

cattleTRAILS

.....March 2024

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



WISCONSIN
CATTLEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION

WCA President Tressa Lacy addresses the audience at Winter Conference.



President's Path

Tressa Lacy, WCA President

As the incoming President of the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association, I would like to thank the work of our past two Presidents, Matt Ludlow and Brady Zuck, for their service. Both gentlemen served our organization during uncertain times with Covid, lack of Steak Trailer revenue, continued grey wolf legislation debate, and an extreme drought. Through all these challenges, the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association remains a robust organization with credit due to their leadership.

My name is Tressa Lacy, and I reside in Rio, Wis. I grew up in Missouri on a backgrounding operation and moved to Wisconsin with Trans Ova Genetics in 2017. I quickly fell in love with the state's diverse agriculture and met my husband, making Wisconsin home. My husband and I run a first-generation operation that we purchased in the spring of 2018. Our beef side of the business is comprised of Red Angus cattle with some Akaushi influence funneling into our terminal market. The forage side of our business includes producing small square bales we market to local producers. When I'm not working on the farm, I work for Trans Ova Genetics as the Regional Operations Director for the Great Lakes Region. In that role I am responsible for the budgeting process, business development and resource allocation for the region.

I joined WCA back in 2017 because I wanted to meet people with aligned interests to mine. As a transplant to this state, I figured it was my best chance at developing these relationships. After two years, I chose to get more involved in WCA because I saw

Meet WCA President Tressa Lacy

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"It is invaluable to have producers involved in the creation of policy."

firsthand the work we were doing and the results as it is invaluable to have producers involved in the creation of policy. I am not passionate about politics, believe me, but I am passionate about beef production in the US. I have served as Winter Conference Chair, Publications Chair, Membership Chair, and now serve you as the WCA President 2024-2026.

As we face 2024 comes record high beef prices, a lot of attention on delisting grey wolves, and exponential funding in the pockets of animal activist's groups. WCA's presence at the Capitol in Madison remains critical. WCA Membership dollars directly correlate to our effectiveness in advocating on behalf of Wisconsin beef producers. I urge you to share why you're a member of WCA with your fellow producers and help us increase the number of producers WCA represents. If there is ever anything WCA can be doing for you, if

you are facing a local issue, please reach out any time. Thank you for your membership in WCA, and for all that you do as a beef producer and advocate in our industry.



-Tressa Lacy

2024 WCA President

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Steak Trailer Update



Brady Zuck, WCA Steak Trailer Co-Chair

With the warmer weather coming early this year, the WCA Steak Trailer is fully prepared for another great year of serving our famous beef products across the state of Wisconsin. We look forward to having Dave and Carrie Goss return to manage the Steak Trailer with a continued focus on delivering a quality product. Dave and Carrie spent time this winter performing maintenance on the trailers to make sure we operate at peak efficiency.

We are currently evaluating how to proceed with World Beef Expo, which will be held separately from the Harvest Fair due to security concerns at State Fair Park.

The Steak Trailer is crucial to funding the activities of WCA – without it, we would not be able to continue to operate in our current capacity. Please consider volunteering at the Steak Trailer – even a few hours here and there is a great help! With the on-going challenges with labor that we are all well aware of, coming together as a membership to support the Steak Trailer is more important now than ever.

If you know of a local 4-H/FFA/youth group looking for a fundraising opportunity, consider the Steak Trailer! Please contact Carrie Goss (608-606-2356, wcasteaktrailer@gmail.com) to secure your group's time at an upcoming event for the 2024 season.

We want to thank you all for the support in 2023 and look forward to another successful year in 2024!

-Brady Zuck

(715)-415-9131
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upcoming events:

WPS Farm Show
March 26-28
Oshkosh, WI

Midwest Horse Fair
April 19-21
Madison, WI

Wisconsin Association of Meat Processors Convention
April 11-13
Madison, WI

Stockmanship and Stewardship
August 28-29
Lancaster, WI

WCA Summer Tour
June 29
Eastern, WI

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST EVENTS AND INFORMATION

wisconsincattlemen.com

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2024 Event Schedule

WPS Farm Show
Oshkosh
March 26-28

Midwest Horse Fair
Madison
April 19-21

Wisconsin State Fair
West Allis
August 1-11

World Dairy Expo
Madison
Oct. 1-4

WCA Supports Assembly Bill 555 – Labeling of Lab Grown Meat

In January, Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association Legislative Chair Rachel Harmann testified in the Assembly Agriculture Committee Hearing on behalf of the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association. Below is a copy of her prepared testimony.

Assembly Agriculture
Committee Hearing – January
9, 2024

Support for 2023 Assembly Bill 555 – Labeling of Lab Grown Meat

Rachel Harmann, Wisconsin
Cattlemen's Association



My husband, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, and I own Lakeshore Land & Livestock in Algoma where we run cow/calf pairs and raise steers. When our children take over our farm, they will be the 7th generation to farm in our family. I am also the Legislative Chair of the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association. **The Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association SUPPORTS AB 555, legislation which would require any food product that contains cultured animal cells or cultured animal tissue to be labeled as containing lab-grown animal cells.**

The Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association is the state association representing Wisconsin's beef producers. Our mission statement is, "To promote the Wisconsin beef business through advocacy, leadership, and education." Our support for AB 555 is two-fold: protecting the integrity of our beef products and alleviating consumer confusion regarding the actual labeling of products.

Clear meat labeling standards are important to Wisconsin beef producers. We believe that the establishment of clear labeling standards will protect the integrity of our beef products. A significant amount of time, effort, and money has been spent by our industry to establish and maintain a healthy, wholesome, and

nutritious product. The proper labeling of products that do not contain our naturally grown meat will help protect the integrity of our products that have been established over time.

We are concerned that unclear product labels create consumer confusion. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) conducted a survey in September 2019 of almost 2,000 consumers to test confusion between alternative meat products and actual meat. The survey asked consumers questions using specific brand labels. More than half of the consumers surveyed noted confusion due to the use of the words "beef" or "meat" on the label of an entirely plant-based or cultured cell product. Use of the terms "beef," "meat" or "meatier" on the label of a plant-based or cell cultured products can cause consumer confusion.

We do not believe that labeling standards will interfere with technology or the development of alternative products. Proper labels will simply ensure that no alternative meat products mislead consumers into thinking that they are purchasing our Wisconsin-grown beef.

Clear definitions under Wisconsin law and federal law will also help both state and federal governments know how to best regulate these products. Regulation of food and food products is managed by multiple state and federal agencies. Although this legislation addresses labeling for consumer sales, clear definitions will likely become increasingly important as regulations evolve to address regulation of new food products, such as cultured meat or plant-based meat substitutes.

Representative Tranel and Members of the Committee, thank you for holding a hearing on this legislation.

Electronic ID Tag Confusion

The Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association is currently updating its policy regarding EIDs and will seek input from membership to guide this decision-making process. The statement below reflects the views of NCBA.

There has been increased interest in traceability. This is due to \$15 million dollars being included in the House agriculture appropriations package, which is money that will help lower costs for electronic ID tags for producers. To be clear, the \$15 million is a NCBA priority and will be very helpful for ensuring producers can access these tags at no or low cost.

Producers are already subject to animal ID requirements. USDA's 2013 traceability rule requires cattle 18 months or older moving interstate to have a readable metal ID tag. USDA is considering a new rule that would transition producers to electronic ID tags. This is not a brand new requirement.

Funding for tags is important for lowering costs for producers. NCBA supports limiting the cost of electronic ID tags to

prevent producers from bearing these expenses.

Traceability is important to protecting the livelihoods of those in the cattle industry. A foreign animal disease outbreak could cost the industry billions of dollars and many producers might never fully recover. An effective traceability system will help producers respond to an outbreak, limit its spread, and get back to work quickly.

NCBA supports protecting producer privacy. The grassroots traceability policy passed by cattle producers at NCBA's convention strongly supports producer privacy and securing cattle ID data. Additionally, traceability should be limited only to animal disease purposes.

Meet WCA's Newest Board Member: Mary Fronek

Mary was elected to the WCA Board during the Annual Meeting in February.

Mary Fronek grew up on her parent's cash crop and commercial vegetable farm in Antigo, Wis. While Mary did not grow up around livestock, she discovered her passion for cows while working on her neighbor's dairy farm. It would be several years later when this very dairy farm would send her home with a dairy-beef heifer calf. Since then, the herd has grown to 30 registered Simmental cow-calf pairs. They also have registered Quarter horses, Texel sheep and two sassy Australian cattle dogs.



Biology and Psychology. Currently, she is completing her master's degree in education at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Following completion of her undergraduate work, Mary was employed as an agronomist then one of the managers for the Northcentral Technical College dairy farm where she also adjunct taught.

Currently, Mary is an instructor at Fox Valley Technical College, focusing on agribusiness and animal science. She uses her background to integrate beef production best practices into all areas of instruction. She is an engaged leader in the agriculture community through her local Farm Bureau, Wisconsin agribusiness association, local 4-H, FFA and by sharing her farm story through social media.

Mary is enthusiastic about agriculture education and is looking forward to being more involved in the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association by serving as a board member.

Mary graduated with a Bachelor of Science from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point with a degree in



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My Farm is Infected with a FAD, Now What?



By Sandy Stuttgen, DVM

UW-Madison Division of Extension

You know your livestock best and if something doesn't seem right, it probably isn't. It is important that you contact your veterinarian early on as symptoms present, especially for something you have a negative gut feeling about. Your veterinarian will in turn contact a Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WI DATCP) Animal Health veterinarian when they suspect your animal may have a foreign animal disease (FAD).

DATCP will assign a case manager and your livestock will be sampled to confirm the presence of a FAD. As Assistant State Veterinarian, Dr Elisabeth Patton, explains, "Once a FAD has been diagnosed on a farm, DATCP animal health officials will establish several zones around the infected premises. The zone that is nearest to the infected farm is called the infected zone. The next zone is the buffer zone, and the third is called the surveillance zone. The distance away from the infected farm for each zone varies by disease."

The infected and buffer zones together are called the control area. Heightened biosecurity measures are taken to contain the disease in the control area. To minimize the risk of disease spread, other premises within the control area will be quarantined, with all movements restricted, and testing animals for the FAD may be required. As Dr. Rebecca Johnson, DATCP District Veterinarian, points out, "A critical part of biocontainment depends on you abiding by the restrictions in your farm's quarantine. While your farm is under quarantine, it is important that you follow biosecurity requirements including limiting traffic to only those authorized to enter and exit the premises. Some of these movements will require a permit to be issued prior to the movement happening. For example, a permit may be required before a garbage disposal company can enter the

farm to remove waste containers."

Premises that are within the surveillance zone will not be quarantined. They will receive a questionnaire and may be required to conduct testing to show that their animals are free of the FAD before the control area can be released.

WI DATCP's [mapping tool](#) allows individuals to check if an address is located in a control area or surveillance zone. The map is updated when new premises are identified, and restrictions have been lifted for specific areas. Currently, Wisconsin DATCP uses the mapping tool for the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreak. Similar mapping tools may be used for other FADs.

The case manager will gather information about animal inventory, animal and product movements, and people visiting the farm. This information will be important in determining how the infection may have been introduced to the farm and for identifying other farms at risk for disease. Having accurate and quickly accessible records of animal movements, and visitor logs is very important in looking for disease spread.

To learn more, watch the [Biosecurity During a Disease Outbreak video](#). Visit [Secure Beef](#) to learn about FADs and for advice about writing daily and enhanced biosecurity plans for your farm. Planning and prevention before an outbreak will better protect your operation and prepare you to withstand the challenges you could face in the event of a FAD outbreak.

Article reviewed by:

Drs. Elisabeth Patton and Rebecca Johnson, DATCP Animal Health

Cattle Trails Advertising

Half-page advertisements are available for placement in an upcoming issue of the Cattle Trails newsletter for \$50 per issue. Ad spaces for the June issue must be claimed by May 15, 2024.

Contact the WCA office for advertising details.
Phone: (608) 228-1457 | Email: kaitlyn@wisconsincattlemen.com

Ag Road Grant Program Now Open! Apply Before April 5

Jordan Lamb

WCA Legislative Counsel

The Welch Group

The Wisconsin Department of

Transportation (DOT) is now

accepting applications for the first

round of grant funding from the

new Agricultural Road Improvement

Program (ARIP). This new state

grant program will provide \$150

million to local governments for qualifying agricultural road

improvement projects across rural Wisconsin. The first round

of grant applications will award \$50 million in grants and is

open until April 5, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. The second round will

award \$100 million in grants and will open for applications sometime

in mid- to late-2024.

Background: The ARIP program was created in legislation passed in 2023 and was funded in the 2023-25 biennial state budget bill. Senators Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green), Cory Tomczyk (R-Mosinee) and Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan), and Representatives Travis Tranel (R-Cuba City) and Nancy VanderMeer (R-Tomah) authored the legislation. The legislation creates a grant program for local governments to apply for funding to upgrade posted roads that create problems for farmers and agribusiness.

Eligible Projects: To be eligible for an ARIP grant, the route or structure must have been posted for weight for at least one month in the previous year, must be maintained by a local government, be classified as a local road or minor collector, and must provide access to agricultural lands or facilities. Stand-alone bridge and culvert projects are limited to structures under 20 feet in length. Local governments applying for ARIP grants can expect to have 90 percent of the costs for these projects funded by the state grant dollars.

Grant Criteria: Priority for awarding ARIP grants will be given to applications for projects that provide the greatest benefit



to agricultural producers using the following criteria:

- Provides the greatest positive economic impact.
- Provides access to the largest number of farmers or volume of agricultural goods.
- Improves the only practicable access to a farm field or facility.
- Results in the reduction of cost for farmers due to repeated trips at reduced weight, labor, fuel, mileage, or wear on agricultural equipment.

Contact Your Local Government – Ask to Assist with an Application. Farmers should work with their local governments to identify eligible roads and to assemble the required information needed to complete and submit the grant application. Local governments will need assistance from affected farmers and agribusiness to complete the required economic information that is part of the grant application. The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation has created a fillable form that is designed to assist farmers and other agribusiness with collecting and providing required economic data to local officials. The questions on the form correspond directly to the questions on the ARIP grant application. (Note: This form is NOT part of the ARIP application. This form is an optional tool designed to assist in the collection of information required to complete an application.)

ARIP GRANT APPLICATION RESOURCES:

- Link to DOT ARIP Program Webpage: <https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/arip.aspx>
- Link to Map of Potentially Eligible Roads (DOT): <https://wisdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c497d01b032d43e589bff13a9599fc33>
- Link to Form to Collect Ag Economic Data (WI Farm Bureau): <https://wfbf.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/ARIP-Farmer-Support-Form-FILLABLE.pdf>

NCBA Statement on “Product of USA” Final Rule

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced on March 11 that they finalized a rule that will promote transparency regarding the “Product of USA” labeling.

USDA’s final “Product of USA” rule allows the voluntary “Product of USA” or “Made in the USA” label claim to be used on meat, poultry and egg products only when they are derived from animals born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the United States. The rule will prohibit misleading U.S. origin labeling in the market, and help ensure that the information that consumers receive about where their food comes from is truthful.

NCBA Executive Director of Government Affairs Kent Bacus released the following statement on the USDA’s finalized rule:

“NCBA has been committed to finding solutions to this problem ever since a producer-led NCBA working group raised the alarm, years ago, that imported beef could be mislabeled as a Product of the USA incorrectly at the end of the supply chain. We appreciate USDA’s effort to address this loophole. During the implementation period, NCBA’s focus will remain on ensuring that these changes result in the opportunity for producer premiums while remaining trade compliant.”

Checking in on your Beef Checkoff



Tammy Vaassen
Executive Director
Wisconsin Beef Council

As you read this, the Wisconsin Beef Council will be a couple of weeks into accepting nominations for our inaugural Wisconsin's Best Burger contest. The contest is designed to seek out and promote 100% beef burgers prepared in Wisconsin restaurants. Everyone has a favorite

spot they choose when burger hunger strikes, and this is the opportunity to recognize those restaurants that work hard to create those delicious memories.

We encourage you to nominate your favorite Wisconsin restaurant that is your go-to for a delicious beef burger (one nomination per person) on the Wisconsin Beef Council website at <https://www.beeftips.com/events/best-burger-contest>. Nominations will be accepted through midnight on Sunday, March 24, 2024.



The elite eight restaurants that receive the most nominations will be announced in early April. A secret panel of judges will travel to each restaurant to evaluate the burgers. The winning restaurant will be announced on May 1 to kick-off May Beef Month. So far we've had great response to the contest from media, consumers and restaurants – and we look forward to having our cattlemen add their burger nominations!

Survey

Wisconsin Beef Council staff and board are looking for feedback from Wisconsin's beef and dairy producers through an online survey. The goal of the survey is to help us get a better understanding of where you get your news and information from and your overall knowledge and support for the Beef Checkoff. The survey was designed to be short, easy to respond to and confidential, providing direction on Checkoff program investments.

Everyone who completes this survey, which should take less than 5 minutes, will be entered to receive one of five prize packages. We are truly appreciative of those who take a few minutes to give your feedback. As investors to the Checkoff, we want to ensure we do the best job in communicating with you on how your \$1/head is invested. Please take a few

minutes to complete the survey at <https://www.beeftips.com/cattlemens-corner> or scan the QR code below to access it on your phone



Wisconsin Beef Leadership Institute Update

At the recent Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association Winter Conference, the inaugural class of the Wisconsin Beef Leadership Institute (WBLI) graduated from their year-long training. This was a collaborative effort between the Wisconsin Beef Council and Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association. Each organization hosted separate workshops during the year, with focus placed on Checkoff education, media training/advocacy development, an introduction to public policy efforts of WCA, and networking with other cattle farmers across the state and the WBC and WCA board leaders.

Members of the class included: Amelia Hayden, Hixton; Annie Benzine, Sun Prairie; Becca Hilby, Hazel Green; Britt Meyers, Rice Lake; Danelle Miller, Watertown; Jared Geiser, Portage; Leeza Kostka, Strum; Mary Fronek, Antigo; Nicholas Goring, Sussex; Rachel Schroeder, Watertown; Rebecca Poppy, Omro; and Tyler Fortun, Westby.

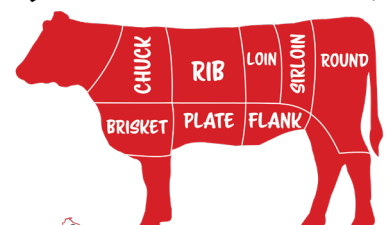
This program was designed to be hosted every other year, so next leadership institute class will begin in 2025. WBC appreciates our partnership with WCA to expand the scope of this leader development program!



Feeding Wisconsin Fundraiser

The Wisconsin Beef Council launched a fundraiser selling shirts to raise money for families in need. Working with a local apparel company, WBC is selling grey and black t-shirts, long-sleeve tees, and sweatshirts with the logo on the right. All proceeds will be donated to Feeding Wisconsin to purchase beef for families in need. The shirts will be available for purchase online through April 2. You can find the order form at [BeefTips.com/cattlemens-corner](https://www.beeftips.com/cattlemens-corner).

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