

cattleTRAILS

June 2023

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



WISCONSIN
CATTLEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION



President's Path

Brady Zuck, WCA President

After what seemed like a never ending winter, with multiple snows in April for our northern members, summer is finally here! We welcome the sunshine as cows head to pasture and we look forward to county and state fairs, the WCA Summer Tour, and getting a solid crop of hay put up. The beef industry is in a great position, with strong consumer demand, fat cattle prices at record highs, and a strong feeder cattle market. Although we all continue to battle supply chain issues and increased input prices, we have much to be thankful for.

Involvement. As I reflect on the current status of WCA, we have a great need for more involvement. We are a 100% volunteer-based organization, with paid support through a contract with the WI Beef Council staff. As a result, we lean heavily on our member leaders to get the job done. The old saying "many hands make light work" holds true, but we need more of those hands to support the activities of WCA. On the committee level, we are seeking help on Scholarship, Sponsorship, Membership, and Summer Tour. Please consider taking a more active role in WCA – your time and talent would be greatly valued! To our current member leaders – thank you for all that you do! It is greatly appreciated.

On the legislative front, we have been busy working with the State Budget process. We are focused on securing continued funding for conservation activities, such as the Producer Led Watershed Program. Additionally, we are supporting increased funding for the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC), which handles the Premise ID program and would be a key player in responding to a animal disease outbreak. Through the work of Jordan Lamb (WCA Legislative Counsel), we are involved in every conversation at the Capitol that could impact beef producers.

As I shared in the March issue, we continue to focus on growing our membership. Tressa Lacy and the Membership Committee have been working diligently, but they also need a hand from us as members. If you are a current member and haven't yet renewed for 2023, please take the time to renew your membership.

We have much to be thankful for

"The beef industry is in a great position, with strong consumer demand, fat cattle prices at record highs, and a strong feeder cattle market."

Our website makes this process very efficient, please visit: wisconsincattlemen.com/membership/join-online

We all have friends and neighbors that are raising cattle, but aren't currently members of WCA. If each member took the time to reach out to just 1 or 2 people, we could easily double our membership. Tressa has partnered with NCBA to update our membership form, and developed a handout that you can share with a neighbor to help start the conversation. We have over 13,000 farms in Wisconsin that have beef cattle – and should be members of WCA – but has anyone asked them to join yet?

Thank you for your membership in WCA, and for all that you do to support our organization. I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming WCA Summer Tour on June 24th. If there is ever anything WCA can be doing for you, or if you have feedback to share on local issues, please reach out at any time. My phone number is 715-415-9131, email brady_zuck@diamondv.com. Wishing everyone a safe and productive growing season!



-Brady Zuck

2023 WCA President

Zuck Cattle Company | Ladysmith,
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Steak Trailer Update



Brady Zuck, WCA Steak Trailer Co-Chair

As we head into the summer months, the Steak Trailer is busy preparing for our largest event, the Wisconsin State Fair. Our first two events of the year, WPS Farm Show and Midwest Horse Fair, showed nice growth in sales due to favorable weather. We did change our location at each event, allowing us to do all our serving and grilling on concrete. In previous years, a rain day at Midwest Horse Fair would make our serving area into a muddy mess, but we are now located on solid concrete near the Coliseum.

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 2023 season.

We want to thank you all for your continued support and look forward to another great year at the Wisconsin State Fair!

-Brady Zuck

(715)-415-9131

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2023 Event Schedule

Wisconsin Farm Technology Days

Badger Steam & Gas Engine Club Grounds, Baraboo
July 18-20

Wisconsin State Fair

State Fair Park, West Allis
August 3-13

World Beef Expo

State Fair Park, West Allis
September 28-October 1

World Dairy Expo

Alliant Energy Center, Madison
October 1-6

Save the date!



DATE

June 24, 2023



LOCATION

Southwest Wisconsin



COST

\$50 per member

\$100 per non-member

SUMMER TOUR

STOPS INCLUDE:

- Nobleland Beef Farms (Lancaster)
- Lancaster Agricultural Research Station (Lancaster)
- Paramount Calves (Darlington)
- Gaffney Family Cattle (Barneveld)



Register now at wisconsincattlemen.com/events/summer-tour

DATCP Livestock Market Update

Prepared and written by Jeff Swenson, DATCP Livestock and Meat Specialist. The Market Update draws information from several sources, including trade publications, radio broadcasts, agricultural news services, individuals involved in the industry as well as USDA NASS and AMS reports.

The University of Wisconsin–Madison Department of Animal & Dairy Sciences and Wisconsin Livestock and Meat Council are seeking nominations for the Wisconsin Meat Industry Hall of Fame’s 2023 class of inductees. Nominations for this honor, which is designed to recognize Wisconsin meat industry leaders and innovators, will be accepted through June 16. The Wisconsin Meat Industry Hall of Fame was established in 1993 to recognize the contributions of individuals who have made a significant impact on the meat industry of Wisconsin. The nomination form, and more information about the Wisconsin Meat Industry Hall of Fame, can be found at meatsciences.cals.wisc.edu/wisconsin-meat-industry-hall-of-fame/.

The USDA latest monthly Livestock Slaughter report showed April beef production 11% below the same month last year. The average live weight of cattle harvested was down 19 pounds and the number of head harvested was 9.6% lower. Harvest was lower for all classes of cattle with the exception of fed heifers and dairy cows. Beef cow harvest is running below year ago levels except in regions still impacted by drought. Beef production year-to-date is 4.9% lower than last year. Last week’s estimate of 625,000 head was 17,000 below the previous week and 16,000 below a year ago. Margins are a touchy topic depending on where you find yourself in the supply chain. Retail beef prices, while about 25% higher than 2019, have been relatively steady for over a year. Choice box beef prices are 14% higher than a year ago, while fed cattle prices are 25% higher. Feedlot operators have maintained profits even with higher feed costs, but increasing feeder cattle prices will tighten margins in the months ahead.

Cattle Industry Groups Support the Foreign Animal Disease Prevention, Surveillance, and Rapid Response Act

WASHINGTON – Leading national and state cattle industry organizations have announced their support for the Foreign Animal Disease Prevention, Surveillance, and Rapid Response Act introduced by Sens. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), John Cornyn (R-TX), and Joni Ernst (R-IA), and Reps. Ronny Jackson (R-TX), Angie Craig (D-MN), Jim Costa (D-CA), Don Bacon (R-NE), and Don Davis (D-NC).

National Cattlemen’s Beef Association President Todd Wilkinson: “The threat of a foreign animal disease outbreak in the United States represents an existential threat to every cattle producer. It would also threaten this nation’s food and national security. We must act now to ensure we are prepared to combat a potential crisis before it happens. As a cattle producer, it is reassuring to see bipartisan support for legislation like the Foreign Animal Disease Prevention, Surveillance, and Rapid Response Act, which will help our industry prepare for, and ultimately prevent, a national crisis.”

California Cattlemen’s Association President Steve Arnold: “The wellness and care of cattle is not taken lightly by California ranching families and cattle producers throughout the U.S. These proactive investments to ensure the stability of our cow herds and ranching lifestyles amid a future foreign animal disease outbreak are invaluable steps forward.”

Iowa Cattlemen’s Association President Bob Noble: “It is not a matter of if, but rather when the U.S. cattle industry will face a foreign animal disease outbreak. We should take what we learned from the COVID-19 pandemic response, such as the need for enhanced vaccine manufacturing, improved precautionary planning, and disease mitigation practices and apply those key learnings to protect cattle production so as to not find ourselves in a situation of trying to play catch up. It is crucial that the new Farm Bill continue to support and expand animal disease prevention and management with proactive measures to not only protect the livelihoods of cattle producers, but more importantly to sustain a food supply reliant on the high-quality protein beef cattle provide for a growing world population.”

Minnesota State Cattlemen’s Association Executive Director Kaitlyn Root: “Support for foreign disease prevention and response programs is crucial for ensuring Minnesota cattle producers can continue operating safely and efficiently. A foreign animal disease could destroy the U.S. cattle industry, so financial support for these programs in the Farm Bill is necessary and appreciated.”

Nebraska Cattlemen President Steve Hanson: “Food security is national security, which makes additional investments vital for prevention, preparedness, and response capabilities in the case of a foreign animal disease outbreak. Our producers rely on these programs to protect their livelihood.”

North Carolina Cattlemen’s Association President Scott West: “Here in North Carolina, cattle producers often run diversified farming operations with many different types of livestock, which would only compound the overall devastation caused by a foreign animal disease. We appreciate leaders for introducing the Foreign Animal Disease Prevention, Surveillance, and Rapid Response Act to help us be better prepared for a foreign animal disease outbreak before it happens. Making these critical investments today will protect the U.S. livestock industry for generations to come.”

Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association President Arthur Uhl: “The U.S. cattle industry has built its strong reputation on its safe, nutritious and high-quality beef. Preparing our nation to work together in the case of a foreign animal disease outbreak is a top priority for Texas. Thank you to the leaders championing this issue.”

Texas Cattle Feeders Association Chairman Michael Bezner: “Increased investments to enhance disease surveillance, secure beef supply plans for cattle feeders, and expansion of the vaccine bank for foreign animal diseases will significantly increase resiliency of the U.S. cattle and beef production supply chain. TCFA supports the Foreign Animal Disease Prevention, Surveillance, and Rapid Response Act of 2023.

Monitoring for Reproductive Health During the Breeding Season



By Amanda Cauffman

Livestock Educator

Grant, Green, Iowa, and Lafayette Counties

UW Madison - Division of Extension

Breeding season is a pivotal time of year for the cow-calf enterprise as the herd's reproductive efficiency has a direct impact on the cow herd's profitability. Monitoring cows during the breeding season for repeat breeding may allow for intervention in a timely manner.

Repeat breeding occurs when cows fail to conceive after being inseminated. There could be many potential causes for a cow to cycle back after being inseminated the previous cycle. Some of these potential causes could be infertility or injury on the bull side. There could also be potential issues with the cow that prevents her from conceiving including the presences of cystic structures on the ovaries and poor uterine health.

If multiple cows in a group come back in estrus (the period of time a cow is receptive to a bull) after the first 30 days of being exposed to a sire, we may want to evaluate the bull for potential fertility issues. The best way to mitigate this risk is to have a breeding soundness exam performed 4 to 6 weeks prior to turning the bulls out with the cows. However, injury and fertility issues can occur during the breeding season and should be addressed as soon as possible. A study done at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine conducted breeding soundness exams on bulls in 205 beef herds located in western Canada and found that 11.4% of the herds experienced bull injuries during the breeding season (Waldner, etc.al, 2010).

Cows can also experience infertility issues; one potential cause could be their overall uterine health. Uterine health takes into account the tone of the uterine wall, the presence of fluid in the uterus, and the presence of infection. Cows that experienced dystocia (difficult birthing) the prior calving season should have

a veterinarian reproductive exam about a month after calving as dystocia can increase the likely hood of an inferior uterine score (Carthy, etc.al, 2014).

It may also be beneficial to watch cows for irregular estrous (reproductive) cycles or watch for cows that seem to constantly be coming into estrus. If a cow experiences this type of irregular cycling it may be advantageous to have a veterinarian check her for cystic structures on her ovaries. The likely hood of ovarian cysts increases as a cow ages and has more calves (Carthy, etc.al, 2014). Cystic structures can have a negative impact on a heifer or cow's ability to get bred in a timely manner and calve every 12 months.

The breeding season is a very important time of year for cow-calf operators. Ensuring that cows get bred in a timely manner has a positive impact on the cow-calf enterprises profitability.

Sources:

Carthy, T.R., et al. "Risk Factors Associated with Detailed Reproductive Phenotypes in Dairy and Beef Cows." *Animal*, vol. 8, no. 5, 2014, pp. 695-703, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1751731114000354>.

Waldner, Cheryl L, et al. "A Description of the Findings from Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluations and Their Association with Pregnancy Outcomes in a Study of Western Canadian Beef Herds." *Theriogenology*, vol. 74, no. 5, 15 Sept. 2010, pp. 871-883, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenology.2010.04.012>.

Evaluated by:

Jackie McCarville, Regional Dairy Educator for Grant, Green, Iowa, and Lafayette Counties

NCBA Statement Correcting Internet Falsehoods - mRNA Vaccines in Cattle

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) released a statement in regard to false information circulating on social media about the use of mRNA vaccines in cattle:

"There are no current mRNA vaccines licensed for use in beef cattle in the United States. Cattle farmers and ranchers do vaccinate cattle to treat and prevent many diseases, but presently none of these vaccines include mRNA technology."

Wisconsin Legislative Update - Work on the Biennial Budget Continues

Jordan Lamb

WCA Legislative Counsel

The Welch Group



The Wisconsin State Legislature is currently working to complete their version of the 2023-25 biennial state budget bill to send back to Governor Evers for his review. The Governor proposed his version of the budget in February. The Joint Committee on Finance took the bill around the state for public hearings in March and April and now is meeting and voting on amendments to the bill. The goal is for the legislature to send the Governor their budget by the end of July 1, 2023, which is the beginning of the next fiscal year.

On May 18, 2023, the Joint Committee on Finance voted on provisions in the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) budget. The Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association, along with our colleagues in the Wisconsin Ag Coalition urged the Committee to support continued funding for the following items in the DATCP budget. Below is a summary of what was requested and what the committee voted to include. The budget process will continue for the next several weeks as the Committee reviews and votes on provisions in other agencies.

- **Wisconsin Committee Food Bank Purchasing Program:** We asked that the Committee support the motion submitted by Senator James and Representative Krug to provide \$10 million in each year of the biennium to DATCP to administer in grants to nonprofit food banks, nonprofit food pantries and other nonprofit organizations that provide food assistance for the purpose of purchasing food products that are made or grown in this state. This program has greatly strengthened state agricultural supply chains and local connections between Wisconsin-grown food and local communities. *JFC Action: The Committee did not fund this program. They did provide \$1,500,000 annually from tribal gaming revenues for a tribal elders' food support program.*
- **Meat Processor Grants:** We asked that the Committee support an additional \$800,000 each year of the 2023-25 biennium for grants to facilities that slaughter animals for human consumption, or that process meat or meat products, excluding rendering plants. Total funding for meat processing grants would be \$1,000,000 in each year of the 2023-25 biennium. *JFC Action: The Committee provided \$1,800,000 for grants to meat processing facilities (i.e., \$1,600,000 in FY 2023-24 and \$200,000 in FY 2024-25.)*
- **Dairy Processor Grants:** We asked that the Committee support an additional \$800,000 GPR each year in the 2023-25 biennium for grants to dairy processors. Base funding for the program would be \$1,000,000 GPR annually. *JFC Action: The Committee included an additional \$300,000 each year for a total of \$500,000 annually for dairy processor grants.*
- **Wisconsin Agricultural Exports Promotion:** We asked that the Committee support eliminating the \$1,000,000-per-year statutory spending cap currently set for the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports and provide additional funding for WIAE. *JFC Action: The Committee provided \$1,000,000 annually for the WIAE program.*
- **Meat Talent Development Grant Program:** We asked for support to create an annual appropriation and provide \$1,237,500 GPR in 2024-25 for tuition grants to students pursuing education in meat processing and to educational institutions for curriculum development. *JFC Action: The Committee did not fund this initiative.*
- **Farmer Mental Health Assistance:** We asked for \$100,000 GPR each year in 2023-25 to support farmer mental health assistance programming at DATCP. *JFC Action: The Committee provided \$100,000 in addition to base-level funding over the biennium to support farmer mental health assistance at DATCP.*
- **County Conservation Staff and Program Expansion:** We asked for an additional \$4,390,400 in 2023-24 and \$4,697,600 in 2024-25 for a total of \$13,354,500 in 2023-24 and \$13,661,700 in 2024-25 for county staffing grants, equivalent to the funding to fulfill statutory goals for cost-share for first and second positions each year. Funding may be provided from any source identified. Under this alternative, one-third of funding increases would be GPR and the remainder from nonpoint SEG. *JFC Action: The Committee included \$1,998,200 in 2023-24 and \$2,250,300 in 2024-25.*
- **Nitrogen Management, Cover Cropping, and Producer-Led Watershed Promotion Grants:** We asked for \$1,600,000 in each year of the 2023-25 biennium to DATCP for nitrogen optimization pilot program grants; \$800,000 in each year of the 2023-25 biennium to DATCP for cover crop insurance premium rebates; and an additional \$750,000 in each year for producer-led watershed protection grants, bringing the total to \$1,500,000 annually for that grant program. *JFC Action: The Committee provided \$1,000,000 annually for the nitrogen optimization grant program, \$800,000 annually for the cover crop insurance rebate program, and \$1,000,000 annually for the producer-led watershed grant program.*
- **Livestock Premises Registration Support:** We asked the Committee to provide an additional \$70,000 GPR annually in 2023-25 for livestock premises registration (in addition to WLIC's current base-level funding). *JFC Action: The Committee provided an additional \$70,000 annually to WLIC bringing their total funding up to \$420,000 annually in each year of the biennium.*

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 September issue must be claimed by August 15, 2023.

Contact the WCA office for advertising details.

Phone: (608) 228-1457 | Email: kaitlyn@wisconsincattlemen.com

Wisconsin Beef Council welcomes Japan trade team to educate buyers



Tammy Vaassen
Executive Director, Wisconsin Beef Council

The Wisconsin Beef Council (WBC), in partnership with the U.S. Meat Export Federation, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, recently hosted a trade team of Japanese foodservice representatives to showcase the diversity and quality of beef raised and processed in-state. The tour was funded through one of the Wisconsin

Department of Agriculture's Ag Export Initiative grants received by Wisconsin Beef Council, and also had some support through the Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board. Funding through the grant allowed WBC to extend efforts beyond the Beef Checkoff investments to reach additional markets and buyers.

On-farm visits helped the Japanese visitors understand the dedication to animal care, sustainability, production practices and genetics used by Wisconsin farmers. Tour hosts included Huth Polled Herefords and S&H Livestock Enterprises, LLC, Oakfield, where the guests experienced a cow-calf operation that produces top notch registered Hereford genetics and focuses on crossbreeding Angus and Hereford cattle to produce high-marbling livestock for commercial use.



Ebert Enterprises in Algoma was the second farm visited. The team at Ebert's, including family members Randy and Renee along with their children Jordan and Whitney, milk 4,200 cows in a rotary parlor. They are also crossbreeding the bottom half of the dairy herd to Angus and feeding those cattle out to enter the beef supply.

Additionally, the visitors toured in-state packers to elevate their understanding of the type of cattle harvested and processed here, along with the range of products and beef quality grades available for export. Stops included:

- Haen Meats – this full-service meat market does custom slaughtering and has a modern retail case featuring fresh, cured and smoked meats and sausage products. Phil Schmidt, owner, provided a tour of their harvest floor, cooler and, along with his staff, broke down a half carcass. Guests were interested in learning more about how they can maximize underutilized cuts to reduce the amount of beef going into trim.
- American Foods Group – the team toured the entire plant in Green Bay, from harvest to fabrication of beef cuts. They

expressed great interest in variety meats, including tripe, tongue and liver. There was extensive focus on beef safety and inspection.

- JBS – the group learned about the beef programs provided by the Green Bay plant, were able to see carcasses in the cooler representing those programs and viewed specific cuts of interest. Following the plant visit, JBS provided samples of Strip Loins from various quality grades, Hanging Tenderloins, Chuck Roll, Outside Skirt and Top Blade Filet.



Other stops included a tour of the meat department of the Hy-Vee store in Ashwaubenon, a short rib dinner at Lodge Kohler's Tavern in the Sky, and a stop at a local Culver's restaurant.

Tatsuru Kasatani with the Tokyo office of the U.S. Meat Export Federation says that while Japan reopened to imports of U.S. beef from cattle over 30 months of age in 2019, prospective buyers have had limited opportunities to visit the United States due to the COVID pandemic. With travel restrictions now lifted, "we enjoyed visiting the Wisconsin beef packing plants and cattle operations to see how product is made. We wanted to see the high quality of the cow products by viewing the carcass, along with cuts like tongue, short plates, chuck rolls and clods as we have some eating cultures to utilize that."

"One main thing we like to know and learn is about the dairy industry, which is very popular in the Wisconsin state. It was a very good occasion to see both the beef and dairy industry and see the diversity of the product, including the cow product which the Japanese can start to import again."

The Wisconsin Beef Council has focused on marketing our high-quality beef in overseas markets for a number of years, recognizing that 96% of the population of the world resides outside of the U.S. borders. By bringing groups like this to Wisconsin, it helps them understand the dedication to animal care, the environment, food safety and the quality product that's being raised domestically. Partnering with USMEF, WBC can help educate foreign customers and help grow markets by developing relationships, understanding the needs and helping to connect the buyers to the sellers who can provide the desired products. These efforts can add value to the beef carcass and create new markets for products produced, but not necessarily in demand, here in the U.S.



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Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association

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