

BC Cattlemen's Association

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, the BC Cattlemen's Association (BCCA), like all industry associations, had to quickly adapt to a new way of getting the work done and adjust many of our regular events. The BCCA Board of Directors began to meet virtually (despite connectivity challenges) while staff worked from home. In June, BCCA held their Annual General Meeting via Zoom and we celebrated our 2020 Ranch Sustainability Award recipient in a special virtual event. Instead of our annual Research Forum, BCCA embarked on a short video highlighting research relevant to BC's cattle industry. The Board was able to meet once face-to-face in October before the second wave hit and new restrictions were put in place. The in-person meeting scheduled for December was quickly modified to a virtual meeting.



Throughout 2020, BCCA worked on the issues related to COVID-19 and we continued to address the regulations impacting producers. During the early months of the pandemic, we collaborated with our national groups and worked provincially to ensure governments and policymakers were aware of the unique challenges facing the industry's stakeholders during COVID-19. At the same time, BCCA continued to address BC ranchers ongoing challenges such as access to water and forage and urge the Province to strengthen trespass laws. Equally as important, we worked to capitalize on the opportunities to build a stronger industry in BC.

On the operational side, BCCA reevaluated our standing committees and began a phased approach to merging two of our existing committees (Livestock Industry Protection and Research) into the new Beef Production and Innovation Committee. In October after Board approval, the committee began to operate under the new name and 2021 will see the first elections for the committee.

2020 also saw a provincial election in October that resulted in a majority government for the BC NDP. In late November, Premier Horgan announced his new cabinet appointing several new ministers to key positions. Work is underway to prepare for bringing our concerns and solutions to the ministers in the new year.

Key Issues

As mentioned, BCCA continued to address challenges facing the industry including:

Water

BCCA has spent a decade consulting with the Province as the government makes changes to the Water Sustainability Act and related regulations. Livestock water regulations are the latest to be reviewed and the Province publicly released their proposal in July. BCCA was able to see some positives such as the acknowledgement of traditional livestock use, agreement to issue First in Time, First in Right (FITFIR) dates for traditional use, and the recognition that livestock can directly access surface water sources. However, we also have strong concerns with mandatory licensing, the lack of clear protections for livestock watering during times of scarcity, and the three-tiered system that would see cattle operations of 200+ head undergo a more extensive application process. We have asked the Province consider a risk-based approach to licensing that would only require mandatory licensing in areas where water is in short supply.

Water Storage

For several years, BCCA members have raised concerns about the increasing costs of dam maintenance and the regulatory burden placed on dam owners through the Dam Safety Regulations. This year, BCCA partnered with Ducks Unlimited Canada to make a submission to the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to highlight concerns and provide recommendations. The 17 recommendations focused on addressing concerns around the increasing costs of infrastructure, dam maintenance/monitoring and archeological assessments, addressing downstream and consequence risk, and improving government support and communication.

Trespass

Like many other livestock commodities in BC and across Canada, trespass has been an ongoing concern for members for years but became more urgent in 2019 with the increased incidents of trespass by activists. In 2020, members brought forward a resolution that asked BCCA to





urge the Province to adopt a bill similar to Alberta's Bill 27 Trespass Statute. BCCA has collaborated with other provincial livestock organizations to advocate for changes to the Trespass Act and work towards finding a solution to trespass on agricultural operations. Some of the recommendations that have been put forward are to urge the Solicitor General to increase the fines and the speed at which charges are laid to mirror that of Alberta and Ontario, to have those successfully fined to also hold criminal records preventing cross border travel and to utilize a special Crown Counsel to handle trespass cases to improve continuity. We have also asked the Ministry of Agriculture to find ways to expedite changes to the Trespass statute.

Agriculture Land Reserve

In BC, the rules around the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR) have seen many iterations as governments change. From the membership, there is a broad diversity of rancher's perspectives on the Agricultural Land Reserve and Commission. However, the common ground is the need to protect the producer, not just the land, and ensure that agriculture is profitable. This year, BCCA has made two comprehensive submissions to the Province with recommendations towards providing supports for ranchers and farmers that make a real difference in their financial viability and to address regulatory burden ranchers face. We will continue to deliver the message that the best way to protect agricultural land is with financially viable farms and ranches.

Opportunities

While 2020 had many challenges, there were also opportunities for BC's cattle industry.

BC Beef Producers Inc.

While work on marketing a branded BC beef product had been underway for several years, 2020 was the year to see the concept become reality. In March, the opportunity to lease an existing processing facility in Westwold, BC spurred the project forward. The Beef Producers

Inc. (BCBP), a producer-owned limited liability corporation, was created to get BC beef to BC consumers, under the trademarked brand of "Genuine BC Beef". Since October, BCBP has been actively selling hook shares and at the end of November the first cows were processed. The motivation behind creating BCBP is to offer BC cattle producers the opportunity to participate in any profits from the efficiencies of processing cows locally and in selling the products as a branded product, "Genuine BC Beef".

Targeted Grazing for Wildfire Prevention

This program, announced in May 2018 with funding from the Province, is using cattle as a tool to manage fine fuels around communities with the aim of lowering fire intensity and creating a fire break close to vulnerable communities. The program garnered media attention this year as the project got underway in three communities. BCCA is working closely with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, regional districts, municipalities, forest companies and First Nations. Further funding for a research program to support data collection and research on the pilot projects has been received.

Indigenous Relations and Affairs

BCCA has been monitoring the treaty process for decades with a willing seller/willing buyer approach to treaty negotiations and land selection. This remains the position of the Association. Understanding that only Indigenous and Provincial governments will be at the main treaty negotiation tables, the BCCA Indigenous Affairs Committee has been urging the Province to create side-table discussions where affected stakeholders can stay informed and ask questions. This process is being adopted with the Wet'suwet'en treaty negotiation and BCCA has been invited to put a representative forward to sit on the stakeholder council.

Recently, the BC Cattlemen's Association, through the Indigenous Relations Committee, is working toward building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities. Our efforts to create a clearer understanding of reconciliation and UNDRIP are focused at the grassroots level. To that end, we are striving to gain a better understanding of our role in reconciliation and forging a path forward based on common values and respect.

In closing, BCCA appreciates the commitment and hard work of all the CCA directors and staff. We would like to thank our hard-working CCA Directors Grant Huffman and Ryan Scorgie.

For more information, please visit the BCCA website at www.cattlemen.bc.ca

Kevin Boon
General Manager



Alberta Beef Producers

As we head into the new year, Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) is looking forward to implementing new initiatives that have been in development through the latter half of 2020. We are finalizing details for the launch of a new ABP magazine, with the first issue out in February, and an online platform/smartphone app. The new platform will have real time market information, industry related stories and the ability for a producer to pick preferences based on their interests. Through the app, notifications can be sent to producers, making them aware of situations that could affect the beef industry in Alberta.

The ABP magazine will be published four times a year and provide updates on the happenings at ABP in each department, such as Research, Policy, Government Relations, Marketing and Education. It will also include information on the national organizations representing Alberta beef producers and other provincial cattle organizations, along with industry-related, human interest stories. As this plan comes to fruition, we will scale back our Cattle Country radio program and wind down the current format of Grass Routes. These new tools aim to connect with producers in a way that will let them guide the type of content they want to receive from our organization.

The 2020 ABP Producer Meetings took place online at the end of the year with a Producer Town Hall and two Resolution Meetings, where we saw strong attendance and participation from Alberta producers. The town hall provided an overview of the work done this year by ABP and our national organizations, and 23 resolutions were passed at the resolution meetings for ABP to consider and move through our resolution process. Delegate elections in two of the five zones were held electronically or by mail-in ballot and the results were announced at the beginning of



ABP General Manager Brad Dubeau visits Bear Trap Feeders to discuss the state of the industry/impacts of COVID-19 on the industry with CCA President Bob Lowe.

January. The Board of Directors elections will take place at our Annual General Meeting in March 2021 with all 12 directors elected at large by the new delegate body, under the stipulation that there must be at least one director from each zone.

Significant changes to agriculture research funding were made by the Government of Alberta with the unveiling of Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR). ABP has been an active member of the RDAR Advisory Committee, whose mandate is "to support results driven agriculture research priorities and programs that will increase competitiveness and profitability of Alberta's agriculture industry." We had the opportunity to provide input and feedback on the scope, governance and research focus and priorities. The ABP Research Committee also invited RDAR interim staff to observe a committee meeting to promote collaboration and opportunities for co-funding between ABP and RDAR. The Government of Alberta has committed \$37 million per year for 10 years to RDAR for agriculture research and knowledge transfer, although at least initially, not all of this funding will be available for research projects.

In October, JBS announced a new partnership with a food service company based in Japan to supply a branded Alberta beef product, utilizing already established premium beef brands.

ABP saw this long-term commitment as recognition of the value and prestige held by the Alberta Beef brand within international markets, and a strong reflection of the hard work and dedication of beef producers in Alberta and across western Canada.



ABP was recognized for our marketing efforts by the Canadian Agri-Marketing Association at the Best of CAMA Awards. Through work done with the marketing agency WS, we were awarded top prize in Series Execution (Print or Digital), Best Overall Industry Relations Program and Website, and Certificates of Merit for Billboard and Single Execution (Print or Digital). These awards were for our Flavour of Alberta billboard campaign, tv commercials and new consumer website, as well as an All for the Beef influencer engagement program.

ABP joined other provincial agriculture commodity groups in submitting a letter to the Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Forestry encouraging government support of the proposed changes to the AgriStability program, which included removal of the Reference Margin Limit and an increase to the compensation rate. We hope to see the provincial government support these changes in the short-term while work continues on the modernization of the business risk management suite.

ABP and other industry partners worked with Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to update the grazing lease disposition document. AEP aimed to modernize the document and add-in clauses to aid in compliance and communication. During the review, industry focused on maintaining the legal status of a lease and through our efforts, the original legal language was successfully maintained, while the remainder of the document was modernized. The changes made were deemed minor, however may allude to greater frequency of overlapping dispositions and resultant activity.



ABP continues to monitor the Alberta Fed Cattle Set-Aside program as it works towards eliminating the backlog of cattle from the first wave of COVID-19. We didn't see significant market disruptions in Alberta through the fall and continue to watch COVID-19 numbers and outbreaks across the province for any potential impacts to our industry. On a final note, ABP would like to express sincere appreciation and gratitude to directors, delegates and staff for their willingness to adapt throughout the year as they continued to proudly represent producers across the province.

An advertisement for Vytelle. It features a large, stylized graphic of a cow in a field, with a diagonal line separating the image into two sections. The Vytelle logo, which consists of a stylized 'V' with a checkmark inside, is positioned above the text 'Vytelle'. Below the logo, the text 'ALWAYS PROGRESSING' is written in orange, followed by 'Unlock animal performance with Vytelle.' in black. At the bottom, there is a copyright notice: '©2021 Vytelle, LLC. All rights reserved. Vytelle and its logo are trademarks of Vytelle, LLC. 02/21 VY210209'.

Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association

A mostly locked down year of cancellations and postponements. COVID-19's impact on the Saskatchewan cattle industry was worst felt by yearling sellers in the March/April timeframe when uncertainty and volatility were carrying the day. Some yearling sellers. Those that had Price Insurance coverage on their cattle were happy they had that coverage. That was true of fat cattle as well. Risk management paid off for those that used the tools at hand.

Agriculture and all its parts being deemed essential was and remains so important. There are major effects on how sales unfold and some bull and production sales have been cancelled. But many went ahead with changes and adaptations. Spring's sales were mostly good reflecting long-term commitment to the business and genetic improvement. The adaptations made for COVID-19 will result in some things being retained for the future. Necessity breeds invention.

Saskatchewan's Minister of Agriculture David Marit has been very good through this challenging time. Regular contact (weekly for a stretch) has been kept with all production groups. Not only the contact but also in response. COVID-19's impact on uncertainty made the volatility portion of price insurance premiums skyrocket.



The Honourable David Marit, Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister visiting with SCA Chair Arnold Balicki at an SCA Board Meeting 2020.



Brian Cole at the "Farm to Forks" event in Saskatoon. It is an event that engages with students showing them where food comes from. This event is co-sponsored by SCA.

The Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association (SCA) asked for help in managing this, one idea being to offer a frozen premium that reflected "peace time" premium and coverage.

The SCA board committed \$1 million to help with improving premiums to help ensure producers were accessing an important program in a challenging time. The Province worked to bring the federal government to partner in offsetting premium increases but were unsuccessful.

This left the Province and SCA to partner in offsetting the share of premiums that was attributed to COVID-19 increases.

On top of this, the Province also funded their share of the fed cattle set-aside program. That program is still running and needed as of this writing. SCA appreciates the communication and responsiveness of our Ministry of Agriculture and our Minister.

At the time of this writing the federal government offer to remove the reference margin limit and increase the payout ratio in AgriStability is under consideration. Hopefully when this report is being read that has come to pass. It would cap off a good year of advocacy and response in Saskatchewan.



Paula Larson, former SCA Board Member at the 2020 Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference (SBIC) dinner.

On the activity front many things have been postponed or cancelled. Some of the funds that would have gone to those things have been reallocated to customer facing communications. Several examples of these tactics with the Bearded Prairie Chef Josh Miller and ex Roughrider Belton Johnson can be found at www.saskbeef.com.

We are also working to develop content for an immersive experience post COVID-19. Stay tuned for more information in the future.

Aside from flooding in the Meadow Lake area, it was another mostly moisture constrained year. There will be more matching herd sizes to feed supply this winter instead of retaining numbers to match higher feed supplies. Especially since snow came in plentiful and early meant feeding started earlier than normal. There have been a lot of dry summers in a row in Saskatchewan. We are due for a reversal.

Looking ahead we are working to see announcements on irrigation and rural internet upgrades come to fruition. The re-election of the Saskatchewan Party that committed to these things is promising. The financial situation due to COVID-19 is not. Building infrastructure is positive for the economy and there is no better way to grow agriculture than irrigation.

Ryder Lee
CEO, Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association



SCFA Feedlot management school



As part of our consumer outreach, there was a series of TV episodes created, including this one featuring Josh Miller, the Bearded Prairie Chef, demonstrating how to make stuffed tenderloin.



Manitoba Beef Producers

Adaptation was the norm for in 2020 for Manitoba Beef Producers (MBP) as the association tried to balance its usual advocacy and outreach efforts with the industry-related challenges that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic.

In February the Manitoba government announced a grant of up to \$300,000 toward the three-year Livestock Predation Prevention Project. MBP has long advocated for such an initiative. MBP and the Manitoba Sheep Association are also providing funding toward it. Technical support is coming from other members of the Livestock Predation Protection Working Group. Some program components include conducting on-farm risk assessments, and, testing the effectiveness of lethal and non-lethal Risk Management Practices in reducing predation. A project lead has been secured (employed by MBP) and work has commenced with a survey on predation losses distributed to cattle and sheep producers in the fall for feedback.



A screen shot of the MBP newly launched website

There was considerable work related to the Manitoba government's changes to the agricultural Crown land (ACL) leasing program. Key among them were efforts to secure the first right of renewal on ACL forage leases issued prior to October 1, 2019, something not permitted when the program changes were first announced. This key change has been achieved. While the continuation of legacy (family) leases is also confirmed, the government has ended unit transfers, i.e. the ability to transfer leases with the sale of deeded land. Advocacy continues on this and other ACL concerns, including: the need for a transition period to allow lease holders to adapt to a steep hike in rental rates; the importance of informed access; the new process for valuing lease hold improvements; and, valuing ecosystem services provided by lease holders in managing ACL.

In mid-June the findings of a review of forage insurance programs offered by the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) were released. MBP sought the review due to producer concerns about gaps or challenges with existing forage insurance offerings that limit their responsiveness. MASC is exploring action on several of the report's recommendations, including: new methodologies to assign coverages to new insureds; determining if the effect that disaster years have on future coverage can be minimized; establishing insured values that better reflect the price of hay in claim years; and, reviewing the index-based insurance approach used in other jurisdictions which rely on weather or satellite-based technology.

Acting upon requests from MBP, MASC announced that extended grazing forages would be made eligible for wildlife damage compensation. This compensation is limited to 45 per cent of the value of loss on swathed or baled crops or forage, and suitable standing annual crops (e.g. corn) that are intended for grazing.

MBP has undertaken considerable work related to the pandemic, both on its own and in collaboration with national and provincial cattle organizations, the Manitoba Livestock Marketing Association and others. Due to the steep spike in premiums for the Western Livestock Price Insurance Program (WLPIP), MBP asked the federal and provincial governments to cost share the premiums with producers, as well as to extend the enrolment deadline. While the deadline to enroll in the calf program was extended in Manitoba, there was no movement for cost-shared premiums. MBP continues to provide input into ways to enhance WLPIP and to make price insurance available in other regions of Canada.

MBP also advocated with the Manitoba government to provide its 40 per cent contribution toward a set-aside program as per the AgriRecovery initiative announced by the federal government on May 5. The 2020 Canada-Manitoba Finished Cattle Feed Assistance Program was announced in mid-October. While the Manitoba government agreed to administer it, it did not provide its 40 per cent contribution. MBP requested adjustments to the program to address eligibility concerns such as: whether the eligible slaughter date could be extended; questions about the minimum weight requirements; and, the requirements for a proof of slaughter date as opposed to a shipment date.

In other advocacy efforts at the provincial level, MBP has long sought changes to AgriStability to make the program more responsive. The efforts redoubled when the federal government announced proposed changes to it in late November. MBP participated in provincial government consultations related to possible changes to trespassing and biosecurity legislation. Some of this discussion has arisen due to continued concerns about the impact of crime on the agriculture sector and rural communities. And, MBP has been providing feedback as the Manitoba government continues to envision and action its Manitoba Protein Advantage strategy.



Taken in January 2020 in Brandon, MB during a social event after our Young Producers Retreat.

There were some weather-related challenges in 2020. MBP asked the Manitoba government to allow Wildlife Management Areas to be made available for haying and grazing in areas where producers were facing dry conditions. In mid-July the Province agreed to do this. Although there was inadequate moisture in some regions, excess moisture was at times a problem in others. Strong storms arrived in southeastern Manitoba in early June, leading to overland flooding and associated damages. Heavy rains also appeared in early July in southwestern to central Manitoba, again leading to overland flooding, road damage, some evacuations of livestock, and crop damage. Drier conditions returned thereafter, but timely rains allowed most producers to secure adequate feed supplies heading into winter. Some producers however closed the year concerned about low dugout and well levels, and how low soil moisture conditions may affect production in 2021.

Days, Amazing Ag Adventure and Ag Days. However, MBP forged ahead with communications activities. This included running morning advertisements on CTV Winnipeg promoting Manitoba's beef industry. MBP participated in a live interview on CTV Morning Live to talk about beef production, as well as the nutritional attributes of beef. Summer and Christmas/New Year's radio campaigns targeted listeners in Winnipeg and area. MBP produced a video for social media thanking those working on the front lines in the processing plants for their efforts. In December MBP completed a refresh of its website to make it more user friendly and inviting, both for producers and for the general public. And, MBP participated in the 31st season of Great Tastes of Manitoba, a popular cooking show on CTV Winnipeg. A video profiling one of our director's operations also aired during the broadcast, helping make the farm to table connection for viewers.

Due to the pandemic, MBP had to forgo its usual process of holding 14 in person fall district meetings, opting for a virtual platform. The same approach will be taken for MBP's 42nd Annual General Meeting in February.

In closing, MBP appreciates the ongoing collaborative efforts between the various industry associations and other value chain members to help the sector respond to the various challenges arising as a result of the pandemic. This includes the timely development of informational resources for holding auction sales and processing cattle. Key too are advocacy efforts targeted at government and elected officials outlining the challenges for the sector and the tools and strategies needed to help the beef industry move through and beyond the pandemic. This level of cooperation has been invaluable.

For more information, please visit MBP's website at www.mbbeef.ca



During the District 5 meeting in October 2020, when Director Steven Manns joined MBP General Manager Carson Callum for the virtual meeting.

The pandemic has and continues to lead to the cancellation of numerous public-facing events in which MBP normally participates, such as the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair, the Red River Ex, Ag in the City, Open Farm



On set in July 2020 during filming for the 31st season of Great Tastes of Manitoba (MBP had two episodes this year).

Beef Farmers of Ontario

The impact of the global pandemic was far reaching in 2020 and presented many disruptions and challenges for so many sectors from tourism and airlines to education and manufacturing.

Unfortunately, Canada's beef industry and the agri-food sector weren't spared from impact. For Ontario's beef farmers, trouble began in the fall of 2019 with the closure of Ryding Regency and the resulted loss of federal processing capacity in the province.



The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March compounded that pressure for farmers. Fortunately, processing facilities in Ontario were not affected by any COVID outbreaks in the spring, but we closed the year with the temporary closure of Cargill Meat Solutions in Guelph, eastern Canada's largest federal processing facility, as a result of a number of positive COVID-19 cases among their workforce.

The pandemic forced us to adapt and find new ways to communicate, lobby and function as an association and, based on the current climate, the adapting will continue into 2021.

Government Relations

Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) was actively engaged with both levels of government prior to and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to our work with CCA, BFO worked closely with the eastern provinces to address the lack of sufficient processing capacity in eastern Canada, and to secure direct financial assistance for beef producers struggling from prolonged market losses.

In June, BFO welcomed an announcement by federal and provincial ministers regarding the creation of a cattle set-aside program for Ontario to allocate \$5 million to the beef sector to help manage potential backlogs in processing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As previously noted, the program was triggered in early December as a result of the temporary closure of Cargill Meat Solutions in Guelph.

Provincially, BFO lobbied aggressively to increase funding for the Ontario Risk Management Program (RMP) alongside our counterparts in the grains, pork, veal, and sheep sectors. In July, the Province announced they would contribute an additional \$50 million across the RMP sectors for the 2020 program year, fulfilling in part a campaign commitment by the Conservative Party.

Federally, our focus was on business risk management programming. We continued to press government that we need to see changes to the AgriStability program. BFO believes there are a number of program-specific enhancements such as increasing the program trigger from 70 to 80 per cent and removing the Reference Margin Limit, that would address equity challenges and improve the effectiveness of the program for farmers.

Lastly, BFO was pleased to see the proclamation of provincial Bill 156, the Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act late in the year. This new legislation will help better protect farmers, their animals, livestock transporters, and the province's food supply from trespassers and extreme animal rights activists. Throughout 2020, BFO and other livestock and agriculture organizations strongly supported the development of this piece of legislation and were actively involved in the consultation process.



Policy Review

BFO's policy department addressed policies and regulations affecting the beef sector, working with various government ministries on a number of critical files. Priority areas included CFIA's consultation on their proposed changes to the guidelines for simulated meat and poultry products, updates to the Nutrient Management Act that will lessen administrative burden on producers, improving access to veterinarians and livestock medicine in remote areas, advocating for interprovincial trade opportunities, consulting on Ontario's new animal welfare legislation, and amendments to the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program.

Research

BFO budgeted research funds of \$200,000 per year for three years (2020-2023). After receiving 28 letters of intent and 12 full proposals through a call for research proposals in 2020, 11 new research projects were approved to receive funding from BFO. All projects are at the University of Guelph with the exception of one funded at the Western College



The new cow barn and some of the renovated pastures at the University of Guelph's research farm near Elora, ON are now in use, and work is nearly done on the construction of the new feedlot barn.

of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. While the research was intended to commence once funding was approved, the pandemic has affected the start of some of the projects with summer student numbers down and work capacity and research progress limitations due to physical distancing requirements.

The new cow barn and some of the renovated pastures at the University of Guelph's research farm near Elora, Ontario are now in use, and work is nearly done on the construction of the new feedlot barn. The new feedlot barn will have capacity for 288 growing and finishing steers, which is an increase of about 96 head over the previous facilities.

Consumer Engagement

The priorities of our consumer engagement efforts in 2020 were getting our content in-market, building relationships with influencers and partners, and continuing to build the Ontario Beef brand story with the public.

Fortunately, the vast majority of our new strategy was designed to be carried out on social media. When the pandemic hit, we made some initial pivots on our messaging and we made some minor adjustments to our campaigns with respect to some of the in-person activities that were planned, but overall, we were able to execute our digital media strategy as planned, and did so with excellent results.

We continued work on our new creative assets, which were used to support some of the virtual public-facing events we participated in during the fall/winter of 2020.

One we were anxious to release was a virtual-360 tour of a feedlot and cow-calf operation. This project was completed in partnership with Farm & Food Care Ontario and was released at the virtual Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Our new public website continued to increase traffic steadily, our store/product locator database continued to build, and we saw fantastic growth in not only followers but, more importantly, engagement across all of our social channels.

Market Development

The Ontario Beef Market Development (OBMD) program continues to evolve and the work by the joint BFO-Ontario Cattle Feeders' Association committee continued in 2020 despite the impact of the pandemic on travel and execution of events and programs.



The priorities of BFO's consumer engagement efforts in 2020 were establishing creative assets, building relationships with influencers and partners, and a focusing on their digital media campaigns.



Throughout 2020, BFO worked closely with CCA and the eastern provinces to address the lack of sufficient processing capacity in eastern Canada, and to secure financial assistance for beef farmers struggling from prolonged market losses.

The ability to develop new branding initiatives in Ontario was limited as packers and retailers focused on operations and the safety of their employees. In addition, we saw a massive drop in customer capacity and meal occasions in the casual dining sector, as well as in the catering sector. As a result, the committee placed a higher priority on promotion of existing Ontario beef brands at retail and advancing its quality assurance objective.

In early 2020, before the pandemic had impacted Canada, work was done to support the growth of Ontario-branded beef by participating in a number of national tradeshow, including Grocery Innovations Canada and the Restaurants Canada show, both hosted in Toronto.

In export markets, most tradeshow were cancelled including in Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Vietnam. However, work continued in the Japanese market by providing promotional support for existing Ontario beef brands. Currently, there are 21 retail partners promoting Ontario beef in 567 outlets across Japan. We did see one program launch in Japan, which was the Ontario Heritage Angus Beef brand, a premium brand exclusive to St. Helen's Meat Packers.

As previously mentioned, the Committee focused on quality assurance programming. As a result of that work, the Ontario Corn Fed Beef Quality

Assurance program was approved as a certifying body for the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. Now, Ontario's feedlot sector and the bulk of finished animals in the province will be well positioned to take advantage of sustainable programming.

Through this announcement, we anticipate we will see an increase in demand from the feedlot sector for VBP Plus certified calves in the cow-calf sector, especially those who are interested in participating in Cargill's Certified Sustainable Program, which is now offered at both its High River and Guelph facilities.

Producer Engagement

BFO's producer engagement team had planned a wide range of projects in 2020, however, the pandemic took a toll on many of the planned activities. Our inaugural Feedlot Management School was to be held at the end of March, but obviously needed to be postponed to 2021.

Likewise, our Beef Youth Development program, as well as the Cow-Calf Management School planned for August, met the same fate.

Plans shifted to meeting with producers in a virtual format when possible and we focused on digital resource development.

Our bfoUP webinar series ran through the winter and spring with great uptake, we launched an article series in Ontario Beef magazine called Wellness on the Farm, which focuses on the overall wellbeing of our producers, and we developed a number of video resources on various topics for producers.

The Producteurs de bovins du Québec

The Producteurs de bovins du Québec (PBQ) has continued efforts in a number of spheres to maintain and build cattle production in Quebec. Profile raising, value creation, and sustainable development form the central themes of our actions.

Strategic Planning 2019–2024

Early 2020 saw the PBQ begin implementing a strategic planning process for its production sectors.

The Quebec beef sector includes feeder calf producers, fed cattle producers, and dairy farmers (for cull cattle). Actors in these sectors are working to reach targets in the following areas: sector coordination, connecting with consumers, success factors from production to processing, and supporting development. Work in the last year has enabled the sector to make progress on a number of fronts, including identifying the need among our processing partners to conduct an analysis of marbling in Quebec beef carcasses.

Note that the Ministère de l'Agriculture des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec, along with various processors, auctions, and other actors, have been included in the process.



The creation of a value chain for Quebec beef cattle is in progress. A number of partners have become involved in the project and, while the data processing does present complexities when it comes to transmission, signs that the project will be successful are being seen.

On December 17, 2020, PBQ was still awaiting the results of a value chain audit, which could open to the door for the organization to be certified by the CRSB. Assuming the certification takes place, agreements in principle will be negotiated with officials at slaughter facilities who are interested in the value chain.



The chair of PBQ Jean-Thomas Maltais inspecting his herd.

Sustainable Beef Product Development

Since the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program was recognized by the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB), the PBQ has doubled its efforts to increase the number of producers certified in Quebec.

Incentive programs implemented in recent years have sparked interest among some farmers to get certified. In early December 2020, the number of VBP+ certified feeder calf and backgrounded calf producers sat at 86, with the figure for fed cattle producers sitting at 24. These producers account for 62 per cent of production volume in the province.



A cow-calf producer feeding calves to finish them.



Most cattle farms are family-owned businesses.

Business opportunities from the pandemic

Quebec, like the rest of North America, saw its share of complexities arising from the pandemic. That said, Quebecers' interest in local products drove up demand for Quebec beef among buyers in the province.

To push this momentum even further, the PBQ produced a friendly television advertisement that aired over the summer months.

The ad provides consumers the key points to keep in mind when buying local beef. As a result, the amount of beef purchased by local abattoirs was greater than usual.



Many producers have transitioned their dairy barns to raise beef cattle.



Beef farmers in Quebec mainly finish their cattle with corn.

Animal transportation

The new Health of Animals Regulations: Part XII: Transport of Animals (Regulations) came into effect on February 20, 2020. The PBQ has created a working committee on transportation to assess the impact of the Regulations on producers.

The committee includes producers of grain-fed veal, milk-fed veal, and dairy calves, who represent the producers most affected by the Regulations. The committee has developed an action plan to first identify and gather the critical points and later analyze the various solutions that may be implemented. The PBQ also remains in regular contact with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to help develop solutions as various parties adapt to the new Regulations.

For more information, please visit the PBQ website at www.bovin.qc.ca

New Brunswick Cattle Producers

COVID-19 has impacted New Brunswick relatively mildly compared to other provinces. We have been very fortunate in being able to keep the curve mostly flattened. Many of our members have reported a significant increase in local demand for beef products, Atlantic Beef Products continues to report record processing rates at their facility on Prince Edward Island and both calf and cull cow prices have, thankfully, stayed reasonably strong throughout the pandemic. The New Brunswick Cattle Producers (NBCP) have worked closely with government to raise potential market and production issues that may have impacted NBCP members throughout the COVID-19 outbreak. Market impacts, thankfully, have largely been positive but production issues, specifically drought, become a much greater challenge during the growing season.

Few areas of the province escaped the impact of drought conditions. Growers are reporting a shortage of winter feed and stalled pasture growth brought cattle to town a bit earlier than we would typically expect in the region. Forage market prices have increase 50 to 100 per cent year-over-year depending on the supply-demand dynamics regionally across the province.

The NBCP continues to work with regional partners through the Maritime Beef Council to implement the Maritime Beef Sector Growth Strategy. The Strategy is focused on generating new opportunities for growth and development in the regional cattle industry. The five core goals of the Maritime Beef Growth Strategy are:

1. Increase the regional cow herd by 20,000 by 2027
2. Increase beef production profitability through training and education
3. Develop an industry-leading regional feed efficient beef herd
4. Maximize pasture and forage stand productivity
5. Advance the profitability of the industry through value chain co-ordination

Enhanced communication with the membership continues to be a top priority for the NBCP. As a cost reduction measure and a general modernization of the NBCP communications strategy, the NBCP encourages producers to be proactive in sourcing information by visiting the NBCP website, Facebook page and new YouTube page for workshop presentations.



Piloted in 2017, the integration of training workshops into the NBCP Fall Regional Meetings has continued through to 2020. With COVID-19 meeting restrictions, NBCP like many other associations have moved our face-to-face meetings to a virtual platform. The learning curve has been steep and technical challenges such as limited rural broadband internet has sometimes represented a barrier to success of the virtual model, but we are working through the challenges with resolve.

Member feedback suggest that the delivery of professional development opportunities along with updates from the Board of Directors on association activities increased the value proposition for attending regional meetings around the province. Presentations for 2020 included a series of management workshops on Risk Management Strategies, Verified Beef Production Plus, Value-Added Calf-Club Development, Livestock Transportation Regulation Changes and Humane Animal Handling.

We continue to look to the future and the potential for market volatility to challenge NBCP members.

Work continues to establish an Eastern Settlement Index and develop a Beef Price Insurance Program for the Maritime region. The Beef Cattle Research Council has supported this effort with a significant funding investment, which is greatly appreciated. We also continue to assess the effectiveness of the AgriStability program for New Brunswick conditions and appreciate the opportunity to work closely with CCA and Beef Farmers of Ontario to complete this national-regional-provincial benchmarking work.

Looking ahead to continued program delivery, NBCP leadership will work with staff to develop a clear direction for program delivery over the next two years of the Canadian Agriculture Partnership by reviewing the NBCP Strategic Plan, aligning with the Maritime Beef sector Growth Strategy and the National Beef Strategy.

Nova Scotia Cattle Producers

Cattle market prices started off strong this year, flattening due to COVID-19 uncertainties of processing. Locally, demand was strong which helped hold prices steady in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Cattle Producers (NSCP) had another productive year, wrapping up some projects and planning to continue working on others into the New Year. Additionally, we are busy planning for upcoming Zone Meetings and the Annual Meeting. The NSCP worked with the local Canadian Food Inspection Agency office to facilitate workshops, delivering presentation on the amendments to the livestock transportation regulations in February 2020. These workshops were delivered in late February 2020 across the province, with nearly 100 attendees throughout the four locations.

The Maritime Beef Council (MBC) released in Spring 2020 a new local dairy-beef resource: Beef on Dairy: A Maritime Dairy-Beef Production Guide. This first volume manual, From Breeder to 500lb Feeder, was a joint collaboration from various Maritime industry organizations, such as provincial livestock specialists, Atlantic Veterinary College, all three Maritime Dairy Farmers associations, all three Maritime Beef Producers associations, provincial veterinarians and Milk 2020, among others. This resource can be found at <http://nscattle.ca/members/industry-fact-sheets/>.



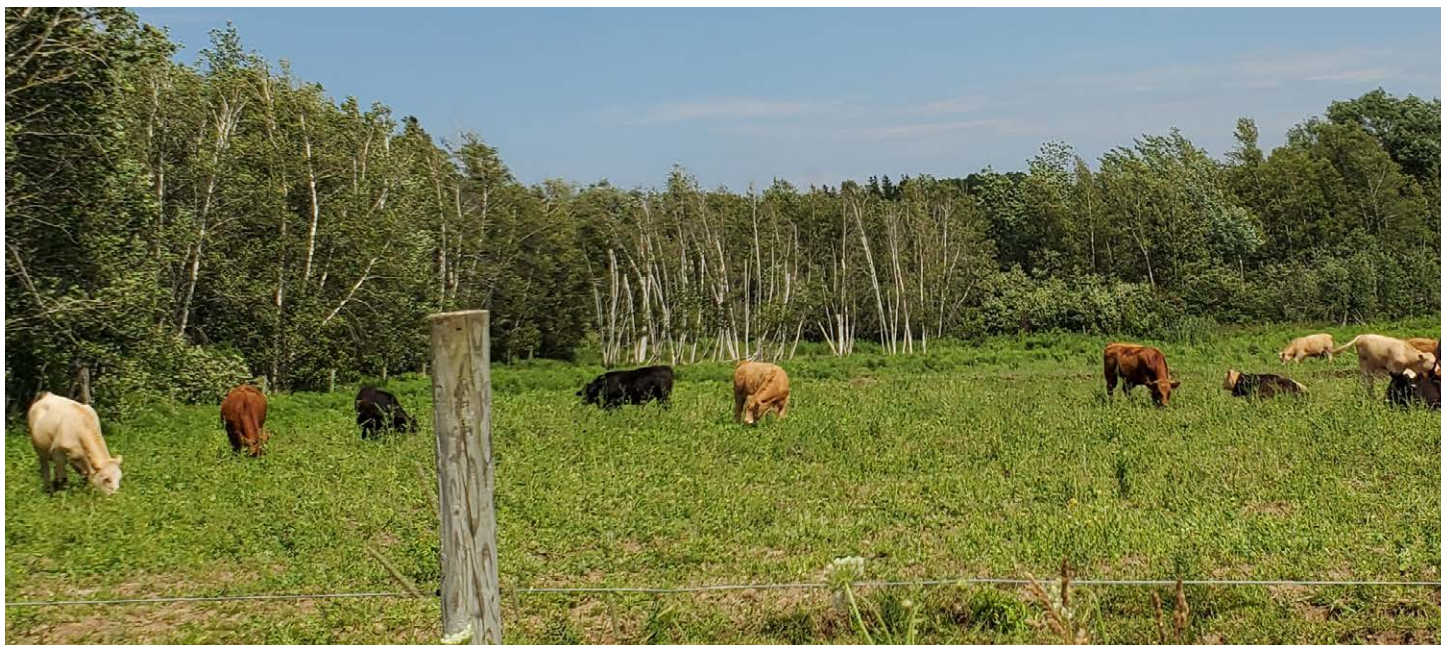
Throughout the next two years, there will be focus groups routinely meeting between beef and dairy who will represent both industries, as well as selected value chain stakeholders.

Also, in Spring 2020, NSCP started tracking cattle market pricing within the eastern Canada region. Price reports are gathered each week, with the weekly cattle price from the week prior added to our website each Monday morning. This includes pricing from feeders (500-900 lbs), fed steers, cull cows and bob calves (good and average) from Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia markets. This can be found on the Market Price Reports webpage: <http://nscattle.ca/members/market-price-reports/>.

In Summer 2020, NSCP and Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia jointly wrote and submitted a letter of interest for the Climate Adaptation Leadership Program through the Nova Scotia Environment - Climate Change Unit and the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture project. The Cattle (Beef and Dairy) sector was selected as one of the three industry topics, being the only livestock group involved in the project. Throughout the next two years, there will be focus groups routinely meeting between beef and dairy who will represent both industries, as well as selected value chain stakeholders, with the end result being a completed adaptation strategy.

Due to provincial exhibitions being cancelled this year due to COVID-19, the 6th Annual Nova Scotia Elite Beef Expo was unfortunately not able to occur this past August. We are hopeful the Expo can once again return for the 2021 Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition.





Throughout the year, NSCP worked with the Agri-Commodity Management Association on the Nova Scotia Animal Transport Resource and Training Program, made possible through funding obtained by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture CAP Program. This allowed for the Livestock Transportation Manifest to be created, which are sold at the NSCP office for \$10 each. Additionally, this funded livestock commercial truckers in the province online Canadian Livestock Transport (CLT) Training, to obtain certification in animal transport in Canada under the current regulations.

Due to regional COVID-19 restrictions, the 5th Annual Maritime Beef Conference looked very different this year, as it moved to an online platform occurring evenings throughout October and November, rather than the usual March in-person session.

The NSCP again partnered the 2020 Maritime Beef Virtual Conference Series, hosted by the Maritime Beef Council, by promoting and advertising the series. The east coast was well represented with many Maritime based presenters, such as Bill Thomas and Ellen Crane, in addition to national speakers such as Anne Wasko and Michel Roche.

With COVID-19 Public Health regulations tightening once again this past fall, NSCP made the move to virtual workshops, rather than in-person meetings. We began releasing videos for a Virtual Farm Tour Series in November, and will continue into spring 2021. A new video focusing on a different beef operation in the province is released each month.

Please visit <http://nscattle.ca/virtual-farm-tours/> and/or social media for these monthly releases.

On the same webpage, a Cattle Vaccination Virtual Presentation can be found. This was recorded in the fall, focusing on beef cattle vaccination handling and techniques, as well as looking at the economics of vaccinating cattle and the associated potential premiums. We partnered with Dr. Alexander Burrows, Fundy Vets Ltd., Ellen Crane, BCRC and Jonathan Wort, Perennia on this video.

The NSCP is actively working with the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture to develop programming which addresses industry goals, such as the Cattle Industry Enhancement Program, which closed for applications December 31, 2020.

A full listing of all government programs and eligibility can be found at <https://novascotia.ca/programs/>.

Prince Edward Cattle Producers

The PEI Cattle Producers (PEICP) held their Annual Meeting on September 1, 2020. This meeting was originally planned in April 2020 but due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was postponed until it could be held in person. Board members include Jeremy Stead, Peter Dixon, Tim Dixon, Kevin Simmons, Kenneth MacEachern, Dennis Hogan and Greg Stavert. Ex-Officio Director, Gary Hughes represents Dairy Farmers of PEI.

Fall District Meetings were held November 23 and 25, 2020 in Charlottetown and Linkletter respectively. These meetings were very well attended despite being limited to 50 people and having to pre-register to attend. Dr. Shawn McKenna in Charlottetown and Dr. Chris Versteeg in Linkletter presented on antimicrobial resistance, benefits of vaccines, importance of having a good vet client patient relationship. There was much discussion and questions asked. We had great feedback from those producers in attendance. We are planning to hold similar sessions in the Spring 2021 due to feedback we have received as more producers would like to attend.

The PEICP continues to deliver the VBP+ program in Prince Edward Island by providing information and delivering workshops. While the number of producers attending VBP+ workshop has remained consistent, the number of audited operations remains low. We have seen a small increase in producers wanting to be VBP+ audited. We accredited this to the announcement from Atlantic Beef Products that offers a \$.02 bonus for cattle that meet specific specs and come from a VBP+ registered operation. To date we have 13 registered operations on PEI.



The PEICP continues to offer third party Age Verification. This is very important to the feedlot sector in PEI who generally feed animals to an older age. This practice results in a high number of animals determined to be over thirty months of age or OTM. A birth certificate can help to avoid a penalty of \$.20/lb if an animal is deemed to be OTM at Atlantic Beef Plant. As a result, we have seen an increase in the number of producers Age Verifying their animals. An important benefit from providing this service is that more producers are getting their Premise ID and merging multiple CCIA accounts into one. All of this will assist producers in preparing for traceability.

The Livestock Development for Beef program was delivered through the PEICP. Funding for this program is provided through Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) and offers qualifying producers money for programs such as premium sires, Purebred heifers, seedstock testing, RFID readers, Animal Health and handling facilities.

The PEICP coordinates the Prince Edward Island Certified Beef (CIB) brand.

Prince Edward Island beef is produced by those who are committed to quality, consistency and flavour, drawing on generations of experience. Beef farming and processing has long been a staple of our Island heritage and we take it very seriously.

We have developed the CIB brand based on these attributes and values. Feeders from any of the Atlantic provinces are now eligible for the brand enabling producers from these provinces to participate. Much of the criteria for CIB is based on current practices and it does not take a lot of adjustment for producers to join. Two key factors include documenting treatments and tracing all animals produced under the brand.





PEICP's newest Board Director Dwain MacAulay's cattle grazing in the Souris Area of Prince Edward Island

Today's consumers are knowledgeable and demand certain attributes for the food they eat. They want to know that the beef they consume has been raised responsibly, that the animals were treated humanely and that the beef is safe to eat.

Each year new CIB members are required to attend a Humane Handling Workshop delivered by Jane Morrigan and Miriam Gordon of Integrity Livestock Services. This practical overview is a great reminder of why we need to keep animal welfare top of mind. The CIB brand continues to grow steadily.

The PEICP continues to administer the Deadstock Removal service to beef producers. This \$850,000 service is cost shared with Dairy Farmers of PEI, PEICP and the province. The Province announced in June 2019 they would be taking over administration of the Deadstock service contract and increasing their share to fund the service.

PEICP entered into a 3-year contract with the Province to pay \$50,000 per year. There has been uptake of approximately 50 per cent of all beef producers paying to use the service. Those who did not pay are not eligible and must arrange for proper disposal of their deadstock themselves.

The PEICP is a member of the Maritime Beef Council (MBC). The MBC hosted the annual Maritime Beef Conference in October virtually and

was well attended. The conference has gained a lot of attention from the beef industry over the years and has grown steadily each year. The MBC continues to work on the development of a Maritime Beef Strategy.

The main objective of the strategy is to grow and expand the Maritime herd over five years.

There are many aspects to the strategy including professional development. To address this the Maritime Beef School was developed along with Feedlot Club and Cow Calf clubs.

If producers take advantage of the Beef School, Feedlot Clubs and/or Cow Calf Clubs and attend the various presentations at the MBC Conference, they will receive a wide array of valuable information they can use to implement changes on their farms. This year many of the meetings were held virtually.

We are pleased to have national representation as follows: John MacDonald; CCA Board of Directors, David Francis; Canada Beef, and Ivan Johnson; CCIA Board of Directors. These representatives provide a valuable link between our provincial organization and our national organizations.