

cattleTRAILS

..... SEPTEMBER 2020

To promote the Wisconsin beef business through advocacy, leadership, and education.



Volunteers ready for sandwich prep inside the WCA Steak Trailer.

President's Path

Matt Ludlow, WCA President

What a year it has been. As we move past the one-year anniversary of the Tyson Holcomb County processing plant fire, reflecting on how much our industry has been through in the previous 12 months is simply remarkable. No one could have ever predicted the futures market fluctuations, unprecedented moves in boxed beef prices, or the rapidly changing cash cattle prices that have been associated with both the aftermath of the processing plant fire and then the COVID pandemic.

I do not think referring to anything in life right now as normal would seem applicable, but, at least since the previous Cattle Trails issue was distributed in June, our industry seems to have 'normalized' a bit. Both cash cattle and boxed beef prices seem to have stabilized after both putting in new lows, and feeder cattle have seen some strengthening as we move into late summer. While prices may not be where producers would hope, there has at least been a stabilization throughout our markets.

As we continue to work through the backlog of market ready cattle, the associated dressed weights of those cattle have remained historically large. While the industry has been unable to process more cattle than compared to a year ago, having the animals be 30-40 pounds heavier on a dressed basis means there is more product to be moved. Ensuring beef demand remains strong both at the domestic and international levels

WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN

Amidst the turmoil and uncertainty of 2020, WCA and beef producers across the country have worked to survive and adapt to unprecedented change.

is imperative to our beef industry; this holds even more true in that our competing protein markets (chicken and pork namely) will also see historically large production as we move through the end of 2020.

Naturally, it seems there is a tendency to be engaged and seek out changes to improve or save an industry when things are in turmoil. As the COVID pandemic wreaked havoc on our country and our industry earlier this year, that call for legislative change seemed louder than I can ever remember. With the stabilization throughout our industry I referred to above, I worry that the burning desire for change may have dimmed a bit. Whether you are a producer, industry advocate, or member of an organization, I encourage you to stay engaged and active. Curiosity may have killed the cat, but we cannot let complacency kill the cowboy.



-Matt Ludlow

2020 WCA President

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upcoming events:

- **World Beef Expo**
Sept. 25-27, 2020 | Wisconsin State Fair Park, West Allis
Be sure to visit the WCA Steak Trailer and enjoy a delicious beef sandwich!
- **Full WCA Board Meeting**
Sept. 29, 2020 | Location TBD
Pending a location, the full WCA Board of Directors will meet in-person on Sept. 29.
- **Full WCA Board Meeting**
Nov. 2, 2020 | Location TBD
Pending a location, the full WCA Board of Directors will meet in-person on Nov. 2.
- **2021 Winter Conference**
Feb. 12, 2020 | Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells
The 2021 Winter Conference will be a one-day event. Watch for more details to come soon!

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST EVENTS AND INFORMATION



[wisconsincattlemen.com](https://www.wisconsincattlemen.com)

How Do We Recruit New Members?

Joe Scott | Membership Committee Chair | jscott@endovacanimalhealth.com

How Do We Recruit New Members?

First, 'we' don't recruit new members, you do! Recruitment is best done as an appeal from one individual to another on why they should be a member of an organization. Right now, we have decreased access to in-person conversations with others. However, we can still talk to friends, family, and other cattle people electronically. Below, I have provided some examples of how to approach these conversations. I have had some luck with these messages, even when reaching out to those I do not know personally that are active on cattle pages I regularly use. If you would like to utilize these specific examples, we will make them available online.

I encourage you - reach out to everyone and do it personally!

Recruitment Message (Facebook, Email or other):

(Insert Name Here),

I just wanted to quickly reach out and see if you would be interested in supporting the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association by becoming a member?

WCA advocates on both the state and national levels to make sure cattlemen's voices are heard. A recent example is our efforts to ensure Wisconsin cattle producers received their fair share of federal and state COVID relief funds. WCA helps ensure that our elected officials don't forget where their food comes from, and works to keep restrictive regulations off all of us in the cattle industry, so our way of life does not disappear.

WCA is a great organization that fosters industry relationships amongst a vibrant and passionate core of members.

Would you be interested in joining?

Once you have sent the message, wait for a response, then answer any questions, and ultimately send them to this link to join: <https://www.wisconsincattlemen.com/membership>

Like WCA on Facebook: Stay Up-to-Date

Like the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association on Facebook to stay current with all the latest information about WCA events and Wisconsin beef industry news.

In the "Upcoming Events" sidebar, you will notice an update to the 2021 Winter Conference, which will be a one-day event in 2021. As in the past, the event will take place at the Chula Vista Resort in the Wisconsin Dells.

As the status of events continuously shifts and changes, Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association members can find the latest information related to WCA events and Wisconsin's beef industry by liking and following the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association on Facebook.

The Facebook page, along with the WCA website at [wisconsincattlemen.com](https://www.wisconsincattlemen.com) are updated regularly and provide a great way for you to stay informed in between Cattle Trails issues!

Steak Trailer Update

Although COVID-19 has had a definite impact on the WCA Steak Trailer, there is still positive news to report after wrapping up the Wisconsin State Fair “Fair Food Drive-Thru” event.

The Wisconsin State Fair “Fair Food Drive-Thru” was offered over four weekends in August, allowing state fair lovers from across Wisconsin to still enjoy their favorite Wisconsin State Fair food items. The WCA Steak Trailer was originally scheduled to attend only the second weekend, but based upon the success of the first weekend, we elected to participate in the third weekend as well.

Overall sales ran over \$90,000 – a great success! The event provided much-needed revenue for WCA. We saw extremely strong demand for the ribeye sandwich, selling nearly 7,000 ribeyes over the two weekends of the event. The crew enjoyed using a “dinner bell” to celebrate a large order, big tip, fancy car or fun vehicle that

came through to place an order! We appreciate all the support and had many loyal customers who were very happy to get their beef meal. Several of those customers even came back for both weekends of the event!

The Steak Trailer has one final event remaining in 2020:

World Beef Expo: September 24-27, 2020, Wisconsin State Fair Park, West Allis

We look forward to closing out our final event for the year, and hope to see fellow Wisconsin Cattlemen’s Association members at World Beef Expo later this month!





Legislative Update

Jordan Lamb, DeWitt LLP
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Evers Directs State Agencies to Cut Budgets:
Wisconsin State agencies are starting to plan for the 2021-22 biennial budget process and will submit their budget requests to Governor Evers shortly. However, at the end of July, Governor Tony Evers directed the Department of Administration to identify \$250 million in cost savings for the current fiscal year, which ends June 30, 2021, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Governor’s statement on this directed cut stated that this, “...is an effort to ensure the state is in a stronger position to weather revenue impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, while also ensuring critical services remain accessible to Wisconsin residents.” It is anticipated that agency budget requests for the next budget bill

will be extremely limited due to the stress on state resources. The next state fiscal estimates will be released this fall.

Governor’s Commission on Rural Prosperity Seeks Input from Rural Residents:
In June, Governor Tony Evers appointed individuals from across Wisconsin to the Blue Ribbon Commission on Rural Prosperity. This Commission is housed at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation’s (WEDC’s) newly created Office of Rural Prosperity. The Commission is charged with finding solutions to the challenges facing rural communities in Wisconsin.

Commission members are seeking input from Wisconsin residents related to what their rural communities need most for success. Input can be provided through virtual public forums, online comments through the WEDC Office of Rural Prosperity website and through direct contact between commission members and rural residents or rural community organizations.

The commission will collect public input early this fall and then present Governor Evers with a report by Oct. 31, which will help shape the Governor’s 2021-22 state budget proposal. WCA members who want to raise rural issues should take advantage of this opportunity to provide input.

DNR Continues Development of Targeted Performance Standard for Nitrates Applied to Farmland:
The Wisconsin DNR NR 151 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is developing recommendations for a targeted performance standard for the application of nitrates over agricultural land. The TAC has continued its work during the pandemic by holding virtual meetings in May, June and July. They have two meetings left in September and October. A draft standard is expected to be released in the mid- to late-fall for public review. The WCA Advocacy Team is monitoring the work of the TAC very closely.

Board Member Spotlight: Brady Zuck

Brady Zuck | Ladysmith, WI | WCA President-Elect

Hello everyone, my name is Brady Zuck. I am originally from Ladysmith, Wisconsin, where my family operates a commercial cow-calf operation. I also work for Elanco Animal Health as a Regional Account Manager, working with large regional feed companies throughout the upper Midwest. When not on the road for Elanco, you can usually find me working at the farm.

I became involved in the Wisconsin Cattlemen’s Association a few years ago, after being encouraged by Austin Arndt to run for the Board of Directors.

Since then, I have become involved in the Steak Trailer Committee, working with Matt Ludlow as we transitioned the Steak Trailer management over from the Koning’s to the Dunnum’s. I am also active with the Summer Tour Committee, helping to plan the event for the past couple years.

Membership in the Wisconsin Cattlemen’s Association is important to make sure your voice as a beef cattle producer is heard in Madison. We all have busy lives, especially on the farm, and do not

often have time to travel to Madison and visit with our legislators. The Wisconsin Cattlemen’s Association is our voice in Madison, representing our interests. Secondly, WCA is a great way to build a strong network within the beef cattle industry in our state.

Through events such as Winter Conference and Summer Tour, you are able to connect with producers from across the state and gain new knowledge.



ABOVE: Brady Zuck is the September WCA board member spotlight.

“Membership in the Wisconsin Cattlemen’s Association is important to make sure your voice as a beef cattle producer is heard in Madison. Secondly, WCA is a great way to build a strong network within the beef cattle industry in our state.”



Weaning the Winners at the Sale Barn

Aerica Bjurstrom
Extension Agriculture Agent, Kewaunee County

The days are getting shorter and that means summer is winding down. Fall weaning is on the horizon and now is a great time to start preparing calves for it.

Focusing on calves with a preconditioning program sets them up for a successful transition into the replacement pen or feedlot. When weaning is done improperly, it can put a great deal of stress on a calf. Stressful weaning can result in compromised immune systems, decreased dry matter intake, respiratory disease, and lameness.

If you have ever remodeled a house, you know spending money in the kitchen or bathroom will always provide a return on investment when you sell it. Think of your calves as the kitchen remodel of the sale barn. Spending money on vaccinations, extra feed, and weaning labor will return your investment at auction. The demand for preconditioned calves at the market continues to grow in the beef industry. Certified preconditioned calves bring better prices and set your reputation as an in-demand producer. Buyers will spend extra money on your calves if they know they have been preconditioned.

When developing a preconditioning program, it is important to work with your veterinarian to determine best management practices. A preconditioning program at a minimum should include vaccination, weaning at least 45 days before sale, castration, dehorning, deworming, and feedbunk training.

Vaccination/Deworming – A typical preconditioning program health protocol involves vaccinating and deworming 21-30 days before weaning. Vaccinating in advance should boost the calf's immune system by the time weaning stress occurs. Work with your veterinarian to determine the best vaccination protocol for your calves, as it may differ from year-to-year depending on your targeted auction.

Weaning – Weaning can look different depending on the farm. Fenceline weaning is common, but still creates some level of stress on both the cow and the calf during weaning and the days

immediately following. The benefit to fenceline weaning is you only need to handle the calf once at weaning. Anti-nursing devices (two-stage weaning) requires you to handle the calf twice, once to insert the nose clip, and a second time for removal and separation from the cow. Anti-nursing devices have proven to quietly wean the calf over two weeks. Calves weaned in a two-stage program have proven to have greater average daily gains immediately after weaning over their traditionally weaned counterparts. Whichever weaning strategy works best for your operation should be incorporated. Calves should not be “truck weaned.” Weaning the calf by putting him on the truck for auction is a recipe for trouble. Calves weaned in this manner will likely develop illness in the feedlot. Truck weaned calves go to the sale barn bawling for their mother, so they're letting every buyer know they're not the calves they want to buy.

Dehorning/Castration – Castration and dehorning stress and pain increases the older a calf gets. According to the American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP) guidelines, waiting to castrate large groups of calves on one day is acceptable if all calves are under 120 days of age. Extreme stress can cause a decreased vaccine response, so it is important not to vaccinate calves the same day they are dehorned and castrated. Avoid castration and dehorning during inclement weather such as fly season, extreme heat, and wet days where calves may be lying in the mud. AABP recommends the use of a rubber ring or surgical removal as preferred methods of castration. Of course, using homozygous polled bulls will eliminate the need for dehorning and the cost associated with it.

Feedbunk Training – It seems silly to think a calf would not know how to eat at a feedbunk, but most calves will require some level of training, especially if they have to put their head through slats or under a neckrail. Adding familiar feed to the bunk from the creep feeder is the easiest way to get calves used to eating at a bunk. Not all calves will immediately take to eating at a bunk and may need extra time to learn. Less dominant calves may take several days or more to work up the courage to eat at a bunk, so take note of them and monitor their progress.

Successful weaning depends on your farm's best management practices and how you implement those practices. Preconditioned calf premiums vary depending on the market but making the effort to send the best calves possible to the sale barn will pay off. Your reputation is on the line, so make it a good one.

National Cattlemen's Beef Association Updates and Information

Strong Turnout of Cattle Producers Sets Important Policies for the Future

July 29, 2020

A capacity crowd of cattle producers worked for more than six hours today to identify a policy that would help resolve concerns about live cattle marketing issues and lead the industry to more robust price discovery. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Live Cattle Marketing Committee considered several proposals, each aimed at encouraging greater volumes of cash cattle trade. After intense debate, the committee and the NCBA Board of Directors unanimously passed a policy that supports voluntary efforts to improve cash fed cattle trade during the next 90 days with the potential for mandates in the future if robust regional cash trade numbers are not reached by the industry.

"The policy decisions we made this week truly show the grassroots policy process at work. We had tremendous turnout for this year's summer meeting, clearly demonstrating that cattle producers needed the opportunity to meet in person to hammer out solutions to these important issues," said NCBA President Marty Smith. "Despite the issues going on in the world today, we had more than 600 people turn out, the vast majority in person, to find solutions for issues facing our industry."

Smith noted that the work of the Live Cattle Marketing committee caps months of working group efforts to find industry- and market-driven solutions to increase price discovery without government mandates.

"The policy we passed today is the result of every state cattlemen's association coming together to work through their differences and finding solutions that meet the needs of their members, all of whom agree that our industry needs more robust price discovery. This policy provides all players in the industry the opportunity to achieve that goal without seeking government mandates," said Smith. "Everyone who took the time to participate in this process over the past several months and throughout this week's meetings is to be commended."

The policy passed by the Live Cattle Marketing Committee and approved by a vote of the NCBA Board of Directors can be viewed online at www.ncba.org.

The Cattle Industry Summer Business Meeting also included a full slate of both policy and checkoff committee meetings. This week's checkoff meetings help set the plan of work for fiscal year that starts Oct. 1, as well as providing an opportunity for cattlemen and cattlemen to review current contractor campaigns, including a very successful launch of the popular United We Steak campaign.

"The past several months have been challenging for everyone, but they've been particularly difficult for America's cattle farmers and ranchers," said Smith. "This week's meetings provided a crucial opportunity for us to come together—safely and with plenty of social distancing—to resolve the issues of the past several months. However, it has also provided an opportunity for a reset and chance to refocus on the priorities that haven't gone away as we battled through this crisis. We're thankful we had the opportunity to do just that during this week's meetings."

Cattlemen Welcome Legislation to Improve Meat Processing Capacity

July 2, 2020

A bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced the Requiring Assistance to Meat Processors for Upgrading Plants (RAMP UP) Act, which provides federal incentives to improve beef processing capacity.

Introduced by House Agriculture Committee Chairman Colin Peterson (D-MN), Reps. Frank Lucas (R-OK), Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Glenn Thompson (R-PA), Sanford Bishop (D-GA), David Rouzer (R-NC), Jim Costa (D-CA), Robert Aderholt (R-AL), and Angie Craig (D-MN), the RAMP UP Act will bolster market access for cattle producers and keep store shelves across the country stocked with wholesome and nutritious beef products.

"The COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions to beef processing which were devastating to cattle producers," said NCBA Vice President and Minnesota Cattlemen's Association past president Don Schiefelbein. "The RAMP UP Act addresses these supply chain issues by ensuring cattle ranchers and farmers have robust access to new markets regardless of where their livestock is processed. We are grateful to Chairman Peterson and Rep. Lucas for their leadership and attention to this critical issue."

The RAMP UP Act authorizes federal grants up to \$100,000 for existing meat processors to become federally inspected. Currently, state inspected and custom exempt processors cannot sell meat in interstate commerce and the process to become compliant with, and inspected by, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is expensive and daunting. If enacted, the RAMP UP Act would ease this burden on processors and benefit cattle producers by opening new markets for the beef they produce.

NCBA Celebrates Implementation of USMCA Trade Deal

July 1, 2020

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) today celebrated the successful implementation of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) by sending a joint letter of thanks to the leaders of all three nations. The letter was sent to President Trump, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. It was signed by NCBA President Marty Smith, Canadian Cattlemen's Association President Bob Lowe, and CNOG President Oswaldo Chazaro Montalvo.

"Together, our organizations worked in unified support of USMCA because it protects market-based principles while making improvements in other sectors to reflect the needs of a modern North American economy," the leaders of the three cattlemen's organizations wrote. "We are the envy of many countries because of the marketplace freedom USMCA will continue to provide both producers and consumers."

"International trade is fundamental to the success of North American farmers and ranchers and the full value of the products

we sell can only be achieved when we have access to the markets that most value them,” the letter continued. “In the face of the economic hardships of COVID-19, it is timely and welcome that USMCA enters into force, providing a foundation of economic stability for our rural communities and food systems.”

Congress last winter overwhelmingly approved the new USMCA deal, with the Senate voting 89-10 in support of it a few weeks

after the U.S. House of Representatives passed it with a strong bipartisan vote of 385-41. NCBA worked hard to build support for USMCA on Capitol Hill, and then-NCBA-President Jennifer Houston led a delegation of more than a dozen members to the White House to attend the official signing ceremony on Jan. 29.

“We believe that our economies and our countries will be stronger together through USMCA,” the letter concluded.

Grill Like You Mean It!

Tammy Vaassen
Executive Director, Wisconsin Beef Council

This summer, the Wisconsin Beef Council (WBC) partnered with Beef. It's What's For Dinner., funded by the Beef Checkoff, to launch “United We Steak,” a new, nationwide summer grilling campaign showcasing 50 steaks and all 50 states. The campaign celebrated the shared tradition of grilling delicious steaks, but also what makes each state unique when it comes to this beloved pastime. And lucky for Wisconsin – our steak image couldn't have made us prouder!

The statewide Wisconsin theme was “Grill Like You Mean It.” I'm hopeful that you saw some component of this campaign over the summer, as there were a number of touchpoints and strategies used to ensure that beef was top of mind when firing up the grill. From social media to promoting local beef processors, we worked to encourage beef purchases at retail and foodservice locations. A few of those activities included:

- **Passport Program:** In a partnership with 30 of Wisconsin's local meat markets, we created the Beef Passport Program – where buying beef from the participating locations made consumers eligible to win prizes. Posters and recipes were available in all of the meat markets.
- **Digital and social media:** Beef was featured in state and national advertisements, including still images and videos shared on digital and social media platforms (i.e. Google Search, Facebook, Instagram) and on video platforms including YouTube and Connected TV.
- **Blogger outreach:** WBC partnered with four bloggers throughout the summer, where they created new beef recipes that were shared on their blogs and social media platforms. These partnerships help extend the consumer reach of our efforts beyond our normal audience.
- **Butcher Block Party:** WBC co-hosted this event at the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center in Manitowoc. We welcomed attendees to learn about purchasing quarters and halves of beef directly from their local farmers, featured a beef cutting demonstration and offered educational activities for the entire family.
- **Foodservice:** Beef was front and center through restaurant campaigns driven by local media. In Madison, your Beef Checkoff dollars supported a “Restaurant Week to Go”

event, as well as Madison Burger Weeks – where over 50 area restaurants showcased burgers that were either regular menu items or new concoctions from the restaurant's kitchen, and consumers got to vote for their favorite. The Chippewa Valley Outdoor Burger Bonanza encouraged folks to post photos while they enjoyed beef burgers at local restaurants for a chance to win \$250.

For more information about the reach and impact of the summer grilling campaign, and for more updates on what the Beef Checkoff is doing in Wisconsin, visit <https://www.beeftips.com/cattlemens-corner/monthly-checkoff-updates>, or visit with one of the WBC board members or staff.



ABOVE: This Wisconsin-shaped steak image served as the visual centerpiece for all the different aspects of the Wisconsin Beef Council's 2020 summer grilling campaign - Grill Like You Mean It!



ABOVE: WBC Director of Communication and Outreach, Brooke Roberts, presents a door prize to an event attendee at the Butcher Block Party event, held August 8 at the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center.



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