

## Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef

The mission of the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) is to advance continuous improvement in Canadian beef industry sustainability through multi-stakeholder engagement, collaboration, communication and science. The CRSB continues to play a leadership role in the beef sustainability space.

While 2020 presented many unexpected challenges, it was also a year with many milestones and opportunities to build trust with stakeholders and consumers.

The CRSB drives progress against its mission through three main pillars of work: sustainability benchmarking and setting strategic goals for improvement, CRSB Certified – a voluntary 3rd party certification program, and demonstrating progress through on-the-ground projects.

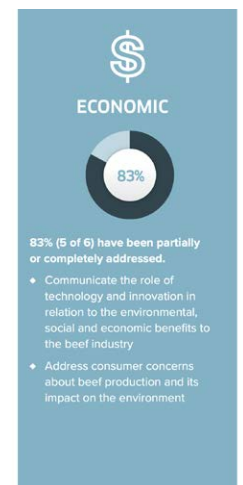
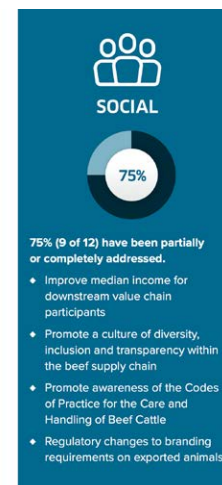
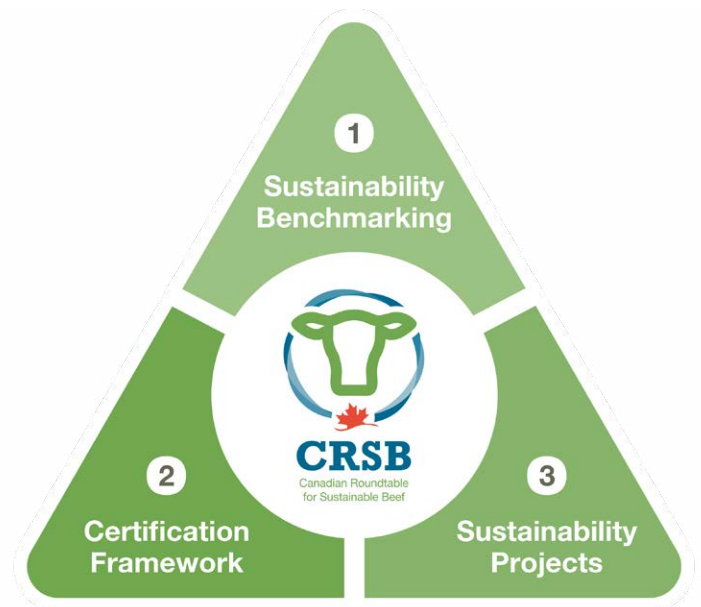
CRSB’s membership continues to grow, with over 110 members and observers, including addition of 12 new members in 2019-20 from a diverse range of categories, including producer associations, processors, academic research, NGOs, retail and foodservice, and agribusiness.

CRSB continues to engage on the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB) through its seat on the Board of Directors, Communications Council and Goals Working Groups.

### National Beef Sustainability Strategy

CRSB kicked off 2020 with an Interim Report on the goals and action items in the National Beef Sustainability Strategy, reporting on progress since the first strategy was released in 2016, and where to focus efforts over the next few years leading up to the next National Beef Sustainability Assessment. We are pleased to report that 86 per cent of the environmental, 75 per cent of the social and 83 per cent of the economic action items in the strategy have been completed or are in progress. Check out the Interim Report for details on action items that will be addressed over the next three years. Visit [csrb.ca](http://csrb.ca) for the full report and infographics introduced this year to help further communicate about beef sustainability.

The Canadian Beef Advisors are building upon the five-year goals outlined in the 2020-2024 National Beef Strategy with a suite of ambitious ten-year goals that aim to show how the industry is continually improving practices and making steady progress. CRSB participated in the development of these goals, and held two series of webinars (six in total), in the spring and fall of 2020. The purpose of the webinars was to provide scientific background from experts and gather feedback as draft goals were developed.



The CRSB encourages all members and industry partners to identify and prioritize any initiatives that advance these action items before the National Beef Sustainability Strategy is reworked in 2023. By reporting activities in the annual survey for sustainability projects, they will be included in future reports.

### Certified Sustainable Beef Framework

Recognizing and Advancing beef sustainability through a world class, operation-level certification program

The CRSB's Certified Sustainable Beef Framework continues to build momentum. Four foodservice companies are now sourcing beef from CRSB Certified farms and ranches, and over 8.6 million lbs of beef was sold with a CRSB Claim since 2018.

In 2017, the CRSB launched the first outcome-based certification framework for beef sustainability in the world, known as CRSB Certified. The Framework recognizes sustainable practices in beef production and processing, supports sustainable commitments in the retail and foodservice sector, and builds trust for Canadian beef through credible, science-based claims.

Adoption of the program continues, with a 28 per cent increase in beef producer participation in 2020, over 9 million cattle currently raised on CRSB Certified Operations, and 8.6 million lbs of beef have been sold with a CRSB Claim since 2018. The demand for beef raised on CRSB Certified farms and ranches outweighs the supply, and there has never been a better time for beef producers to seize opportunities through this certification program.

There is increasing consumer awareness and interest about how food is produced and the sustainability of the food system. In fall 2020, there were several exciting announcements and new players partnering with the CRSB to help share the great beef sustainability story in Canadian beef. Key highlights of the year included:

- JBS Canada facility in Brooks, Alberta was certified to Sustainable Beef Processing Standard
- Chop Steakhouse & Bar was first to feature CRSB Certified on a restaurant menu with its Chop Burger
- McDonald's Canada introduced sustainable beef sourcing to its Quarter Pounder® line-up featuring a full-scale advertising campaign, in-store marketing and packaging, coupled with a "Future of Sustainable Beef Ranching" campaign
- Gordon Food Service Canada Ltd. committed to beef sustainability in its Gordon Choice™ brand boxed beef program, another first for CRSB
- Cargill Guelph facility was certified to the Sustainable Beef Processing Standard; further, with successful Chain of Custody certification in place, Cargill is now sourcing beef from CRSB Certified farms and ranches across Canada for both High River, Alberta and Guelph, Ontario facilities
- Ontario Corn Fed Beef Quality Assurance Program was approved as a CRSB Certification Body for feedlot operations in Ontario

- Loblaw made its first purchase of one million pounds of beef sourced from CRSB Certified farms and ranches, the first grocery retailer in Canada

The CRSB looks forward to further momentum in 2021.



### Communicating Beef Sustainability

Communications and marketing were a key focus for the CRSB in 2020. Working with an external agency, a robust three-year marketing strategy was developed to expand on the plans already in place. One of the key recommendations is expanding our reach to consumers. To kick that off, CRSB carried out its first consumer-directed social media ad campaign in the summer of 2020, focusing on creating awareness about the environmental benefits of sustainable beef production in Canada. The campaign was supported by the development of a website, [beefortheplanet.ca](http://beefortheplanet.ca), which highlights key data from our National Beef Sustainability Assessment, showcases the Guardians of the Grasslands documentary, and shares numerous CRSB Certified beef producer stories and videos. The social ads are linked to this website to enable people to learn more. The campaign was successful and started an important conversation; we continue to leverage this website as we work with our retail and foodservice partners. The icing on the cake was receiving a Best of CAMA award - awarded annually by the Canadian Agri-Marketing Association to recognize excellence in marketing and advertising in agriculture. Surprisingly, the website was also recognized with a special Best in Show award. CRSB would like to recognize Kahntact and Nourish Food Marketing who worked with CRSB to develop the campaign and AdFarm for designing the website.

We continue to collaborate with members and industry partners in many areas, particularly with Public and Stakeholder Engagement, and Canada Beef. A great example of this working relationship was a sponsored campaign with the Toronto Star called “Cooking by Degrees”. It brought together university and college executive chefs, their favourite beef recipes, and features Canadian beef producer stories from across Canada, penned by Owen Roberts, a great supporter of agriculture storytelling. Sponsored ads by CRSB, Canada Beef and Guardians of the Grasslands were embedded from December 2, 2020 to January 12, 2021, and the articles will live on in the Toronto Star digital space. Check it out at [thestar.com/sponsored\\_sections/cooking-by-degrees.html](https://thestar.com/sponsored_sections/cooking-by-degrees.html).

We are excited to expand our reach in our social channels and develop more of these types of campaigns in 2021.

Of course, none of our work would be possible without our farmers, ranchers and industry partners. We continue to promote sustainability within the industry, such as through industry events like the Canadian Beef Industry Conference. CRSB was part of the Program Committee, and then the core planning team, as the conference shifted to a virtual event in 2020. A sustainability panel discussion was one of the most popular sessions, and brought together beef producers from Alberta and Ontario, with foodservice and restaurant speakers for a great discussion facilitated by Shaun Haney of RealAgriculture.

### Shifting Priorities and “The New Way” to Engage

As we all experienced in 2020, CRSB had to make some changes in how we operated and how we engaged with our members. As we look back over the past year, we were able to pivot quickly, maintain contact and even improve engagement to meet our 2020 goals. We held both our semi-annual and annual meetings virtually, and in addition to our Canadian beef Goals webinars, CRSB held a series of webinars on a diverse range of topics.

Alongside CCA, our environmental NGOs helped share the importance of grassland conservation with the media, and CRSB participate in its first government fly-in (virtually) in Ottawa. To connect with the heightened awareness about the security and sustainability of Canada’s food system, we worked with Canada Beef, restaurant partners and beef producers across Canada to share their stories of gratitude to help the supply chain moving.

Check out our Annual Report for more details on our progress in 2020. We look forward to making further progress together in 2021 with initiatives such as phase two of the Canadian Beef Goals, supporting GRSB’s global goal setting, working with supply chain partners committed to supporting Canadian beef producers and sustainability, and continuing to build trust for Canadian beef here in Canada and around the world.



**We’re here to help youth succeed in the beef industry.**

**RBC® is a gold sponsor of Cattlemen’s Young Leaders.**

Cattlemen’s Young Leaders (CYL), by the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association, offers industry-specific training and mentorship opportunities to young people ages 18-35.

With a 10-year, \$500M commitment to empowering young Canadians, the RBC Future Launch initiative invests in programs like the CYL that help our youth with opportunities for networking, skill development, and practical work experience, as well as mental wellbeing supports and services.

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