

# cattleTRAILS

.....SEPTEMBER 2019

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



Photo credit: Lynn Grooms/Agri-View

## ABOVE: STEAK TRAILER AT STATE FAIR

New managers Craig and Vickie Dunnum successfully staffed a team in the steak trailer for all 11 days of the 2019 Wisconsin State Fair in West Allis.

## President's Path

Eric Johnson, WCA President

Greetings to all! I would like to use this space to address a topic that has exploded onto the world food scene, the so-called plant-based alternatives: the Impossible burger, Beyond Beef, and the bio-burger. The last was on a menu at a restaurant we had visited, and now it has expanded into chicken markets.

The marketing campaign for these products has been intense, with ads on every form of media possible. Every restaurant we have been to recently has added some version to their menu. That's where it gets interesting. With the bio-burger mentioned above, or the listing on a menu that reads "a healthy plant-based alternative burger", does that mean there are unhealthy plant-based alternatives? Or that the rest of their menu is unhealthy?

The promotion of these beef imitators centers around the plant-based claim, with the sentiment that "plant-based" automatically makes them a healthy choice. They do have plant materials, but they also have around 38 other ingredients, including chemicals. They are also processed in a way that makes their product resemble beef. One thing I have noticed in the ads is that they all promote a product that emulates the taste, texture, and flavor of real beef. They have yet to be bold enough to say that they exceed beef in those three

categories. As much as these products want to be known as plant-based, they desperately want to have their product placed in the meat case of grocery stores. If it's plant-based, shouldn't it be in the produce section?

As a beef producer, it is flattering to see so much effort going into producing a product that resembles beef. But the reality is that beef continues to be the gold standard when it comes to the protein of choice for the consumer.

So my response when questioned about this topic is to acknowledge that consumers can choose to purchase whatever they want. But when making those choices, they need to be given the facts about what a product really is by having labels that are not misleading. If it is not beef or meat-based, it should not have any labeling that might lead someone to think it is meat-based, like the term "burger." These products should not be allowed space in any meat case or beef section of a retail store.

As we approach another fall harvest season, I wish you all a safe and successful harvest. As always, remember what you are doing and who you are doing it for. Be safe.

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

@WisconsinCattlemensAssociation

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## upcoming events:

- **World Beef Expo**  
**September 26-28, 2019**  
*Wisconsin State Fair Park  
West Allis, Wisconsin*  
Enjoy the cattle shows, visit the WCA booth, and swing by the steak trailer for a delicious beef meal.
- **World Dairy Expo**  
**October 1-6, 2019**  
*Alliant Energy Center  
Madison, Wisconsin*  
Visit the WCA booth in the trade show and grab food from the steak trailer!
- **Winter Conference**  
**February 21-22, 2020**  
*Chula Vista Resort  
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin*  
Education, legislative updates, networking and entertainment with the men and women of Wisconsin's cattle industry. Don't miss it!

**CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR  
THE LATEST EVENTS  
AND INFORMATION**  
[wisconsincattlemen.com](http://wisconsincattlemen.com)

# Changes to the Cattle Trails

Times are changing, and so is the Cattle Trails newsletter. Enjoy the new look and choose if you would like to receive the newsletter digitally going forward.

## CHECK YOUR INBOX!

All WCA members should have also received a digital copy of this issue of the Cattle Trails in their email inbox. Please use that email to indicate your preference for receiving the Cattle Trails moving forward - either digitally via email or to continue physically receiving a hard copy in your mailbox.

Questions? Contact [brooke@wisconsincattlemen.com](mailto:brooke@wisconsincattlemen.com).

## Plan to attend Winter Conference

The 2020 WCA Winter Conference will be held on Feb. 21-22 at Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells. The conference will include educational sessions, legislative updates, networking opportunities, and entertainment.

The conference will start with a Cattlemen's Education Series, which will feature management-based topics relevant to cow-calf and feedlot producers. The series will also include continuing education credits for BQA. The WCA Annual Meeting will be held over lunch on Friday. Following the Annual Meeting, you will receive legislative updates from WCA Legislative Committee and NCBA. A panel discussion will be held prior to the reception with members of the Wisconsin Meat Processors Association (WAMP).

The day will end with opportunities to network with fellow cattlemen and industry members at our reception, which will feature local beef products and ice cream. You don't want to miss the evening's events. The keynote speakers will be announced in October. The reception will honor our awardees and we will be raising funds through the Silent Auction to send a young producer to NCBA. The evening will also include entertainment by the popular local bluegrass band, Down from the Hills.

On Saturday, the WCA board and committees will hold their meetings in the morning. Wisconsin Angus, Hereford and Shorthorn Associations will also hold their annual meetings in conjunction with the conference.

The program and registration information will be posted by October 1 on our website. Award nominations will also be posted. Please consider nominating your fellow cattlemen for these awards: Cattleman of the Year, Friend of WCA, BQA producer, and Environmental Stewardship. Any WCA member can nominate someone for these awards.

Please join us for this great event and program! You will find the most current information at <http://www.wisconsincattlemen.com/events/winter-conference>. Email questions or requests for additional information to [winterconference@wisconsincattlemen.com](mailto:winterconference@wisconsincattlemen.com).

**Follow WCA on Facebook and watch your e-mail for Winter Conference updates!**



# Update from the Steak Trailer

State Fair 2019 was one for the record books, with a record 1,130,575 people in attendance. WCA also benefited from the large crowd, as we reached new heights on total product sales.

Throughout the fair, we enjoyed seeing our repeat customers who “just have to stop in and get that ribeye sandwich” along with many first-time visitors to the Steak Trailer.

Our new managers, Craig and Vickie Dunnum, successfully staffed a team of people who served throughout the 11-day run. In total, over 14,200 ribeye sandwiches, 19,200 burgers, and 2,080 hotdogs were sold! A special thank you goes out to all of the volunteers who shared their time, including:

- Biddick Farms
- Destination Imagination Wauwatosa Middle School/High School
- Mauston FFA
- Rock County Beef Producers
- Marshall FFA
- Vernon County Cattlemen
- Hiawatha 4-H
- WI State Fair Camp of Champions
- Green County Beef Queen
- Numerous WCA members



ABOVE: Steak trailer managers Craig and Vickie Dunnum.  
Photo credit: Lynn Grooms, Agri-View

Here are the events we have remaining in 2019:

- September 26-29, 2019 - World Beef Expo, Wisconsin State Fair Park, West Allis
- October 1-5, 2019 - World Dairy Expo, Alliant Energy Center, Madison

We have one group labor shift for six people still available for World Beef Expo on September 28th from 10:30am to 6pm. We also welcome any WCA member to stop in and lend a hand at any of our events throughout the year! Additionally, we are already gearing up for next year's events. If you know of a local 4-H/FFA/youth group looking for a fundraising opportunity, consider the Steak Trailer! Please contact Vickie Dunnum (608-963-2428, [wcasteaktrailer@gmail.com](mailto:wcasteaktrailer@gmail.com)) to secure your group's time at an upcoming event for the 2020 season.

## Member Spotlight: Levi Wedig

Levi Wedig | Darlington | Board member since: Feb. 2019

I am Levi Wedig from Darlington, Wisconsin, and I recently joined the WCA board this last February. As a young member of this industry, I thought this position would be a great opportunity for me to be able to give back and share some ideas from the younger generation.

I was raised in Darlington on my parents' farm, which was primarily a dairy operation through most of my years. As my siblings and I grew up, we started into the beef as a 4-H project and it has grown from there. We showed cattle every year at many levels and were fortunate enough to find some success. The beef cow herd was a product of that success and we were blessed with parents that afforded us the opportunity to grow the herd. After attending Iowa State University, majoring in Animal Science and Dairy Science, I worked for a feed distribution company in southeast Iowa for two years. Last spring, I was able to return to the family operation full-time to work with my parents and two brothers. The dairy cattle are still the backbone of the farm, but we run a couple hundred beef cows - mainly focusing on show cattle.

With my position on the board I have been involved with the scholarship committee, volunteered at the steak trailer at state fair and helped put together the summer tour. Summer tour has so far been the highlight of my time as we were able to visit several different farms and see how they conduct their cattle business.



ABOVE: Levi Wedig is the September WCA board member spotlight.

I feel that it is important that all producers are able to get away from the farm every once in a while and see what their peers are doing in the industry. Observing how other people are successful and finding ways to incorporate new ideas whenever possible is integral for growth, no matter what business you are in.

It has been a great opportunity to be on the board and I appreciate more and more what Wisconsin Cattleman's Association is doing for the growing beef industry in Wisconsin. As my time continues with the board I hope to get more involved and see how WCA can grow and flourish.





ABOVE: There was no shortage of smiles in the Beef Tent at the 2019 Farm Tech Days.

## Farm Tech Days Update

The Wisconsin Cattlemen’s Association had a booth in the Beef Tent at the 2019 Farm Technology Days.

From July 23 - 25, the Beef Tent at Farm Tech Days allowed attendees the opportunity to interact with beef producers, learn about different breeds of beef cattle, and interact with exhibitors, including the Wisconsin Cattlemen’s Association.

Located in the 70-acre “tent city”, the Beef Tent had a special visitor on Wednesday, July 24th. Comedian Charlie Berens of the Manitowoc Minute online video series came and visited with beef

producers prior to entertaining the crowd at the first-ever Block Party event. Due to the event, show hours were extended until 7 p.m. on Wednesday.

Although over 700 attendees participated in the new Block Party event, attendance at the 2019 show was noticeably down from past years. This year’s show brought in an attendance estimated in the tens of thousands relative to the anticipated 40,000 attendees.

Although a variety of factors could have played a role in the decreased attendance, attendees who took the time to visit the Beef Tent left with a greater knowledge of Wisconsin’s beef industry and organizations.

The 2020 Farm Technology Days will be held in Eau Claire County on July 21-23 at Huntsinger Farms, the world’s largest grower and processor of horseradish.

## Membership Shoutout

Nate Moll  
Membership Committee Chairman

Happy Fall everyone! Hopefully the pastures are still running green and calves are growing as we head in to the cooler weather. It never seems like the summer is long enough to get all the projects done before the snow flies. One project we have finished this summer on the membership side is updating our brochure for the WCA, we were able to showcase them at Farm Technology Days this past July. We continue to work on the legislative side for our members, as well as continually looking to add value to our membership.

With the summer fairs behind us, we look forward to the fall shows. World Beef Expo and World Dairy Expo are soon upon us. If anyone is interested in helping recruit new members at either show, contact me.

### QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS RELATED TO MEMBERSHIP?

Reach out to Nate Moll at:  
nmoll@equitycoop.com  
(608) 434-8316

Or check the WCA website:  
wisconsincattlemen.com





## Governor Issues Directive to Regulate Farmers' Use of Nitrates

Jordan Lamb  
DeWitt LLP | [jkl@dewittllp.com](mailto:jkl@dewittllp.com)

On July 31, 2019, Governor Evers announced that he is directing the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to pursue the development of a new rule that would establish a targeted performance standard for the application of nitrates over permeable soils. This directive will trigger the re-opening and revision of Wisconsin Administrative Code s. NR 151, which is Wisconsin's nonpoint source pollution regulation. Although no specific regions for this targeted standard have yet been announced, it is expected that the Central Sands and/or Southwest areas of Wisconsin could be targeted in this regulatory initiative.

In addition, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) will also have to re-open and revise their corresponding rule, Wis. Admin. Code. s. ATCP 50, in order to develop the conservation and technical standards that will be needed to guide farmers' implementation of a new NR 151

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## Wisconsin Hosts Central American Importers

Tammy Vaassen  
Executive Director, Wisconsin Beef Council

In early September, the Wisconsin Beef Council hosted a trade team from Central America to showcase the Wisconsin beef industry, introduce them to the packers in our state, and showcase trends in retail and foodservice that are occurring in the U.S. The effort was coordinated in conjunction with the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF). The trip was made possible through the Beef Checkoff, as well as support from Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, and Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board.

Five importers from Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Guatemala participated in the tour. Their companies represent importers, processors and distributors with retail and foodservice customers. Also attending were Gerardo Rodriguez and Lucia Ruano, USMEF staff from the region; Tammy Vaassen, Wisconsin Beef Council; John Freitag; and Jeff Swenson with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture.

Throughout the week, the group toured three farms – Breukal Farms, Waunakee, a Holstein feedlot; Marda Angus, Lodi, a purebred Angus cow-calf farm; and Pagel's Ponderosa Dairy, a large dairy.

They also had the opportunity to visit the JBS and American

targeted performance standard for nitrogen.

It is our understanding that the first step in the administrative rules process is underway. The DNR is currently developing a "scope statement," which will define the scope of the proposed change to NR 151. That scope statement has not yet been made public or scheduled for consideration by the Natural Resources Board (NRB). The NRB must approve any DNR scope statement before work on a rule revision can commence.

From a legal perspective, a scope statement to revise NR 151 to create a targeted performance standard for application of nitrates must meet the statutory criteria for a targeted performance standard. A targeted performance standard, by definition, must be limited to a specific waterbody or group of waterbodies or region. A statewide standard is not a targeted performance standard. Rather, a statewide standard would require a general reopening NR 151 and would also perhaps require a statutory change to Chapter 281, depending on the circumstances. As such, it is expected that the scope statement will be limited to a particular region or regions of the State.

Second, for the adoption of a targeted performance standard to be considered, the DNR must show that the current statewide performance standard: (1) has been implemented and (2) is not sufficient to achieve water quality. In this case, it will be necessary for the scope statement to demonstrate, through sufficient scientific evidence, monitoring or modeling, that the current statewide standards have been implemented in the designated region and, despite that implementation, they have failed to meet water quality standards.

Because the development of any proposed regional targeted performance standard related to the application of nitrogen by farmers is of importance across our membership, the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association advocacy team is monitoring and participating as necessary as this rule process moves forward.

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Foods Group harvest plants in Green Bay. Plant staff provided tours of the harvest floors, and discussed the products that their companies could provide to the Central American region. The guests expressed interest in a variety of beef products, but are looking for consistency and quality, while keeping in mind that it is a price sensitive market. There was interest in grain-fed Holstein beef as potential to meet these needs, especially to be able to compete with their domestic grass-fed beef supply.

In addition, the group had the chance to learn about U.S. meat safety and inspection, view a meat cutting demonstration of beef subprimals, and take a tour of the Meat Science and Animal Biologics building that is under construction at UW-Madison. They connected with export staff from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture who can assist with logistics of exporting products to their countries, and tour a retail meat case to see displays and merchandising efforts to help sell more beef.

This was an exciting opportunity for us to showcase the diversity of the beef industry in the state; the quality, availability and consistency of products that can be exported, and to further develop relationships with these buyers.

For a number of years, the Wisconsin Beef Council Board has worked in cooperation with the USMEF to help grow demand for beef in foreign markets – but has specifically chosen to focus on the Central American region. Those efforts have included retail and foodservice promotions in that area, as well as sponsorship of the Latin American Showcase – a trade show and educational program that brings together buyers and sellers together at a single location.

The purpose of this survey is to learn about current farming and ranching practices and the successes and obstacles of the BQA program. Through interviews and a comprehensive multi-state survey, NCBA and University of California Davis will work to enhance current BQA programs and lay the groundwork for future farmer and rancher educational programs.

**WE NEED YOUR  
VOICE!**



**TAKE THE SURVEY  
TODAY!!**



# Ranch Management Survey

## WHAT?



Completely anonymous survey. Your input will greatly improve rancher education programs.

## WHY?



Let's make programs for ranchers by ranchers. Win a YETI cooler or one of our many other prizes!

## HOW?



To take the quick survey, use the QR code above or type in the link below:

<https://tinyurl.com/ranchsurvey-com>

Contact for questions:  
Sarah Klopatek, MS  
[Klopatek@ucdavis.edu](mailto:Klopatek@ucdavis.edu)

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# NCBA Action Regarding Fire at Tyson Plant in Kansas

Letter received August 14, 2019 from  
NCBA President Jennifer Houston

As you are aware, the Tyson beef processing facility in Holcomb, Kan., has been shut down due to a fire they sustained on Friday and Saturday. We recognize the enormous negative economic impact this plant shut-down is having on the beef industry. We want to reassure you that we are doing everything in our power to minimize the impact this is having on the market.

After the fire, Tyson quickly announced it will rebuild the plant (read more on Tyson's recovery plan here,) which is crucial to beef producers in Kansas and surrounding states. Since being made aware of the event, NCBA has been working to ensure the Federal regulatory burden does not make recovery more difficult than necessary.

Following are some of the steps NCBA has taken to minimize the inevitable economic disruption and help the industry recover as quickly as possible:

- NCBA reached out to the National Economic Council at the White House to inform them of the situation and ask them to help with regulatory flexibility.

- We contacted the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and the Packers and Stockyards Division to request they keep an eye on the market to make sure it keeps working, and to identify any market participant who might try to illegally capitalize from the market situation.
- We have requested U.S. Department of Transportation provide an Hours of Service waiver to allow trucks to transport live cattle to other plants for processing.
- We contacted Secretary Perdue's office and other USDA leadership to inform them of the uncertainty this brings to our industry, and we requested they work on APHIS and FSIS inspector flexibility to help the industry meet our needs while the Tyson facility is being repaired.
- NCBA staff informed Senate and House Agriculture Committee Staff of the situation and our requests of flexibility to the Administration.

NCBA also followed up on phone calls with official letters of request to DOT, USDA, and CFTC for regulatory flexibility.

NCBA will continue to engage on this issue on behalf of its members and the beef community as a whole until the plant is again operational.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Houston, NCBA President

## Now is the Time to Manage Forage Inventory

Sandy Stuttgen  
Agriculture Educator, Extension Taylor County

Some farmers are wondering if they will have enough forage to see them through the upcoming winter. It's time to stop wondering and time to start taking inventory.

Basically, there are four steps for completing your farm's inventory. The Estimating Hay Use Calculator is a free spreadsheet that calculates results from your inputs. It is available at WI Beef Information Center-Division of Extension <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/wbic/decision-tools-and-software/>. For those you not so inclined to work with spreadsheets, grab a piece of paper, a pencil, calculator and start figuring!

### Step 1: Write down farm livestock numbers and what they weigh.

Counting heads is easy. Measuring weights is a bit more involved, and getting it wrong leads to the wrong conclusions. A scale in the chute is the most accurate method for determining weight. Weight approximation may be made by using a weight tape in the chute or weighing representative animals over a scale (two trips over a drive-over scale: subtract the truck and full trailer from the truck and empty trailer, then divide by the number of animals in the trailer).

**Step 2: Determine Dry Matter (DM) forage requirements of the herd per day.** For this step, it's not the wet part of the forage that matters. It's the DM component that provides the carbohydrates, protein, and other components the animal needs. Each animal's preferred total daily intake = 2 - 2.5% of its body weight on a DM basis. A herd of 20 cows that each weigh 1,400 lbs. multiplying by .02 (2% on a DM basis) results in the cows needing 560 lbs. of dry matter forage per day.

How much would 10 retained heifers eat over winter? Remember these animals should grow, so their weight will change over the feeding period. When planning to overwinter from Nov 1 - May 31 (210 days), if their beginning weight is 575 lbs. and they are fed to gain 2 lbs. per day, then their ending weight is 995 lbs. The average

weight of each animal is  $(575 + 995) / 2 = 785$  lbs. The calculation becomes  $10 \text{ heifers} \times 785 \text{ lbs.} \times .02 \text{ (DM)} = 157 \text{ lbs. DM/day}$ . Don't forget about the herd bull, he eats too!  $1 \text{ bull} \times 1,400 \text{ lbs.} \times .02 \text{ (DM)} = 28 \text{ lbs. DM/day}$ .

### Step 3: Calculate the DM forage required for the feeding period.

Adding the daily amounts from above =  $560 + 157 + 28 = 745 \text{ lbs. DM forage/day}$  needed for 210 days equals =  $156,450 \text{ lbs.}$  or 78 T of DM forage.

### Step 4: Inventory all forages available, converting all high moisture forages to their DM basis.

Again this involves accurately measuring weights; overestimating or underestimating weights leads to the wrong conclusions! Weigh a few bales (day hay or wrapped baleage) or full chopper boxes to serve as an approximation for all the others. Two trips over the scale: full - empty = weight of as-fed forage. Count: bales in storage or loads placed in the silos, bunkers or drive-over piles. Dimensions of bales, chopper boxes, silos, bunkers or drive-over piles along with conversion tables may be used to estimate amount of forage.

Earlier I told you the moisture content was not as important, but now we need to bring it back into its as-fed component. Converting the DM forage needed to as-fed dry hay @ 85% DM =  $78 \text{ T} / 0.85 = 92 \text{ T dry hay}$ . Don't forget about the storage losses (shrink) and feeding waste that occurs, even on the best managed farms. Assuming a very conservative 10% waste factor,  $92 \text{ T} \times .10 = 9.2 \text{ T}$  for a total of approximately 100 T as-fed dry hay needed for the feeding period. If using haylage @ 40%DM =  $78 \text{ T} / 0.40 = 195 \text{ T}$  as fed haylage + 10% waste, approx. 215 T haylage or 9' x 180' bag or 16' x 50' silo.

Determine the quality of every forage source you have so that you may feed a balanced ration. Lab analysis allows for the purchase of alternatives to either replace or supplement your forage. Explore options with a nutritionist.

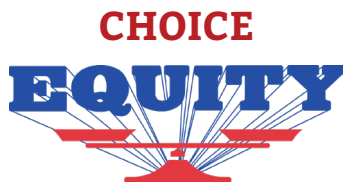
**With an accurate forage inventory in hand, management decisions for purchasing forage or reducing herd numbers may be made before a crisis develops.** Forage prices are cheaper when supply is high right after harvest. Don't wait to buy next spring, when yours and everyone else's supplies are short, and demand is high. Seek advice from the market for the best times to market each type of animal you could sell from your herd.



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