

cattleTRAILS

.....March 2026

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



WISCONSIN
CATTLEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION



President's Path

Jared Geiser, WCA President

As incoming Wisconsin Cattlemen's President, I want to thank Tressa Lacy for her work during her term as president. Her relentless dedication and steadfast leadership have continued to push this organization forward. Her efforts to update and modernize our policy book, coordination with other states across NCBA Region 3, and driving engagement with our membership will leave a lasting impact on Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association. As we look ahead, I'm committed to strengthening our policy efforts, expanding member engagement, and ensuring WCA remains a strong advocate for Wisconsin cattle producers.

For those of you I haven't met, I'm Jared Geiser, a 4th generation farmer from Chilton Wisconsin. My family operates Riveredge Farms, established in 1921 in Eastern Calumet county. We run registered Simmental and SimAngus cattle, selling yearling bulls and select groups of females annually. Our primary business is direct marketing beef as halves and quarters locally. Along with cattle we grow wheat, soybeans, and hay on our row crop acres. I also work a day job off the farm as a feed merchandiser for CP Feeds LLC.

I joined WCA in 2023, looking for an organization to continue building connections within our state and give back to the industry that I call home. I quickly joined the board of directors and serve as co-chair of the Steak Trailer committee. I was also a part of the inaugural Wisconsin Beef Leadership Institute. I cannot brag on the program enough

New WCA Leadership

Meet 2026 Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association President Jared Geiser!

and the importance of finding your own voice.

Over 120 of those individual voices joined us for our annual Winter Conference in Mauston in late February. Updates to our policy book on CRP and Wolf Management, DC briefings on New World Screwworm and new Dietary Guidelines, cattle nutrition and management presentation, and a producer led technology panel were just a few of the conversations had. The energy in the room was palpable, and I'm thrilled to build on the momentum throughout the rest of the year.

Thank you for your membership in WCA. I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming local cattlemen's meetings and our other events throughout the year. If there is anything WCA can be doing for you reach out at any time. Wishing everyone a safe and productive planting and calving seasons!



-Jared Geiser

2026 WCA President

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in this issue:

- President's Path
- Steak Trailer Update
- Wisconsin Legislative Update
- A New Tick on the Radar:
Asian Longhorned Ticks are an Emerging concern for Cattle producers
- WCA Elects New Leadership and Updates Policy at Annual Meeting
- Seasonal Lice Activity in Cattle: When and How to Treat
- New DNR Tool Helps Businesses Navigate Environmental Requirements
- New Dietary Guidelines for Americans Reinforce Beef's Role in a Healthy Lifestyle

Steak Trailer Update



Brady Zuck, WCA Steak Trailer Co-Chair

With the warmer weather coming early again 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.

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 2026 season.

We want to thank you all for the support in 2025 and look forward to another successful year in 2026!

-Brady Zuck

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2026 Event Schedule

WPS Farm Show-Oshkosh
March 24-26

Midwest Horse Fair-Madison
April 17-19

Wisconsin Farm Technology Days
July 14-16

Wisconsin State Fair-West Allis
August 6 – 16

World Dairy Expo
September 29 – October 2

upcoming events:

WPS Farm Show
March 24-26
Oshkosh, WI

Wisconsin Association of Meat Processors Convention and Trade Show
April 9-12
Madison Marriott West

Midwest Horse Fair
April 17-19
Madison, WI

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST EVENTS AND INFORMATION

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wisconsincattlemen.com

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, 2026.

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

Wisconsin Legislative Update

Jordan Lamb

WCA Legislative Counsel

The Welch Group

The Wisconsin State legislature is wrapping up its 2025-26 legislative session. Both the Senate and the Assembly were on the floor February. The State Assembly adjourned on February 20 and Speaker Vos has stated that he does not intend to have the Assembly meet again. The only exception would be if legislative leadership and Governor Evers reach agreement on a tax package, in which case the Assembly could reconvene to act on that proposal. The Senate plans to meet on Tuesday, March 17 for what is expected to be its final day of regular session.



ENROLLED BILLS: The following bills of interest to WCA have **passed both houses of the Legislature and are being prepared for Executive Action** (Governor's Signature or Veto). The bills can be delivered to the Governor under any of following circumstances: (1) delivered to the Governor by the Legislative Leadership; (2) requested by the Governor; or (3) delivered pursuant to the Legislative Calendar on April 2, 2026. Once the bills are delivered, the Governor can act.

- **ENROLLED – Requiring Labeling of Lab Grown Meat (AB 554 - Moses, Clint).** The sale, service, and labeling of food products containing lab-grown animal cells and providing a penalty.
- **ENROLLED – Rural Veterinary Loan Repayment Grants (SB 501 - Cabral-Guevara, Rachael).** Creating a rural veterinary student loan repayment grant program administered by the Higher Educational Aids Board.
- **ENROLLED - CDL Training Grants (SB 783 - Wimberger, Eric).** This bill expands eligibility for grants under the commercial driver grant pro-

gram to applicants other than training providers.

Animal Health License Fee Increases. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) initiated rulemaking in fall 2025 to revise livestock market and dealer fees under Wis. Admin. Code ATPC 12. The department's initial proposal included fee increases of up to 1,700 percent, levels that would have imposed unsustainable financial burdens on sale barns, livestock marketers, and ultimately producers.

WCA opposed the proposal, and extensive public testimony during hearings last October highlighted these concerns. Following that feedback, DATCP approved a revised rule that significantly reduces the magnitude of the increases, with the highest increase now approximately 60 percent. However, the revised rule still does not address the underlying funding challenges facing DATCP's animal health programs. The amended rule has now been submitted to the Legislature in final form and may take effect at the conclusion of the legislative review process.

At the same time, the Legislature responded to the proposed fee increases by introducing legislation (**SB 622 / AB 627**) that would freeze livestock dealer and market fees at their current statutory levels.

SB 622 passed the Senate in February but was amended by the Assembly on its final day of action. As a result, the Senate must now concur with the Assembly's changes in order for the bill to be sent to Governor Evers for consideration. WCA supports the legislation and, if it passes both chambers, will urge the Governor to sign the bill.

WCA continues to emphasize that Wisconsin's animal health system cannot be funded solely through fees imposed on farmers and livestock marketers. A more balanced funding approach that combines General Purpose Revenue (GPR) support with modest fee adjustments would better align Wisconsin with funding practices in neighboring states while ensuring the long-term sustainability of critical animal health programs.

A New Tick on the Radar: Asian Longhorned Ticks are an Emerging concern for Cattle producers

Emma Rients Ph.D. Beef Nutritionist, KENT Nutrition

Ticks are a concern for cattle producers as blood feeding parasites and vectors of disease that can reduce cattle performance and welfare. The Asian Longhorned tick is a relatively new species, being recognized by the USDA in 2017 as present in the United States, but becoming a greater concern for cattle producers in recent years. Because it is relatively new to the US, research on prevention and treatment of diseases it carries is ongoing and much remains unknown. This tick is light brown in color and very small during most life stages, about the size of a sesame seed. Female Asian Longhorned ticks can reproduce without a male. This means a single female

can create a new population in a new location, laying up to 2,000 eggs at a time. The Asian Longhorned ticks can feed on multiple hosts, including wildlife and livestock. This tick spends most of its time in the environment only attaching to the host for blood meals.

Beyond being a nuisance parasite, the greater concern with the Asian Longhorned tick is the diseases they carry. This tick is a carrier for *Theileria orientalis* causing Theileriosis in cattle. Theileriosis affects the red and white blood cells of cattle causing infectious anemia. Clinical signs include weakness, lethargy, difficulty breathing, and abortion. Cattle can also be carriers of Theileriosis without clinical signs until a stressful

Tick cont.

event triggers clinical disease. Unlike anaplasmosis, another disease carried by ticks, there is currently no approved treatment for theileriosis in the United States. If you think are concerned with tick pressure or disease in your herd, work with your veterinarian to identify and diagnose tick-borne disease. Although not all ticks are carriers of disease tick prevention is the main management strategy of Theileriosis for cattle producers.

The main goal of prevention strategies is to alter the landscape in ways that make it more difficult for ticks to survive there or reduce their access to hosts. One way to do this is by mowing pastures, removing or thinning trees, and placing mulch and surface barriers. Removing cattle from an area to “starve” ticks can also be a management method. However, in areas where wildlife, rodents, or birds are present, this management strategy may not be effective. These ticks have a wide range of feeding preferences and may survive with blood meals from other animals. These management strategies can reduce tick numbers, but are unlikely to eliminate ticks entirely.

In addition to pasture and landscape management, producers may also consider using approved tick control

products as part of a broader strategy. There are currently no tick control products approved by the EPA and FDA for control of Asian Longhorn ticks specifically, however there are products labeled for general control of ticks. To get the most out of these products, the label should be followed closely and seasonal timing of

application should be considered to have the greatest impact on tick development. These products should be viewed as a piece of a larger management plan. Work with your local specialists when choosing these products to ensure they are used appropriately.

Even with these tools, it’s important to remember that tick control is rarely a one-and-done solution. Prevention of ticks can be challenging because strategies are only effective for the duration they are used. For example, mowing pastures can decrease tick survival because attachment to a host is more challenging. However, this management strategy only lasts as long as the pasture stays mowed, and when grass grows the habitat for ticks is also re-established. No single strategy provides lasting control, so producers should consider using multiple approaches. There is no silver bullet for tick control – layering strategies can help get the most control for ticks for your herd.

WCA Elects New Leadership and Updates Policy at Annual Meeting

The Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association (WCA) hosted its Annual Meeting and Winter Conference in Mauston on February 28, bringing together members and industry partners from across the state to discuss policy, leadership, and the future of Wisconsin’s beef industry.

Highlighting the meeting, members elected Jared Geiser of Riveredge Farms in Chilton as president of the organization. Geiser succeeds Tressa Lacy of Lacy Acres in Rio, who completed her two-year term as president.

“I am proud of the progress we’ve made during my time in leadership from securing continued funding for the Agriculture Road Improvement Program to strengthen rural roads and bridges, to supporting increased resources for DATCP’s Producer-Led Watershed Grant Program,” Lacy said. “We’ve also stood firm in advocating for clear labeling standards for cultured animal products and for responsible wolf management that gives producers the tools they need to address depredation. These accomplishments reflect the power of our members working together, and I’m confident WCA will continue building on this momentum.”

In accepting the role, Geiser emphasized the importance of grassroots leadership within the cattle industry.

“Every person in this room brings a unique perspective and experience to the table,” Geiser said. “Our strength as an organization comes from producers who are willing to share their voices and work together to shape the future of Wisconsin’s cattle industry.”

Geiser has been an active member of WCA from his

participation in the Beef Leadership Institute to his initial election to the board in 2023 and looks forward to building on the organization’s policy efforts and member engagement initiatives in the coming year.

The association also recognized Brady Zuck of Zuck Cattle Company in Ladysmith, who completed six consecutive years of leadership service, including two years as president-elect, two years as president, and two years as past president. WCA members expressed appreciation for his dedication and commitment to advancing Wisconsin’s beef community.

During the business meeting, members voted to update WCA’s wolf management policy. The revised policy supports proper management of Wisconsin’s wolf population while protecting cattle herds and the livelihoods of beef producers. Members underscored the importance of science-based wildlife management that balances conservation goals with agricultural sustainability.

In addition, the membership passed a resolution regarding the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The resolution proposes the development of a working-lands CRP option that would allow for increased managed grazing on CRP acres. The proposal places particular emphasis on creating opportunities for young and beginning farmers to access land while maintaining conservation outcomes.

The Annual Meeting and Winter Conference provided educational sessions, networking opportunities, and updates on industry initiatives, reinforcing WCA’s mission to advocate for Wisconsin beef producers and promote a strong, sustainable cattle industry.

Seasonal Lice Activity in Cattle: When and How to Treat



Written by: Sandy Stuttgen and Adam Hartfiel, UW-Madison Division of Extension Livestock Educators

Cattle lice are commonly seen during Wisconsin's winter. Treating lice costs money, time, and labor—and resistance to common products is increasing. Before you reach for treatment, ask yourself: Do my cattle actually need delousing, and when is the best time to treat them? Once you decide to treat, do so correctly to reduce insecticide resistance in your herd.

Cattle support lice year-round. Lice activity increases in winter because thick hair coats and the warm, humid layer near the skin create ideal conditions for them. Additionally, over-crowding, poor animal husbandry, and feed quality can contribute to increased severity of lice infestations. As spring arrives, cattle shed hair—and many lice with it. In summer, thin hair coats and direct sunlight reduce lice activity. UW-Madison Division of Extension's Lice Management for Cattle summarizes their life cycle.

To determine whether treatment is needed, closely inspect a few animals by parting the hair with both hands and counting the number of lice per square inch on the head, neck, shoulders, back, rump, and tail switch while cattle are safely restrained. Write the counts down, as it's easy to forget. A one inch by one inch square of cardboard can help keep area in perspective. University of Nebraska-Lincoln articles, Fall Cattle Lice Treatments and Prepare for Cattle Lice, and their video, Cattle Lice Treatment and Control include lice-counting directions.

If you find more than 10 lice per square inch, treat the animal right away. At this level, cattle are usually itchy and may already be losing hair. Because lice spread quickly through direct contact and shared surfaces or equipment, treat the whole herd when treatment is warranted. Lice survive only a few days off the host; therefore, deep cleaning the environment is unnecessary.

Avoid treating too early, producers who pair delousing

treatments in fall or early winter with other fall management tasks like weaning need to monitor the effectiveness of treatments. If your herd has a history of lice, a late-fall or early-winter treatment can help—but only if hair coats have grown in and temperatures are consistently cold. Most products don't kill eggs, and their residual activity may wear off before the next hatch. Treating too early in a warm fall or using a product that has too short of a residual activity length often leads to disappointment.

A variety of lice control products are available. The COWS Control of Ectoparasites of Cattle (available as a Resource from the Lice, Mites & Insect Pests tab) provides help with product selection. Most insecticides used for lice control are pyrethroid pour-ons or powders, and each product has its own strengths. Read the label carefully for dosage, residual activity, and withdrawal times. Rotate active ingredients to slow lice resistance and increase long term effectiveness.

Read the label of systemic products, such as macrocyclic lactones like the Cydectin® or Eprinex® as some work better on sucking lice, while others target biting lice more effectively. Many non-systemic products don't kill eggs, so you may need a second application about 14 days after the first to target new nymph and adult stages. Keeping in mind the average two- to five-week louse life cycle and only nymphs and adults are hindered by the treatment, recheck animals at two-week intervals for two months after treatment to make sure the treatment reduced the lice infestation.

Eradicating lice is difficult and often unnecessary. Cattle and lice can co-exist when lice don't get the upper hand. Closely observe your cattle during the winter and quickly (and effectively) treat to reduce production losses for your cattle.

**Sources used for this article are available upon request.*

Peer reviewed by Bill Halfman and Heather Schlessler. UW-Madison Division of Extension Educators.

New DNR Tool Helps Businesses Navigate Environmental Requirements

The Wisconsin DNR's Sustainability and Business Support Program (SBS) announced the launch of Enviro-Nav, the Environmental Responsibility Navigator. The new online tool is designed to make environmental compliance easier for businesses across the state and includes specific information for agricultural businesses to understand their environmental obligations.

Developed by the DNR's Sustainability and Business Support Program, Enviro-Nav is a resource that guides users through a series of questions about their business operations. No matter if the business is new, expanding, or just has compliance questions, Enviro-Nav will summarize potentially applicable environmental regulations based on the users' responses.

Enviro-Nav covers a full range of environmental topics, including air emissions, water use and discharge and waste management. The tool features specialized content for 18 different sectors and processes, including CAFO / Non-CAFO farm, digester, grain handling, demolition with asbestos removal and emergency generator use.

For the cattle products sector, Enviro-Nav can help

identify regulatory requirements, improve the clarity of discussions with the DNR and support decision-making during project planning and permitting. From evaluating facility upgrades, advising on site selection, or investigating compliance questions regarding ongoing facility operations, Enviro-Nav can help streamline compliance efforts.

Enviro-Nav is available to all Wisconsin businesses and is an anonymous tool. Those looking for assistance with environmental regulations should review the information in Enviro-Nav to enhance compliance efforts and save time and money.

"Enviro-Nav is a win-win for the environment and for Wisconsin's economy, as environmental compliance is an essential component of a thriving business," said DNR Secretary Karen Hyun. "I encourage any business seeking assistance with environmental requirements to take advantage of this new resource."

For questions or feedback, contact the DNR's Small Business Environmental Assistance Program at DNRS-smallBusiness@wisconsin.gov or call 855-889-3021.

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New Dietary Guidelines for Americans Reinforce Beef's Role in a Healthy Lifestyle

Tammy Vaassen
Executive Director
Wisconsin Beef Council

Every five years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) jointly release the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) to serve as the cornerstone for federal nutrition programs, nutrition standards and nutrition education initiatives. In the years leading up to the release of the DGAs the current body of nutrition science is evaluated to help inform the recommendations. The 2025-2030 DGA was released in January, and it prioritizes diets built on whole, nutrient-dense foods such as protein (including beef), dairy, vegetables, fruits, healthy fats, and whole grains.

The new DGAs confirm what producers have long known, that beef belongs in a healthy, balanced diet. The guidance recognizes the importance of nutrient-dense, real, whole foods like beef for a healthy life.

Beef is being recognized for providing an important source of high-quality protein and nine other essential nutrients like zinc, iron and B vitamins.¹ As a staple food in Americans' diets, beef can help offset nutrient deficiencies, particularly iron and vitamin B12, which are critical for vulnerable populations such as children and older adults.²⁻⁵

This is a great opportunity for beef farmers and ranchers because beef delivers key nutrients that many Americans need across all stages of life.

USDA and HHS use the latest nutrition science to develop DGA recommendations. Over the years, the Beef Checkoff and the Federation of State Beef Councils have funded rigorous, high-quality human nutrition research highlighting beef's nutrient profile and demonstrating its role in a healthy diet and lifestyle. Decades of research now confirms that beef can fit in heart-healthy eating patterns, and paired with fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, can help meet dietary guidelines effectively.⁶ Several of these scientific reports were cited in the new DGAs.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff who leads the efforts on nutrition research, also takes that scientific data to equip doctors and other healthcare professionals with evidence-



based resources. Currently, there are four educational toolkits that NCBA produced that focus on beef's role in a healthy diet throughout the lifespan: high quality protein, heart health, early years, and adolescent nutrition. These kits have been mailed to family physician and pediatric offices across the U.S. In addition, state beef councils have had the opportunity to extend the reach of the kits within their state borders through a buy-in, extending that mailing to more offices, and to purchase kits for in-state use. Wisconsin Beef Council has chosen to support these efforts. This spring we'll be at the state conferences for dietitians, family physicians, nurses and cardiovascular/pulmonary health and rehabilitation professionals. We'll be taking these beef nutrition kits to expand the reach and knowledge of Wisconsin's health professionals, and the clients they provide nutrition advice to.

Nationwide, healthcare professionals who received these kits and responded to a follow-up survey had an overwhelmingly positive reaction to the program materials, with 96% rating them very valuable or valuable. In addition, 90% of survey respondents say they will recommend beef more frequently to their patients when asked "What impact has receiving and using these materials had on your recommendations of beef to patients?"

Our team wishes you the best with calving season and the upcoming growing season!

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6. Sanders LM, Palacios OM, Wilcox ML, Maki KC. Beef Consumption and Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials. *Current Developments in Nutrition* 2024; 8(12): 104500.



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