



The Voice of  
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BEEF INDUSTRY



# CATTLE COUNTRY



Julie W. captured this shot of her cattle while doing the daily evening herd check near Piney, MB.

## Manitoba Livestock Predation Prevention Project Update

BY: RAY BITTNER, LPPP LEAD

What did we learn after initiating the Livestock Predation Prevention Project (LPPP) with 10 different practices on over 109 projects on 46 Manitoba farms over the last two years? In this project update I am focusing on fall predator losses of livestock in confinement in relation to round-up and weaning, or fall calving.

Fall livestock attacks are a concern for many producers, and the losses sting especially when the young stock have made it through so much over the summer. Predators in fall are looking for new hunting grounds as pastures are vacated, access to food such as berries is

over, and packing on some calories before the cold winter is their number one priority. At the same time the predators are getting hungrier, young stock are entering a risky period where their diet changes drastically, their open free range behavior is ended with close quarters housing, temperatures drop, soggy fall weather can impact their ability to stay warm, immunization from spring vaccines is waning, cattle from multiple pastures and exposures are pooled into a small area, not to mention the stress that can accompany weaning.

Producers don't always lose calves at weaning time, but potential illness and risk abounds when so many challenges all hit at the same time. Predators can hear a

newly-weaned herd for many miles and they understand the implications: sick, slow animals, and the occasional deadstock that they don't even have to fight for. While there are no 100 per cent cures for livestock illness at weaning or fall calving there are a few mitigation plans that can work to give your youngstock an extra few days to recover without being harassed. Once a calf has shed the weaning stress and achieved a full stomach the illness potential will plummet and the predators will move on.

This is a list of the most successful management practices that the LPPP program found to help avert fall confinement predation.

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# A Look at Seasonal Change As Well As Change in Government

This truly is the season of change. As we have seen, the greens of summer are fading into fall colours and very soon we will be surrounded by our familiar sea of white. A real positive change is an upswing in calf prices this fall, however, they are needed, as we have seen sharp price increases in everything else. These are only some of the changes, as we also recently saw a change in provincial government. More on that in a moment.

Looking back on the summer, many of us didn't experience outstanding growing conditions and are leaning heavily on the carryover, whether their own or province-wide from the outstanding 2022 production year. This is a good opportunity to look back at our pastures' grazing plans and our winter feed production model and set aside some time on some of the colder days to look at opportunities for change and improvement. There are many different opportunities, through different outlets, to take advantage of programming to offset some of the costs of these upgrades. There is a wide range of programming out there, varying by region, but I would urge everybody to look into what is available for their own operations.

As with last year, we are seeing lots of calves marketed into these very strong markets, even going down



MATTHEW ATKINSON  
*President's Column*

to some pretty low weight classes. We will see what this does to influence calf prices in the new year.

As much as I find clearing snow to be one of my most hated jobs as it seems like it takes so much time and money to achieve such short-term results, I am hopeful that we do see some significant snowfalls. In many regions, water tables and dugout levels are very low. We didn't see any of the big fall rains to replenish them, which starts to give me flashbacks of the fall of 2020, ahead of widespread drought in 2021.

Following a recent provincial election, we have seen not only a change in government, but also a fairly significant urban-rural split. I would like to congratulate Premier Wab Kinew, Agriculture Minister Ron Kostyshyn and all the other MLAs as they assume their various roles. Now that the cabinet ministers have sworn in, I am pleased to see we have an Agriculture Minister from a rural riding. We welcome him to his new position and

look forward to working with him and his colleagues on both issues and opportunities facing the beef sector. With such a big urban-rural split, it will be more important than ever to share the story of sustainable beef production in Manitoba, and all the economic, environmental and social benefits it provides with the MLAs.

I would also like to really thank former Agriculture Minister Derek Johnson for his service and leadership. He tried very hard to address the cattle industry's issues and he had a very good relationship with myself and our organization. Thanks as well to the other Ministers and MLAs we worked with in the previous administration.

As we finish our district meetings, I look forward to welcoming and working with some new board directors, while unfortunately having to see a great board member - Nancy Howatt, retire come our AGM in February. There is a very diverse and constantly changing suite of issues and opportunities that we work on at Manitoba Beef Producers that involve having a lot of irons in the fire at one time. However, it's great to have outstanding staff support and such a good board to try to work through these. I always feel so fortunate to be able to work with such an outstanding group. I hope you have a productive fall!



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# District Meetings Underway With Varied Topics Being Discussed

Good day folks,

Hope your fall is going well. We are lucky to have such a nice extended fall with decent temperatures. I am sure this has been helpful to get important fall work done and get feed ready for the cold winter months.

As I write this column, we are in the middle of our fall district meetings. This year we are hosting seven in-person meetings in the even-numbered districts where director elections are required and one virtual session. So far, attendance and engagement at the



CARSON CALLUM  
General Manager's Column

meetings has been high and it was nice to see both familiar faces and some new faces ones. It's great that producers can take an evening off the farm to get an

update from MBP on all we have been working on to drive the industry forward. Key topics of discussion at the meetings so far have included predation challenges and potential solutions, livestock movement reporting/livestock inspection, and the Agricultural Crown Lands Leasing Program, among others. With a new government in place here in Manitoba, we look forward to bringing these topics up with the newly-appointed Cabinet Ministers, MLAs from all parties and their staff to ensure beef sector issues and opportunities are heard and addressed.

One topic of discussion I am bringing forward at all our district meetings relates to our governance structure as an organization. With the unfortunate reality of declining producer numbers in the province, we want to have good discussions with the membership about how the board of directors is structured. MBP regularly reviews its governance structure. *The Cattle Producers Association Act* states MBP's board will have between 12 and 15 directors. The Act was created in the 1980s when Manitoba had considerably more cattle producers than it has now. As per our administration by-law, MBP currently has 14 districts and directors. At times it has been difficult to fill director positions, resulting in fewer voices around the board table.

MBP is considering possible scenarios to address this, such as potentially reducing the overall number of districts, but allowing for the election of directors at large, e.g. 10 directors elected at district level and four elected via general election held at the Annual General Meeting. I want to stress that this isn't something we are deciding on tomorrow, as a by-law change of this nature takes considerable time and ultimately approval by the members at an AGM. However, we thought it would be good to have a roundtable discussion with membership to take back the points raised to the board table to help address the long-term concern. If you have any questions or comments you want to bring forward on this topic, please feel free to give me a call at the office.

It's a short and sweet column this month. After writing this, we are back on the road for more of our in-person meetings.

Stay well and see you on the road,  
Carson

## Help Protect Cattle and Wildlife

Winter conditions will soon be here. If you haven't already done so, take steps to protect your stored forage and silage from wildlife damage before snow and colder weather makes this more challenging. When deer and elk can access hay or silage, you lose valuable livestock feed and encourage the transmission of diseases such as chronic wasting disease and tuberculosis.

Protect your forage, cattle, and wildlife:

- Plan and construct wildlife exclusion barriers around feed storage areas; these can be temporary or (preferably) permanent.
- Bring bales to permanent fenced stack yards as soon as possible and be sure to close the gate.
- For temporary protection, place a row of double stacked straw bales around the stored hay or silage.
- Use temporary electric fencing to protect bale stacks by inserting fiberglass posts horizontally into the bales to hold three, or preferably five, alternating hot and grounded wires; ensuring the top and bottom wires are hot.
- Clean up any spilled hay, silage, or grain when found.

Preventing damage before it occurs will ensure your feed supply and help protect the health of both your livestock and wildlife.

For more information about damage prevention, please visit Agricultural Interactions at [manitoba.ca/human-wildlife](http://manitoba.ca/human-wildlife).

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## 2023 MBP Scholarship Winners Named

Each year MBP offers six \$1,000 scholarships to members, or the children of members, who are attending university, college or other post-secondary institutions or pursuing trades training. Applicants are asked to submit a 600 word essay on what the beef industry means to them, their family, community and Manitoba at large. They are also asked to include the reasons they enjoy being involved in agriculture.

The six recipients of the MBP bursaries for 2023 are:

- Emma Fox
- Garrett Turner
- Oksana Iwanchysko
- Kiara Gillis
- Kadence Carels
- Julia McIntyre

Three of their essays are in this edition, and the rest will be in the December *Cattle Country*.



# MBP Scholarship Recipients



EMMA FOX

Beef. To many that word means something you pick up from the grocery store, but to me it is a word that represents over a century of hard work and steadfast commitment to improve our ability to feed the world. I am

a fifth generation rancher from both my maternal and paternal ancestry and like so many Manitoba ranchers, my dedication runs deep. We run 200 pairs consisting of both seedstock Hereford and Angus cows and a commercial herd where we get to see firsthand the value of crossbreeding pure line genetics. The effect of this industry upon my family has been monumental.

Through thick and thin, five generations have strived for success in this industry, and I am honored to continue their legacy. I have grown up working on the farm, helping my parents run our operation with my four siblings. I am amazed by the incredible opportunities this industry has

provided for us. Though it is not always easy, the rewards are certainly worth the effort. And luckily, most of the time even when it does get hard, we are met with a helping hand because of the people that this industry is comprised of.

The beef industry plays a vital role in the functionality of my thriving community. Our industry provides good paying jobs to my neighbors and supports our local economy; whether it be from our local sale barn that handles close to 40,000 animals a year, or the close community spirit that permeates from the area's producers. I've been lucky enough to have been raised within a community of dedicated people who have demonstrated to me that the industry that feeds the world is built on the backs of some of the most determined, patient, and dependable people.

The beef industry represents an unbreakable community that I am proud to be a part of. I have been fortunate enough to encounter many of our local beef producers, via 4-H, junior beef breed associations and at our local agricultural fair. Through this I have learned so much, including the immense impact our industry has on our Manitoban society. Since this industry has such a wide array of active members, the beef industry has a substantial influence on our prov-

ince. Every section of the beef supply chain can be found in Manitoba from our local farms to butchers' shops. The beef industry also plays a vital role in the economic status of our province. Manitoba provides a wide array of opportunities within the beef industry as it contains 12% of the national beef herd.

Feeding our population is of the utmost importance to everyone and therefore the agricultural industry is invaluable in comparison to others. Through working with some of the most stubborn teachers, those of course being cattle, I have learned the value of perseverance, trust, teamwork, and patience.

The life lessons I am taught through the challenges of everyday life as a rancher are invaluable. The entire process of ranching is a joy to me, and I am extremely fond of being able to take part of it from birth to burger, raising cattle has shaped the person I am today and will be tomorrow. I am honored to be a part of this endeavor.

Beef is more than an industry, it is a community of people who understand what we do is more than just a job, it is a lifestyle that contributes to our communities beyond the farm gate.



GARRETT TURNER,

My name is Garrett Turner, and I am a sixth-generation beef producer in Manitoba. I live and work on a grain and cattle farm west of Souris. For my family, beef production has allowed

our farm to work with the sensitive soils we have and provide sustainability for both our family and the land around us. In my community farmers help to provide a need for a school, restaurants, grocery stores, post office, banks, veterinarians, hardware stores and many others. Manitoba's beef industry has the third most cattle with 12% of Canada's herd which is a significant contribution to Manitoba's economy.

On our farm, we have a mix of soils, some that are suitable for grain production, and some that need more intensive management. This is why cattle fit so well on our farm. Beef can be produced where grain can't. Areas of heavy bush, or light sandy land can grow plentiful grass or alfalfa. Growing and grazing forage crops protects the soil from erosion

and improves soil health and quality. This is the case on our farm, because instead of leaving some land unused where grain isn't suitable to be grown, we raise cattle to feed Manitobans, Canadians, and the world.

In Souris, farmers contribute a lot to the community. Farmers increase the need for basic services such as a school, a hospital, grocery stores, and banks which provide jobs for people outside of the ag industry. Additionally, farmers give opportunities specialized to farming such as seed businesses, feedlot cleaners, trucking companies, custom crews, elevators, veterinary services, auction marts, and feed stores. Jobs such as these give people the chance to remain in small towns, be able to enjoy the benefits of rural living, and still have good employment opportunities.

Manitoba is home to 12% of Canada's national beef herd distributed between 3574 farms and feedlots. Some 3.3 million acres of pastureland feed these cattle which feed the world. The millions of acres of grasslands and wetlands that are associated with beef production provide many benefits to our environment and our ecosystems. Some of those benefits include carbon sequestration, prevention of nutrient runoff, and habitat for thousands of species of animals.

Since I was young, I have always loved animals, specifically cows. We always had bottle fed calves to feed and play with. Once I was a little bit older, I started pail feeding replacement heifers, bulls and calves. Also, around this time I joined the Souris 4-H beef club in which I showed steers for four years. This gave me the opportunity to learn showmanship of animals, intensive feeding strategies, and just more knowledge of working with cows in general. Later in my teen years I learned how to build and fix fences, treat cows, and put-up hay which are all great satisfaction and enjoyment to me.

Being raised on a farm involved in the beef industry has given me the opportunity to develop a passion for raising cattle, and a strong work ethic to give me the ability to put in the hours it takes to be successful. Working in the beef industry has let me work alongside my family and enjoy what the Ag industry has to offer. I will be attending Olds College in Alberta to take the Ag Management diploma to further my education to help me in my farming career. Now, I am starting my own cattle herd, which will allow me to have a life involved with agriculture, and a lifestyle like none other.



OKSANA IWANCHYSKO

Beef cattle production plays a significant role in grassland conservation, regeneration, and ecological health. Grazing cattle help to support the recycling of nutrients into the soils and protect both endangered and threat-

ened species in the ecosystem. Beef cattle provide a great benefit to protecting natural landscapes, which is essential to maintaining a healthy environment. Keeping grasslands healthy is critical to store carbon, conserving soil, protecting from flood and drought, providing clean water, and so much more. Not only is this industry so crucial to maintaining a healthy ecosystem, but it is also a key part of the Canadian economy as it provides many a source of food, income, and livelihoods.

Cattle are a critically important source of nutrition, income, and nitrogen-rich manure for replenishing soils and other uses. Addressing food and nutrition security is and will continue to be an immense challenge. The productivity and efficiency of food systems have to be improved to be able to

fulfill dietary needs. Beef has proven to be a source of food security and nutritional quality while providing many different benefits. The value of cattle extends to environmental services such as nature management. Properly managed grazing maintains landscapes, reduces environmental disaster risks, and increases wildlife biodiversity. Cattle are able to utilize land that would otherwise remain unproductive for humans.

The beef industry within Manitoba and all of Canada is filled with passionate producers extremely dedicated to producing top-quality beef for the economy. The Canadian beef brand adds tangible value to the industry and shows how much effort producers and communities as a whole put into raising the livestock. I am so lucky to be involved in the beef industry as it grows to adopt more sustainable and efficient management practices. As I continue to grow my own small commercial herd while pursuing my degree in veterinary medicine, I grow more passionate about the industry every day. From my parents being raised on beef cattle farms to spending my childhood around the farms, I have developed a deeper understanding of the benefits and impacts of beef production.

While I attend university to become a large animal veterinarian and work in underserved rural areas to provide veterinary care to producers, I strive to become an advocate for farmers and ranchers to

showcase to society the vital role farmers and ranchers play in their everyday lives, from providing the food we eat to the sustainable efforts they practice every day. Rural large and food animal medicine faces critical shortages that can directly affect the safety of our food supply. With sufficient veterinary oversight to ensure the health of the animals in the food supply chain, the nation's food and economic security can avoid considerable risk. My goal upon graduation is to serve producers in rural Manitoba to assist in continuing to create a more developed food security system.

My involvement in the beef industry has impacted my career path and shaped me into the person I am today. I am passionate about the agriculture industry as a whole and the amount of incredible opportunity in the sector as I become increasingly ambitious and develop a vision for the industry's future. The agriculture industry is filled with passionate, hardworking people whose success is dependent on the operation they run. The opportunities in this industry are endless and I am incredibly lucky to be a part of it and learn from producers who have a wealth of knowledge to provide to youth like myself to achieve great things in the industry.



# Manitoba Habitat Heritage Name Change, But Its Programing is Still Maintained

BY WAYNE HILDEBRAND,

Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC) recently made some big changes. MHHC was established in 1986 as a provincial Crown corporation, but in 2021 MHHC moved out of government to become a charitable, not-for-profit conservation organization. The change called for a new name, a new organization brand, and a new strategic plan for the future.

“Our new name, ‘Manitoba Habitat Conservancy’ (MHC), distinguishes us as Manitoba’s largest environmental not-for-profit,” said Stephen Carlyle, CEO of MHC. “The new name and brand reflects a modernized Manitoba Habitat organization. We are still committed to delivering and maintaining our conservation programs with rural Manitoba landowners to conserve, restore and enhance wildlife habitat.”

For nearly 40 years, Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation has been delivering “homegrown conservation” in partnership with private landowners.

“We have always prided ourselves on offering conservation programming that promotes conservation to

benefit the larger community, but also meets the needs of the private landowner,” said Curtis Hullick, Habitat Field Manager of MHC.

In 2022, MHC partnered with landowners, farmers and ranchers to conserve, restore and enhance approximately 24,000 acres of wildlife habitat. These areas also support ground water recharge, carbon storage and biodiversity in Manitoba.

What is Manitoba Habitat Conservancy’s plan for 2024?

“We will maintain our habitat conservation program delivery staff and their rural offices with Roy in Shoal Lake, Tom in Boissevain, Carol in Reston, Jessica in Minnedosa, Scott in Rosser, Kasie in Brandon, Ian in Hamiota, and Kathy in Treherne,” said Curtis. “The team will be offering financial incentives in 2024 for conservation agreements that pay landowners to conserve and restore wetlands, grasslands and wildlife habitat on private property.”

MHC will continue to deliver the Grassland Stewardship Program in partnership with Manitoba Beef Producers to offer financial assistance for summer

pasture infrastructure or seed costs. MHC will also work with cattle producers on rangeland management plans, which support the awareness of pasture health for the purpose of enhancing and managing pastures.

MHC will continue to use agriculture as a tool for managing wildlife habitat and biodiversity on the MHC owned lands.

“We are either putting up new fence or making upgrades to existing fence on 12 quarter sections this fall. The plan is for these pastures to be ready for pasturing cows in 2024,” said Hullick.

The modernized not-for-profit Manitoba Habitat Conservancy (MHC) will continue to seek funding from traditional partnering organizations, in addition to looking for new funding opportunities and turn that into conservation program incentives for landowners for the foreseeable future.

For information on MHC’s new name and brand or existing conservation programs call your local Habitat Conservation Specialist or visit the website at [www.mbhabitat.ca](http://www.mbhabitat.ca)

## Manitoba Beef & Forage Production Conference

Join us for the Manitoba Beef & Forage Production Conference, a must-attend event for all beef and forage enthusiasts! This exciting conference will take place over 1.5 days on **Tuesday, December 12 and Wednesday, December 13** at the Victoria Inn, Brandon, MB.

Get ready to dive into the world of beef and forage production with industry experts and fellow enthusiasts. This in-person event will provide a unique opportunity to learn, network, and stay up to date with the latest trends and practices.

Discover cutting-edge techniques, innovative technologies, and best practices that will help you enhance your beef and forage production. Gain valuable insights from experienced professionals and producers through engaging presentations and interactive workshops.

Whether you’re a seasoned producer or just starting out, this conference offers something for everyone. Connect with like-minded individuals, exchange ideas, and build lasting relationships within the beef and forage community.

Don’t miss out on this exciting event! Mark your calendars for the Manitoba Beef & Forage Production Conference and be prepared to take your beef and forage production to new heights!

Organized by Manitoba Agriculture in partnership with Manitoba Beef & Forage Initiatives, Manitoba Beef Producers and other industry members. Register now at [www.mbf.ca/conference](http://www.mbf.ca/conference)

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### Tuesday, December 12

9:00 REGISTRATION, COFFEE and TRADE BOOTH DISPLAYS

10:00 Dr. Susan Markus - Lakeland College - Smart Beef Cows on Smart Farms - Remote Sensing Technology and Genomic Insights into Traits of Economic Importance

11:00 Tim Lang - FCC – Transition and Succession – What’s the difference?

12:00 LUNCH & DISPLAYS

1:30 Karen Beauchemin – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada - Reducing Methane Emissions in Beef Cattle Production

#### 2:30 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Each session will be given twice, choose two of the four)

Dr. Kim Ominski – University of Manitoba

Going green with implants: The economic and environmental benefits of implanting calves

Betty Green – Fisher Branch Producer

Elizabeth Nernberg – Manitoba Agriculture

Feedstuffs, Requirements and Everything in Between; Managing the growing Calf

Kathleen Walsh – Swan River Producer

Dr. Yvonne Lawley – University of Manitoba

Intercropping to overcome Nutrient Deficiencies

Mary-Jane Orr – MBFI

Mae Elsinger – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Fixing your pasture composition - Best practices and novel approaches.

Graham Tapley – Langruth Producer

3:30 Refreshment Break / Visit Displays

#### 4:30 REPEAT OF BREAKOUT SESSION A

5:30 IMPERIAL BALLROOM – Cocktails, Banquet and Keynote Presentation – Cash Bar

Lewellyn Melnyk – “Rooted” How to stay small town strong, thrive on the farm and make yourself a priority.

### Wednesday, December 13

8:30 Dr. John Campbell – WCVM – Key Findings from the Canadian cow- calf surveillance network.

9:30 Refreshment Break / Visit Displays

#### 10:30 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Each session will be given twice, choose two of the four)

Dr. Shania Jack – Morden Veterinary Clinic

Calving 101: Malpresentations and what to do when things don’t go according to plan.

Featuring Clover the Cow Dystocia Model – 4H MB

Charlotte Crawley – Ducks Unlimited Canada

Plant diversity – Species selection to get the most out of every acre.

Gerald Bos – Rapid City Producer

Anneliese Walker - Maia Grazing

Grazing Fundamentals: A Practical Introduction to Graze Planning

Ron Moss – Dauphin Producer

Dr. Stephen Crittenden - Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Sifting through Soil Health

Clayton Robins, Rivers Producer

#### 11:30 REPEAT OF BREAKOUT SESSION A

12:30 Closing Remarks and Adjourn



## Livestock Predation Prevention Project Update

### High Tensile Seven Wire Predator Resistant Livestock Pens

The project involved building several pens with seven wire high tensile electric fences with electrified wires close to the ground, and predator proof gates. Producers widely reported that this was very effective at keeping all animals away from predators. The cost of materials for these five acre pens totalled under \$4,000 in 2022 prices and 86% of cooperators agreed that the pens save livestock from predators, and 86% of producers would recommend other producers build these pens if they are having problems at calving time.

### Fixed Knot Fence With Ground Apron

This involved the use of predator page wire with a dig-proof 22 inch wire mesh apron on the ground. This system was purchased and installed in 2023 and has yet to be evaluated for predator resistance. However farms in Minnesota who installed this fencing system have slowed predator invasions to zero or near zero. Local evaluations are ongoing. The cost of the wire component alone is about \$4 per linear foot before posts or hardware. For more information contact MBP in summer 2024.

### Deadstock Composting Pens

These were installed and rated by co-operating farms, and all involved agreed that better removal of deadstock was important. Reducing food sources for predators to dine on was a positive move and didn't cost as much as you might expect. While this doesn't directly keep predators out of pens, it can reduce traffic of scavenger animals such as coyotes and bears to an operation. If the found deadstock is promptly disposed of, scavenger birds will not be present which is nature's way of inviting predators to your farm. The deadstock composting pens built for the project were made with chain link fence and predator proof gates and cost about \$2,500 for a 64 x 64 foot pen. Some 78% of producers claimed that the smell was either minimal or no smell, and 91% of producers who used them would recommend them to all producers.

### Solar Fox Lights

These are small solar-powered flashing light devices that emit a light show at night that consists of multi-colored lights going off at random times. Surprisingly these simple little gadgets are enough to throw off coyotes, wolves and foxes for a few weeks to a month or two. They are easy to set up, and actually allow calves which are suffering from weaning ailments to recover without predators taking a bite. Note: this practice works well for fall weaning and calving as the nights are long and the days are short. An investment in four solar fox lights adds up to under \$800 and will help many farms. Some

85% of farms trying solar fox lights would repurchase them at full retail cost if they lost the use of them.

### Fladry Wire

This is a poly wire electric fence wire that has red nylon streamers, and is intended to temporarily encircle an existing pen or small paddock to prevent coyotes or wolves from entering the pen. Producers were initially hesitant to spend half a day setting up a temporary fladry wire pen for 50-60 days use. The little red streamers don't appear very scary to humans. However, through this project we have found that little red streamers do disorient canine predators for a temporary need, so if you have calves that are recovering from stresses, fladry wire can slow or stop predator stalking. Some 80% of producers who used fladry reported that they would recommend it to others. Fladry is not cheap. It costs about \$1,000 per 1,320 foot roll plus temporary posts and an electric fence, and needs to be rolled up and stored indoors 10 months a year.

### Vet Assessments

These were tested by a number of producers. It involved a vet visiting the farm to have a visual assessment and an in-depth conversation about how animal health can potentially be improved. The plan was to have a minimal number of livestock on pasture with a health issue, be it lameness, pneumonia or scours and cocci or other. Recommendations varied, such as improved vaccination regimes or nutritional care to the use of

**Finally, if you are subject to livestock losses or injuries due to predators, preserve the carcass and take photos of the loss or injury and contact Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation immediately to submit a claim through the Wildlife Damage Compensation program for Livestock Predation.**

summer safe pens. Producers who used the assessments agreed that having an extra set of eyes on the herd was positive. And now that producers need a veterinary client patient relationship (VCPR) visit annually to access medications if needed, having a vet out during any risk season is an ideal time to have this evaluation.

### Donkeys or Livestock Guardian Dogs

Guardian animals in pens can be helpful to reduce predator attacks. Livestock guardian dogs like the Great Pyrenees breed and others have proven themselves for centuries for sheep and cattle protection. Donkeys are another guardian animal that can be useful for livestock guarding. Some donkeys have an inborn instinct to repel predators from their group, and can be very helpful. However not all donkeys behave equally; some are excellent protectors and some are not. Female donkeys are often more protective and appropriate in many cases.

Male donkeys can be used in cattle, but not in sheep due to fighting with rams. Male donkeys and all donkeys can be fierce fighters and can be dangerous to humans. The end result is that the use of donkeys can be good or bad depending on the donkey. This project did not specifically test livestock guardian animals but we had a lot of comments and commendations on their value. As well, we did find that having a GPS collar on a guardian animal is very helpful, especially with dogs who might roam outside of the pasture boundaries.

### Predator Management

This project tested multiple mitigation techniques that can reduce predator attacks, but each has its limitations. One aspect that should be considered by producers is some level of trapping and hunting of problem predators for the protection of property. In Manitoba producers are allowed under *The Wildlife Act* to remove coyotes, wolves and bears, but not cougars in protection of property. Predators not historically or recently harming your livestock should be left alone, as no harm is better than new predators moving into your pasture. Producers need to be aware that pelts taken in summer are valueless, and even prime winter pelts have recently been low value and hard to justify the expense of trapping. However if a producer is experiencing losses, the Manitoba Trappers Association can be assigned to help through the Problem Predator Removal Program. This program is funded by Manitoba and is intended

to remove problem predators once there is an approved claim for a lost animal with Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC). Producers should also consider building up a relationship with local trappers; trapping can help moderate predator populations in season and improve problems in

summer. For more information please refer to: [https://www.gov.mb.ca/nrnd/fish-wildlife/pubs/fish\\_wildlife/factsheet\\_livestockpredation\\_old.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/nrnd/fish-wildlife/pubs/fish_wildlife/factsheet_livestockpredation_old.pdf)

Other livestock management techniques to reduce youngstock stress and sickness at weaning time include:

- Vaccinate youngstock prior to weaning. If possible, vaccinate two weeks prior to weaning as the vaccine will work better with a healthy animal, and will not cause additional stress on weaning day.
- Wean all groups over the shortest period of time possible. If you wean multiple groups over a long period of time the later entrants will be exposed to sicker animals than if all were weaned at the same time. Also, the earlier weaned stock will be exposed to different pathogens from later weaned stock who enter late. The earlier weaned animals will already be stressed when the late entrants arrive with new pathogens.
- Don't mix sale barn animals with your own during the weaning stress period, as sale barn animals can bring in new pathogens to your herd. The new pathogens may not infect the herd, but the risk does increase.
- Get energy and protein into the calves prior to weaning date. Feeding the cows and calves hay, silage or grain prior to weaning will adjust stomach bacteria and eating preferences to keep energy up in calves when they most need it. Creep feeding calves grain or high quality hay is also good to maintain constant nutrition through the weaning adjustment period.
- Keep youngstock mortalities out of the predator food chain. A dead calf close to your herd almost guarantees that there will be predators close by when other calves are slow and lethargic. If you do not adopt a deadstock composting pen, deep burial is an option.

Finally, if you are subject to livestock losses or injuries due to predators, preserve the carcass and take photos of the loss or injury and contact Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation immediately to submit a claim through the Wildlife Damage Compensation program for Livestock Predation. Most predator losses are subject to compensation as long as there is a provable attack. The producer must contact MASC to register a claim within 72 hours of discovering the attack. All evidence should be preserved for the adjustor to view. An adjustor will assess the loss or injury. This is a no-cost program available to all Manitoba producers, with no program fees or sign-up requirements. Contact your local MASC office for details.

For more information on each of the individual practices listed you can find them on Manitoba Beef Producers' website at <https://mbbeef.ca/producers/>

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# Optimistic Market Outlook as the Fall Run Gets Underway

As I sit in front of the computer, the calendar shows the first week in October, which means the fall calf run is well underway. On a normal year, we would see higher volumes, unpredictable weather, and softer prices. The sheer volume of calves marketed during October and early November in Manitoba usually drives the prices down. So far that has not happened!

In Manitoba, the markets have experienced a 21% increase in cattle sold compared to last year. There are a few factors that are responsible for the increase. Prices are the main driver. At the end of September, they were considerably higher than last year. Four hundred-pound steers were \$1.80 higher than last year, 500-pounders were \$1.50 higher, 600-pounders were \$1.35 more and 700-pound steers calves were \$1.14 higher. Heifer calves at 500 pounds were \$1.50 higher, 600 pounds at \$1.16 more, and 700-pound heifers \$1.00 higher. The steer-heifer spread remains wide, with heifers trailing the steers at between 40 cents to a dollar per pound. With these prices, producers are sweeping the pastures and selling everything, regardless of weight.

Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan lead the price parade in western Canada on calf prices. The Ontario influence and demand on the market are the drivers for the high prices. Crop reports out of Ontario indicate that crops were very good, and that feed will be considerably cheaper than last year.

Another reason for higher marketing is that many producers who sold livestock privately over the past years have returned to the auction method of price discovery through either the auction markets or electronic platforms. No one can honestly predict what the market will be within five cents per pound. This year, paying a fee for price discovery has been a good investment.

One word of advice; carefully consider which mar-



RICK WRIGHT  
*The Bottom Line*

ket you consign to or agent you use to list your cattle. At the auctions, biggest is not always best, and the fastest does not always guarantee that you get the top value for your livestock. Selling cattle is like selling used cars! If the buyers don't like the first impression when they see the product, they are not likely to bid top dollar. The cattle must be presented properly, not overcrowded in pens prior to sale. Shrink is paramount this year. Almost every pound is worth at least an average of \$3.25. If you can manage the shrink, five extra pounds will pay for your selling commission. With this said, buyers expect fair weighing conditions at the pre-sorts and show list sales. If weighing conditions don't meet the industry standards, buyers will be less aggressive at those sales barns. Sales barns that overbook the number of cattle that their facilities can comfortably hold do not do the producers any favours. Sale day is often your whole year's work. Make sure that the market you choose earns its commission.

When it comes to listing on an electronic platform, anyone can take pictures and describe the colour of the cattle. The success of your sale on the electronic platform depends on the reputation of your listing agent and how much work they put into marketing and promoting your cattle. A good agent has a network of buyers and feeders who trust the agent's description of weight, flesh conditions and quality. Top agents make sure that potential buyers know that the cattle are for sale and can use your

health protocols, genetics, and value-added items such as VBP+ to get you the top dollar. Houses don't sell themselves very often and neither do cattle. There have been a lot of amateur listing agents pop up over the past couple of years who take the listings and the commission and do very little for the producer. There are several very good listing agents in Manitoba, so choose wisely!

This fall I have witnessed many very light, young cattle at the markets. I am not sure why producers are selling these calves, especially the lighter heifer calves. I bought a set of 250-pound heifers last week for \$720.00 per head. The price per pound sounded okay, but the dollars for keeping that cow are too far behind. I think there is going to be good money in keeping those heifers under 425 pounds until spring if you have feed; the same for steers under 375 pounds. Sure, I have seen steer calves at 300 pounds bring up to \$5.85 per pound, but I have also seen them at under \$3.00. It is no secret that there are fewer cows in the country, resulting in fewer calves to sell. I think the grass market in the spring will be very strong, and if you have a lot of light calves, there could be good profit in feeding them over to the new year.

Will the current market stay? Probably not at these levels, but don't expect them to drop much. Ontario is just getting started on the calves. The local backgrounding lots are finishing up the silage and fall work and will come to the market by the middle of October. Yearlings are drying up for the season, and some of the Alberta feedlots are looking for calves. Demand will outlast supply for the rest of the year, as many feeders are thinking that supply could be short in the spring. Even though these calf prices have high break-evens, there is a lot of optimism in the market.

Until next time, Rick

## Important to Consider Biosecurity for Livestock at Shows and Fairs

BY: DR. TANYA ANDERSON, DVM

As the fall season gets into full swing and calves come off pasture, bulls enter test stations and the indoor fall fair/show season starts. Biosecurity should become top of mind for those in the purebred industry with high value livestock and those in the bidding stands.

Indoor venues bring people and animals in proximity with each other and, just as with the flu season in people, this "closed environment" increases the potential for infectious disease transmission especially as immune systems may be weakened by the stress of the show environment, frequent transportation, and disrupted schedules.

Disease prevention starts at home with planning prior to animal purchase. Only purchase from operations with a solid health program and record-keeping. Information on vaccines, parasite control and nutrition should be readily available. Review the information with your veterinarian. At my practice, I provide a list of questions that prospective buyers should be asking prior to purchase. This reduces the chances of purchasing the "trojan" diseases that can come in undetected - like BVD, John's or EBL (Leucosis)... all difficult to easily and cheaply eradicate.

Question asking BEFORE purchase is the first step in preventing disease - prevention before introduction. Then you need to prevent disease before reintroduction back into the herd (return from fairs, bull test/heifer development facilities and community pastures) and then finally, biosecurity to minimize disease spread within the herd.

Any animal entering the farm, whether as a new purchase or if returning from another livestock enterprise should be quarantined, preferably for 30 days. Feeding, cleaning, and handling equipment/supplies should be dedicated to the quarantine area. This includes clothing and boots. Ideally, those animals should be cared for by someone not looking after others, or dealt with last when doing chores.

A sound vaccination program should be a part of your biosecurity plan. The goal of a vaccination plan is to protect your animals from the more common diseases affecting livestock in the area. Test station and show livestock require vaccination against reproductive and respiratory pathogens - BVD, IBR, PI3, BRSV, the Pasteurellas and Histophilus. Deworming and lice control products tailored to resistance patterns and herd history should be in place. Vaccination against common environmental pathogens like the Clostridials and Pinkeye is also highly advised. In higher risk situations, boosters immediately prior to an event or even metaphylaxis (preventative antibiotics) may be necessary.

Show organizers and exhibitors should also be watching for evidence of sick animals before, during

and after the show. Early detection will prevent inadvertently bringing animals incubating/shedding disease to a facility and will minimize spread of disease both at the show and upon arrival to the home premise.

Don't forget about nutrition. Proper nutrition is the cornerstone of health - adequate energy, protein, vitamins/minerals, and quality water are crucial for optimal growth and immunity. Avoid sudden diet changes when animals are under stress. This helps prevent diarrhea, enterotoxemia, acidosis, bloat, and founder.

Networking and visiting progressive breeding operations and exhibitions are highlights for any cattle producer. Keep biosecurity top of mind during participation and ensure that you don't bring back more than good memories.

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# What's Growing Between the Rows? This Research Project is Tackling Corn Intercropping From all Angles

BY: EMMA MCGEOUGH, YVONNE LAWLEY AND SCOTT JEFFREY FOR THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR LIVESTOCK AND THE ENVIRONMENT, UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Environmental challenges facing Prairie producers are highlighting the ever-growing need for cattle production to utilize diverse crops and management strategies to improving forage yield and nutritive value for overwintering. A multi-disciplinary team at the University of Manitoba and University of Alberta have partnered with the beef and forage industry to evaluate the role that intercropping could play in achieve this goal.

Grazing of standing corn has become a popular strategy for overwintering beef cows in Western Canada. Corn is a high yielding, high energy crop and provides shelter for cattle while grazing during the coldest months. However, its suitability for growing cattle or mature cows under extreme cold conditions may be limited by its typically low crude protein content. As a result, this research team has been evaluating the potential to “grow the protein” between the corn rows through the practice of intercropping.

Much is unknown about the agronomic management needed to adapt corn intercropping strategies for the Prairies. These management factors include identifying suitable intercrop species, the time and method of seeding, fertilization strategies, and corn row spacing. Although producer interest is high, Prairie research on intercropping high protein forage with grazing corn has been limited. This project is testing the feasibility of intercropping corn from a number of angles by including a range of agronomic, animal and economic elements in the project.

Coupled with growing interest in crop-livestock integration, and regenerative agriculture, novel grazing strategies that will enhance the long-term resiliency, adaptability, competitiveness, and profitability of Canadian beef production are critical.

## Meet the Students!

Graduate students are at the heart of this project and there are currently three M.Sc. students investigating the viability of intercropping corn in our modern agricultural systems from a range of disciplines and perspectives.

Talyia Tober grew up on cow-calf operation near Ashern, Manitoba and earned a B.Sc. in Animal Science in 2023. After graduation, she jumped into this project with both feet beginning her M.Sc. degree in Animal Science at the University of Manitoba on the agronomic and forage quality evaluation of intercropped corn. Talyia is co-advised by Dr. McGeough in the Department of Animal Science and Dr. Lawley in the Department of Plant science as her thesis research is focused on



Graduate students at the University of Manitoba and University of Alberta (Talyia Tober, Connor McIntyre, Tabia Binte Shan from L – R) are investigating the viability of intercropping corn from a range of disciplines and perspectives.

evaluating a range of intercrop forages (hairy vetch, Italian rye, fall rye, graza radish and crimson clover) for their establishment, yield, and nutritive value potential for late fall and early winter grazing for beef cattle. Talyia's research also entails a multisite experiment running at eight sites across western Canada; Prairie Crop Diversification Foundation (Roblin, MB), Western Agricultural Diversification Organization (Melita, MB), University of Manitoba (Glenlea and Carman, MB), South East Research Farm (Redvers, SK), Olds College (Olds, AB), North Peace Applied Research Association (Manning, AB) and Farming Smarter (Lethbridge, AB).

Connor McIntyre grew up in Winnipeg, earned his B.Sc. in Microbiology at the University of Manitoba and is currently enrolled in the M.Sc. program in the Department of Animal Science. His project takes a step up to the large-scale evaluation of intercropped corn and grazing by growing beef cattle. In the spring of 2023, a large scale (45 ac) field trial was established at the University of Manitoba Glenlea Research Station to compare the standard practice of grazing corn on 30 inch rows with the new idea of intercropping corn. The intercropped corn in the grazing study was seeded on wide 60 inch rows to create the space needed to “grow the protein” in the form of mixtures of hairy vetch and Italian ryegrass or a mixture of fall rye with radish. Connor is gearing up for a busy fall in 2023 as we aim to graze replacement heifers to evaluate cattle performance (liveweight gain), feed intake, blood nitrogen status and enteric methane emissions. Additionally, we will

be tracking intercrop forage quality weekly as little is known about what changes we can expect in nutritive value heading from fall into colder conditions of winter.

Tabia Binte Shan, born and raised in the agriculturally rich country of Bangladesh, carries a deep passion for agricultural research. After earning her bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics and Business Studies in her homeland, she has embarked on an academic journey in Canada, currently pursuing her M.Sc. degree in the Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology department at the University of Alberta. Tabia is looking at the farm-level economics of corn intercropping for grazing. Using results from the small plot and animal grazing experiments, Tabia will employ simulation techniques to examine the impact of the alternative intercrop forage options on risk and return for beef producers in the Prairie region. Tabia is committed to conducting a detailed economic analysis of corn intercropping methods, with the goal of improving winter grazing opportunities for beef cattle.

*This project is jointly funded by NSERC, Alberta Beef Producers, Beef Cattle Research Council, Mitacs, RDAR, and the University of Manitoba. In kind support kindly provided by: Union Forage (seed donation), Bayer Crop Science (seed donation), Tyton Farm Ltd (cattle), Manitoba Beef Producers, Manitoba Forage and Grassland Association, Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association and Saskatchewan Forage Council.*



A fall 2023 cattle grazing study at the University of Manitoba Glenlea Research Station will compare the standard practice of grazing corn on 30 inch rows (L) with the novel practice of grazing corn on 60 inch rows intercropped with high protein forage (R). (Photo credit: Emma McGeough)

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# New Government Sworn In With a Familiar Face as Agriculture Minister

Manitoba Beef Producers will continue its advocacy efforts on behalf of the province's cattle sector following the election of a New Democratic Party government on October 3.

"It was a very significant day in Manitoba history to see that for the first time a First Nations individual will become Premier of our province, marking another important step as part of the reconciliation journey," said MBP President Matthew Atkinson. "We look forward to working with Premier Wab Kinew and his colleagues on matters related to our sector."

"Thank you as well to outgoing Premier Heather Stefanson and outgoing Agriculture Minister Derek Johnson for their ongoing engagement on a variety of issues of importance to our sector. These included the provision of AgriRecovery during the 2021 drought, continued support for business risk programs and beneficial management programs through the various agricultural policy frameworks, funding toward the Livestock Predation Prevention Project, the funding additional of training seats for Manitoba veterinary students, and support for agriculture-related environmental initiatives through the Conservation Trust, among others," added Atkinson.

MBP also congratulates the Hon. Ron Kostyshyn on his appointment as Minister of Agriculture, a position familiar to him as he had previously served in Greg Selinger's government as the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives.

"Minister Kostyshyn brings to this key role both his past experience around the Cabinet table, as well as knowledge and experiences gained as a primary producer himself. Having that agricultural and rural perspective around is very important to our members," Atkinson added.

MBP intends to engage with the new government on an array of topics affecting Manitoba's beef industry. These include but are not limited to: the importance of having equitable and responsive business risk management programs to ensure beef producers are on a level playing field with other sectors; the value of the Agricultural Crown Lands Leasing Program; wildlife matters; having effective water management strategies to reduce risk; achieving recognition for ecosystem services provided through beef production; addressing infrastructure needs such as rural connectivity and others; capturing value related to trade opportunities; strategies to meet labour supply challenges; advancing agriculture education and awareness, and more.

New Cabinet Ministers were sworn in on October 18. Some other key appointments include:

- Jamie Moses (MLA for St. Vital) minister of economic development, investment, trade and natural resources;
- Lisa Naylor (MLA for Wolseley) minister of transportation and infrastructure;
- Tracy Schmidt (MLA for Rossmere) minister of environment and climate change,

minister responsible for Efficiency Manitoba

- Malaya Marcelino (MLA for Notre Dame) minister of labour and immigration.

The Progressive Conservatives have also identified their Shadow Ministers (critics) and they are as follows for some key portfolios:

- Jeff Bereza (MLA for Portage la Prairie) Shadow Minister for Agriculture;
- Rick Wowchuk (MLA for Swan River) Shadow Minister for Natural Resources;
- Josh Guenter (MLA for Borderland) Shadow Minister for Transportation and Infrastructure;
- Greg Nesbitt (MLA for Riding Mountain) Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change
- Jodie Byram (MLA for Agassiz) Shadow Minister for Labour and Immigration.

## FCC Has Announced a New Replacement Heifer Program

(October 17, 2023 FCC News Release) Farm Credit Canada (FCC) is announcing a new FCC Replacement Heifer Program to help Canadian cattle producers in maintaining or expanding their herds.

The Canadian beef cattle inventory was pegged by Statistics Canada at 10.3 million head earlier this year which is a decline by four per cent since 2017. The cattle sector is an important part of the agriculture industry, that contributes over \$24 billion annually to the economy and plays a critical role in maintaining the health of grasslands. FCC wants to ensure Canada's cattle ranchers have access to the financial levers they need to plan for the future.

"The drought conditions this summer affected a large cattle producing area in Western Canada and right now ranchers are making decisions about how to best manage their herds," said Sophie Perreault, FCC's chief operations officer. "The Heifer Replacement Program will help reduce cash flow pressures for those who want to maintain or grow their herd."

The program consists of a loan with a maximum two-year period of interest only and a maximum life of seven years. For this loan, variable interest rates will be capped at prime plus 1.5%, and loan processing fees will be waived.

"FCC is here to partner with customers in coming up with financial solutions that will continue to support the well-being and longevity of Canadian cattle herds," Perreault said. "If ranchers have other needs beyond heifer financing, I invite them to contact the FCC team."

"The Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association appreciates FCC's response to the current needs of livestock producers," said Garner Deobald, SSGA president. "This FCC program will help producers rebuild or maintain their herds after consecutive years of drought."

Beef producers are encouraged to contact their FCC relationship manager or their FCC livestock Alliance partner for details. Producers can do this by contacting their local office or the FCC customer service centre at 1-888-332-3301.

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Veterinary Diagnostic Services Dashboard News Brought to you by Manitoba Agriculture



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Fall Reminders

As harvest winds down and livestock owners’ focus moves from securing feed to moving and processing cattle, producers may be wondering which health conditions are still significant and whether their herd health protocols are up-to-date. The provincial animal health laboratory, Veterinary Diagnostic Services (VDS), can offer some insight to the animal health issues and pathogens, disease-causing agents, which are detected in the province through the on-line VDS Dashboards.

The VDS Statistics table in Fig. 1 shows that in the fall of 2022, bacterial pneumonia caused by *Mannheimia haemolytica* was the most commonly diagnosed condition of bovine pathology submissions, and other bronchopneumonias were fourth most common. This indicates that pneumonia is still one of the most common challenges cattle face as the weather changes later in the year.

quarter four of 2022, 57 per cent of the primary pathology diagnoses involved the respiratory system and the top PCR test being conducted was the bovine respiratory panel, which involves testing samples for several common respiratory viruses. This demonstrates the importance of addressing risks associated with respiratory disease, which involves applying proper management practices and developing herd health protocols.

Optimal animal health always begins with proper nutrition, as any macro- or micro-nutrient deficiency, such as energy or copper deficiency, will impede the immune system’s ability to mount a proper immune response when confronted with a disease. Calf health is also highly dependent on disease pressure, or the amount of pathogen in their environment, which is minimized by reducing the stocking density and developing strategies to mitigate risks associated with mixing calves from different sources.

of the two main stressors of weaning, the diet change and leaving their dam. When these events are separated, calves have improved feed intake and lower stress indicators than their counterparts that are abruptly weaned. Exposing calves to creep feed and any new watering systems prior to leaving their dam also helps them adapt to the changes at weaning.

One of the final key aspects of minimizing pneumonia risk involves developing a vaccine protocol specific to the operation. An injectable core viral vaccine, which includes protection against Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus (BVDV) types 1 and 2, Infectious Bovine Herpes Virus (IBHV), Bovine Respiratory Syncytial Virus (BRSV), and Parainfluenza-3 (PI3) Virus, should be given to the mature cow herd annually, and once or twice to calves prior to weaning, depending on management practices.

Calves that receive their first injectable viral vaccine at a few months of age during spring processing will require an injectable viral booster in the fall prior to or near weaning. Calves that are younger at spring turnout, and receive a viral intranasal vaccine at spring processing, will only require one dose of injectable viral vaccine prior to weaning, given that they are a minimum of six months of age at fall processing. All animals that remain on the operation should receive an annual core viral vaccine the following spring.

In addition to the core viral vaccine, the VDS dashboards reveal that bacterial pneumonias are still one of the more common diagnoses, indicating that a pre-weaning vaccine program containing *M. haemolytica* and possibly two other bacterial pneumonia pathogens, *Pasteurella multocida* and *Histophilus somni*, are going to provide the broadest protection to calves in the fall.

Producers are reminded that the Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) has many cost-benefit calculators, including a Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD) Vaccine Cost-Benefit Calculator, which can be found at <https://www.beefresearch.ca/blog/the-cost-benefit-of-using-vaccines-bovine-respiratory-disease/>. This tool allows owners to compare costs, risks and economic benefits of feeding calves that have been vaccinated for BRD versus those that have not. Ultimately, every operation is unique and assistance from a herd veterinarian and tools like the BCRC cost-benefit calculators can help create a health program that is tailored to each ranch and provides optimal protection.

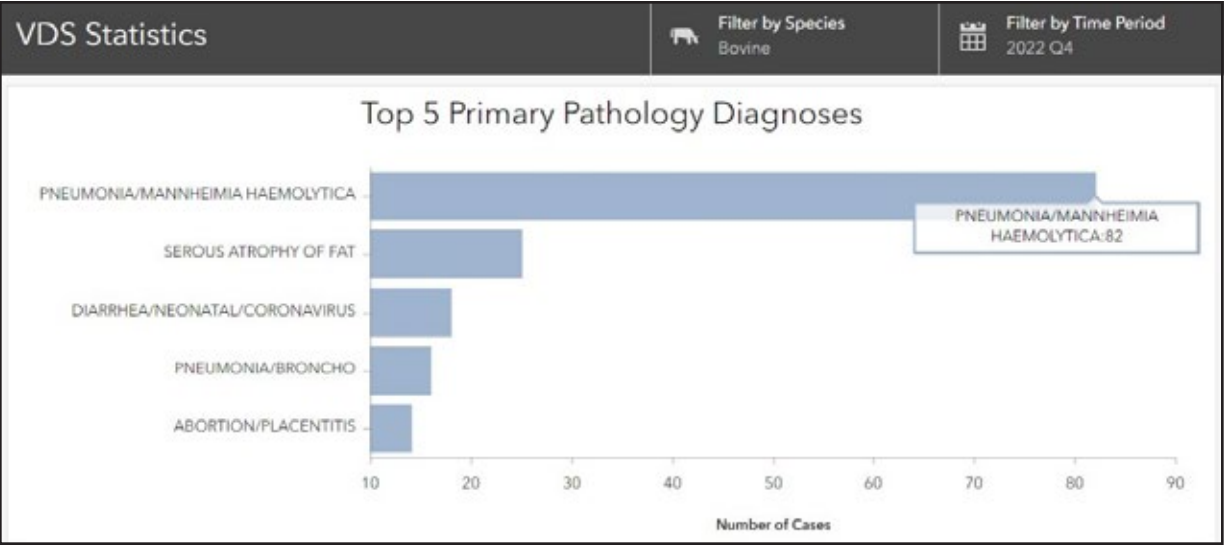


Fig. 1 shows the Top 5 Primary Pathology Diagnoses table, one of six tables included in the VDS Statistics dashboard.

The VDS dashboards also indicated that during

Other management practices that will decrease pneumonia risk involve minimizing stress, especially for calves that are being weaned. Fence-line or two-stage weaning with nose tags allows for the separation

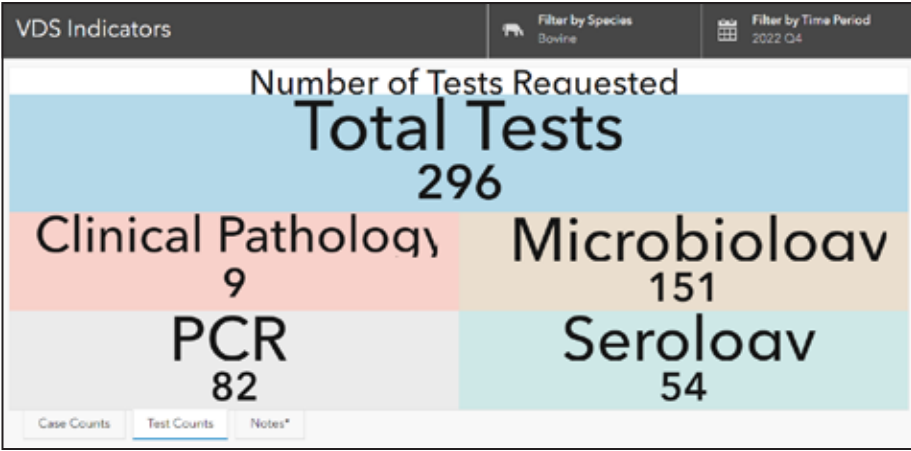
Introduction to the Veterinary Diagnostic Services Dashboards

The many variables and tight margins involved in beef production requires producers to use all available tools to optimize their herd health, which ensures a high level of animal welfare and maximizes production. One thing that producers may be unaware of is that animal owners, universities and other government agencies have access to a cutting-edge veterinary diagnostic laboratory in Winnipeg, Veterinary Diagnostic Services (VDS). This laboratory is especially beneficial to agriculture within the province, as up to 70 per cent of the cost of testing is subsidized for Manitoba livestock producers, and the services can be accessed by submitting samples through their herd veterinarian. In addition to affordable testing, online tools called the VDS Dashboards are available for the public to view VDS laboratory data. This allows Manitoba producers to better understand which health conditions are encountered locally, and view health trends over time.

The dashboard website, at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/animal-health-and-welfare/vds/vds-dashboards.html>, contains three dashboards, some having several tables displaying different information collected by the laboratory. Many of the tables allow viewers to select the species and time period of interest. The Number of Tests Requested table in Fig. 1 shows the total number of bovine tests requested at VDS during quarter four of 2022, as well as the number of tests being conducted by each laboratory section. During the selected time range, it is evident that veterinarians requested many bacterial cultures from the microbiology section at VDS, with the second highest test numbers coming from the virology section, which runs polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and serology testing.

Figure 1. VDS Indicator Dashboard – Displays the number of cases submitted to VDS and the number of tests requested for specific species and during certain time periods

The VDS Statistics dashboard may be of the most interest to beef producers, as it contains tables displaying the most frequently diagnosed health conditions and requested diagnostic tests, which suggests that veterinarians suspect or are monitoring these diseases in herds. When looking at the laboratory data, it may be most helpful to look to the previous year’s quarterly data to gain an idea of which conditions are being tested for and diagnosed at different times of the year, as the current quarterly data takes a short time to compile and report. Producers having questions about health conditions, or trends that they have viewed on the dashboards, are encouraged to contact their veterinarian for further discussion to determine if their herd health protocols require any updating.



Share Your Voice

In the next issue of *Cattle Country*, a Manitoba Agriculture forage or livestock specialist will answer a selected question. Send your questions to [Elizabeth.Nernberg@gov.mb.ca](mailto:Elizabeth.Nernberg@gov.mb.ca).

StockTalk for *Cattle Country* is brought to you by Manitoba Agriculture. We encourage you to email your questions to our department’s forage and livestock team. We are here to help make your cattle operation successful. Contact us today.

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## RAISE THE BAR ON RAISING BEEF

Since 1996, The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) has been awarded annually at the provincial and national level to recognize cattle producers' leadership in conservation. Nominees and applicants are selected based on their stewardship practices, accomplishments and goals.

### ELIGIBILITY

All beef cattle operations in Canada are eligible to apply. Producers can either be nominated by an individual or organization or apply themselves through their provincial or regional cattle organization(s). All methods are equally encouraged. Where provinces or regions have annual stewardship awards, nominees and applicants compete for awards based on their province or region of residence. Where provincial or regional organization(s) do not present an annual award, they can select a nominee who has engaged in significant environmental stewardship activities on their farm or ranch. Past nominees are encouraged to resubmit their application. Previous recipients may not reapply.

### PROVINCIAL AWARD

Provincial recipients are announced at their respective provincial cattle association's annual general meeting. All provincial award recipients then move forward to compete at the national level.

### NATIONAL AWARD

The national TESA recipient is announced during the Canadian Beef Industry Conference (CBIC). All provincial recipients are awarded an all-expense paid trip for two to attend CBIC and the CCA Semi-Annual Meeting that is held in different locations across Canada in August of each year. The national TESA recipient is also awarded a belt buckle and certificate.

**Applications due to Manitoba Beef Producers by December 8.**

## Manitoba Habitat Conservancy



Building on Manitoba Habitat  
Heritage Corporation's past 37 years  
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### UPCOMING SALES

**November 4th**  
Cherry Creek Farms Online Bull & Female Sale  
**November 14th**  
Rainbow River Simmentals Online Sale  
**November 16th**  
Pembina Triangle Simmental Assoc. 43rd Annual Sale  
**November 20th**  
Maple Lake Stock Farms Fall Bred Heifer Sale  
**November 23rd**  
Associate Invitational Simmental Sale  
**December 3rd**  
Queens of the Heartland Production Sale  
**December 4th**  
Northern Light Bred Heifer & 2 Year Old Bull Sale  
**December 5th**  
Keystone Connection 45th Annual Sale  
**December 5th**  
Cream of the Crop Simmental Sale  
**December 9th**  
Transcon's Season Wrap Up Bull & Female Sale  
**December 10th**  
Bonchuk Farms Female Production Sale  
**December 13th**  
Steppeler Farms Female Sale  
**December 14th**  
Mar Mac Farms New Generation Female Sale



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# A Hunger Cure: Homemade Salami

BY: ANNA BORYS, MBP FOOD EXPERT

I’m always on the lookout for fun and innovative ways to use beef. Recipes that would be tasty, that might challenge the at-home cook but without having to require kitchen equipment or materials that they might not have or aren’t easily accessible. As a classically trained cook, it’s fun to learn new techniques to fit these parameters. I especially love it when the inspiration comes from people I love!

Curing meats and making sausage I would say is not a specialty of mine. As someone who works in food research with a focus on food safety, I can be overly paranoid of any sort of curing or preserving process in my home kitchen. I typically make my own fresh sausage at home, but I keep it as ground, without stuffing it in casings. Not every home kitchen has a meat grinder, sausage stuffer or even a fancy curing chamber, so when my grandma introduced me to the idea of making sausage without either of these tools, I was intrigued! My grandma’s method of rolling seasoned ground meat into a tight cheesecloth casing and baking low and slow provides a terrific alternative. This recipe makes a super tasty salami that can be sliced paper thin and would go perfect on your next charcuterie board, atop your homemade meat lover’s pizza or for your next social platter alongside your crackers, cheese, and dills.

The one, maybe tricky (but extremely necessary) ingredient I might point out is the blended meat cure. If you can’t find it at your nearest Walmart, you might be able to talk to your local butcher. And if all else fails, it can be found online. It is a mixture of salt, sugar, nitrates, and nitrites that cure and provide that signature pink colour that you typically see in cured meats. Just using regular old, iodized table salt is not something I’d recommend as it might leave an off taste. There are plenty of great resources online if you find yourself interested in the meat curing process. There are a variety of methods and types of curing processes. However, as this method is somewhat of a “quick and dirty” way to cure meat, safety comes first so I strongly advise you to store your finished salami in the fridge or freezer.

Enjoy!

### Correction

The recipe for Big Mac Tacos that was featured in the September 2023 issue went to print with an error - please see our website (<https://mbbeef.ca/recipes/big-mac-tacos/>) for the correct instructions.



## MANITOBA BEEF PRODUCERS™

### ALL DISTRICTS VIRTUAL MEETING Tuesday, November 7

7:00 pm  
start time

Register at  
**mbbeef.ca**

**Questions about what district you live in?**  
Call the MBP office at 1-800-772-0458 or email: [info@mbbeef.ca](mailto:info@mbbeef.ca)



Watch MBP and Chef Anna Borys on *Great Tastes of Manitoba*, Saturday, November 25, at 6:30pm on CTV Winnipeg.

For those who prefer a digital experience, be sure to follow Great Tastes on Facebook and Instagram, and subscribe to their YouTube channel.




Photo credit: Anna Borys

## Beef Salami (3 x 600g Rolls)

• 4 lbs	Ground beef, lean
• ¼ cup	Morton Tender Quick Meat Cure
• 2 tsp	Garlic powder
• 2 Tbsp	Liquid smoke
• 2 tsp	Mustard seed, whole
• ½ tsp	Smoked paprika
• 1 tsp	Black pepper, coarse ground

### METHOD

1. In a mixer, fitted with paddle attachment, mix all ingredients until well combined and meat mixture lightly starts to stick to sides of mixing bowl (about 2 minutes).
2. Wrap and refrigerate for 24 hours.
3. Set oven to 250°F. Remove mixture from fridge and mix meat mixture again for about 2 minutes.
4. Divide mixture and form into 3 separate logs about 8-9” long.
5. Using plastic wrap, wrap logs as tight as possible, using the ends to roll the log tighter and to remove as many air pockets as possible. (It will likely reduce in length as you roll it tighter, and thickness will increase). \*Tip: use the tip of a toothpick or cake tester to lightly poke any air pockets on surface so they release, and the roll can get even tighter.
6. Remove plastic wrap and wrap tightly in cheesecloth. Repeat with the remaining 2 rolls.
7. Place wrapped rolls onto a roasting or cooling rack on top of a sheet pan (to allow for airflow).
8. Bake for 4 hours.
9. Remove from oven and immediately remove cheesecloth then allow salami to cool.
10. Wrap and refrigerate or freeze.

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