

cattleTRAILS

..... March 2023

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



President's Path

Brady Zuck, WCA President

The temperatures are starting to warm up, but we have a long way to go to melt all of the snow in northern Wisconsin! After what seemed to be more than our fair share of winter storms, hopefully green grass is just around the corner.

Thank you to all who attended the 2023 Winter Conference - it was great to see the large turnout of members and fellow cattle producers! Our speakers provided updates and new ideas to improve our operations. We also shared policy updates from the 2023 NCBA Cattle Industry Convention with the focus on traceability moving forward. The growing threat of a FMD outbreak is something we can no longer ignore as the economic costs would be devastating to our industry. Without traceability, we are unprepared to deal with a disease outbreak of this magnitude. Please keep an eye out for more information to come on this important topic.

On the Legislative front, the comment period for the WI DNR Wolf Management Plan closed on February 28. WCA submitted comments as an organization, and I thank you all who submitted comments as individuals. As members, it is key that we share our insight with elected officials. A simple phone call or email to our local legislators goes a long way. Please take the time to figure out who your local representatives are, and then reach out to them. If you are interested in becoming more involved in the legislative aspect of our association, please reach out to Eric Johnson, Chair of the Legislative Committee.

Over the next few months, I would like to put a focus on 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

It's time to focus on membership

"If each person took the time to reach out to just one or two people, we could easily double our membership."

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

We all have friends and neighbors that are raising cattle but aren't members of WCA. If each member took the time to reach out to just one or two 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 14,000 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 local cattlemen's meetings. 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. Wishing everyone a safe and productive planting and calving seasons!



-Brady Zuck

2022 WCA President

Zuck Cattle Company | Ladysmith,
Wisconsin
Phone: 715-415-9131
Email: brady_zuck@diamondv.com



Follow the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association on Facebook for the latest news!

@WisconsinCattlemensAssociation

in this issue:

- President's Path
- Membership Update
- Winter Conference
- Steak Trailer Update
- WGA: It's the Workforce, Duh
- Summer Tour
- UW-Extension: When Changing Herd Goals, Use EPDs
- Legislative Update
- Federation of State Beef Council's Background
- Scholarship Award Winners

upcoming events:

● **Vernon County Cattlemen's Annual Meeting**

March 28, Viroqua Eagles Club
Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. with a meeting at 7:00 p.m. Hear from a local veterinarian who will explain changes for livestock producers and antibiotic use in 2023.

● **Rock County Beef Producers Annual Meeting**

March 30, Sidelines Sports Pub and Grill, Janesville
A social hour begins at 5:30 p.m. with dinner at 6:30 p.m. The annual meeting and speaker will follow.

● **Wisconsin Beef Council Burgers & Buns Fun Run**

May 20, Manitowoc
Join this May Beef Month celebration at the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center. Volunteer to help promote beef, or lace up and join the run/walk. Find more details at beeftips.com

● **WCA Summer Tour**

June 24, southwest Wisconsin
More details will be coming soon. Stay up to date by following the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association on Facebook.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST EVENTS AND INFORMATION

.....

wisconsincattlemen.com

Would you like to only receive Cattle Trails digitally? Email kaitlyn@wisconsincattlemen.com to change your subscription preferences.

Membership Update

Tressa Lacy, WCA Membership Chair

Memberships are due!

Memberships with Wisconsin Cattlemen's that were paid in 2022 expired on February 28, 2023. Below is a breakdown of renewing and expirations of WCA memberships. If you have not renewed your membership in 2023, you can do so by visiting the WCA website. Please contact the WCA office at info@wisconsincattlemen.com or by phone at 608-228-1457 if you need to check the status of your membership.

The membership timeline is as follows:

January 1 – February 28: Primary Membership Period

- Both new and renewing members who pay their dues during this time will be considered active through February 28 of the following year
- Example: ABC Farms pays their membership dues on January 5, 2023. Their membership is active through February 28, 2024.

March 1 – August 31: Grace Membership Period

- Both new and renewing members who pay their dues during this time will be considered active through February 28 of the following year
- Example: ABC Farms has an expired WCA membership because they forgot to pay their dues on or before March 1. ABC Farms pays their dues on March 5, 2023, and is then considered active through February 28, 2024.

WCA is a member-driven organization, so your membership is pivotal for us to lobby on behalf of the Cattlemen in Madison. WCA appreciates your continued support.

-Tressa Lacy
(417) 712-1755
tressaalderson27@gmail.com

Winter Conference

In case you missed it, Winter Conference was back this year. Cattlemen came together on February 11 at the Comfort Inn and Suites in DeForest. Aside from the location, there were additional changes made to the event. Instead of a multi-day, multi breakout sessions gathering, we opted to try a one-day event with guest speakers covering diverse aspects of the industry. Find our guest speakers and a brief description about their topics below.

- Jordan Lamb, Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association Legal Counsel – Lamb provided an update on legislative progress at the Wisconsin Capitol as well as key topics impacting the state's cattle industry.
- Dr. Jordan Thomas, Assistant Professor of the Division of Animal Sciences at the University of Missouri – Dr. Thomas dove into how investing in reproductive management improves the success of cow-calf operations.
- Patrick Linnell, CattleFax – Linnell informed attendees about what to expect in 2023 and important factors that will influence prices and profitability.
- Susan Quam, Executive Vice President of the Wisconsin Restaurant Association, and Mike Semmann, Vice President of Government Affairs of the Wisconsin Grocers Association – Quam and Semmann provided insight into the businesses that sell beef products to consumers, the overall business model of both grocery stores and restaurants, along with challenges facing the industry.

Following these presentations, WCA hosted our Annual Meeting with updates from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and WCA Committee Chairs. At the conclusion of Winter Conference, UW-Extension hosted a free Beef Quality Assurance Certification meeting for attendees.

Stay tuned for Winter Conference date and location in February, 2024.

Steak Trailer Update

Brady Zuck, WCA Steak Trailer Co-Chair



As we look forward to warmer weather and snowbanks melting away, the WCA Steak Trailer is gearing up for another great year of serving our famous beef products across the state of Wisconsin. We are excited to have Dave and Carrie Goss return to manage the Steak Trailer, building off the success they had in 2022. Dave and Carrie spent time this winter performing maintenance on the trailers to make sure we operate at peak efficiency. Be sure to check out the new signage work that was completed – the trailers look sharp!

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 the support in 2022 and look forward to another successful year in 2023!

-Brady Zuck

715-415-9131

brady_zuck@diamondv.com

2023 Event Schedule

WPS Farm Show-Oshkosh - March 28 - 30

Midwest Horse Fair - Madison - April 14-16

Wisconsin Farm Technology Days - Baraboo-July 18-20
(new this year!)

Wisconsin State Fair - West Allis - August 3-13

World Beef Expo - West Allis - Sept. 28-Oct. 1

World Dairy Expo - Madison - October 1-6



It's the Workforce, Duh



By Brandon Scholz,
Wisconsin Grocers Association President and CEO

For grocers, it has been an incredible gauntlet from the beginnings of the pandemic to this point. The challenges created for grocers and their suppliers as the pandemic lodged itself into the daily business operations have only continued to create hurdles for the industry.

As most grocery store shoppers know, not all shelves are full of their

favorite products — shoppers have had to deal with substitutes or alternatives. Throughout all these topsy-turvy, head-spinning challenges, there is one common denominator that bears most of the blame for what drives grocers crazy. Workforce.

Simply put, there are not enough people available to fill the jobs open today, nor in the years to come. Reports have suggested the workforce population in Wisconsin is flat and likely to decline. Forward Analytics notes Wisconsin's youth population has declined 4.3% since 2010 and says a decline in the state's under-18 population will cause economic problems. That same report forecasts that by 2030, the working population will be down by 130,000 people.

Grocers, convenience stores, and retail businesses report there simply is not a pool of people in the workforce that can fill the gaps. And, for those who want to suggest otherwise that all is good because unemployment is low and UI applications are down, that's not necessarily the case.

There are all sorts of reasons why the workforce is running on empty. During the pandemic, people chose not to work; were let go by employers who couldn't keep their doors open; received state and federal assistance to make up for their non-employment status; as well as other factors.

Confounding the employment factor is the regressive impact of inflation that has chewed up most all the incredible and eye-popping increasing in wages and benefits.

Early in 2022, with the government giving assurances that the

economy was in good shape (inflation notwithstanding), the expectations were that people would come back to their jobs, or any job.

Not so. Didn't happen. Not only did people not show up, but the pool of prospective employees was more like a very small pond.

The forecast for the remainder of 2023 is now even more uncertain. You may find grocers taking down a checkout lane and adding a self-checkout stand to help their customers move through the end of their shopping experience.

What's the solution? Wisconsin needs to bring people back to Wisconsin to work here. The question is how.

Let's target quality of life issues in Wisconsin and focus legislative, employer, and community efforts on several key areas. Good businesses, strong communities, safe streets and less crime, daycare, housing, public transportation, and good schools are key components of attracting new workers to Wisconsin.

These changes will require funding solutions, regulatory relief, and legislative initiatives in local, county, and state governments. Grocers and their customers are resilient. They've proved it since the pandemic started. It doesn't mean that things are hunky dory, but we're approaching critical mass. Changes must be made to solve our workforce crisis.

Winsight Grocery Business notes that inflation, technological advances, and the pandemic have influenced grocery shopper habits. It's a common sight to see shoppers using smartphones to look up sales, product information, loyalty apps, and more. While these changes have become common place for the customer, they are not long-term solutions for the retail world. It starts with the workforce and quality of life.

The Wisconsin Grocers Association represents nearly 1,000 independent grocers, retail grocery chain stores, warehouses and distributors, convenience stores, food brokers, and suppliers. Wisconsin grocers employ over 50,000 people with more than \$1 billion in payroll and generates more than \$12 billion in annual sales in Wisconsin resulting in approximately more than \$800 million in state sales tax revenue. Visit [wisconsinagrocers.com](https://www.wisconsinagrocers.com).

Summer Tour



Mark your calendars for the 2023 WCA Summer Tour, which is scheduled for Saturday, June 24th. We are planning to be in the southwest Wisconsin area, along the Hwy 151 corridor. The format will be similar to past years, with 3-4 stops and lunch and dinner included. Keep an eye out for more details to come both on the WCA website and Facebook page.

When Changing Herd Goals, Use EPDs



By Carolyn Ihde

Agriculture Educator

UW-Madison Division of Extension

In 2022 we saw a significant decline in the national beef cow-calf herd. The reduction was primarily due to drought in a large portion of the significant cattle-producing states. Other factors, such as high input costs and high cull cow prices, resulted in many cows being culled and a higher-than-average number of heifers being fed out. The forecast models show the national cow herd will likely be in a contractional phase for the next few years meaning the cow herd will continue to decrease due to the reduced number of females available to produce female calves to grow the herd.

Beef producers may be motivated to increase the size of their beef herds by saving heifers that would typically go to the feedlot as replacement heifers. Not all heifer calves will mature into productive mature females, especially if the emphasis was placed on carcass traits and feedlot performance rather than maternal traits for replacement heifer development in the previous breeding cycle. Switching from producing market animals to replacing females may take a few adjustments in management strategies.

There are many ways to select and develop replacement heifers into mature cows. One method would be to use your herd's past production records to select a group of cows to produce replacement heifers. Cows who repeatedly calve early in the season, walk on correct feet and legs, exhibit a sound udder, and are good mothers should be considered candidates for raising replacement heifers. Producers can use genomic and Expected Progeny Data (EPDs) to select the heritable traits of potential sires to match the bulls' best genetic contribution to the cows. It is not always an either-or situation. You do not have to sacrifice acceptable feedlot performance (terminal traits) for heifer development (maternal traits). Reviewing a bull's All-Purpose-Index (\$API) or Combined Value Index will consider a bull's offspring's potential carcass value and estimates profitability when some of his daughters will be retained as replacements.

Through these targeted matings, the pool of heifers that are candidates to be replacement females will have an increased genetic base to meet long-term goals. However, genetics is only part of the equation; a sound nutrition and health program will also be needed to support the heifer's transition into the cow herd. Matching the heifer feeding program to the resources and management system she will experience as a mature cow will ensure she has the ability to thrive in the production system in the years to come.

As we move through the next few years in the cattle cycle, there will be opportunities to increase the cow-calf herd. Use EPDs to match sire traits with the current cow herd to achieve production goals and to produce females with longevity in the herd and increased genetic performance.

References

Peel, D. "2023 Cattle market outlook", Oral presentation at the proceeding of the Driftless Region Beef 2023 conference, January 2023, Dubuque, IA, USA.

Platts, L. (28 February 2023). \$API and \$TI A bull buyer's best friend. Retrieved from: \$API and \$TI A Bull Buyer's Best Friends (simmental.org)

Sitz, T., DelCurto-Wyffels, H., Van Emon, M., Wyffels, S., Retallick, K., Tarpoff, E., Kangas, K., et al. (2023). Importance of Foot and Leg Structure for Beef Cattle in Forage-Based Production Systems. *Animals*, 13(3), 495. MDPI AG. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/ani13030495>

Reviewed by:
Bill Halfman
Amanda Cauffman

Cattle Trails Advertising Opportunities

CONTACT THE WCA OFFICE FOR DETAILS

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 June 1, 2023. Contact the WCA office for additional information.

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

Wisconsin Legislative Update

Jordan Lamb

WCA Legislative Counsel

The Welch Group

Ag Groups Release 2023-25 Biennial Budget Priorities

At the end of January, The Wisconsin Ag Coalition, a group of commodity and agri-business trade associations who work together on state legislative issues, released its 2023-25 Biennial Budget White Paper identifying the programs and proposals that Wisconsin's agriculture and agri-business industry collectively supports in the next state budget bill. The Coalition supports initiatives related to producer-led conservation programs, rural economic development initiatives, funding for continued nonpoint source pollution reduction grants and staffing, support for biofuels promotion and support for the creation of a voluntary carbon credit scoring program in Wisconsin. WCA is a part of the Ag Coalition and worked cooperatively with the Coalition on these joint biennial budget priorities.

Governor Evers Delivers Budget to Legislature – Proposes \$103 Billion Budget

On February 15, 2023, Governor Tony Evers delivered his budget address to a joint session of the legislature and released his proposed 2023-25 biennial budget bill. The Governor proposed an operating budget of \$103.8 billion over the next two fiscal years (2023-25), adding 816.55 additional full-time positions. His budget did include some key provisions for Wisconsin farmers including grants for water conservation programs, funding for producer-led watershed grants, continued funding for the nitrogen optimization grant program, additional funding for the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium, and continued funding for the local

commodity food purchasing program to purchases of Wisconsin commodities for Wisconsin's food banks.

WCA Files Comments on Proposed Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan

The Wisconsin DNR released a draft of the updated Wolf Management Plan for public review and comment. The WCA filed written comments on the proposed draft plan expressing several concerns including support for a numerical wolf population goal of 350, encouraging wolves only in areas of prime wolf habitat, requesting additional management tools for Wisconsin farmers and asking for DNR support for federal delisting of gray wolves in Wisconsin. Comments on the draft plan are now closed and the DNR has stated they are reviewing the comments and considering revisions to the final plan. Once final, the plan will be presented to the Natural Resources Board. The DNR has not disclosed a timeline for the review of the comments.

Wisconsin's Spring Election is April 4, 2023 – Two Key Races on the Ballot

There are two crucial races on the spring election ballot in Wisconsin – one seat on the Wisconsin Supreme Court and a special election for the vacated 8th Senate District (formerly held by Sen. Albert Darling R-River Hills). In the 8th Senate District, Republican State Representative Dan Knodl (Germantown) won the Republican primary. He will face Democrat attorney Jodi Habush Sinykin (Whitefish Bay) in the April election. The Supreme Court non-partisan primary winners were former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Dan Kelly, a conservative, and Milwaukee County Circuit Judge Janet Protasiewicz, a liberal. The race drawing significant attention and importance because the next court is likely to issue key rulings on issues ranging from Wisconsin's 1849 abortion ban, legislative district maps, union rights and election law issues.

Integrating Crops and Livestock

Increased Profit Per Acre

Cost Reduction

- Manure = fertilizer
- Stretch feed supply
- Break pest and weed cycles

Income Benefits

- Marketable cover crop
- Diversify income streams
- Eco credits

Soil Benefits

- Improve fertility
- Enhance water infiltration
- Increase organic matter

Community Benefits

- Support local farms and businesses
- Safeguard local water
- Build relationships
- Opportunities for new farmers



Integration of crops and livestock brings benefits...but also challenges.
We need your help to understand what's working and what isn't.



Take the crop/livestock integration survey!

<https://z.umn.edu/MatchMadeSurvey>



"Match Made In Heaven" is a partnership between crop and livestock associations, universities, public agencies, and soil/water groups. The results will guide development of resources to benefit all.

The first 30 members who complete this survey will receive a \$25 Amazon gift card. To redeem, email info@wisconsincattlemen.com after taking the survey.

Federation of State Beef Council's Background



Tammy Vaassen

Executive Director, Wisconsin Beef Council

For the past year, I've had the opportunity to serve on the Executive Committee of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Federation Division in an ex-officio role, representing my counterpart state beef council executives. I was a bit reluctant when asked to take on this role – I'm not new to the

Wisconsin Beef Council, but new enough that I was uncertain that I'd have the historical knowledge and broad perspectives to share.

However, this experience has helped me better understand the role that NCBA has as a contractor to the Beef Checkoff and home to the Federation, how the Federation operates, and how grassroots leaders provide input into the overall program.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Federation of State Beef Councils. Even with 60 years of history, many in the countryside don't understand how the Federation and Policy Divisions at NCBA operate separately and keep funding sources separate. So I thought I'd share some details in this article to try to provide some clarity.

The Federation of State Beef Councils was written into the Beef Promotion Act and Order because Checkoff founders realized the important role that the states play in providing a grassroots voice to the program. The Federation was originally housed in the Beef Industry Council (BIC) of the National Livestock and Meat Board. In 1996 the industry recommended merging the BIC and the National Cattlemen's Association to create efficiencies and develop one voice for the beef industry – forming the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. So today, the Federation is a division of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), which is also a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program.

The Federation is an alliance of all state beef councils that comes together with one voice and funds national programs to grow

demand for beef – investing Checkoff dollars into larger cities and states where the people are. State beef councils include more than 700 board members who represent every segment of the industry. State beef councils elect directors to serve on NCBA's Federation Board – and these individuals serve on Beef Checkoff Committees and attend the board of directors meetings held twice a year.

NCBA's policy division is also producer directed – but that leadership direction comes from producers through their state and breed organizations – like Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association. If you're sitting in an NCBA Board or Executive Committee meeting, votes are taken for the Policy Division and Federation Division separately. So if approving the Federation budget for the year at a board meeting, Wisconsin Beef Council's representative Rosie Lisowe would vote. However, if the NCBA board was voting on policy resolutions, Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association representative Brady Zuck would vote.

I'm always happy to visit with you to answer questions that might remain on this topic. It is confusing, even on the state level. But remember that the Wisconsin Beef Council is funded through the Beef Checkoff with the goal of growing demand for beef through promotion, education and consumer information efforts. Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association is funded through your membership and fundraising activities like the Steak Trailer. Their goal is to promote the Wisconsin beef business through advocacy, leadership, and producer education – and they focus on legislative efforts in the capital in Madison and with state regulatory agencies.

I truly hope you're all managing through the ups and downs the Wisconsin weather has been delivering recently. Here's hoping that the next time we connect we've got green grass and cattle out on pasture turning forage into beef! You can always find new recipes, and information about the Checkoff, on our website www.beeftips.com!

2023 WCA Scholarship Award Winners

This spring, a panel of judges had the difficult task of selecting five \$1,000 scholarship recipients. Scholarships are available to any high school senior enrolled or planning to enroll in any university, technical college, or community college in the United States. Congratulations to the following five applicants.

- Ty Gaffney, Barneveld - Ty plans to study agriculture power at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College.
- Alan George, Albany - Alan intends to study agribusiness at West Texas A&M University.
- Ethan Lulich, Lyndon Station - Ethan aims to study science at Kansas State University.
- Lily Mitchell, Boscobel - Lily aspires to earn her agriculture business major with a minor in animal science at South Dakota State University.

- Courtney Rathke, Fredonia - Courtney plans to study animal science at UW-Milwaukee/Washington County and UW-Platteville.

In addition to yearly scholarships, WCA also offers individual travel grants. All Wisconsin youth are eligible to apply. Grants can be used to help cover expenses for any educational event related to the beef industry. Such events could be attending national breed shows, AI schools, beef seminars, state and national judging contests, fitting and showing clinics, or any other activity that will educate and benefit Wisconsin youth interested in the livestock industry. There is no deadline, so applications will be taken all year.



**WISCONSIN
CATTLEMEN'S**
ASSOCIATION

Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association

957 Liberty Drive, Suite 201

Verona, Wisconsin 53593

Thank you to our Affiliate Members!

FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative
Grant County Cattlemen's Association
Grams Insurance Agency LLC
Great Northern Texas Longhorn Association
Green County Beef Producers
IDEAL Agriculture and Marine Insurance
North American Normande Association
North Central Highland Cattle Association
North Central Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association
Northern Wisconsin Beef Producers
Purina
Richland County Beef Producers

Rock County Beef Producers
US Premium Beef
UW-River Falls Beef Management Team
Vernon County Cattlemen's Association
Wisconsin Angus Association
Wisconsin Beef Council
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
Wisconsin Hereford Association
Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium
Wisconsin Shorthorn Association
World Beef Expo

Thank You Sponsors!

Prime



Choice



Select



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

Phone: 608-228-1457

E-mail: info@wisconsincattlemen.com

Office: 957 Liberty Drive, Suite 201 Verona, WI 53593

Interested in becoming an affiliate member or sponsor? Contact info@wisconsincattlemen.com