



**CAROLINA
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CONNECTION**

**Spotlight on
ANGUS**

MARCH 2026 • Vol. 40, Issue No. 3

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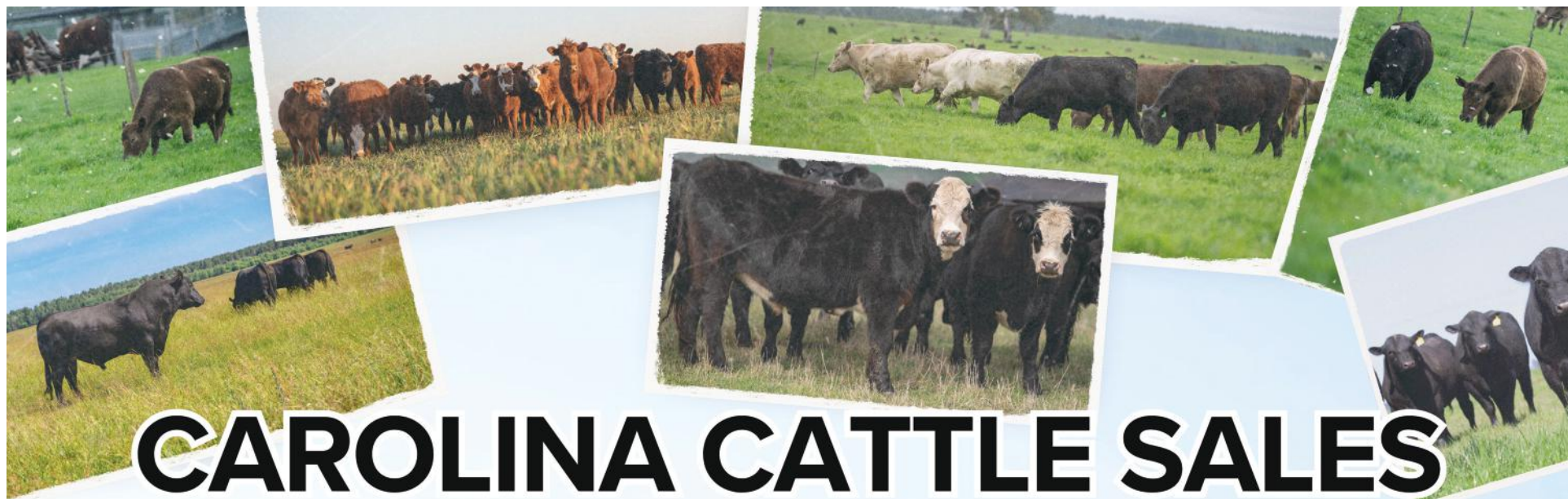
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By **AMBER STARNES**, S.C. Cattlemen's Association

Director's Report

Learning Together

The SCCA Annual Meeting took place on February 6 at the T. Ed Garrison Complex. We began the afternoon with a trade show, followed by our annual business meeting and updates from Clemson University and Cooperative Extension administration. Before the awards banquet, we concluded the general meeting with a presentation by Dr. Elizabeth Bradley, Extension Wildlife Damage Specialist.

Dr. Bradley highlighted the significant concerns posed by wild pigs in livestock operations. Her presentation provided valuable insights, many of which I, personally, took time to reflect upon in the days following the meeting. One key takeaway was that controlling wild pig populations requires a reduction of over 70 percent. Wild pigs are estimated to cause over \$375.5 million in property damage annually, with \$192.9 million of that total attributed to pasture damage.¹

Beyond the physical damage, wild pigs also present a serious health risk. Dr. Bradley reported that 87 percent of swine pathogens are zoonotic, and 77 percent of agricultural animals are in close proximity to wild pig populations. An often overlooked impact of wild pig overpopulation is the negative effect on water quality. Dr. Bradley cited research indicating a 75 percent reduction in *E. coli* levels following removal efforts. However, studies have shown that water quality remains a concern, as *E. coli* levels increase by 79 percent and fecal coliform levels rise by 159 percent post removal compared to pre-removal levels.

The damage caused by wild pigs to equipment, pasture, and water quality continues to have lasting effects on livestock operations. A critical point emphasized during the presentation was

that it is not just about how many wild pigs are removed but how many remain. Methods such as baiting, trapping, and eliminating whole family groups have proven to be more effective in reducing populations than other techniques.

There are resources available to assist with feral hog exclusion. For more information or to apply for the Feral Hog Exclusion Fencing Program offered by the S.C. Association of Conservation Districts, please visit scacd.org/feral-hog-exclusion-fencing.

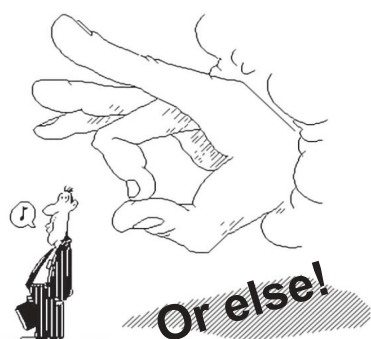
You will find highlights from the annual meeting later in this issue.

Reference

¹American Farm Bureau Federation. (2024, January 29). *Feral hogs vs. farmers: The damage price tag*. American Farm Bureau Federation. Retrieved from www.fb.org/market-intel/feral-hogs-vs-farmers-the-damage-price-tag.

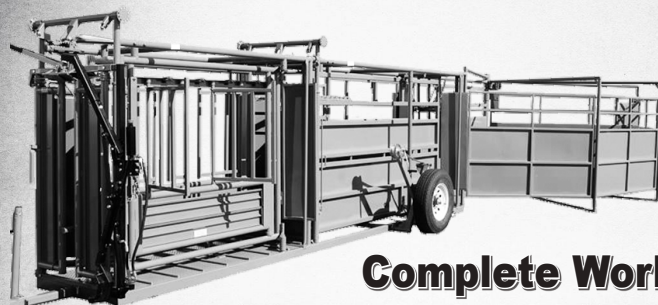
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SPOTLIGHT on Angus

God Makes Things Grow – Uwharrie Ridge Farms is Proof

By **KARL H. KAZAKS**, *Country Folks*

Mark Wilburn said, while reflecting on his journey as a cattleman, “When you start with no knowledge, it’s an uphill climb.”

In 2007, as a 21-year-old with no farming experience, he purchased 30 acres with the intent to raise cattle.

A few months later, he bought some commercial cows. It was then he realized he had purchased cropland — with no fencing and no water.

“I was new,” Wilburn recalled. “I knew absolutely nothing.”

That first weekend he kept the cows at a relative’s place while he fenced in five acres of his land. For a few months he hauled water twice a day before having a well dug.

“There’s been some good, there’s been some bad, and there’s been some ugly,” he admitted.

Wilburn has advanced his operation, Uwharrie Ridge Farms (URF), a long way from that memorable beginning. In 2010 he bought his first registered Angus. In 2012 he sold his first registered bull. In 2017 he sold his first bull to a stud service — URF Homegrown 1619 to ABS. In total, he has sold four bulls to stud services.

One of his foundation cows — Yon Sarah Y79 — produced 126 offspring while greatly impacting the quality and character of Wilburn’s herd.

Today URF, a partnership between Mark and his wife Jessica, has 200 cows. The Wilburns’ young daughter Mereighan participates in the farm as well.

URF’s herd is 80 percent Angus and the remainder Charolais. Wilburn uses ET on 50 percent of the herd’s cows, with the balance being bred A.I. with natural service backup. Counting hayfields, pasture, and cropland, the farm now encompasses about 1,000 acres of land in southern Randolph County.

The first Saturday of December, URF has an on-farm production sale, selling about 50 bulls as well as females. This year they are

selling bred females for the first time.

The herd is fall calving, which means the final months of the year — with calving, breeding, and the sale — are hectic. “Jessica calls it managed chaos,” Wilburn said.

Wilburn sells primarily to buyers from North Carolina and surrounding states, but he has sold animals as far away as the Mountain West.

He also permits certain past customers to consign replacement heifers at the sale, with the provision that those females represent URF genetics.

“Our goal is balanced trait selection,” Wilburn said. “We may not be the best in any area, but we try to keep things in balance — good maternal traits, good growth, and good carcass quality.”





The buyers of his Charolais bulls are primarily commercial Angus producers who want Charolais genetics for hybrid vigor.

Out of college, Wilburn worked as a bank's loan officer, then at Farm Credit. From there he took a job at ABS. Today he has an off-farm job with Select Sires, providing technical expertise for beef producers in the eastern half of the country, from Kansas to the Atlantic.

Wilburn built his herd with animals from Blue Q Ranch and Springfield Angus (both now dispersed) in North Carolina, Sitz Angus in Montana, and Mill Brae Ranch in Kansas. Yon Family Farms in Ridge Spring, S.C., has also been an important influence. Charolais came to the ranch five years ago from the Virginia Tech herd.

In addition to learning how to raise cattle, Wilburn has learned how to raise crops. He started by growing small grains for baleage. He likes growing a blend of 75 percent black oats and 25 percent Marshall ryegrass.

Recently, he's also begun growing beans and corn, some 200 acres, to use as feed for his herd. The beans are roasted offsite and then milled on the farm. About 70 percent of the corn is harvested as silage, the rest as grain. He is growing the dual purpose white mid-rib variety 'Enogen.' "It's got good height, good leaf, and good stalk density," he said.

"I've had some young guys ask us how we did it," Wilburn recalled. "I'm not sure how."



"Because the farm didn't come from my family, there are no expectations," he continued. "The only thing I've got to lose is what I've worked for. If I lost it all, I would be back with what I started with — nothing."

He wants to keep growing his operation — to 500 cows and 1,000 acres of cropland.

"We have had a lot of sleepless nights, and there's been a lot of hard work — and it's still that," he reflected. "There's been times I went to bed thinking, 'Lord, how am I going to pay that bill?' Inevitably something unexpected will happen, and we keep going.

"I'm not going to lie — it's not been easy. Learning about animal husbandry, farming, and business. Without faith and without the Good Lord's blessings, we wouldn't be here."

As stated in Corinthians 3:6 — "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow."

Reprinted from the September 2025 Issue of Country Folks

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SPOTLIGHT on Angus

N.C. Angus Association 81st Annual Meeting

By **CORTNEY HOLSHOUSER**, *N.C. Angus Association*

The 81st N.C. Angus Association Annual Meeting was held on February 7 at the Farm at Brushharbor in Concord, North Carolina. Celebrating 81 years of Angus in North Carolina made for a special day of reminiscing. We celebrated accomplishments throughout the years, remembered pioneers in the N.C. Angus Association, and looked forward to the future of our organization and the impact we will continue to leave.

We were excited to be in a new location this year, the beautiful Farm at Brushharbor wedding venue. A special thank you to the Porter family, who graciously donated the use of this gorgeous building for our event and worked hard to set up the space.

The educational sessions were informative and well received

by the audience. The educational sessions were made possible by generous sponsorship from ABS Global, Carolinas Animal Health, Corteva AgriScience, EBS Farms, and H&D Angus. This year, our group was lucky enough to host an Angus Media Marketing Summit. These presentations help participants think about marketing from a new perspective, turning minor adjustments into major gains. Angus Media Marketing Summit delivers ideas on innovative ways to reach your customers. The first session, "Pathway to Sale Day," presented by Rayne Cox, Angus Media Marketing Specialist, focused on mastering your marketing ahead of sale day. Rayne provided a specific timeline of preparations and how Angus Media can help you reach a targeted audience in the best format and timeline possible.



**2026 NCAA Board of Directors – Kim Starnes, Treasurer; Kyle Mayberry, Vice President; Michael Wyatt, President; and Cortney Holshouser, Executive Secretary; Justin Wood, Kate Reichert, Doug Rowell, Patrick Neal, Bruce Shankle, Jackie Johnson, Jonathan Wilks, Matt Morrison, Michael Jensen, and Will Moss.
Not pictured – Mattie Harward, Mark Wilburn, Harrison Dudley, and Chuck Broadway.**



The next session, “A Refresh — Evolve Your Brand,” was presented by Grace Sanburg, Angus Media Print Services Coordinator and Graphic Artist. Grace explained in detail the differences between branding and marketing and how important it is to distinguish the two. She also touched on messaging. Updating your messaging allows you to stay relevant and promote your competitive advantage. Grace gave several examples of effective messaging, all of which included strengths of your operation and clarity. Defining goals with measurable objectives for your operation is key to success. She outlined several steps to ensure you stay relevant to your audience throughout the year.

Both sessions of the Angus Media Marketing Summit provided attendees with the tools and resources to set themselves up for success regardless of their current marketing situation.

The N.C. Angus Auxiliary and N.C. Junior Angus Association held their annual meetings early in the day. The Auxiliary met at Copper Leaf Farm and Vineyard and enjoyed lunch, made plans for the coming year, elected officers, and participated in a Spice Bar Leadership activity. The Auxiliary also hosted the always popular silent auction throughout the day. It is the Auxiliary’s main fundraiser for the year, and the support on this day is always very much appreciated. The Auxiliary graciously provided the decorations for the day as well.

The juniors enjoyed Top Golf, lunch, made plans for the coming year, and installed new officers as well. A special treat for the juniors this year was the gracious sponsorship of all N.C. Junior Angus members’ annual meeting registrations by Biltmore!

Attendees were able to enjoy coffee and refreshments throughout the day courtesy of PureEmbryo.

The annual business meeting was next on the agenda for the day, where members received updates from all committees, conducted business, and elected new board directors. Congratulations to Chuck Broadway, Harrison Dudley, Will Moss, Patrick Neal, and Jonathan Wilks on being elected to serve a three year term. Retiring directors Emily Barnes, Bryant Chapman, Nathan Ireland, Marty Rooker, and John Smith were recognized for their years of service and dedication to the association. The 2026 NCAA officers include Michael Wyatt, President; Kyle Mayberry, Vice President; and Kim Starnes, Treasurer.

After the annual business meeting, the social began, and members were able to interact with sponsors and fellowship with old and new Angus friends. We enjoyed appetizers and wine graciously donated by Childress Vineyards. The social was sponsored by 4K Farms/Tarheel Angus, Hill Top Farm Service Center, Hi Lo Farms, Mitchell’s Meat Processing, and Walnut Hill Farm.

After the social, premium advertising spots for our *N.C. Angus News Magazine*, Spring Fever catalog, and website were auctioned as well as items to benefit the N.C. Angus Juniors and Auxiliary. Thank you to Will Thompson for serving as the evening’s auctioneer and to all who participated in the auction to make it a huge success.

After a great auction, we rolled right into the awards portion of

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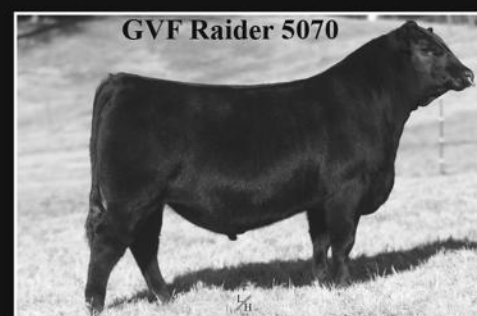
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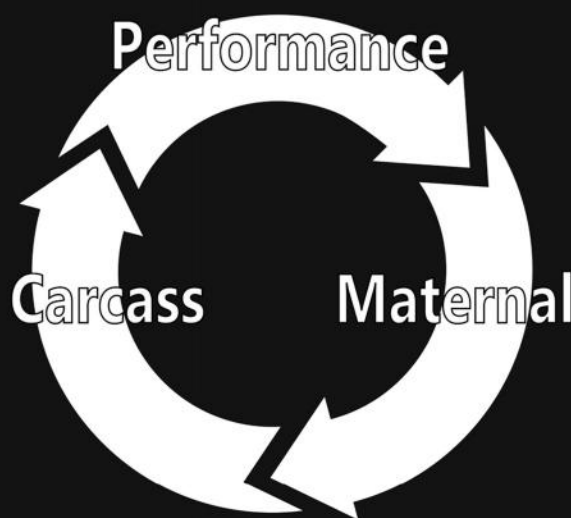


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NCAA Annual Meeting *continued from page 9*

the day. This is a time to recognize the hard work of our members and juniors. The first award of the night was perhaps the most prestigious. Representing a lifetime of dedication and service to our organization, the N.C. Angus Hall of Fame Award was presented to Jane Fowler of Wakelon Angus Farms in Zebulon. Jane's family was able to be there to accept the award in her honor and recalled the many years of Angus events, field days, state fairs, and more that Jane attended and made special. Congratulations to Jane on this well deserved honor.

Next, we celebrated the accomplishments of our members throughout the year. Buddy Shelton of Shelton Angus Farm in Gretna, Va., received the Ira Gentry Memorial trophy for having the high selling lot in the 2025 Spring Fever Sale with Lot 4 and 4A. Lot 4, WHS Fireball Burgess 85K, was a daughter of GB Fireball 672 with GAR Ashland on her maternal side. The cow was bred to EZAR Step Up 9178 for a fall calf. She sold to Craven Angus Farm in Seagrove, N.C., for \$6,000. Her October heifer calf, WHS Top Cut Burgess 96M, sired by Yon Top Cut, sold to 3J Angus in Shelby, N.C., for \$6,750.

N.C. Junior Angus member Caroline Scarlett was recognized next for receiving the 2025 William M. Sanders Scholarship.

Justin Wood next presented Macie Ledford with the DeEtta Wood Achievement and Leadership Award and recognized Ava Wood for receiving the DeEtta Wood Memorial Scholarship this past summer.

Christy Perdue presented the N.C. Junior Angus members with the Auxiliary Achievement Awards next. Recipients included Maddie Carpenter, Caroline Scarlett, Jonathan Scarlett, Ellie Shuping, Lane Boatwright, Ashlyn Houston, Macie Ledford, and Beau Surratte. Maddie Carpenter was recognized for receiving the award for three consecutive years, earning her American Angus Auxiliary Achievement Award, and for also earning her NJAA Bronze Award.

Lastly, Maddie Carpenter was presented her NJAA Silver Award from American Angus Association Regional Manager Reese Tuckwiller for her involvement in the showing, contests, and leadership roles.

Guests were treated to a delicious tenderloin dinner. Banquet sponsors included G5 Agency, Biltmore, and First Bank & Trust Company. During the meal, we were able to see a slide show presented by the N.C. Junior Angus members highlighting their activities, events, and accomplishments throughout the year. Guests also were able to put in those last bids on the Auxiliary silent auction, always an exciting time!

The evening concluded with a keynote address from social media sensation and agriculture advocate The Tarheel Farmer, Will Brinkley. Will's message was encouraging, uplifting, relatable, and very funny. It was the perfect message for our group.

Our organization is so appreciative of all our sponsors for the evening. We were able to create a first class experience for attendees with their generosity. General sponsors for the evening include 323 Ranch, Anson County Farm Bureau, Chatham County Farm Bureau,



Retiring board members Bryant Chapman and John Smith were awarded plaques in appreciation of their dedication to the NCAA by Cortney Holshouser. Not pictured – Emily Barnes, Nathan Ireland, and Marty Rooker

Cleveland County Farm Bureau, Collins Angus, Cumberland County Farm Bureau, Davidson County Farm Bureau, Double Creek Angus, Durham County Farm Bureau, Eberlee Farms, Forsyth County Farm Bureau, Gentry Homeplace Angus, Goshen Cattle, JC's Ranch, Montgomery County Farm Bureau, Nash County Farm Bureau, Pamlico County Farm Bureau, Person County Farm Bureau, Pitt County Farm Bureau, Richmond County Farm Bureau, Surry County Farm Bureau, The 909 Ranch, Triple LLL Angus, and Wayne County Farm Bureau.

Our 2026 Allied Industry Partner program allows us to work with sponsors throughout the year on various projects, including our annual meeting. Prime Level Allied Industry Partners include Chessie Creek Farm, Farm Credit Associations of N.C., Piedmont Custom Meats, Inc., and Southeast AgriSeeds. Choice Level partners include Biltmore Estate, Brushy Mountain Genetics, Performance Livestock & Feed Co., and Zoetis. Select Level partners include Premier Select Sires and Zach Moffitt Cattle Marketing & Consulting.

It was a treat to have many of our Allied Industry Partners, sponsors, and supporters in attendance throughout the day to interact with our members.

A huge thank you to the Annual Meeting Committee for planning and executing a spectacular event. Members included Chairman Daphne Jensen, Brooke Harward, Nichole Carpenter, Robin Vanhoy, Greg Little, Kate Reichert, and NCAA President Michael Wyatt. We are also extremely grateful to Roy and Teresa Swisher for handling registrations throughout the day. Their help was invaluable in making the day a success. We are excited to begin planning next year's event already. We invite everyone to join us in 2027!



NCAA 81st Annual Meeting

February 7, 2026





SPOTLIGHT on Angus

Jane Fowler Inducted into the N.C. Angus Hall of Fame

By CORTNEY HOLSHOUSER, N.C. Angus Association

Jane and J.R. Fowler were a team — a loving, giving couple who helped each other with everything, especially pertaining to the Angus industry. J.R. married his Orange County dairy farming, Meredith College angel just six months after they met, then moved her out to the Fowler family farm near Zebulon. His dad, “Mr. Bob,” tended many crops and raised farm animals but said registered cows had too much paperwork. J.R. thought the paperwork was worth it and bought his first registered Angus cows in 1955. Together they joined the N.C. Angus Association and Auxiliary. They wrote articles and letters, researched, updated, and helped write the N.C. Angus history. Both, separately, had the *Angus Handbook* dedicated to them. They attended most — and hosted two — field days. They traveled to promote Angus while J.R. served two terms as association president, and together, they stored, prepped, maintained, and manned the NCAA booth at the N.C. State Fair for over 40 years. They loved to talk (Angus) bull. When J.R. was inducted into the N.C. State Fair Hall of Fame and the N.C. Angus Hall of Fame, he gave credit where credit was due — to his wife, Jane. When Jane Ebert served as the American Angus Auxiliary President in 2000, the newly formed N.C. Angus Auxiliary was selected to host the National Breakfast in Louisville, Ken., and Jane Fowler made North Carolina proud. With her experiences as officer and outstanding member in two garden clubs, hostess, floral and special event chairperson at her Rolesville Baptist Church, PTA president, Wake County School Board representative, permanent Meredith College class agent, Meredith alumni board of visitors, and Outstanding Meredith Alumni Award recipient...she volunteered her skills to make this event memorable. Jane collected dogwoods, cardinals, magnolias, and Angus items for arrangements for the many head, side, and welcome tables throughout the ballroom. A young N.C. Junior Angus member named Karl Holshouser helped her immensely to unload and set up. All of this “Jane work” came in second after raising three active children, caring for her parents and in-laws, all while she, J.R., and son Bob kept their Century Farm — Wakelon Angus Farms — running smoothly over the last 71 years. She is a Christian example to follow.

When Dr. Richard Kirkman let me know that the committee had

unanimously selected Jane Fowler to be inducted into the N.C. Angus Hall of Fame, it brought back lots of memories for me personally. She has always been the most welcoming person in the room. She loved the Angus breed and this organization fiercely and wanted everyone to be part of the Angus family. From manning the N.C. Angus booth at the N.C. State Fair and hosting field days, to setting up a virtual garden in Louisville, Ken., for the American Angus Auxiliary Breakfast to support one of North Carolina’s own...to hosting N.C. Junior Angus retreats in the Fowler cabin, Jane did it all. It is just her nature to give 110 percent to everything she does — especially the Angus breed that she was so passionate about. For many years, she would travel with me to N.C. Angus Auxiliary outings. She eventually was unable to travel, but she always called to check in or sent handwritten letters to encourage me and let me know how proud she was. I feel so very fortunate to call her a mentor.

At our recent annual meeting, Jane was honored with this Hall of Fame Award. It was so nice to have many of her family members in attendance to witness this token of appreciation for her many years of service and dedication to our organization. When asked to share thoughts and memories of Jane, one common theme repeated itself — Jane is a true Southern lady, full of class and charm. These qualities contributed greatly to Jane making everyone feel welcome at Angus events throughout the years. Her passion was truly contagious.

Jane Ebert shared, “In the Angus industry, we refer to respected breeders as ‘Statesman.’ Tonight, we honor a ‘Statewoman,’ Jane Fowler, who is a Southern lady who walked beside her husband, J.R. Fowler, in the Angus world. This distinguished, beautiful lady had the charm of being able to create a warm environment for all involved. When the N.C. Angus Auxiliary was organized, Jane joined, served, and led. She was always a cheerleader for any event, and when it came to promoting our state associations, she showed up to make it memorable. At the 2001 American Angus Auxiliary Annual Meeting and Breakfast in Louisville, Ken., Jane provided the floral décor for the event. The Fowler cars traveling to Louisville for the event were loaded with a full staged florist platform that Jane transformed into a beautiful landscape.

To know Jane is to love Jane. Jane is adored by fellow Angus members from the junior, auxiliary, and adult associations. To tell you how J.R. adored Jane, these were his words with a twinkle in his eye, "I married up! Jane has been a class act, and what a privilege for me to have loved her along the way.

Beauty, brains, and talent are encapsulated in our honoree tonight, Jane Fowler."

Howard Gentry says, "Jane Fowler is truly a classy, charming Southern lady. For many years, she attended numerous N.C. Angus Association events with her husband, the late J.R. Fowler. Jane is a behind the scenes, get it done person, who has been very supportive and active with our association and the American Angus Association events. She was also the association's historian for several years. Jane, in fact, was the N.C. Angus Auxiliary, long before that organization was formed. She always made sure our events were held with a touch of class.

I remember fondly Jane working the events like an old time politician. She greeted everyone with a smile, talking to everyone

and showing a true interest in them. If she did not know you, you were her friend, before the event was over. Jane Fowler is a true ambassador of the Angus breed."

Suzanne Brewer shared, "The Fowler family has been heavily involved with the N.C. Angus Association throughout the years. In 1999, J.R. Fowler was inducted into the N.C. Angus Hall of Fame, and in 2000, Jane was heavily involved and one of the charter members of the N.C. Angus Auxiliary. Jane was always willing to help in any way, no matter the task. In 2008, J.R. and Jane were honored with the Handbook Dedication. Jane was always so supportive of me during my time as the N.C. Angus Association Executive Secretary. Folks like Jane will always be a part of the wonderful memories of my time in that role."

Jane Fowler is a true Angus enthusiast with an incredible passion. We are eternally grateful for her years of dedication to advancing our mission and can only hope this award inspires the next generation to approach this business with the same passion and attitude to better the N.C. Angus Association.



Wakelon Angus Farms photo Wake Forest, N. C. 7556-5911
Address 7400 Fowler Rd → 27597

2026
N.C. Angus
Hall of Fame
Inductee
JANE FOWLER



SPOTLIGHT on Angus

53rd Carolina Angus Futurity Dedicated to Lee Clinton

Lee Clinton, owner of Clinton Farms in Clover, S.C., was raised on a dairy farm in Clover. Clinton Dairy was owned and operated by his father, uncle, and grandfather. After Lee was born, he was never very far behind them in anything farm related. Lee's childhood was spent learning and working on the dairy, where he fell in love with all aspects of farming, from working with cows, milking, feeding, breeding, and running equipment and doing field work. He was known for being able to escape the house at a young age when he was trying to follow his father to the milk barn and even jokes that he drove his first tractor when he was two years old. Lee was able to get out of the house, start the tractor, and then drive it into the side of the house. Thankfully, only the house had minor injuries. Lee also spent most of his childhood and teen years

showing cows.

After Lee graduated from high school, he attended Erskine College for a while but decided that his place was on the family dairy farm. He worked with his father in the dairy business until 2004, when his father sold out of the dairy business. Lee decided to try running the dairy on his own and did so until 2007. Lee ended up going to work for Clover School District as a sports field manager, but he deeply missed working with cattle. In 2008, Lee's aunt and uncle brought about ten Angus cows to the farm to put on the pasture, and Lee considered buying some black cows to have back on the farm. He ended up buying four bred Angus cows from Dean, Nancy, and Clinton Crocker, and the herd has continued to grow from there. One of the cows that he bought from the Crockers, CRR

53rd Annual Carolina Angus Futurity

The sale is sponsored by the S.C. Angus Association and will take place at the T. Ed Garrison Cattle Complex at 12:00 noon. This year's sale offers fall pairs, spring pairs, bred heifers, open heifers, and embryo lots. We hope you'll take advantage of this offering of solid Angus genetics from South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama.

We'd love to see you in person on the day of the sale, but if you're unable to attend, feel free to contact any of the sale staff or bid online with CCI Live. Please also join us for the S.C. Angus Association banquet and annual meeting on March 20 in Clemson. Everyone is welcome, and payment will be accepted at the door.

If you'd like a catalog or need more information, please contact any of the sale staff. Join us on March 20–21 for this great Angus event!

Sale Consignors

221 Cattle
Aynor Angus
Black Creek Angus
Black Springs Farm
Brooks Angus Farm
Chessie Creek Farm

Clinton Farms
Diamond N Farms
Lawler Farms
McElrath Farm
Paul Boyd Angus
Rocking W Angus

Rose Myrtle Farm
Spring Hill Angus
Soles Angus Farm
Two Rivers Cattle Company
Steve Waggoner
Yon Family Farms

Sale Staff

Sale Manager
Zach Moffitt – 336-736-6340

Sale Chairman
Lee Clinton – 704-913-6127

SCAA President
Donnie Watts – 803-315-6439

Sarita EXD 161, is considered the matriarch of his herd, as most of the cattle on the farm go back to her. Lee quickly learned that Angus cattle breed much easier than Holsteins.

The more the herd started to grow, the more Lee wanted to become involved. With help and encouragement from his friend and neighbor, Neil Boyd, Lee learned more about the Angus breed and business. He decided to join the SCAA in 2012 and consigned his first lot in the Futurity in 2015. He steadily became more and more involved in SCAA by first becoming a board member, then vice president and sale chairman, and president.

Lee is also a board member for the York County Cattlemen's Association and a past president of the S.C. Sports Field Managers Association. He serves as an alumni advisor for the Clover FFA chapter and was honored with their Outstanding Service Award in 2025. He offers his time to help FFA members learn about working with cattle and allowed them to show several of his heifers. He was also recently recognized as the S.C. Farmer and Agribusiness Association Beef Producer of the Year.

Lee is married to Robin, and they live on the farm in Clover with their dog, June. They love having their nieces and nephews come to help on the farm.



THE 53RD ANNUAL *Carolina* ANGUS FUTURITY

SATURDAY, MARCH 21 AT NOON
T. ED GARRISON LIVESTOCK ARENA

CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2026

NOON: Sale Cattle in Place

6 PM: Social Hour

CLEMSON OUTDOOR LAB
415 CHARLIE WHITE TRAIL
PENDLETON, SC 29670

7 PM: 53rd Annual Meeting & Banquet

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2026

T. ED GARRISON ARENA

9 AM: SC Junior Angus Silent Auction

NOON: 53rd Annual Carolina Futurity Sale

TO REQUEST A SALE BOOK, CONTACT

ZACH MOFFITT | 336.736.6340



\$100,000 in Colvin Scholarships Available in 2026. Apply by April 1 for Certified Angus Beef scholarships supporting students pursuing careers in food and agriculture. Certified Angus Beef (CAB) will award over \$100,000 to college students pursuing careers in food and agriculture from the Colvin Scholarship Fund. Applications span three degree tracks and are open through April 1.

The production agriculture, undergraduate, and graduate scholarship categories each have tailored requirements, including essay questions, résumés, and letters of recommendation. In 2025, the Colvin Scholarship Fund supported 27 students with awards ranging from \$2,000 to \$7,500.

“The Colvin Scholarship Fund is an incredible investment to support our young leaders in the industry,” says Melissa Brewer, vice president of communications. “With the help



of our partners, we are helping ensure these students have a vibrant future in the beef business.”

The 2026 Colvin Scholarship empowers the next generation of agricultural leaders who have chosen to dedicate their academic studies and future careers to strengthening the beef industry.

“This scholarship is a big step that supports what I’m going to do for the rest of my life, and it’s truly an honor,” says Olivia Hadrick, 2025 top production agriculture scholarship recipient and S.D. State University animal science major. “It gives me an opportunity to be away at school to learn about new technologies and new methods to always stay adaptable.”

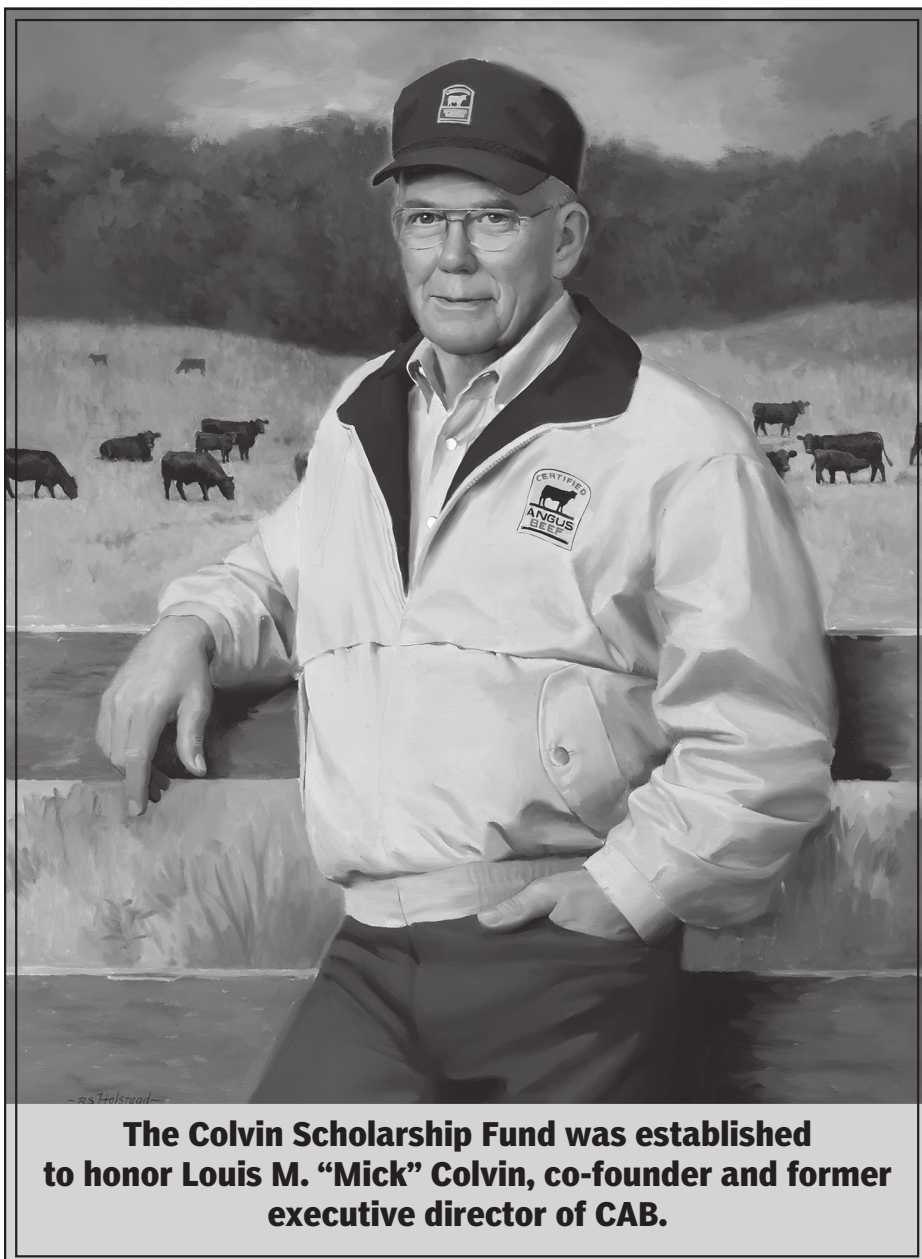
Applications for the scholarship undergo a comprehensive review process, which considers the applicants’ academic achievements, extracurricular involvement, communication skills, and commitment to the beef industry. A selection committee comprised of industry experts and CAB representatives then reviews each application to identify the most qualified candidates.

Scholarship recipients receive financial support along with the opportunity to connect with industry leaders and mentors. First place winners in each category earn \$7,500.

Applications for the 2026 Colvin Scholarship are now open and will close on April 1. Interested students who live in the U.S. or Canada are eligible and encouraged to apply. Learn more about eligibility criteria and apply by visiting www.certifiedangusbeef.com/en/brand/colvin-scholarship.

About the Colvin Scholarship. The Colvin Scholarship Fund, established to honor Louis M. “Mick” Colvin, co-founder and former executive director of CAB, supports students committed to shaping the future of the beef industry. Over its two decade legacy, the fund has provided students with over \$730,000 in support of pursuing educational and professional goals in agriculture. With growing support from brand partners, the fund’s impact continues to expand.

Who is Certified Angus Beef? At Certified Angus Beef, we know people want to put great meals on the table. Our employees work across the beef supply chain to ensure chefs and home cooks find and prepare the best Angus beef. Led by our culinary, beef, and marketing experts, our team provides consultation, marketing materials, training, market insights, and tools that help businesses like grocery stores and restaurants thrive. Our team is also dedicated to sharing the story of family farmers and ranchers who supply the brand.



The Colvin Scholarship Fund was established to honor Louis M. “Mick” Colvin, co-founder and former executive director of CAB.

Behind the Brand



The Angus Argument

By JOHN STIKA, *Certified Angus Beef President*

Certified Angus Beef's (CAB) mission is to increase demand for registered Angus cattle, yet the brand doesn't require carcasses to trace back to documented Angus heritage.

Why? Consider the industry 50 years ago. Angus had a declining presence, branded beef programs didn't exist, and packers had little reliable information to confirm source, let alone breed composition.

At the time, a USDA certified beef program transferring live cattle eligibility standards to a carcass had never been attempted. The brand's founders knew the program had to be practical, easy, and affordable to implement. Strict parentage requirements would



Carcasses are identified as Angus influenced when the hide is removed at the packing plant with an A-stamp on the rump or mark on the hock in blue ink.

have been nearly impossible for the industry to adopt, as they would have hindered the creation of a scalable program and widespread value for the breed.

In collaboration with USDA, hide color was established as the basis for determining live animal eligibility for CAB. Still today, the American Angus Association's Live Animal Specification outlines characteristics for the USDA to determine live cattle eligibility for beef programs, referencing Angus influence. To be eligible for CAB, cattle must be predominantly solid black with no other color behind the shoulder, above the flanks, or breaking the midline, excluding the tail.

The "Is It Angus?" argument – There's no denying CAB has helped dramatically expand the market share for registered Angus genetics. Arguably, that success has encouraged several other breeds to adopt a black hide color by incorporating registered Angus genetics into their breeding programs and registries.

Today, with more than 70 percent of fed cattle being predominantly solid black, both Angus breeders and non-Angus producers inquire about the genetic composition of CAB carcasses, especially given the market preference and price disparity between cattle that are and are not eligible for Angus beef programs.

Scientific sampling of the national supply of CAB carcasses reveals the average CAB carcass approaches 75 percent Angus genetics. Among CAB Prime, this average grows beyond 75 percent, nearing straight bred Angus. This sample testing confirms CAB supply derives from high percentage Angus cattle, even though it doesn't require a specific percentage of Angus heritage. This makes sense thanks to a market dominated by registered Angus bulls and a mix of other sires highly influenced by registered Angus genetics being widely used on predominantly Angus based commercial cow herds.

Room for improvement – This is not to suggest the system is perfect. However, it does support the contention that, under the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, determining live animal eligibility for Angus beef programs by hide color remains accurate, although admittedly imprecise at times.

Thus, we should always remain open to better options. Significant progress in DNA technology, individual animal traceability, and information exchange could each factor into a more precise method of determining live cattle eligibility for Angus beef programs moving forward.

As we contemplate alternative approaches, we also need to keep in mind the U.S. beef industry identifies roughly 16 million fed cattle as eligible for Angus beef programs each year. From that, 5.8 million qualify for CAB. Transitioning to a more precise system reliant on DNA testing or traceability would add cost and needs to be factored into the cumulative return on investment.

Where this long debated topic lands remains to be seen. However, looking at the 47 year history of CAB suggests the approach has benefitted Angus breeders, supply chain partners, and consumers. Some try to suggest CAB merely requires a black hide. That is simply false. The fact is just being Angus or black hided isn't enough. To qualify for CAB, eligible carcasses must meet ten exacting carcass specifications. We will talk more about that next time.

ANGUS

THE BUSINESS BREED

UPDATE

AngusLink offers GeneMax enhancement for Genetic Merit Scorecard. AngusLink connects Genetic Merit Scorecard with GeneMax Advantage test, offering enhanced scorecard option for commercial producers. Commercial producers with Angus based cow herds can access a new value added marketing option with the GeneMax enhanced Genetic Merit Scorecard (GMS) from AngusLink.

This connection serves as another way for producers to set themselves apart in the marketplace, says Troy Marshall, director of commercial industry relations for the American Angus Association.

GeneMax Advantage is a genetic test for high percentage commercial Angus females, and the GMS is a valued added marketing tool that objectively describes the performance potential of a group of feeder calves. Each is powered by the association's database, the industry's largest genetic database, with product research and intelligence managed by Angus Genetics, Inc. (AGI).

"The GMS has already proven to be exceptionally accurate, but building values to represent the cow herd side [of the scorecard's calculations] naturally took time," Marshall says. "GeneMax speeds up the process, so the latest update to the GMS is about improving it further. The more precise the GMS becomes, the more value it creates for the entire industry."

He says GeneMax Advantage has also built itself a reputation as a reliable tool. Recent improvements have included adding five dollar value indexes (\$Values) to test results on individuals as well as scores for five additional traits — Functional Longevity (FL), Teat Size (Teat), Udder Suspension (UDDR), Hair Shed (HS), and Pulmonary Arterial Pressure (PAP). The \$Values on the test are directly comparable to the \$Values of registered Angus bulls, making it the practical choice to test commercial heifers out of registered Angus bulls. It also includes Sire Match™ services, which provide sire parentage for tested daughters of registered and HD 50K or Angus GS tested bulls.

What's required – To qualify for the GeneMax enhanced scorecard, 10 percent or more of a producer's cow herd must be tested. The standard requirements for enrolling a calf crop in the GMS program also still apply. Those include age and source verification through IMI Global, a division of Where Food Comes From; the cow herd breed composition for the calves being enrolled; and a list of sire registration numbers. Sires must be predominantly (50 percent or more) registered Angus.

"Having an additional source of information brings more

precision to the calculation, but the logic behind the scorecard is still the same," says Rafael Medeiros, geneticist with AGI. "The scores of GeneMax tested cows will be considered in the cow side of the equation — on a scale that matches the percentage of your cow herd that's been tested — to calculate that calf crop's GMS. This added transparency and credibility makes your marketing even stronger, helping buyers recognize the depth of your genetic investment."

During the American Angus Association's fiscal year 2025, AngusLink premiums averaged \$20.92 per hundredweight (cwt.). Medeiros and Marshall agree this new scorecard option is an extension of efforts by the Association and AGI to help commercial producers both make genetic progress in their herds and help them get paid for it on sale day.

There is no additional cost for the connection. The only cost for receiving a GeneMax enhanced GMS is the regular cost of GeneMax testing at \$28 per female and typical AngusLink enrollment costs, which include the expense of age and source verification.


To signal interest in the enhanced scorecard, producers check a box indicating they have tested with GeneMax Advantage when completing the AngusLink enrollment form. To begin an enrollment, producers can contact the AngusLink team at anguslink.com or 816-383-5100. To begin GeneMax testing, visit www.GeneMaxAngus.com and place an order, or complete the "Talk to a Rep about GeneMax" form on the webpage.

Improving GMS scores – A frequently asked question about the GMS from users is, "How can I improve my scores?" Medeiros says this connection provides an efficient path for doing that.

"Producers of all sizes have found success with GeneMax Advantage," he says. "Because GeneMax delivers results on individual animals, you can make selection and breeding decisions with greater precision and have a greater effect on genetic merit within a shorter period. The sooner you begin, the sooner you'll see the advantages of integrating GeneMax data into your marketing strategy."

The scorecard values range from 0 to 200, with the industry average being 100. The higher the score, the greater the genetic merit of the calves. Medeiros says the effect of adding GeneMax scores depends on the genetic quality of a herd.

The more cows you test, the greater the impact GeneMax data

<p>ANGUSLINK™</p> <p>GENETIC MERIT SCORECARD®</p> <p>ENHANCED WITH</p> <p>GMX</p> <p>GENEMAX Advantage™</p>	<p>BEEF SCORE</p> <p>131</p>
	<p>FEEDLOT SCORE</p> <p>125</p>
	<p> GRID SCORE</p> <p>127</p>
	<p>MATERNAL SCORE</p> <p>142</p>

will have on your Genetic Merit Scorecard scores, Marshall adds.

“Testing a higher percentage of females adds more detail and insight, giving buyers a clearer view of your herd’s genetic potential,” he says. “By incorporating GeneMax Advantage insights into selection and mating decisions, you can really accelerate the rate of genetic improvement within your herd.”

Marshall says this enhancement brings full circle the suite of tools designed in partnership with AGI for the American Angus Association to benefit commercial cattlemen.

“We can always get better,” he says. “Once you’ve selected the right bulls, GeneMax Advantage offers the most accurate heifer selection tool available, allowing you to build and describe a cow herd that aligns with your goals. After establishing the right genetics, the focus shifts to capturing their value — marketing your feeder cattle in a way that reflects their true worth. AngusLink has transformed that process. It is the most recognized and trusted method for conveying the genetic merit of commercial feeder cattle.”

Navigating Industry Leaders Highlight Strategies to Maximize Value. Industry experts and producers discuss how genetics, management, and marketing drive profitability at the 2026 National Western Stock Show. At the 2026 National Western Stock Show, industry leaders and cattle producers gathered to discuss how breeding, management, and market decisions can create value buyers recognize and reward.

Sponsored by the Colorado Angus Association, the session focused on connecting production fundamentals to market success.

Presentations by Troy Marshall, director of commercial industry relations for the American Angus Association; Clay Burson, Ph.D., associate beef technical specialist at Zinpro; and Ryan Rathmann, Ph.D., of Texas Tech University set the stage for a panel moderated by Kevin Ochsner, host of *Cattlemen to Cattlemen* on RFD-TV, and panelists Jason Hoffman, Hoffman Ranch; Rick Machado, auctioneer for Western Video Market; Steve Gabel, owner of Magnum Feedyard; and Troy Marshall.

Proving Genetic Merit – Even in strong markers, high demand doesn’t ensure higher premiums. Marshall explained how producing high quality cattle is only part of the equation. “If the market can’t see it, they can’t pay for it,” he said, citing verification tools such as AngusLink to quantify genetic merit.

He emphasized how market value increases when production decisions are aligned with downstream demand.

“We’ve done a really great job of producing pounds and being efficient, low cost producers in this industry,” Marshall said. “Now we’ve got to continue to connect to our marketplace and consumer demand to make sure our management decisions are connected to real world economic decisions.”

Nutrition as a Value Multiplier – Nutrition remains one of the most influential factors of profitability. Burson highlighted how every sector of the industry feels the effects of a good nutrition program.

“Virtually every biological process at some point is going to require a mineral or vitamin,” Burson said. “We’re asking cows to breed early, we’re trying to keep the calf healthy, and we’re trying to keep the feedlot steers performing efficiently — minerals play a critical role in all those functions.”

Rathmann linked nutrition to efficiency and feed costs, noting



that matching cow size and milk production to resources prevents unnecessary expenses. “The most efficient cows are those that produce the most with the least,” Rathmann said.

He noted how variations in feed intake present selection opportunity. “If we can identify cows who are genetic outliers for eating less and still being able to sustain their maintenance needs, there’s a lot of opportunity,” Rathmann said.

Beyond the Scale – While pounds remain important to commercial value, panelists stressed that relationships, reputation, and consistent performance also affect profitability.

“Now you have the tools available where you can accurately and objectively describe the genetic merit of feeder cattle,” Marshall said. “This is the people business and always will be, but if we can document that information to give buyers confidence, I think that’s the key to driving value.”

Gabel noted that “efficiency of growth and carcass quality” matter, but reliability and trust influence market outcomes.

Machado described it as, “What you have to sell is your name if you’re not retaining ownership all the way through.” Hoffman echoed this, adding that balancing risk versus reward is another key factor to a successful operation.

“You’ve got to stick your neck out where you can be a leader,” he said about taking chances. “But you’ve got to be grounded enough to stick to the basics too and produce good cattle they know they can count on.”

Down the Road – Finding a competitive edge requires foresight. As Ochsner noted, “Your genetic decisions today have big ramifications years down the road.”

Producers who thoughtfully combine genetics, management, and marketing can turn these decisions into a win for their bottom line.

“Genetics, management, and marketing are really risk management tools along the way,” Marshall said. “If you’re doing those things right, you’re going to reduce your risk in this marketplace.”

2026 Angus Foundation Scholarship Applications Open. Youth encouraged to apply for educational scholarships through May 1. The Angus Foundation has opened the application period for its 2026 scholarship program, continuing its commitment to supporting the education and leadership development of Angus youth. Now through May 1, students can apply for the Foundation’s broad suite of undergraduate, graduate, vocational or technical, and commercial cattlemen’s scholarship programs.

For more than 27 years, the Angus Foundation has remained

Angus Update *continued from the previous page*

steadfast in its mission to empower the next generation through education. Since 1998, the Foundation has awarded over \$5 million in scholarships to students pursuing degrees in agriculture, science, business, communications, veterinary medicine, trade programs, and other fields. These scholarships do more than provide financial assistance; they aim to celebrate dedication, leadership, and education for students to give back to the beef industry.

Each year students recognize the impact these scholarships have on their lives and education. These young leaders represent the future of the Angus breed.

“Receiving this scholarship meant the world to me,” said Claire Murnin, a past recipient of the Richard L. Spader Scholarship and Pat Goggins Memorial Angus Scholarship. “It is helping me pursue my educational goals. To the donors, thank you for investing in the Angus breed’s future.”

Murnin, who plans on a career in agriculture, notes the scholarships provided more than financial relief; they affirmed her drive to advocate for the industry.

In 2025, the Foundation awarded \$393,000 in scholarships to 142 students with majors ranging from agricultural communications to pharmaceuticals to graduate degrees in meat science and technical certificates.

Kansas junior member Addie Haverkamp, another recent undergraduate scholarship recipient, expressed similar appreciation.

“I used to look up to older members receiving awards, and now I’m one of them,” she said. “Being involved in the Angus breed and with the [National Junior Angus Association] (NJAA) has truly shaped me into the leader I am today.”

For Haverkamp, the scholarship will support her pursuit of a degree in agricultural communications, helping her step into a career focused on educating consumers and advocating for the agriculture industry.

“Supporting youth in their education is an important part of the Foundation’s mission,” said Jaclyn Boester, Angus Foundation Executive Director. “Our scholarships are one of the most prominent and consistent ways our donors support Angus youth. They pave the way for a bright future for our industry by ensuring young people can reach their full potential.”

The Angus Foundation offers multiple scholarship categories, ensuring a pathway for students from different operations and educational goals.

Undergraduate and Graduate Angus Foundation Scholarships – One application. More than \$190,000 awarded annually. The Angus Foundation Scholarship Application is available to all Junior Angus members. One completed application creates eligibility for all listed scholarships. NJAA members can apply via AAA Login through May 1.

- **Access to application** – www.angusonline.org/Account/Login, “Programs” tab

- **Submission** – Through AAA login

- **Deadline** – May 1

Commercial Cattlemen Scholarship – The Angus Foundation

will award five \$1,500 scholarships to undergraduate students who use Angus genetics in a commercial cattle operation. The applicant or their parent/guardian must have transferred or been transferred an Angus registration paper in the last 36 months (on or after May 1, 2023) and must be considered commercial and not seedstock in their operation. The scholarship applies to any field of study.

- **Access to application** – Download application at www.angus.org/foundation/apply-for-scholarships/commercial-scholarships

- **Submission** – Email to scholarships@angus.org

- **Deadline** – May 1

Vo-Tech Scholarship – New in 2026, the Angus Foundation will award scholarships to support students pursuing vocational or technical education related to the beef industry. The Vo-Tech Scholarship is designed for individuals seeking specialized training at accredited technical schools, community colleges, or certification programs that prepare them for hands-on careers in agriculture and allied industries.

- **Access to application** – Download application at www.angus.org/foundation/apply-for-scholarships

- **Submission** – Email completed materials to scholarships@angus.org

- **Deadline** – May 1

External Scholarships – In addition to the many scholarships available through the general undergraduate scholarship application, NJAA members may be eligible for additional Angus Foundation scholarships administered by partners who share our mission.

- View additional opportunities at www.angus.org/foundation/apply-for-scholarships/external-scholarships.

- **Deadline** – Varies based on Application

The Angus Foundation encourages all eligible youth to apply for this year’s scholarship opportunities and take the next step toward building their future. Applications for programs including undergraduate, graduate, VoTech, and Commercial Cattlemen’s scholarships are due May 1.

Application links and full details are available at www.angus.org/foundation/apply-for-scholarship.

About the Angus Foundation. Established as a 501(c)(3) organization in 1980, the Angus Foundation remains focused on its mission to support Angus education, youth, and research. The organization has distributed more than \$4.9 million in youth scholarships since 1998 and has also invested more than \$1.4 million in beef cattle research in the past decade. For more information, contact the Angus Foundation at 816-383-5100.

ANGUS MEANS BUSINESS. The American Angus Association is the nation’s largest beef breed organization, serving more than 21,000 members across the United States, Canada, and several other countries. It’s home to an extensive breed registry that grows by more than 300,000 animals each year. The Association also provides programs and services to farmers, ranchers, and others who rely on Angus to produce quality genetics for the beef industry and quality beef for consumers. For more information about Angus cattle and the American Angus Association, visit www.angus.org.



33RD ANNUAL

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ANGUS BULL & FEMALE SALE

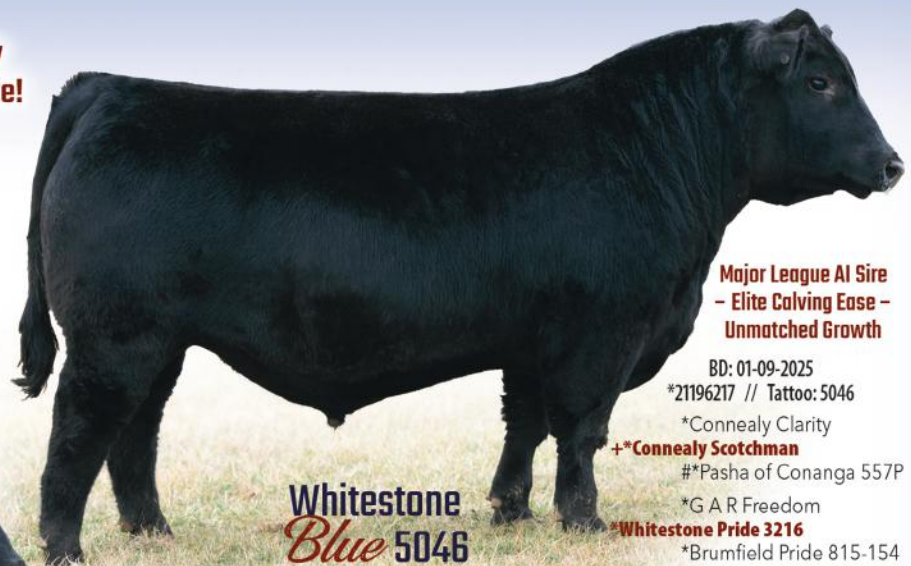
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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BD: 01-09-2025

*21196217 // Tattoo: 5046

*Connealy Clarity

+*Connealy Scotchman

#*Pasha of Conanga 557P

*G A R Freedom

*Whitestone Pride 3216

*Brumfield Pride 815-154

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	CW	MARB	REA	SM	SW	SB	SC
+18	-1.8	+87	+153	+27	+79	+1.29	+1.27	+106	+101	+226	+399

Whitestone Blue is a major league AI Sire candidate with as impressive of a pedigree and number profile as you can get in the breed. He stems from the same family as the Genex AI Sire, Turning Point. Don't miss him on sale day.



Heifer Bull
- Growth - Carcass -
\$Values

BD: 01-27-2025

*21227945 // Tattoo: 5116

*Connealy Clarity

+*Connealy Scotchman

#*Pasha of Conanga 557P

*LAR Man In Black

*Whitestone Barbara 2127

*ICC Barbarba K 6334-9674

Whitestone
Tigger 5116

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	CW	MARB	REA	SM	SW	SB	SC
+9	+1.5	+91	+157	+29	+70	+0.97	+0.88	+87	+98	+182	+323

Whitestone Tigger is a combination of the cattleman's kind herd sire with all the bells and whistles for many different environments in our industry. Keep an eye out for him on sale day.



Phenotype
- Growth - Power -
Performance

BD: 01-07-2025

*21196215 // Tattoo: 5042

#*TEX Playbook 5437

+*BJ Surpass

+*BJ Prophet 5275

+*Koupals B&B Windfall 1021

Whitestone Miss Cap T050

B&B Miss Cap 9132

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	CW	MARB	REA	SM	SW	SB	SC
+6	+2.8	+80	+143	+34	+65	+0.79	+0.94	+75	+83	+175	+302

Whitestone Peyton 5042 is a high-growth bull who will add pounds, length of body, and an attractive look to his offspring; couple this with his paperwork and his predictable pedigree, and he will be a sale attraction on sale day.



Top Growth Genetics
- Performance - Size -
\$Combined

BD: 01-03-2025

*21196211 // Tattoo: 5029

*Connealy Clarity

+*Connealy Scotchman

#*Pasha of Conanga 557P

+*WHITESTONE

*Whitestone Evelyn 3052

Whitestone Evelyn R173

Whitestone
Twister 5029

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	CW	MARB	REA	SM	SW	SB	SC
+4	+3.1	+103	+178	+26	+85	+1.02	+0.79	+89	+98	+198	+346

Whitestone Twister is a top growth and performance sire in this year's sale. He has body and impressive muscle shape in a heavy, durable package. A must-see on sale day.



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The President's Letter

By JONATHAN PERRY, *American Angus Association*



Dear Members of the American Angus Association,
The Board of Directors met February 8–12 in Saint Joseph, Missouri. Along with virtual committee meetings, we discussed a variety of topics important to the future of the American Angus Association.

We appreciate member feedback and those who take the time to call and engage on various topics. As we receive member letters, we discuss them with the board and on various committees. One letter asked us to consider making EPDs and \$Value indexes optional on registration certificates. We will be discussing it with members over the coming months and thinking about long term consequences of this idea.

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Another member shared ideas for increased commercial producer involvement, and we discussed those and several other ideas. We value our commercial cattlemen customers, and know their success is the key to Angus breeders' success. While we didn't act on these ideas, we're keeping them in mind as we plan for the future. The board also heard an update on how we share a coordinated message for commercial producers. With the purchase of a registered Angus bull, producers are set on a Pathway to Progress to meet their breeding goals and capture the value of their investment in Angus genetics. As more commercial producers begin to test with GeneMax Advantage, we have developed an integration with the AngusLink Genetic Merit Scorecard (GMS). This will allow the GMS to better describe the female side of the calculations.

• **Selection tools** – The board also discussed new genetic selection tools on health traits being released in the industry and the best long term strategy for the association. These new tools are being developed outside of the Angus organization with data not accessible for Angus breeders. Should we be working more closely with these outside companies to help deliver these tools to our breeders?

One challenge we have as an association is the expense and space required to archive DNA samples, especially the newer tissue samples. The board spent considerable time discussing the benefits

of having access to archived samples and weighing that against the cost and logistics. Staff shared optional strategies around the sequencing of high influence animals and elevating member information on best practices for archiving their own samples on influential animals in their herd. Staff will be coming back to the board with some proposed ideas in June.

Staff reviewed member feedback for the Data Driven Herd recognition program, and the board approved some improvements suggested by members. We also evaluated the trends in data submission. We were encouraged to see the trends remain strong for most traits, demonstrating Angus members are continuing to submit phenotypes.

A member letter was received requesting the research of a gestation length EPD. Staff reviewed research from 2021 around gestation length. While no action was taken by the committee, we will review the current standards for gestation length of Angus cattle in produced resources like the gestation length calculator.

Staff shared planned updates for the genetic evaluation that takes place at the end of May. They are fairly standard updates,

AAA President's Letter continued on the next page

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Marb: +2.45 • RE: +1.75 • \$B: +318 • \$C: +489

Historic markets should be the incentive seedstock producers need to dig deep and make prudent genetic decisions. Progressive registered and commercial beef producers recognize the difference in "playing the numbers" game versus practicing the discipline to produce elite Angus cattle with the multi-trait excellence to perform in any environment. Take advantage of the most elite offering of registered Angus females to sell this spring.

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AAA President's Letter *continued from the previous page*

including the economic assumptions and other updates to the software and evaluation maintenance.

• **Research** – We heard updates on bovine congestive heart failure (BCHF) and cow efficiency research projects. The methodology for the cow efficiency project continues to evolve, and the project is on track. Members can continue to keep up with the project on the website. We continue to collect BCHF phenotypes to have enough data to make meaningful conclusions on the role genetics play in the prevalence of the condition.

We heard an update on the University of Illinois \$Value validation project and additional opportunities with the replacement females, foot scores, and potential tenderness research. In addition, Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) continues to explore ways to collect more commercial data to complement the data collection work Angus breeders have done.

• **Member needs** – Over the last year, we've gathered feedback in both a membership survey and polling during the Angus Convention. Our team has been looking at those results and, in particular, focusing on ways to improve the effectiveness of communication avenues and improve member engagement.

The Member Services team has been busy improving systems and tools for our members. We discussed plans to transition the association business to paperless preferences. This switch, planned for June 2026, is an effort to serve the membership in a more timely and efficient manner and ensure mail delays do not affect members' business needs. All member accounts with an email address on file will be switched to paperless, and members can find their preferences in AAA Login. The committee changed the membership name change fee from \$500 to \$100. With improvements to technology, this requires less time, and the lower fee will help members who change their name for reasons such as marriage, divorce, or adoption.

Paper, printing, and postage expenses continue to rise, and the team continues to find ways to manage those costs. The Angus Media Board also discussed the importance of the *Angus Journal* as the association's flagship publication and a primary means of member communication.


Knowing that health insurance premiums have risen for members over the last few years, staff has been exploring whether a health insurance option made available through association membership could provide meaningful value to members. The

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Madalyn Carpenter Earns Junior Silver Award

M Madalyn Carpenter of Wadesboro, N.C., has earned the National Junior Angus Association's (NJAA) Silver Award, according to Caitlyn Brandt, events and junior activities director of the American Angus Association in Saint Joseph, Missouri.

Carpenter is the 17-year-old daughter of Steve and Nichole Carpenter and attends Anson High School. She is a member of the NJAA and the N.C. Junior Angus Association, where she has served as treasurer, secretary, and royalty.

She has participated in regional and national shows. She also participated in the 2025 Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) conference.

Carpenter has consigned cattle to the EBS Farms Select Sale.

The Silver Award is the second level of the NJAA Recognition Program that began in 1972. Junior Angus breeders must apply for the award, then meet point requirements in many areas of participation before receiving the honor. Applicants are evaluated in areas of junior Angus association activities and leadership, participation in showmanship, contests, and shows, and using performance testing to improve their herd and their progress in producing and merchandising Angus cattle.



committee agreed to survey the membership to gauge interest. Watch for a survey that will be available in March.

• **CAB** – The Board heard about the status of a Certified Angus Beef Prime line extension built around the growing number of carcasses with ultra high marbling scores. Consumer testing and partner research have been a part of the process, and next steps include packer engagement, partner research, and launch planning.

For the past two years, Certified Angus Beef has been opening the door for the brand's premium beef to be offered and enjoyed in countries where the brand is not as readily available today. We are working with new partners in Uruguay to launch Certified Angus Beef brand products, increasing the availability of our brand in markets that previously have been underpenetrated. While the volume will likely be small, this is an important way to protect our registered trademarks in markets that current production cannot access while expanding global brand equity. Live cattle eligibility requirements and carcass specifications are equal to or, in some instances, tighter than domestic requirements, and this product is not allowed to be sold into the United States and Canada.

There were many other important topics discussed. I encourage members to listen to *The Angus Conversation* podcast, where we recorded a special episode to discuss these and other boardroom topics. Feel free to reach out to me or any member of the board with your questions.

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COMMON GROUND



The Power of Angus Pioneers

By MARK McCULLY, American Angus Association CEO

“Every industry owes its progress to those who dared to think differently, and the Angus breed is no exception.”

From the early days of importation to the modern era of branded beef and genomic selection, trailblazers have shaped the breed into the global powerhouse it is today. Their vision, persistence, and willingness to challenge convention offer lessons that remain as relevant as ever for today’s cattle producers.

The Angus breed’s journey in America began with innovators like George Grant, who imported the first Angus cattle to Kansas in 1873. At a time when horned cattle dominated the Plains, Grant’s decision to introduce a polled breed was bold — and controversial.

Yet his foresight laid the foundation for what would become the most popular beef breed in the United States. His story reminds us that progress often starts with a willingness to take calculated risks.

Fast forward to the mid-20th century, and we see another wave of trailblazers, registered and commercial producers, who transformed Angus into a global leader. Breeders who embraced performance testing and carcass data helped shift the focus from mere appearance to measurable value.

In recent decades, leaders within the Angus community have continued to push boundaries. Developing Certified Angus Beef (CAB) in 1978 was a game changer, creating a brand that rewards quality and elevates consumer trust in Angus genetics.

This initiative didn’t happen by accident. It was the result of visionaries like Mick Colvin, Fred Johnson, and Harold Etling, who understood the power of branding and consistency in a competitive

marketplace.

This past summer we celebrated the life and legacy of Minnie Lou Bradley, a true pioneer whose vision and determination broke barriers for women in the cattle industry and set new standards for Angus breeding excellence. Her contributions remind us leadership is not just about cattle; it’s about courage and character.

Likewise, attending the Saddle and Sirloin induction of Bill Rishel was a powerful moment for me. Bill’s influence on Angus genetics and his commitment to advancing the beef industry through education and advocacy have left an indelible mark. These experiences underscore the importance of celebrating those who paved the way and inspire us to carry their torch forward.

So, what can today’s cattlemen learn from these trailblazers? Three themes stand out:

Embrace innovation early — The leaders who shaped the Angus breed didn’t wait for change — they drove it. By adopting new technology, marketing strategies, or management practices, being open to innovation can position your operation for long-term success.

Focus on value, not just tradition — While tradition is important and should be honored, progress often requires challenging the norm. The shift in the 1970s from show ring dominance to performance based selection was a turning point for the cattle industry. Today, producers must continue to prioritize traits that deliver real world value — such as maternal strength, efficient pounds, and carcass quality.

Build relationships and reputation — Trailblazers understood that success isn’t just about cattle — it’s about people. From George Grant’s early advocacy to the collaborative efforts behind CAB, strong networks and trust have always been critical. Today, investing in relationships — whether with customers, fellow breeders, or industry partners — remains a cornerstone of growth.

The Angus breed’s history is rich with individuals who saw beyond the status quo. Their courage and commitment created opportunities that benefit every producer today.

As we look to the future, the challenge is clear — who will be the next generation of trailblazers? The answer lies in those willing to innovate, adapt, and lead with integrity.





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ASHLEY'S BEEF CORNER

From Field to Food

By **ASHLEY HERRING**, N.C. Cattlemen's Beef Council



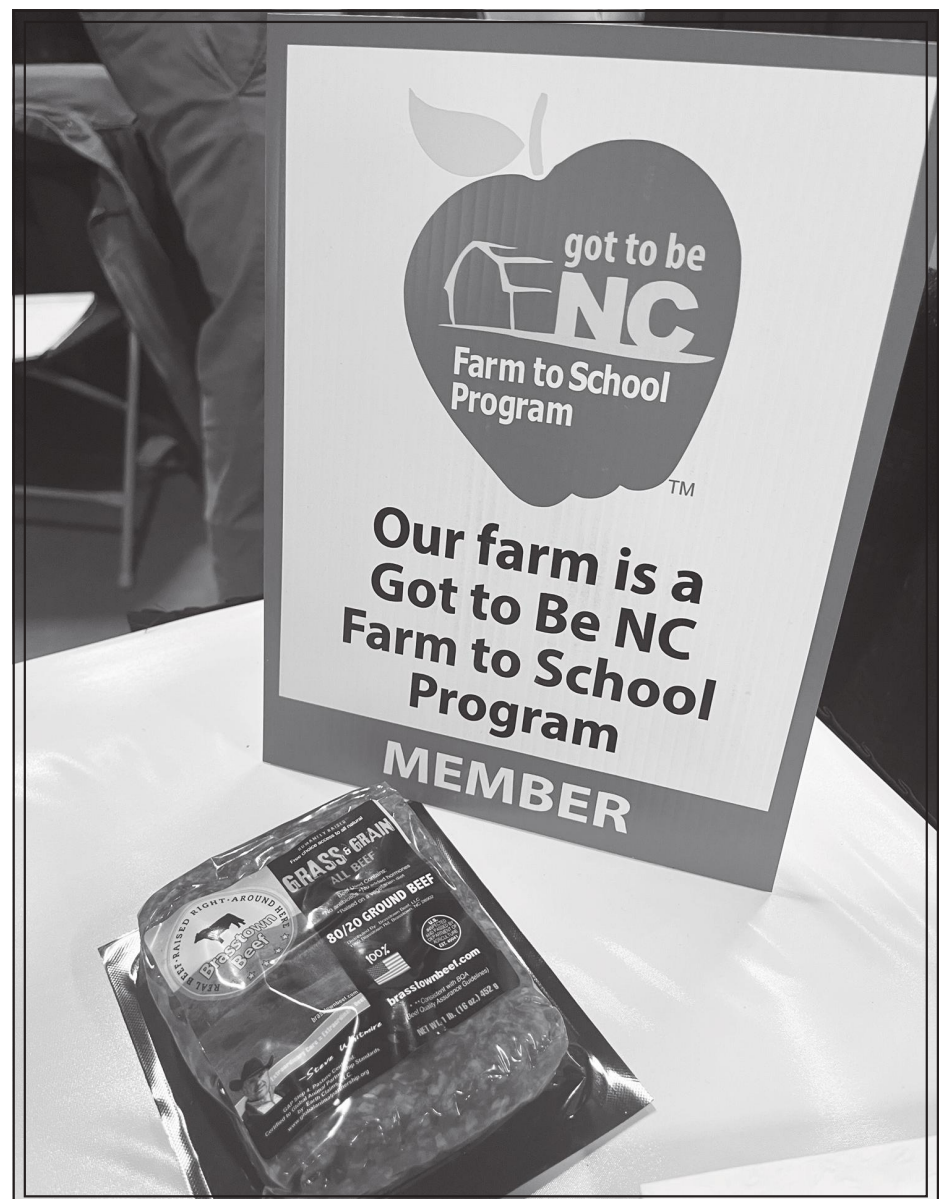
The events lineup recently has covered the gamut between producer focused conversations at the Southern Farm Show to retail and foodservice focused conversations at the Flavors of Carolina Show.

Our exhibit at the farm show is centered around listening to beef cattle producers and sharing news, updates, and information about the (then) upcoming N.C. Cattle Conference. It's an opportunity to chat about the beef industry and listen to insight and feedback. This is a prime opportunity for young beef supporters to network and gain exposure in the North Carolina agricultural community. I was joined by Skylar Dudley, an N.C. Cattle Conference intern, and Beef Ambassadors Chaney Leonard, Kate Hinnant, and Annah Claire Sullivan. Their enthusiasm and passion are a great addition to our exhibit space. I'm sure you will see and hear more from them in the near future as they complete their college work or begin their college journeys.

The Flavors of Carolina show is hosted by the N.C.

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as North Carolina's premier food and beverage showcase.

This exclusive, one day event connects the state's finest farms, fisheries, and food makers with buyers, distributors, and industry professionals from across the region. As the longest running food show hosted by any state, Flavors of Carolina offers unparalleled access to high quality, North Carolina grown, raised, caught, and made products across categories, including craft beverages, specialty foods, produce, seafood, and value added goods.





Many farmers and processors attend the show, and it is a great opportunity to introduce buyers to the farmers in a favorable sales environment.

Beef was well represented with several farms that direct market their product. I enjoyed chatting with them and hearing how

successful the show was for their marketing efforts.

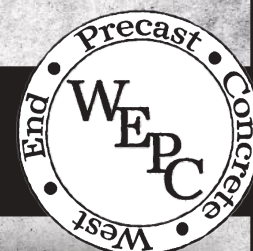
Also included is the annual report for the N.C. Cattlemen's Beef Council as well as the national Beef Checkoff's annual report information. I hope you will find it helpful in seeing how the Checkoff dollars are allocated in diligent methods to drive beef demand.



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Confessions of a Regenerative Farmer – Part 6: Conclusion

By DR. MATT POORE, *N.C. State University*



The regenerative farming movement is focused on improving the efficiency of agriculture through restoring soil health and ecosystem function. Most pasture based livestock production systems are based on perennial forages, and thus their potential for soil health is inherently high. With just a few key changes in management, pasture based livestock producers can dramatically impact their system, moving it to a self sufficient system that can operate without many of the expensive inputs many of us use regularly.

Through this series I have discussed a variety of inputs that may be needed in a cattle farm in order to restore soil function and a high level of animal production in a reasonable amount of time. While it is an admirable goal to do away with all external inputs in a system, most farms will need to use various “tools” to build soil fertility, create a desirable plant population, and achieve a level livestock production performance that meets their targets. If the principles of adaptive grazing management are regularly followed, then system health and productivity are bound to increase, and inputs can be gradually withdrawn.

There is no question that organic matter is key to building soil fertility. To build organic matter levels, plant tissues have to be grown in place or imported, perhaps as chicken litter, compost, or hay. To grow a lot of forage in place will take some nitrogen fertilizer or a system heavy in legumes. Higher yields are good for soil organic matter because more carbon is returned to the soil, benefiting the soil biology.

Legumes are a key to a highly productive perennial grass based system. For the Carolinas, red and white clover are the staples and should be part of nearly everyone’s forage system. In order to grow excellent stands of clover, the pH of the soil needs to be at least 6.0. Most pastures in our region will need some application of lime to grow good legumes, and our habit has been to substitute nitrogen fertilizer to stimulate grass rather than managing for legumes. If you will apply lime to increase pH and plant clover, the benefit will be seen for a long time.

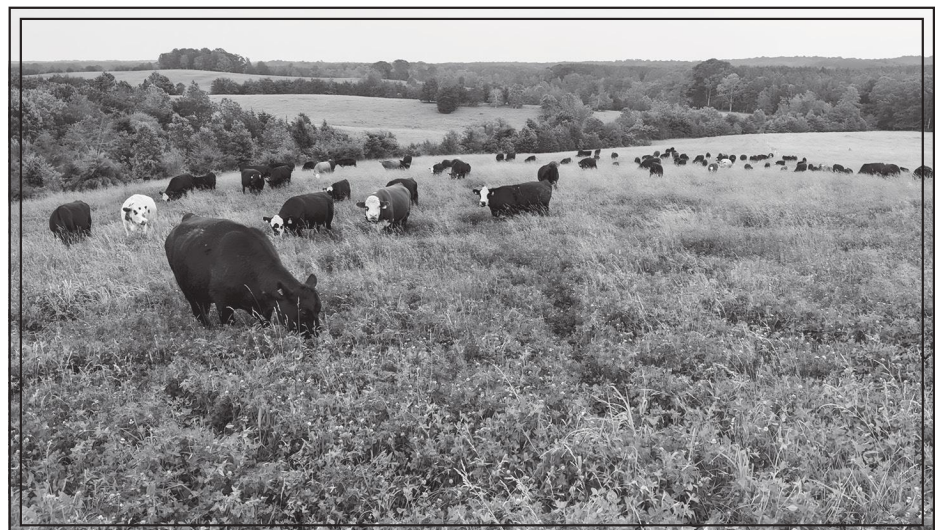
I am excited about a regenerative and adaptive approach to management because I have worked with many farmers over the years that have seen dramatic benefits. At home we have turned very unproductive land into productive pastures. Once you start to manage for soil health and practice adaptive management, you will

see constant improvements in your system. The key is to keep it up, with the big payoffs coming after a few decades of system evolution. It is important for me to note that at home we have not given up all external inputs. We still use feed, fertilizer, and herbicides as surgical tools to get where we need to be. We are using an adaptive approach to make changes in our genetics and our forages to better meet our goal of getting away from expensive feed inputs.

If you are interested in moving your farm in the direction of high ecosystem health, then there are several key items you need to consider.

First, rotational grazing is the key to managing soil health in a grazing system. The use of polywire to effectively move cattle around the landscape, giving the desirable level of animal impact, is critical. Polynet gives the same opportunity for farmers with small ruminants or poultry. Changing the grazing system is a barrier for many farmers, but it should not be. Once the livestock and the farmer are well trained, it opens up many options that can save you a lot of time and money.

In our travels with Amazing Grazing and in our personal lives, we have made the general observation that most cattle producers are slightly overstocked. Basically, most folks we know have more cattle than their forage system can reasonably support. Essentially, they are exceeding the carrying capacity of their land, leading to a need to purchase a lot of hay to balance the forage budget. A key benefit to adopting a rotational grazing system where animals are moved at least once a week will be improved forage utilization. In other words, more of



the forage you grow will end up “down the throat” of a cow. In this way you can take a slightly overstocked system and turn it into a slightly understocked system just by making that one change in management.

Second, nutrient cycling is one key to a healthy ecosystem. Soil nutrients are taken up by the plants, which are eaten by the livestock and other wildlife, and then they are returned to the soil through manure and decaying plant tissue. If soil nutrients are very low to start with, then it will be necessary to put some outside source to help build those levels. Also, nutrient distribution can be very uneven in systems that don't move cattle very often, so rotational stocking and dispersed hay feeding are key practices to keeping a lot of nutrients cycling. You can amend the fertility using commercial fertilizer (as long as you don't use too much at once), or you can use imported hay, poultry litter, compost, or some other nutrient source. Soil pH is also critical, so early on you should apply lime to get you to a pH of above 6.0.

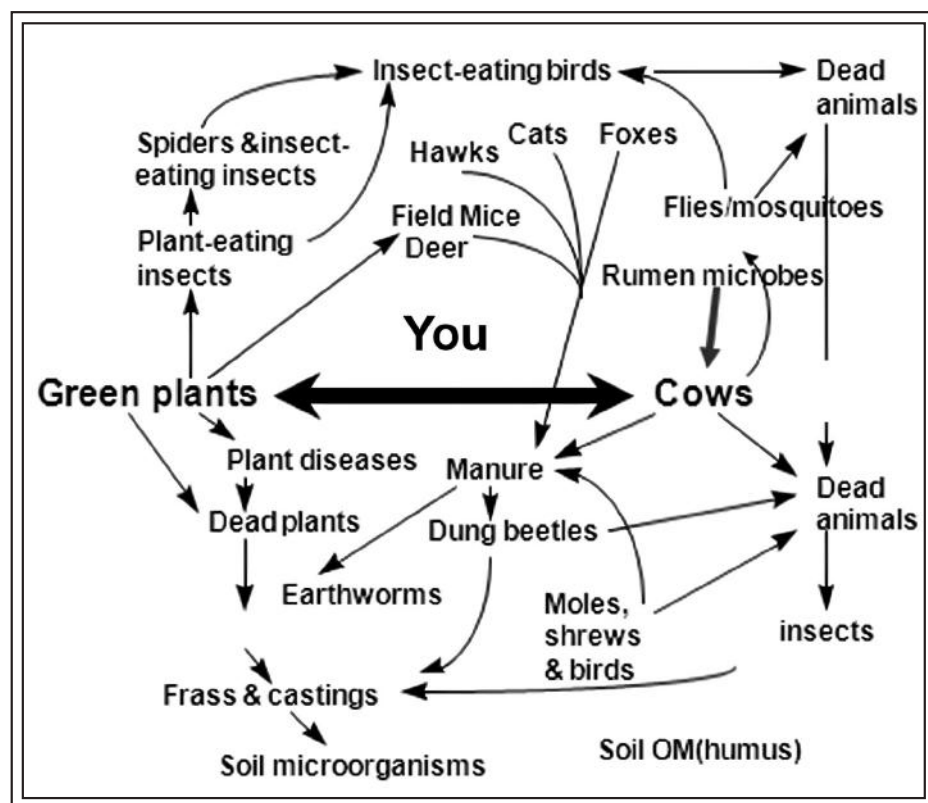
Third, you can't assume that if you just graze and wait, a good stand of something will develop. There actually are places in the country where agriculture is relatively young that still retain a seedbank of native plants just waiting to be released. That is not the case in our region, where much of the topsoil was eroded away more than a century ago. Actively planting a desirable mix of grasses, legumes, and non-leguminous forbes will give a jump start on the pasture evolution process. Some acreage in native warm season grasses might also fit well in your production system. For some farmers, annuals will make sense, especially on 10–20 percent of the land. There are many options to customize to your particular context.

If you are going to actively manage pasture health, then you will need to measure that somehow. I like the Pasture Condition Scoring system developed by NRCS. There is a well developed worksheet with documentation that can help you learn about this approach on the NRCS webpages. Scoring all your pastures can help you develop a plan for how to improve things.

Once you walk and score all your pastures and have soil test results, you will be ready to make an action plan. Some pastures will need only small inputs to be highly productive. This might mean applying a ton of lime per acre to some fields and frost seeding clover. Other pastures may have a lot of undesirable plants, so they might call for strategic herbicide use. Other pastures in very poor condition should be scheduled for a full renovation. This process involves killing the remnants of the existing pasture with either glyphosate or tillage, correcting fertility, planting a cover crop (for at least one season), and then replanting with a desirable cool or warm season perennial grass or a mix of species.

Infrastructure development is a key item that can't be ignored. A good watering system not dependent on direct access to surface waters like creeks and ponds has a dramatic beneficial impact on the ecosystem and also allows you to put water where you need it in the landscape. You can start by using a temporary lane back to a pond or other water access, but eventually you need to get that infrastructure installed. Also, many farmers adopting this management style will start with a lot of temporary fencing, but eventually putting permanent cross fences on major pasture boundaries will make your life a lot easier.

Fortunately, there are many advisers out there who can help you with the assessment and to make a good action plan. Contact your



extension agent or conservationist to start the conversation. The NRCS has a very good system for helping you develop a conservation and grazing management plan, which will guide your infrastructure development and future management. Your state soil and water conservation district staff or NRCS is a good place to start to explore cost share programs that can help you improve your system.

One new development is that NRCS has a new mandate to put a lot of their EQIP funds into regenerative agriculture. For pastures, this basically means that to qualify for a contract, you will need to implement management practices intended to improve soil health. Basically, you need to adopt adaptive grazing management. The soil health on your farm will be documented before the start of the contract and after the five year contract is completed. This is a new program and somewhat of a moving target, but ask your local adviser how to get involved.

Finally, I want to stress that all the good things related to regenerative agriculture are dependent on the farmer and their team taking charge of the system. Very frequent trips to the pasture lead to better observations and evaluation of system performance. It comes down to the fact that the most important aspect of a pasture ecosystem is you, the farmer. You are the big bottleneck that needs to be overcome. Status quo will always be so much easier than charging into unknown territory. If you are a new farmer, you have a lot to learn but not much to unlearn. If you have been farming a long time, you will need to completely revise a worldview that is based on generations of experience. Either way, there are a wide variety of educational opportunities out there to help you along the way.

As we move into the future, there will be multiple reasons to take a regenerative approach to grazing. This approach promises higher returns for your efforts, improved ecosystem services associated with your farm, and improved mental and physical health for you and your livestock. The main downside to all of this is that it takes some focus and attention to detail from you. If you don't think it is worth the trouble, then you need to question why you are in the pasture based livestock industry in the first place.

E.B.'s VIEW FROM THE COW PASTURE

Sometimes Folks Talk to the Spirits

By E.B. HARRIS, Warrenton, N.C.

I received a call the other day from a lady in Wilson, who we are going to call Pete. I think that was her nickname. She went on to explain to me that her husband had passed away, and he had worked at a shop doing mechanical work.

He had a garage at home full of air compressors, generators, and all kinds of hand tools, and she had no knowledge of how to use

them. She wanted me to come and get the tools and sell them for her, if I would. She said, "I have been going up and down the steps in the house for many years to the attic for Christmas decorations, and I want to store them in the garage where his tools were."

She explained that it would take some time because some of the items needed to be boxed up. I made arrangements to take my enclosed trailer and go down and load the items. I took Shane and two other men from here on the farm.

We started loading the tools and supplies. She came up to me and related a story about her husband and his pickup. Her husband had told her he wanted to be cremated and have his ashes spread at the beach. He liked to spend a lot of time at the beach. The pickup outside was his, and she had looked the house over for the keys but could not find them. She said, "I got frustrated at him for not being able to find the keys, so I talked to him just like he was here. I told him, If you don't send me a sign or lead so I can find the keys to the pickup, instead of taking you to the beach and spreading your ashes like you requested, I am going to bury you in the backyard with the dogs."

After one of the talks with her husband, she went into his bathroom, and in the first drawer she pulled out, she saw the keys to the pickup. She said, "I guess he heard me and sent me a thought, so now I will have to take him to the beach and do as he requested."



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Focus on Forage

Fertilizing Cool Season Annual Forages

By MORGAN CLARK, *Clemson University*

Cool season annual forages can extend the grazing season and reduce dependence on hay. Their performance begins with proper soil management. Establishing and maintaining adequate soil fertility is essential for developing a strong winter annual stand and maximizing the return on your investment.

The first step is to take a soil sample and use those results to decide how much fertilizer to apply. Guessing nutrient needs can lead to applying too little or too much. Too little fertilizer can limit growth, forage production, and persistence, while too much wastes money and can harm the environment. Extra nutrients can run off or leach into nearby streams, ponds, and other groundwater, causing algae to grow quickly and reducing oxygen for fish and other wildlife. Nitrogen can also escape into the air as ammonia. You can lower this risk by applying fertilizer during cooler weather and when rain is expected soon after.

There are four “Rs” (4Rs) to nutrient stewardship — apply the *Right nutrient source* at the *Right rate* at the *Right time* and in the *Right place*. These four management practices will keep your nutrients where they belong — in and on your field. This brings back the importance of soil testing. In your soil analysis, you will see recommendations for pH adjustment with lime, nutrient concentrations, and fertilizer recommendations for nitrogen (N), phosphorus (as P_2O_5) and potassium (as K_2O).

Label your samples correctly and follow these recommendations! They are directly tailored to your specific field, helping you spread fertilizer in the right place. The soil test will show which nutrients are lacking. Use these numbers to determine what the right nutrient source is. There are many different formulations of fertilizers; they are expressed as a ratio indicating the percentage of nitrogen (N), phosphate (P_2O_5), and potash (K_2O) in that particular type of fertilizer. For example, a 17:17:17 blend means that every 100 lbs of material contains 17 lb of nitrogen, 17 lb of P_2O_5 , and 17 lb of K_2O . This blend would be beneficial if you are deficient in all three macronutrients. These numbers will help you ensure you are spreading the right rate of nutrients on your field as well.

Right timing is critical. Apply fertilizer when there is adequate moisture and when the plants are actively growing. When managing winter annual small grains and grasses, such as rye, wheat, oats, ryegrass, or triticale, plan to split your fertilizer applications into

two. Apply fertilizer once in the fall at establishment after seedlings have established and again in the spring to optimize plant uptake and reduce nutrient losses. Pastures that include legumes (such as clovers, vetch, and alfalfa) require a lower amount of applied nitrogen. It is recommended to apply no more than 50 lbs of nitrogen per acre at establishment. Just enough to give these seedlings a jump start. Excessive nitrogen applications to any nitrogen fixing plant can suppress the plant’s natural nitrogen fixation process, ultimately reducing the benefits of these plants. Non-legume containing pastures typically benefit from a second nitrogen application in the spring.

The addition of cool season annual forages to a grazing system can lead to nearly year round forage availability. These annuals help fill the production gap left when perennial forages slow down or go dormant, providing valuable forage during periods of limited growth. The benefits from this are numerous; a few are improved soil health, better animal welfare, and increased overall profitability. Successful forage production and stand success start with fertile soils. Consider implementing the 4Rs of nutrient stewardship into your fertilizer plan. Reach out to your local extension agent for assistance with soil sampling, interpretation of recommendations, and guidance in choosing the right cool season forages for your operation.



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Have You Herd

Beefing Up Traceability – The Future of Transparency in the U.S. Beef Industry

By BAILEY JONES, N.C. State University -- ANS 402 Beef Management

Those involved in the cattle industry have likely heard the word “traceability” in conversations in recent years. If you are unfamiliar with the term, traceability in the context of the beef industry refers to the ability to trace the origin of a beef product all the way back to birth, mainly in an effort to ensure the product’s safety. Here in the U.S., voluntary traceability is recommended to producers, but there is currently no government mandated animal ID or traceability system. Many other major beef exporters – like Australia, Argentina, the European Union, New Zealand, and Uruguay – have mandated traceability programs in place, leaving the U.S. behind in this area of beef production. Meat originating from the U.S. has been widely viewed as safe, even without the traceability standards, which has led producers to be hesitant to support mandatory traceability in the United States. Additionally, producers have concerns about economic impacts, privacy, and other long term effects a government mandated animal ID or traceability program could have.

Taking a deeper look into how traceability is being mandated in other countries, the European Union is a great example. In the late 1990s, a major food safety scare occurred in the cattle industry with an outbreak of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). This began in the United Kingdom and quickly spread to other European countries. This event caused a dramatic drop in beef consumption in Europe and the United Kingdom, as exhibited in Figure 1 below. Many consumers lost trust that beef producers were providing a safe product, and the EU banned beef imports from Britain for ten years.⁴ In the early 2000s, identification and traceability laws were passed that required registrations for cattle identification as well as a calf birth registry and a Cattle Movement Monitoring System (CMMS). In terms of identification, the EU mandated that all animals be individually identified with an ear tag, that these identification records be kept in a computerized database, and that each animal have a “passport.”⁴ In terms of traceability, the Calf Birth Registration System is a database that requires producers to report an animal’s ear tag number, sex, breed, date of birth, herd of origin, and the dam’s ear tag number. The Cattle Movement Monitoring System (CMMS) is used in Ireland to track the birth, movement, and deaths of cattle. Birth information comes from the birth registry previously mentioned, which is reported by the

herdsman. Movement of cattle can come from two main sources, private sales and sale barns – or “marts”. For private sales, the herdsman selling the cattle must receive a permit from the CMMS authorities to move the cattle, the sale occurs, and then the buying herdsman must reach out to CMMS to confirm the movement. In a sale barn, staff and a District Veterinary Officer work together to record cattle identification numbers electronically to report them to the CMMS. Finally, deaths are to be reported by the herdsman to the CMMS to properly keep records. While all of these regulations may seem overwhelming or unnecessary to producers in the U.S., it is important to remember that restoring consumer trust in EU beef products was a driving factor in these laws being passed.

In April of last year, a U.S. law was updated to require all sexually intact cattle over 18 months of age to have electronic identification tags if they are moving across state lines.² This law has sparked many conversations regarding the benefits of traceability. The main benefits that have been identified include increased market safety in the event of a disease outbreak and more efficient product feedback for producers. The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association has identified how vulnerable the U.S. is to a foreign animal disease outbreak, estimating that an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the U.S. would result in

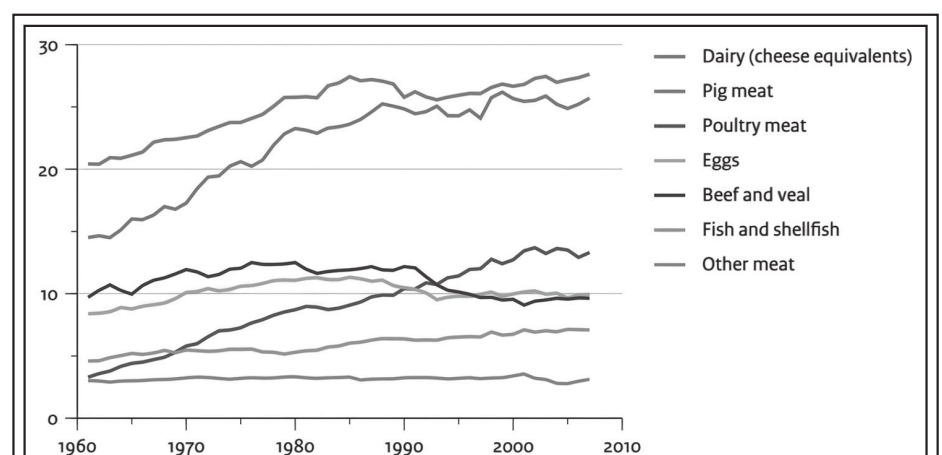


Figure 1. Graph depicting the consumption in kg per capita per year of meat, dairy, and fish in the European Union over the years. Notice the decline in beef and veal consumption during the 1990s.⁶

economic losses of around \$221 billion.² This is extremely concerning, as this level of economic losses would be devastating to the beef industry. In addition to disease control and economic losses, the communication and feedback a traceability system could provide would be beneficial to producers. Currently, in the U.S., the beef industry is very segmented, with cattle often being raised on a cow/calf operation, moving to a new backgrounding operation shortly after weaning, and then moving to a feedlot for finishing prior to slaughter. All of this movement through the supply chain and different operations usually means the cow/calf producer and the backgrounding operation rarely get feedback from consumers or the processor on meat and carcass quality. With a national traceability system in place, producers would be able to access data from the processor to understand how their management practices are affecting the quality of their products and would allow them to be more efficient in adjusting their practices.³ This improved quality would hopefully result in increased profitability for the individual producer and the industry as a whole.

To contrast some of the benefits listed above, industry members and stakeholders have concerns about privacy and costs related to traceability in the beef industry. Kansas State University published a study in 2020 examining the potential economic impact on producers if a government mandated traceability system were to be implemented. In Figure 2, which is attached in the appendix below, you will see the estimated cost for each sector of the cattle industry if a traceability system called “CattleTrace” were to be implemented nationwide. As you can see from the table, the cow/calf sector would be the most impacted economically by this decision, with 84.3 percent of the total industry cost being shouldered by the cow/calf sector.⁵ In this article, it is proposed that the government may engage in cost sharing to help split the cost of the traceability system with the producer. With this

in mind, it is still concerning for producers to envision the financial impact on their operations, as implementing traceability practices is not cheap. In order to offset producer costs for traceability programs, it is estimated that a 17.7 percent increase in international beef demand and a 1.9 percent increase in domestic beef demand would be required.⁵ This study ultimately found that with typical market fluctuations in domestic and international beef demand, the offset of cost is feasible. It is noted that this is all preliminary data that does not consider factors such as data management. Along the lines of data management, many producers are concerned about how the data provided to a traceability system would be used. Many producers worry that traceability systems would have the location of their farm or ranch in the database, which raises concerns for their personal privacy. This is a valid concern, and there is still information being collected on privacy regarding traceability. To help producers begin understanding what privacy and traceability can look like, the Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association shares in an article how the USDA manages sensitive data. The system the USDA currently uses in the voluntary traceability system houses some sensitive data separately, by linking that sensitive information to a separate database. In doing this, producers can have more confidence that certain data would only be available and accessed by USDA officials in a disease outbreak emergency situation. Additionally, to quell concerns with federal agencies having a farm or ranch address, it is necessary to recognize that the location data that is collected could be from a sale barn address, veterinary office, or other public place, and the private farm or ranch information may never be recorded or reported in the traceability system.¹

In conclusion, it is important to acknowledge that there is still some research left to be done as it relates to traceability and its place in the beef industry. We can recognize the potential benefits a traceability database can provide, such as efficiency for disease control in the event of an outbreak and increased producer feedback for the adjustment of management practices. Alternatively, we can notice the potential drawbacks of a traceability system, such as costs to the producer and privacy concerns. Producers, stakeholders, and industry leaders will need to work together to develop a solution for traceability that can properly address these concerns and make traceability a feasible option for beef cattle producers across the nation. I would see if there is anyone who did a potential cost analysis of potential profit producers may gain from implementing versus the overall cost.

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Have You Herd is written as a portion of ANS 402 Beef Management course requirement at N.C. State University Department of Animal Science under the instruction of Dr. Carrie Pickworth. The opinions of Bailey Jones are not necessarily those of N.C. State University or Dr. Carrie Pickworth.

Sector	CattleTrace direct cost ^a	% of total industry cost ^a
Cow/Calf	\$129,823,537	84.3
Backgrounder	\$7,670,839	5.0
Sale barn	\$6,439,428	4.2
Feedlot	\$9,640,589	6.3
Packer	\$512,936	0.3
Total	\$154,087,329	100

Partial equilibrium model sector	CattleTrace direct cost	% Change in supply
Feeder cattle ^b	\$136,262,965	-0.2548
Slaughter cattle ^c	\$17,311,428	-0.0333
Wholesale ^d	\$512,936	-0.0009

^aShear et al. (2019).

^bCombined Cow/Calf and Sale Barn sectors.

^cCombined Backgrounder and Feedlot sectors.

^dPacker sector.

Figure 2. Data table from the Economic Cost of Traceability in U.S. Beef Production by Shear and Pendell shows CattleTrace direct cost to the industry by sector and supply shocks.⁴



Clemson Corner

Growing Our Knowledge – Clemson Extension Agents Attend AFGC Conference

By HUNTER TAYLOR & SYDNEY RENTZ, *Clemson University*

The American Forage and Grassland Council serves as an international organization with a mission to promote and advance forages in agriculture. Every year, AFGC holds an annual conference to bring together producers, students, industry professionals, and researchers to focus on one shared priority – advancing forage based systems. This year, the AFGC Annual Conference was held January 12–15 in Asheville, North Carolina. The conference allowed for interaction with multiple grazing and forage professionals from many differing backgrounds. With so many different organizations and producers there, we could see all angles required to properly and efficiently care for pastures and fields. Participation in the AFGC Annual Conference equipped team members with valuable information to take back to their communities and share with local producers. On behalf of the Clemson Extension Livestock and Forages Team, we would like to thank the S.C. Forage and Grazing Lands Coalition for sponsoring our team and allowing us the privilege of attending.

The first two days of the AFGC Annual Conference included informational sessions that promoted deeper thought into how to raise livestock in a system that is not as intensive as others. Instead of starting with the animals or even the forages, it was presented to take a better look at the soil ecology. By promoting the soil ecology, there is a lesser need for fertilizer inputs since proper soil health can promote plant growth on its own, leading to better forage health. This ultimately led into the presentations on livestock and pasture health based on grazing practices. These grazing practices included, but were not limited to, the use of companion forages, rotational grazing, and a reduced usage of herbicide. The use and utilization of companion forages were emphasized, not only on the nutritional gains but also on the optimal growing heights of the companion plants. Maintaining forage height within a range that benefits most plants will help forages outcompete weeds that may emerge. This method also keeps the forages from thinning out and becoming a monoculture stand. Having the forages at optimal heights and outcompeting the weeds ultimately means that there is less need to spray. There are multiple methods for maintaining forages within the optimal range, with rotational grazing being the most widely used. A more intensive rotational grazing helps distribute manure evenly and prevents forages from being grazed too low. The intensity of the grazing can be limited by having forages with closer to similar grazing needs. On the final day of the AFGC Annual Conference, several members of the Livestock and Forages Team



attended the AFGC Tour – which included stops at the Biltmore Estates Farm and Hickory Nut Gap Farms.

Attending the AFGC Annual Conference provided Clemson Extension Livestock and Forages Agents with the latest research and practical strategies in forage management. By bringing this knowledge back to South Carolina, they can support local producers in improving pasture productivity, managing weeds naturally, and optimizing grazing practices. Conferences like this play a crucial role in connecting researchers, educators, and producers to advance sustainable forage and livestock systems. Lastly, we would like to thank the S.C. Forage and Grazing Lands Coalition again for sponsoring our team and making this trip possible.



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CATTLE & FORAGE HEALTH

Management Considerations for Forage Systems After Prolonged

By LILIANE SILVA, *Clemson University*

This season we have experienced a combination of prolonged dry periods and lower temperatures since early fall, which has delayed planting and seedling growth and caused varying levels of plant cold injury across the state. With the recent

cold temperatures, ice, and snow in South Carolina, it is essential that producers assess their fields to determine cold injury and winter kill on their forage stands over the coming weeks.

The optimal temperature for cool season forage growth ranges from 65–78°F. Below 50°F, plant growth slows down. At freezing temperatures, growth stops completely. The prolonged exposure of forages to subfreezing temperatures, and later to snow and ice formation, can damage plants — as seen in Figure 1 — as plant cells may rupture or burst when they freeze.

Cold tolerance varies among forage species and varieties, so the level of injury observed and the plant's ability to recover may differ. Thus, the plant's vegetative stage at the time it was exposed to more intensive damage is another factor influencing its response. Below, you will find some management considerations for stands impacted by prolonged cold weather recently:

- **Assess damage in your fields.** Over the coming weeks, assess your field closely for cold damage and winter kill. Generally, the main symptoms include chlorosis (yellowing), tissue necrosis (especially on the tips of leaves exposed to cold wind), leaf rolling and wilting, and reduced growth; lodging can also occur.

- **Will my stands recover?** Depends. Many cool season forages can tolerate subfreezing temperatures for short periods, even with snowfall, but this depends heavily on the forage species and variety's cold tolerance. Also, on other factors such as plant development stage, stand health, topography/slope (prone to wind damage), and soil and air temperatures. For recently planted perennial or annual cool season stands, the stage of development the plants were in before the drastic cold event(s) will strongly influence their recovery and, depending on the level of damage, can lead to winter kill.

- **Can I graze my cool season forage stands now?** It depends on how severe the cold injury/damage was and whether the forage stand is ready to be grazed. Sometimes, the actual cold damage will only become visible days after the cold event, which is why it is recommended to assess the stand over the next few days. In conditions where the plants were largely damaged, and yellowing of the whole plants is evident in stands, then it might be worth grazing what is

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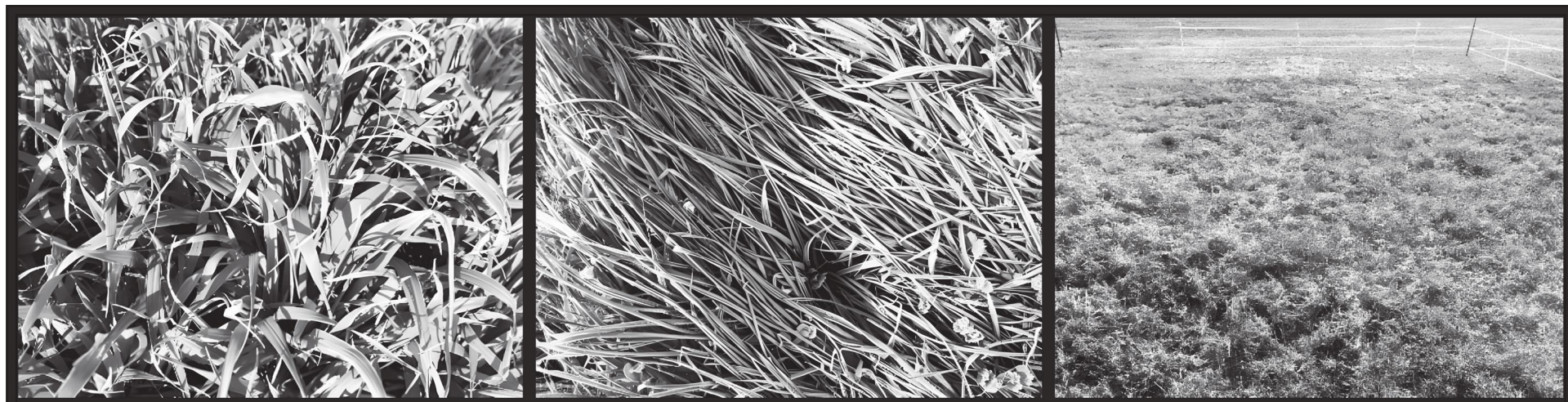


Figure 1

possible to be able to use the forage, even if it means fencing off parts of a field sometimes. If the growing points of the plants were killed due to winter kill, the plants are unable to continue developing leaves, so this can be observed in the field to assess plant damage. If you are able to graze your cool season stands, be careful to leave enough leaf area/proper stubble height behind so the plants can withstand the lower temperatures expected over the next few weeks. Additionally, allowing the plants a proper regrowth period after being grazed will be essential. Generally speaking, when we refer to the regrowth interval of cool season forages, we may say 4–6 weeks, given the variation in forage growth during the fall and winter months. Avoiding overgrazing stands now will help to keep plants healthy and give them better chances of reduced cold related issues later on.

• **What about my tall fescue stands?** Tall fescue stands are likely to do well when properly managed. Tall fescue has a waxy layer on its leaves that reduces damage caused by lower temperatures. It can also retain its forage quality better than some other cool season forages, but it is still prone to quality losses when leaves are damaged and start to become necrotic.

• **What about forage mixtures?** What should I expect to see on mixed stands? Forage mixtures can vary in composition, but here I am mostly referring to combinations of grasses, legumes, and maybe brassicas. Forage mixtures generally improve forage production and quality distribution, but in this scenario of cold damage, they can also provide microclimate protection under fuller coverage, depending on the annual cool season forage mixture used. Then, some species are more cold tolerant than others, such as oats versus cereal rye and wheat. Having diverse forage mixtures can be an “insurance” for seasons that present greater challenges, such as

this year, as some species may withstand the challenges and persist while others may die in the mixture.

• **What can I do to help prevent cold damage in stands?** The best approach is to implement effective management strategies to support healthy, persistent stands. Among the main strategies are proper fertilization, especially of N, P, and K levels, and adequate grazing management following research based recommendations for species used. Although extreme weather events are unusual, we are starting to see trends of these events becoming more frequent over the past decades. Planning ahead can be the best approach to mitigate future issues, and using adapted, cold tolerant forage varieties is an ally. Dr. Silva’s publication on *2024–2025 Cool Season Forage Results from the Edisto and Sandhill RECs Demonstration Plots* is a resource that helps with adapted variety options for South Carolina. Scan the QR code for more information.

What about my dormant warm season perennial grass stands? It will be important to assess them, especially in early spring. The warm snap we had in early January with temperatures in the upper 70s may have indicated adequate conditions for germination of these plants. If plants germinated, then they would have consumed some of their energy reserves to grow, only to then go back into dormancy because of the freezing temperatures that followed. The management you have implemented in the previous season is highly important to help stands to improve winter hardiness of these stands. Their energy storage and K levels will be of extreme importance for withstanding challenging conditions.

To read the full text, please visit tinyurl.com/WinterDamageSC.



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You Decide!

By DR. MIKE WALDEN, *William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor Emeritus, N.C. State University*

You Decide: What's the Best Tax? If you meet someone new and the conversation lags, one way to keep things going is to bring up the topic of taxes. Virtually everyone has an opinion about taxes.

Are taxes too high? Are they too low? Do some deserve tax breaks? Should others pay more taxes? Should some taxes be eliminated? Should others be expanded? These are some common questions about taxes.

Here I will focus on one key question about taxes — specifically, is there a “best tax?” Are some taxes better than others, and if so, should we shift to those and away from others? Indeed, at all levels of government, these questions are being asked today.

First, let's look at how the three levels of government — federal, state, and local — use different taxes to collect revenues. At the federal level, by far the dominant source of tax revenue comes from taxing income. Over 90 percent of federal revenues come from the individual income tax, the corporate income tax, and taxes on income that support Medicare and Social Security. Revenues from taxes on imports (tariffs) and taxes on tobacco and fuel sales make up most of the rest. Interestingly, prior to 1913, when the income tax was authorized, federal revenues mostly came from tariffs, taxes on tobacco and liquor, and taxes on land sales.

Most states use three sources for tax revenues, which — ranked in order of amount — include income taxes on households and corporations, sales taxes, and taxes on motor fuel, tobacco, and alcohol. Just like at the federal level, there's been a trend toward greater reliance on income taxes among states and less reliance on sales taxes. However, there are nine states — Alaska, Florida, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming — that have no income tax and therefore rely on other taxes, often the sales tax. For example, North Carolina has a statewide sales tax rate of 4.75 percent, while Tennessee's is 7 percent.

With the federal and state governments using so many taxes, what is left for counties and cities? This is where taxes on property, mainly land and buildings, come in. Property taxes are the largest generator of revenue for local governments, followed by local sales taxes and “user fees” for water and trash pickup provided by local governments.

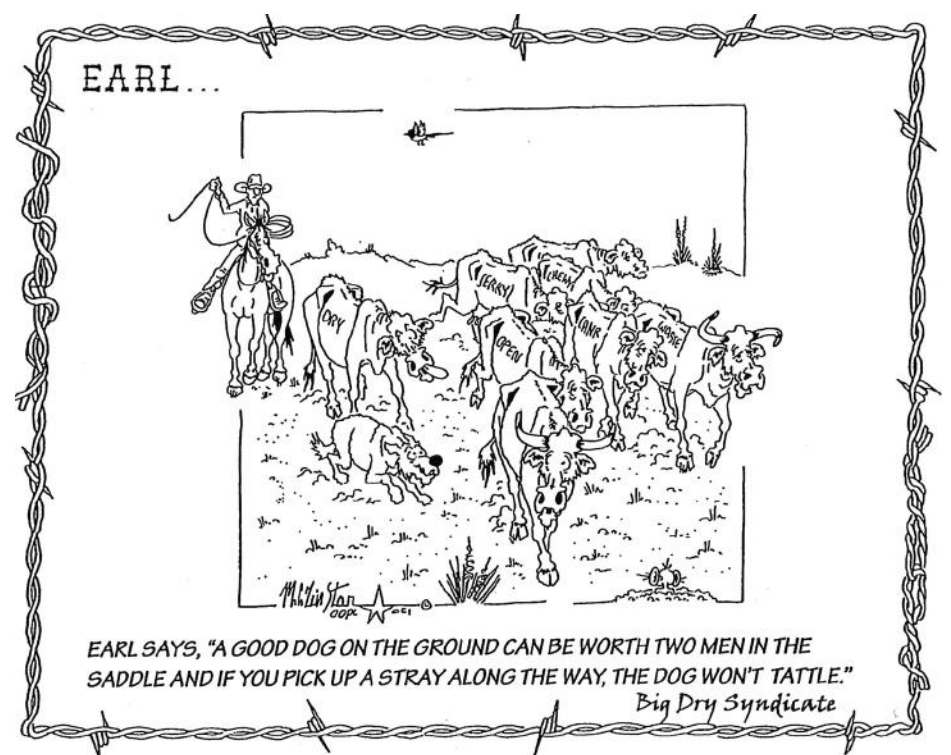
There are many ways to judge a tax, such as simplicity, ease of administration, progressivity, capacity, and keeping up with economic growth. Simplicity means the tax is easy to understand, and ease of administration indicates the tax is easy to collect. Capacity is the ability of the tax to raise significant revenues. Progressivity means the size of the tax relative to the taxpayer's income rises with the taxpayer's income, meaning the tax burden is

relatively low for lower income taxpayers. Lastly, a tax is preferred if the revenues it generates keep pace with an expanding economy, where public needs are likely greater.

How do the major taxes, including income, sales, fees, and property, stack up on these measures? Experts view income taxes positively on all the factors, but especially on progressivity. With an income tax, it's easy to divide the taxpayer's income into segments and tax each segment with a different rate. Typically, the rates are higher for higher income segments, meaning taxpayers with lower incomes pay less as a percentage of their income in taxes, while payees with higher incomes pay more.

Sales taxes also get high marks on simplicity, ease of administration, capacity, and their ability to increase with economic growth. One issue is progressivity. It's impractical to charge people with different incomes a different sales tax rate. Many states, including North Carolina, have addressed this issue by not taxing some essential purchases, like raw food items and prescription drugs. Fees receive similar evaluations as sales taxes.

Some of the biggest complaints over taxes are about property taxes, the main revenue source for local governments. Property owners, particularly homeowners, complain that their taxes rise as their property values increase. While the owners like that their property is worth more, some say they can't afford the taxes until



they sell the property. Retired owners, in particular, point to this issue. Many states, including North Carolina, are considering limiting increases in estimated property values to help owners deal with “tax shock” from higher property assessments.

There’s another tax that some states, such as California, are considering: a wealth tax. While gains in investment values are taxed, the full value of a person’s wealth is not taxed. Taxing wealth would provide a tremendous amount of new tax revenue. However, opponents argue such a tax is unfair and is actually “double taxation” because usually the wealth was accumulated from income that had already been taxed.

Taxes will always be a topic of discussion and debate. In recent years, there’s been discussion at both the national and state levels of moving away from the income tax. Supporters say the income tax discourages working more and earning more, and hence impedes economic growth. At the federal level, there’s been talk of eliminating the income tax and replacing it with revenues from tariffs and from a broader federal sales tax. In North Carolina, there’s been a gradual reduction in the state income tax rate, thereby shifting more dependence for revenues to the state sales tax.

There’s plenty to debate. Taxes are probably one of the most important and lasting decisions made by governments. But what kind of tax is best? You decide.

You Decide: What’s Wrong With the Job Market? The most recent job market report for January was received with much enthusiasm. Total jobs in the country increased by 130,000, the highest number since May 2025. The unemployment rate also fell, but only by 0.1 percent. Still, that was an improvement — although modest — from 2025 when the jobless rate rose from 3.7–4.4 percent.

However, the news wasn’t all good. Job growth was not widespread. Most of the job additions, specifically 60 percent, were in one sector: health care. Several sectors lost jobs, including financial services, transportation/information, and the federal government. Also, job layoffs were high, wage growth was very slow, long term unemployment — meaning 27 weeks or more without a job — remained high, and job growth in several previous months was revised downward.

It is important to recognize the job market could be worse. Jobs are not declining; they’re just not rising significantly. And while the jobless rate is higher than we’d like, it is nowhere near the levels we see during a recession. It’s also important to note that while North Carolina’s economy continues to be stronger than the national economy, the state has also experienced a slowdown in the creation of new jobs.

What are the reasons for the sluggish job market? Economists point to three reasons, each of which is creating uncertainty for businesses. And when a business is uncertain, it usually becomes very cautious about adding new costs through more payroll.

The first generator of uncertainty for businesses is a change we are increasingly hearing about — artificial intelligence (AI). Some economists have called AI the most transformative technology to impact the labor market since the tractor. The tractor was revolutionary because it reduced the need for labor in agriculture and dramatically increased the efficiency of agriculture, thereby allowing many more people to be fed. Consequently, not as many farmers were needed. As a result, a mass migration of farmers

occurred from rural areas to cities. This was just at the time manufacturing was expanding in the cities and requiring workers.

The distinctive impact of AI is the technology’s effect on both physical labor and cognitive labor. For example, AI will increase a robot’s capability of performing many human tasks, especially in factories. But AI will also be used to perform cognitive tasks, like bookkeeping, various kinds of analysis, and even teaching. Millions of workers and businesses will be impacted.

Businesses know AI usage is spreading, and to be competitive, they will need to incorporate it. But it’s still uncertain when they will need to make the change and how extensive the change will need to be. This is likely one of the factors behind slow hiring.

A second reason why hiring has slowed is tariffs. Tariffs are a tax on incoming imports from foreign countries. Although some believe that tariffs are paid by the foreign exporter, in fact they are paid by the U.S. importer. It’s estimated almost \$300 billion in tariffs has been collected from U.S. businesses by the U.S. government in 2025. This is a large new cost for businesses.

Again, tariffs have created more uncertainty for businesses. The rates have been changed several times. Higher tariffs have been imposed on some imports, while lower tariffs have been levied on other imports, and more changes can be made quickly. Most importantly, there is a pending Supreme Court decision on whether some of the tariffs are legal. If the Supreme Court rules that some tariffs are illegal, then the question becomes how the Trump administration will react and if they could substitute other types of tariffs. The result leads to more questions and additional uncertainty for businesses.

Lastly is mass deportations. Currently, estimates suggest almost three million individuals have been deported from the country, including those who have self deported. Several economic sectors, such as construction and agriculture, have traditionally used foreign laborers. Deportations have reduced the labor supply for these sectors, even among legal immigrants, thereby curtailing hiring. Due to the physical and seasonal nature of the work and relatively low pay, unemployed individuals often don’t consider these jobs.

As long as these three factors remain, the sluggish job market will likely continue. However, one change could improve the labor market. This is if the pace of economic growth accelerates. In recent years the economy has been growing in the 2–3 percent range. If, as some are predicting, the national economic growth rate could rise to the 4–5 percent range, the need for additional jobs would likely overwhelm the uncertainties and other challenges businesses are now facing.

Some have tagged today’s labor market the “no fire, no hire economy,” meaning businesses want to keep the workers they currently have but don’t want to add new workers. This makes it hard for new workers, like the high school and college graduates we will see in a few months. I always recommend what I call the KEF approach — knowledge, enthusiasm, and flexibility. Job seekers should communicate — but not boast — about their skills, they should indicate they are excited about working for the company, and they should let the company know they are flexible with respect to the tasks, hours, pay, and benefits of the job.

What will it take to improve the job market, and are we headed in that direction? You decide.

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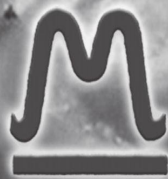
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THE CHAPLAIN'S CORRAL

Checking Our Motives

By SCOTT HILGENDORFF, *Cowboys of the Cross*

What is your motivation when you pray? In church culture, it's normal for us to ask how to pray for one another, especially if we're part of a Bible study or small group. And it's Biblical to do that. The book of Acts is just one place that makes it clear we're supposed to pray for each other.

But we train ourselves to ask God for our needs without checking our motives, and those motives can sometimes get in the way.

James 4:3 says – "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."

We forget that God wants us to give Him glory. We forget that the Bible is full of instructions about putting others first over our needs. We forget that as Christians, we're in a process of becoming more like Jesus and less like our selfish selves.

When we pray to win a rodeo, why are we wanting that win? Are we chasing a buckle that we can be proud of or to bring ourselves the glory of the win?

It is totally okay to want these things, but a more Biblical perspective is to use our victories to bring attention to God. Talking about our win opens the door to telling others about how we know we couldn't have done it without God, for example.

And a loss? Same opportunity. Someone will likely come up to you to tell you it was a good effort or to offer some advice on what to do. Any conversation can open the door to turn it to God. For example, we could respond such as this. Man, I just keep asking God to help me get better at keeping my chin tucked, and if nothing else, I got that right tonight, so praise Him for even the small things.

That's just one way it can look to give God glory.

We can't know what God's plan is, and praying for that win may not bring it about. If it doesn't, our motivation still needs to line up with what's in scripture.

Are my needs for myself because I want that year end buckle before I retire, or do I need this check to help my mom with a medical bill or to put food on the table for my family?

This isn't to say we shouldn't tell God what we feel we need.

Philippians 4:6-7 tells us – "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

We're told not to worry because God is going to take care of us, but being thankful for our current circumstances, good or bad, we're also supposed to tell God what we feel we need.

Then we have to trust that God is going to meet our needs, but sometimes it's the struggle that we need to help us grow and learn to rely on Him.



Insights From the 2026 January Cattle Inventory Report

By **MATTHEW FISCHER & BRIAN BEER**, *Clemson University*

The 2026 January Cattle Inventory Report was released by the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) on January 31. Below are some insights from the report.

United States

As of January 1, the U.S. cattle inventory totaled 86.2 million head, slightly lower than the January 2025 inventory of 86.5 million head, as seen in Figure 1. The reduction continues the downward trend in cattle inventory that started after 2019.

Cows and heifers that have calved totaled 37.2 million head, a relatively flat movement from the 37.3 million head on January 1, 2025. Beef cows were down 1 percent from 2025 at 27.6 million head. Beef cow replacements were up 1 percent in 2026 at 4.71 million head. This is the first increase in beef replacement inventory since the *January 2021 Inventory Report*.

Cattle over 500 lbs varied. Heifers over 500 lbs were 18 million head, down 1 percent. Beef replacement heifers were 4.71 million in 2026, up 1 percent from 2025. Steers over 500 lbs were reported at 15.6 million, down 1 percent. Bulls over 500 lbs were 2.01 million head, up less than 1 percent from 2025.

The 2025 calf crop was down 2 percent from 2024, estimated at 32.9 million head.

Dairy cow inventory was up 2 percent in 2026, reported at 9.68 million head.

South Carolina

South Carolina's cattle and calves inventory reported a 5 percent reduction from 2025. All inventory on January 31 was reported at 280,000, down 15,000 head from 2025. All cows and heifers that have calved were down 4 percent at 147,000 head, and South Carolina's calf crop was 7 percent lower at 125,000 head. USDA did not provide inventory data for beef cows that have calved for South Carolina in the 2026 report. The reduction in 2026 follows the slight increases in inventory and calf crop that South Carolina reported in 2025.

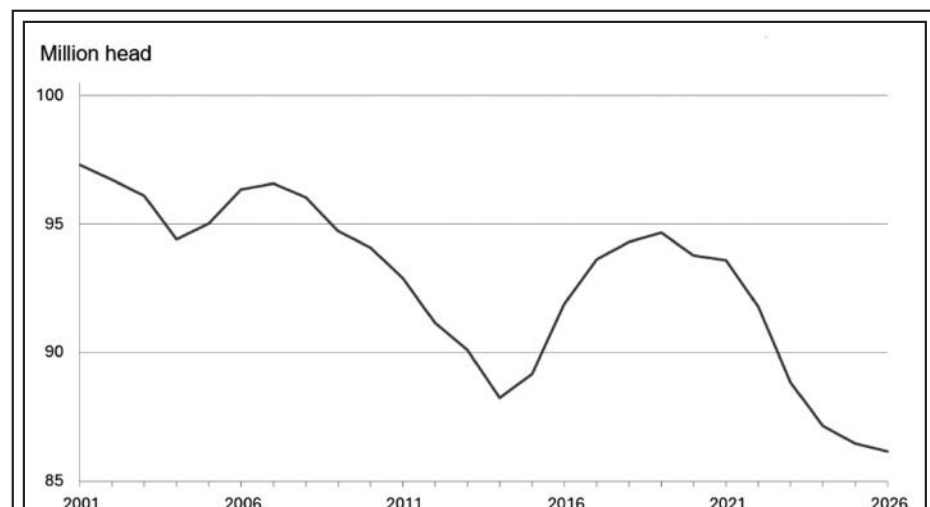


Figure 1 - All Cattle & Calves Inventory - United States: January 1 (Source: USDA, NASS)

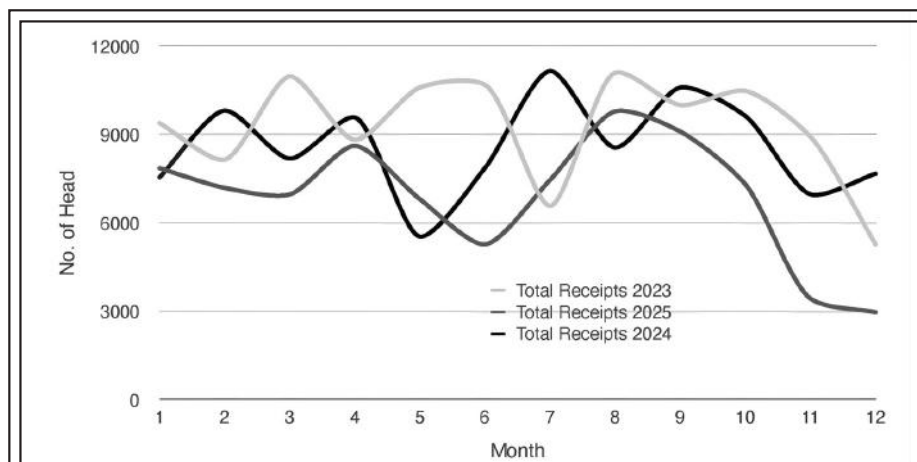


Figure 2. Cattle Marketing Volume Seasonality

South Carolina marketing seasonality has continued to not follow expectations. The one exception is with volume decreasing towards the end of each year. Expected depressed volume has continued due to contraction in the herd size.

North Carolina

North Carolina's inventory of all cattle and calves for 2026 is 690,000, a 4 percent decrease from 2025. All cows and heifers that have calved for 2026 came in at 350,000 head, a 5 percent decrease. North Carolina's calf crop is 4 percent smaller at 325,000 head. This is the second year in a row of 4 percent and 5 percent reductions in inventory, cows that have calved, and the calf crop for North Carolina. As with South Carolina, USDA did not provide inventory for other categories.

Takeaways – The missing inventory number in the beef replacement category is frustrating. Given the inventory reductions across the reported categories, it is reasonable to speculate that the beef cow replacement inventory is also down – or at least not increasing – in both North and South Carolina. We just don't know due to the missing data. Compared to other southern region states, Alabama and Florida saw cattle inventory increase – 2 percent and 1 percent respectively – while Georgia and Tennessee are both down 1 percent. Virginia's 2026 inventory was unchanged from 2025.

The national market could be slowing down on liquidation. Is the 2026 cattle inventory less than 1 percent lower than last year, coupled with the increase in beef replacements, signaling an end to the liquidation phase of the cattle cycle? Maybe so; however, we still have a 75 year low in cattle inventory, and the year-over-year reduction in the calf crop may not sustain heifer retention in the coming years. An indicator moving forward can be the Cattle on Feed Reports and observing the portion of heifers that are on feed. Regardless, for the foreseeable future there are still fewer hooves on the ground than last year to supply the beef market.

You may review the *2026 January Cattle Inventory Report* in its entirety at <https://esmis.nal.usda.gov/sites/default/release-files/795748/cat10126.pdf>.



AMERICAN
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NEWS

Series of Updates to the Genetic Evaluation Docility EPD Next Call for Docility Phenotypes. International Genetic Solutions (IGS) has been making planned updates to the genetic evaluation over the past two years. These updates are being completed in a series and applied to each trait complex one at a time. The Docility EPD is next to be updated, and is expected to be released in early spring 2026. Updates to several of the evaluations have already been completed, including carcass weight/ribeye area and growth, followed by calving ease in late 2025. Following docility, the update series will be completed with backfat/marbling and then stayability.

Mature Weight and Cow Energy Requirement EPD Released on Herdbook. Expected progeny differences (EPD) for mature

weight (MW) and cow energy requirement (CER) became available for all animals on [Herdbook.org](https://herdbook.org) on February 16. In November 2025, the EPDs were released in a research format for a list of high accuracy animals and high use sires. These EPDs will be displayed on the Herdbook animal page for all animals. MW and CER EPD will be included in the International Genetic Solutions weekly production run and will therefore be updated every week.

For more information about the Docility, MW, and CER EPDs, visit <https://tinyurl.com/EPD-Update>.

ASA Conducts Internal Parentage Audit. As part of our ongoing commitment to industry's best practices and continuous improvement, ASA is conducting an audit of its DNA parentage verification processes. This effort includes a review of historical parentage records to ensure consistency and reliability as our database continues to evolve with additional testing over time.

Through this audit, we identified a small number of parentage inconsistencies affecting a limited fraction of DNA tested animals. These cases primarily stem from historical practices in which parentage was verified at a single point in time, often against only one parent, and subsequent additions of a second parent's DNA did not automatically trigger re-verification. Importantly, this review has no impact on other DNA based services. Genomically enhanced EPDs and trait testing remain unaffected.

If any of your animals are involved in this review, you will be

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contacted directly by the ASA DNA team with specific information and recommended next steps. The vast majority of these cases are straightforward and can be resolved through standard collaboration, and we are confident in reaching appropriate outcomes.

Members are encouraged to ensure their contact information is current, including email address, mailing address, and phone numbers on all associated accounts, so that ASA staff can communicate efficiently if needed. Keeping this information up to date helps ensure timely and accurate communication.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the ASA office at 406-587-4531 and select Option 1.

STYLE 2026 Set for San Antonio. Back by popular demand, SimGenetics Training for Young Leaders and Entrepreneurs (STYLE 2026) will be held in San Antonio, Tex., on June 23–25.

Hosted by the American Simmental Association, this leadership training program is designed for individuals ages 25–45 seeking to develop leadership skills and expand their professional networks.

Participation is limited to the first 25 registrants. Registration closes on May 1 or when full. As an added incentive, ASA members who refer a participant who registers and attends STYLE will have their 2025–2026 annual service fee waived.

About the American Simmental Association. *Founded in 1968, the American Simmental Association is headquartered in Bozeman, Montana. ASA is committed to leveraging technology, education, and collaboration to accelerate genetic profitability for the beef industry. In keeping with its commitment, ASA and its partners formed International Genetic Solutions — the world's largest genetic evaluation of beef cattle. Learn more at www.simmental.org.*

50th Annual Clemson Bull Test Sale Recap

By **LEE VAN VLAKE**, *Clemson University*

The 50th Annual Clemson Bull Test Sale was held on February 7 at the T. Ed Garrison Arena in Pendleton, South Carolina. The sale was phenomenal, offering top notch genetics and resulting in our highest average sale price ever at \$7,366. A total of 54 bulls sold for \$397,750.

The sale ring was packed with enthusiastic bidders, and online and phone bids were major contributors to the event's success. This year's group of bulls represented some of the most complete and industry leading genetics we have ever offered. DVAuction once again handled our online bidding, attracting participants from across the country. Bulls were purchased by buyers in South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia.

The highest selling bull was Lot 29, an Angus bull consigned by Johnathon Wells of Berry Wells Farm in Rayle, Georgia. Osage Farms Inc. of Scaly Mountain, N.C., purchased the bull for \$14,000. Osage Farms acquired four bulls in total during the sale. Lot 29 was a true standout, earning the award for highest overall Average Daily Gain (ADG) at 6.13 pounds. He was a high performing bull throughout the test, with several Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs) ranking in the top 10 percent.

The second highest selling bull was Lot 21, an Angus bull consigned by Eugene Shuffler of Shuffler Farm in Union Grove, North Carolina. Shaw Family Farm purchased Lot 21 for \$12,000. He posted an impressive set of EPDs and was designated an Elite Bull in our program. Lot 21 also won an award for the highest test ADG of 6.13 pounds and achieved a negative Residual Feed Intake (RFI) during the testing period.

Breed averages for the bulls were as follows:

- 27 Angus averaged \$7,463
- 12 SimAngus averaged \$8,187
- 1 Balancer sold for \$4,500
- 5 Hereford averaged \$6,950
- 7 Red Angus averaged \$6,035
- 2 Simmental averaged \$8,250

After the bulls were sold, 24 high quality open heifers were offered. These heifers came from three farms and averaged \$3,412. We appreciate this high quality offering and the support from the consigners and buyers of these heifers.

On behalf of Clemson University, the Cooperative Extension Service, and the Clemson Bull Test Program, we extend our sincere thanks to our consignors, buyers, and bidders for their dedication to breed improvement and excellence in genetic advancement within the beef industry. The confidence you place in the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Bull Testing Program is both humbling and greatly appreciated.

The 50th Annual Sale was conducted by Col. Dale Stith of Mays Lick, Kentucky. Ringmen included Scott Weller of Virginia, Michael Ryan of South Carolina; and David Gazda of the American Angus Association. These gentlemen are true professionals, and we thank them for a job well done. Despite the excitement and energy in the sale ring, they never missed a bid.

Please mark your calendars for February 6, 2027, for another powerful offering of industry improving bulls.

Injectable Trace Minerals to High Risk Calves

By DR. PHILLIP LANCASTER, *KSU Beef Cattle Institute*

Injectable trace minerals are a method often used to improve the mineral status of cattle at arrival to the feedyard, usually as an insurance policy against unknown previous nutritional management. The effectiveness of this practice has been studied with variable results. A recent meta analysis evaluated the effectiveness of injectable trace mineral solution containing copper, magnesium, zinc, and selenium by combining results from 16 published trials.

A meta analysis is a method to synthesize results from multiple studies to determine an overall effect and to investigate the effect of other variables on the outcome. It is a very powerful research tool, especially when results from individual studies appear to be conflicting, allowing researchers to better understand the nuances of the studies that lead to significant outcomes. However, a meta analysis is not the end all be all as important factors may be overlooked.

The recent meta analysis of injectable trace minerals

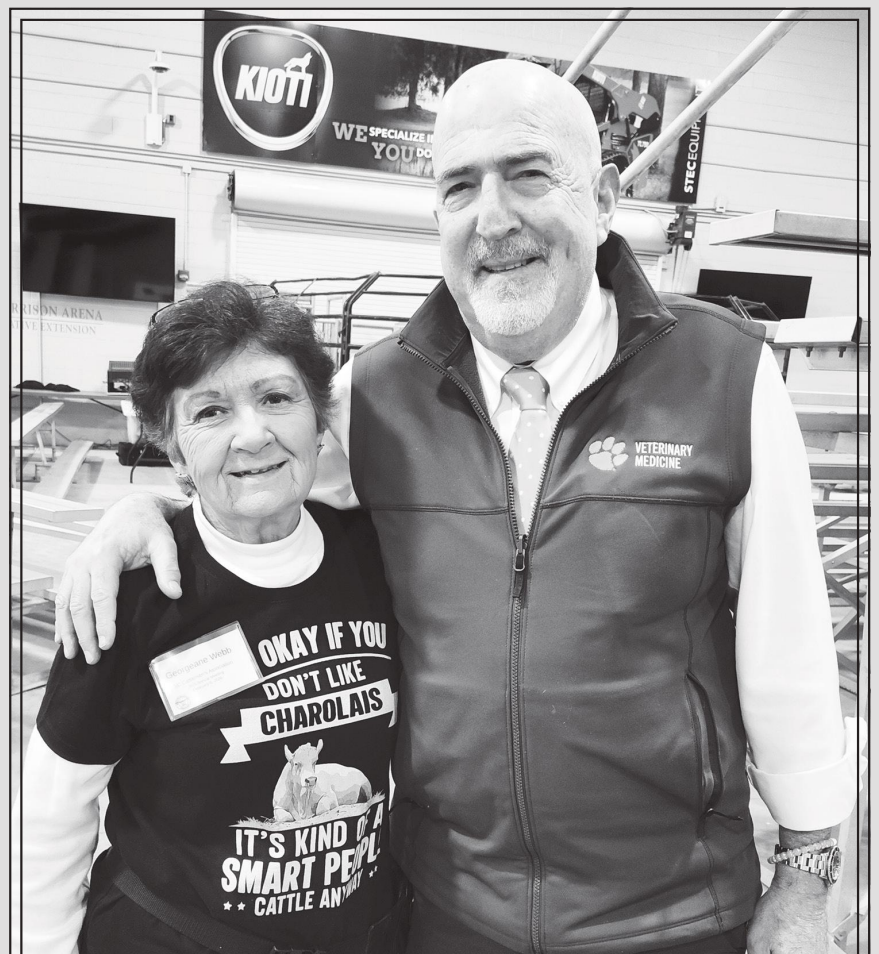


S.C. CHAROLAIS NEWS

By GEORGEANNE WEBB, *S.C. Charolais Association*

I hate to say I told you so, but I told you so. Remember after the hurricane, earthquake, tornadoes, and forest fires I told y'all to expect a blizzard this winter? Well, welcome to the most snow we have had in years. This ice one weekend and snow the next has about worked me to death feeding critters. I am through with winter and ready for spring.

Last night, I attended the S.C. Cattlemen's Association Annual Meeting in Clemson and introduced Dr. Steven Marks, Dean of the Harvey S. Peeler Jr. College of Veterinary Medicine at Clemson University, to my granddaughter, who plans to become a vet. Even when I'm gone, his worst nightmare will be around forever. You know how I keep up with the building of the vet school at Clemson after I griped about them not having one for years and years. I attached a picture of me and him just to prove I was there. I am wearing the shirt that Riley Friddle, our newest Charolais member, gave me for Christmas. It reads,

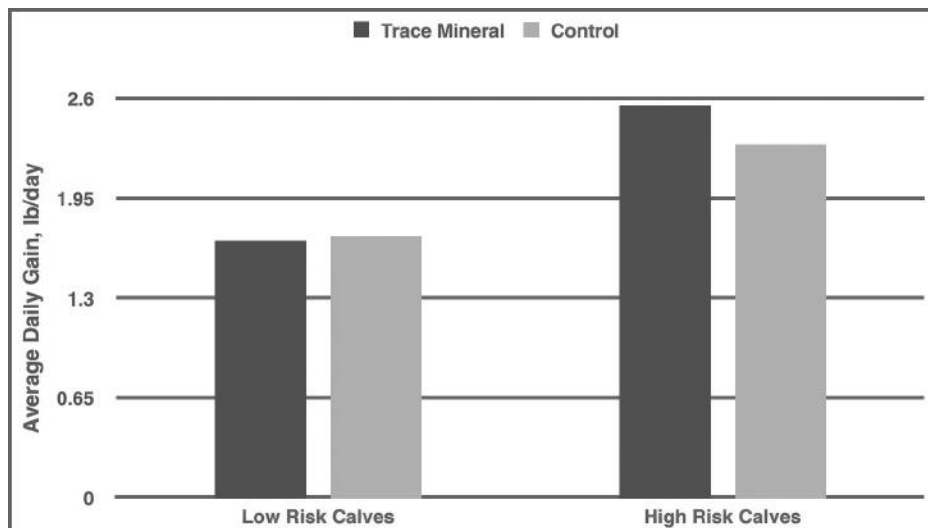


**Georgeanne Webb and Dr. Steven Marks,
Dean of the Clemson Vet School.**

"It's okay if you don't like Charolais. It's kind of a smart people cattle anyway." Boy, I got attention and laughs from that.

Congratulations to Tommy Wilks from Clayford Ranch in Patrick, S.C., for receiving SCAA Cattleman of the Year. It's about time Charolais got some recognition down here.

I don't have any bad news — other than the weather from this area — thank goodness. All of us old folks are hanging on, aggravating the young folks.



evaluated growth rate and morbidity of cattle during receiving or preconditioning phases. Overall, there was no effect of injectable trace mineral on growth or morbidity during receiving or preconditioning; however, only five trials reported morbidity results. Heterogeneity was present among trials for growth, but not morbidity, indicating that other factors were affecting the outcome associated with the injectable trace mineral.

One of the factors evaluated was cattle morbidity risk classification — low or high risk. High risk calves were cattle with

no previous vaccination or management history or cattle sourced from an auction facility. Low risk calves were cattle with known vaccination and management history or sourced from a research facility. Cattle in the high risk category had 0.26 lb/d greater growth rate when given injectable trace mineral than cattle not given injectable trace mineral. In the low risk category, there was no effect of injectable trace mineral.

Phase of production, preconditioning, or feedlot receiving did not impact the effect of injectable trace mineral on growth rate. Additionally, whether calves were getting in-feed supplementation of copper, magnesium, zinc, and selenium or not did not impact the effect of injectable trace mineral on growth rate.

In conclusion, administering an injectable trace mineral containing copper, magnesium, zinc, and selenium to calves with unknown management history or from auction facilities could increase growth rate during the preconditioning or receiving phase; however, there appears to be little effect on morbidity.

Injectable trace minerals are a quick method to increase the trace mineral status of cattle in specific situations and have been used with preconditioning and receiving cattle. A recent meta analysis reported that the growth rate of high risk calves can be improved with injectable copper, magnesium, zinc, and selenium, but not low risk calves.



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 For hauling services, contact Marcus at 704-322-0840.
 If you need help working your cattle, contact Marcus Harward at 704-322-0840 or Chuck Doolittle at 704-221-1447 for more information.

Bull Buying Behavior: Part I

– What Are Your Customers Really Thinking?

By **LILLY PLATTS**, *American Simmental Association*

Seedstock producers work consistently to make sure catalogs present the most pertinent information to commercial customers.

With the ever expanding suite of EPD, deciding what to put in a catalog can be challenging, especially considering the fast paced nature of many bull sales. Dr. Charley Martinez studies bull buying behavior through the use of eye tracking software. He presented his work and findings during Fall Focus 2025 in Columbia, Missouri.

Dr. Charley Martinez and his team first started working on this research in 2021. Martinez ran his idea by Dr. Troy Rowan to formulate experiments in Alabama and Tennessee, which evaluated whether or not producers were using EPD to make sale selections and tested the ability to predict value. “We were just trying to elicit their belief about what a bull is worth,” Martinez shared.

Next, Martinez purchased state-of-the-art eye tracking equipment, which uses movement and heat tracking technology to reveal where a person’s eye goes first, how long their attention is focused on a single thing, and other behaviors. Martinez and his team published their first study, which posed the question, “Do EPDs matter?” After finding that the answer was yes, their next question was, “What EPDs matter?”

EPD systems have developed drastically since their introduction. The earliest EPDs were for the basics: birth weight, weaning weight, yearling weight, and milk, for example. In the early 2000s, percentile rankings became a part of the system. During this same time, researchers started developing economic selection indexes, which provide a single monetary measure. Over time, more EPDs and selection indexes have been added.

Economic selection indexes are typically placed at the far right hand side of the overall EPD profile. Martinez shared that this



Economic selection indexes can help producers simplify their selection decisions on sale day. Where these figures are placed in a sale catalog is important.
Photo by Susan Russell.



Data shows that phenotypic appraisal is a top priority for most producers. Photo by Liv Stavick.

decision may have had an unintended effect on behavior. “Visual cognition literature supports the idea of ‘what comes first is seen first,’ which is known as the primacy effect,” Martinez shared.

Under this assumption, the first EPDs that producers see are not the indexes, which have been developed to simplify decisions and have been proven to improve selection decisions. Instead, they are likely taking in those foundational EPDs like Milk, and potentially missing the indexes entirely. Recent eye tracking studies suggest that people often skip information on the far right, especially when the information is dense or busy. “If we can’t get people to look at or understand them [indexes], then how are they supposed to use them?” Martinez said.

The objectives of Martinez’s latest study were

1. To understand the influence of different EPD profile layouts on buyers’ accuracy of seedstock bull price prediction,
2. To understand producers’ characteristics that affect accurate decision making when buying a bull,
3. To understand producers’ accurate decision making across different states and breeds, and
4. To understand the factors that affect accurate prediction of quality differentiated bulls by producers.

The team collected data through “lab in the field” experiments, using the eye tracking computers and software. Participants were paid a small amount to participate, with an extra incentive for answering all of the questions correctly. Across several states, 208 participants looked at 18 bulls, with the challenge of predicting



A significant amount of information is available for registered cattle, which can easily lead to information overload. Photo by the Grant Company.

value. These bulls had been sold, which gave the researchers a baseline for the actual real world value of the animals.

The participants looked at a looping video of each bull, as well as an EPD profile. There were three treatment groups and a control. The bulls were Angus, Simmental, and Hereford and were chosen to represent high, average, and low EPD profiles. The “control” group saw what is typically presented in a bull sale catalog. The treatment groups either saw the EPDs in the typical order with percentile ranks, the EPDs in the typical order without percentile ranks, the EPDs in the reverse order with percentile ranks, or the EPDs in reverse order without percentile ranks.

The participants were given minimum and maximum values to keep their estimation within and challenged with predicting the value of the bulls. The participants were also surveyed on things like their involvement in the beef industry, the breeds used in their own operation, age, income, comfort with risk, and other general measures. The survey also asked if the participants used EPDs in real life or genomically enhanced (GE) EPDs. Just over 80 percent said they use EPDs, and around 50 percent said they use GE-EPDs. Around 90 percent said they use phenotype in making selections.

This study showed that participants were most successful at predicting value when the EPDs were presented in an “inverted” or opposite order and when percentile ranks were displayed, with the index measures on the left. The study also showed that participants who said they utilize GE-EPDs were better at predicting the price of the bulls. People who reported being more risk seeking were also more likely to be wrong on the bull predictions. The study also measured a person’s relationship to delayed gratification. The participants who reported being more ok with delayed gratification

were more likely to accurately predict the value of the bulls. “The folks who are thinking of and tolerant of setting aside something to have a bigger gain at the end are better off,” Martinez said.

The eye tracking technology used in the study creates a heatmap based on the amount of time a person spends looking at one area. For example, if someone looked at the CE EPD for five seconds and the bull’s head for one second, the CE EPD area would be a more red color, while the bull’s head would be green. These “areas of interest” reveal what people are actually looking at and considering when evaluating animals and EPD profiles. The aggregate map of this data shows the percentage of time that people spend “fixated” on an area (spending more time) or simply “gazing” (a passing glance).

This data shows that people overwhelmingly spend more time looking at an animal’s phenotype versus EPDs and indexes. Only 11 percent gazed at the indexes, with 10 percent fixating. The opposite was true for phenotype, with over 97 percent gazing and 100 percent fixating. Martinez shared that this data shows that more education is needed on indexes, as well as how to differentiate the measures across breeds.

The results of this study also bring up the important question of how producers should be laying out their bull sale catalogs. With the number of EPD and data points available today, choosing what to include is a challenge, and it’s easy to create information overload. This is especially true for producers who cater to the commercial industry. “Information overload has been proven to cause confusion and uncertainty in decision making,” Martinez said.

If less is better, the challenge becomes choosing which measures matter the most. EPD ranks and percentiles, as well as having the economic indexes appear on the left, improved the ability to accurately predict bull value, and Martinez suggests that producers should consider better placement of these numbers. “Our study suggests that emphasizing economic selection indexes in catalogs can enhance producers’ evaluation accuracy by better helping them connect merit with economic value,” Martinez shared.

Martinez and his team set up a similar study for Fall Focus participants. The results of that study will be shared in Part 2 of this article.



Ensuring that customers have the most important information in front of them on sale day is a priority for seedstock producers. Photo by Kelly Finke.

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zoetis NEWS

Zoetis Encourages Communities Give Back to FFA Students Through Industry Support Program. The annual program has donated millions to local FFA chapters since 2008. Returning for its 18th consecutive year, Zoetis encourages veterinary clinics and animal health distributors and retailers to support their local FFA students through its Industry Support Program. The annual rebate program helps support local chapter educational and leadership opportunities for students by providing funding through the sales of select Zoetis Cattle products.

“Today’s FFA members are our industry’s future, and we recognize and celebrate FFA’s vital mission in shaping tomorrow’s leaders,” said Kristin Kasselmann, senior vice president and head of U.S. Livestock and Equine at Zoetis. “Being in FFA comes with countless opportunities to grow and learn as a young individual. The Industry Support Program helps make sure that all students can benefit from those experiences and make lasting memories.”

FFA chapters use program funds to help offset travel costs to attend leadership events and conferences and fund other chapter initiatives, including community projects and scholarships. In 2025 alone, nearly 800 FFA chapters and over 13,000 students across the country benefited from the program’s contributions.

Zoetis recognizes firsthand the impact these initiatives have on career development, with many Zoetis colleagues building their path from those early experiences.

McKenzie Squires, a strategic account manager at Zoetis, shared what being an FFA member means to her. “FFA opens the door for lifelong friendships, career development, and capitalizing on your passion for agriculture. The people I met and the life skills I developed shaped who I am today.”

How to Show Your Support – The 2026 Industry Support Program will conclude on April 30. Veterinarians, distributors, and retailers must enroll in the program and select their designated FFA chapters by May 1 to be eligible.

To learn more about the program and how to contribute, contact your local Zoetis representative or visit ZoetisUS.com/IndustrySupport.

Zoetis Launches First Commercial BRD Genetic Predictions to Help Build More Resilient Beef Herds. INHERIT genetic predictions identify genetics for productivity and health during critical phase in beef herd rebuilding. Zoetis Inc. recently announced the launch of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) genetic predictions in INHERIT Select for commercial cow/calf operations and as an upgrade to its INHERIT Connect test for seedstock. This marks the first time that cattle

producers can select replacement females and evaluate sires based on genetic predictions for BRD health and survival.

BRD costs the beef industry nearly \$1 billion each year due to calf and production losses and increased treatment expenses.¹⁻³ Until now, producers had no way to evaluate and select for the genetics that influence calf BRD health and survival after weaning.

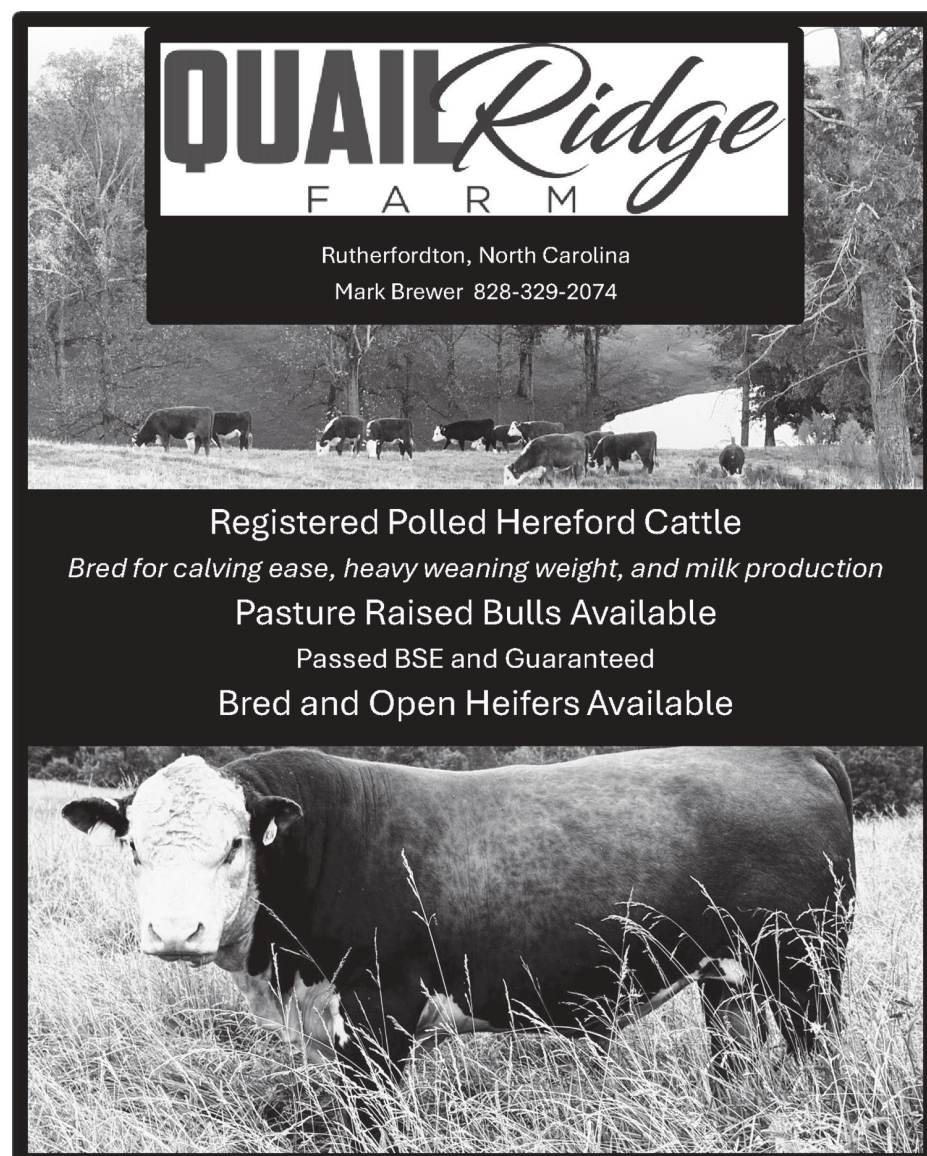
“This is a breakthrough for the beef industry,” said Brett Bristol, head of Zoetis Precision Animal Health. “For the first time, producers can make selection and breeding decisions based on Genomic Expected Progeny Differences for BRD health and survival, in addition to production traits. Long term, this innovation is expected to have meaningful economic impacts on commercial cow/calf producers and downstream backgrounders and feeders.”

Genetics That Compound Over Time – As the rebuilding of the U.S. cowherd begins and replacement costs are at historic highs, producers are looking for ways to build cow herds that last longer, raise healthier calves, and deliver predictable value. Genetic advancement from testing and selection compounds over time; the breeding decisions made today influence future herd health and productivity.

INHERIT Select and INHERIT Connect with the BRD Upgrade include three BRD genetic predictions in the form of Genomic Expected Progeny Differences (GEPDs):

- **BRD Health (BRDH) GEPD** – Predicts genetic differences in the likelihood that calves (progeny) will stay healthy after weaning

Zoetis News continued on the next page



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without requiring treatment for BRD. Higher BRDH and lower percent rank are better.

• **BRD Survival (BRDS) GEPD** – Predicts genetic differences in the likelihood that calves (progeny) will survive from arrival for backgrounding to harvest without dying from BRD. Higher BRDS and lower percent rank are better.

• **\$BRD Economic Index** – Combines BRDH and BRDS into a single dollar value that estimates revenue impact per calf (progeny). Higher \$BRD and lower rank are better.

These predictions are based on feedlot health and performance data from a commercially representative population of more than 50,000 head of cattle across North America. These phenotypes, along with continual genetic data additions, are updated weekly and included in the Zoetis Multi-Breed Genetic Evaluation.

Select Replacements That Build Healthier Calf Crops – “GEPDs for BRD and \$BRD bridge an economically important gap in current beef genetic evaluations,” said Kent Andersen, PhD, director of Beef Technical Services for Zoetis Precision Animal Health. “BRD predictions give us a way to select for post weaning BRDH and BRDS and related economic impact that we couldn’t before. That matters when used along with predictions for maternal, feedlot, carcass, and

adaptability traits and simplified via economic indexes.”

With BRD genetic predictions in INHERIT Select, commercial cow/calf producers can:

Select replacement heifers with stronger genetic potential across all major economically important traits to set the stage for healthier and more productive calf crops.

Identify and invest in genetics for greater profit potential and less health risk that compounds over time.

Using the population of more than 440,000 commercial animals tested using INHERIT, researchers compared the top versus bottom 25th percentile rank based on GEPDs for BRDH, BRDS, and \$BRD. The comparison shows progeny of the top 25th percentile that are genetically:

- 25 percent more likely to stay healthy and not require treatment for BRD from feedlot arrival to harvest⁴
- 14 percent more likely to survive and not die from BRD from feedlot arrival to harvest⁴
- \$12 per calf advantage in net return from combined genetics for BRDH and BRDS⁴

Evaluate Bulls for BRD Health Genetics – For seedstock, the INHERIT Connect + BRD Upgrade provides a powerful way to



Lot 22 - DTF INVICTUS D287 5N01



Lot 1 - NCSU MISS PROPEL 04K 24N



Lot 23 - FIVE JS 4224



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evaluate bull batteries and potentially differentiate sale bulls based on BRD GEPDs and \$BRD.

With the INHERIT Connect + BRD Upgrade, producers can:

- Potentially differentiate sale bulls with BRD predictions that benefit commercial buyers and downstream backgrounders and feeders
- Evaluate A.I. sires and bull batteries to benchmark genetic merit for BRD and identify favorable and unfavorable outliers
- Document genetic merit for BRDH and BRDS and position future calf crops for premium prices

When comparing bulls tested using INHERIT Connect + BRD Upgrade, bulls in the top 25th percentile rank or \$BRD have a \$1,200 predicted advantage over bulls in the bottom 25th percentile rank, assuming they sire 100 calves during their lifetime.⁴

Product Details – INHERIT Select is a genomic test and genetic evaluation for commercial crossbred replacement females. It provides GEPDs and percentile rankings for 25 traits, including BRDH, BRDS, and \$BRD, economic indexes that simplify selection, plus parentage discovery, breed composition, and color and polled genotypes. Results are updated weekly.

INHERIT Connect + BRD Upgrade is an option for testing seedstock sires and females for BRDH, BRDS, and \$BRD, enabling selection and differentiation based on BRDH genetics. Breeds eligible for this product include Angus, Red Angus, Hereford, Simmental, Gelbvieh, Limousin, Charolais, Shorthorn, and South Devon.

Producers can contact their Zoetis Genetics representative or visit beefgenetics.com to learn more and get started with testing.

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About Zoetis. As the world's leading animal health company, Zoetis is driven by a singular purpose – to nurture our world and humankind by advancing care for animals. After innovating ways to predict, prevent, detect, and treat animal illness for more than 70 years, Zoetis continues to stand by those raising and caring for animals worldwide – from veterinarians and pet owners to livestock producers. The company's leading portfolio and pipeline of medicines, vaccines, diagnostics, and technologies make a difference in over 100 countries. A Fortune 500 company, Zoetis generated revenue of \$9.3 billion in 2024 with approximately 13,800 employees. For more information, visit www.zoetis.com.

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NEWS

Case IH Puma Series Tractor Launches with Major Enhancements to Maneuverability and Operator Experience. *Reimagined tractor series features the latest precision technology, increasing productivity and optimizing time in field.* Case IH launched its all new Puma series tractor, available in 155, 165, and 185 horsepower models, with a full vehicle redesign, configured for unmatched performance, reliability, and efficiency. Unveiled at NCBA's CattleCon, the Puma series boasts superior maneuverability as well as a smoother ride. The reimagined tractor also equips operators with access to the latest precision technology and Case IH FieldOps. ?

Operators can choose between the advanced CVXDrive continuously variable transmission for power, improved traction, and long service intervals or the innovative ActiveDrive 8 dual clutch transmission for uninterrupted torque, fast shuttle shifts, and smart automations. Both options boost productivity and reduce operator fatigue, helping operators work more efficiently every day.

The Puma design is compact and powerful, providing excellent maneuverability with a 20 percent tighter turn. The tractor features a new front axle suspension for greater high speed transport safety and roll control. Enhanced braking responsiveness, updated linkage/hitch, and a new transmission improve the tractor's drivability and implement control.

"The latest upgrades to the Puma series make it the perfect partner for livestock producers — a versatile and reliable tractor to meet each day's varied tasks," said Leo Bose, livestock customer segment lead at Case IH. "With an entirely new cab design and access to the latest technology features, operators can achieve more in a day with less fatigue."

The Puma features advanced precision technology, offering optional ISOBUS and Tractor Implement Management (TIM) for compatibility with modern implements, along with expandable electronic architecture — built with the hardware, software, and connectivity foundation to add new technologies as they become available. Operators can manage tractor machine and agronomic data and unlock the power of Connected Services with FieldOps.

The updated cab design of the Puma enhances productivity and ease of use, featuring improved styling, a Pro 1200 display, a new cab suspension, a semi-active seat option, and an upgraded MultiController Armrest to maximize operator comfort during extended use.

Case IH Launches Farmall 35A and 40A Compact Tractors for Enhanced Operator Comfort and Versatility. Case IH is introducing the latest additions to the Farmall family — the Farmall 35A and 40A compact tractors. Built for versatility, engineered for

comfort, and designed to keep operations moving forward, the new Farmall compact series tractors deliver comfort built power from sunup to sundown. Their adaptable design helps operators save both time and money.

Created for maximum operator comfort and safety, the Farmall 35A and 40A feature a wide platform and a spacious step through design that make it easy to enter and exit the tractor. A premium cushioned seat and ergonomic controls ensure all day comfort, while clear sightlines enhance safety, and a strategically placed loader joystick allows for intuitive operation.

"The new Farmall 35A and 40A tractors are not only more comfortable, they make work easier and more efficient," said Leo Bose, livestock customer segment leader at Case IH. "From operator station comforts to powerful capabilities, these compact tractors are designed with the operator in mind, simplifying tasks and maximizing control and productivity."

Operators can choose between a 3 range hydrostatic transmission or a 12×12 gear transmission to best meet their needs. To maximize runtime by reducing fuel stops and maintenance, the Farmall 35A and 40A come standard with an easy fill 12.6 gallon tank and a common rail diesel injection system.

Powering implements is simple with an optional live third

Case IH News continued on the next page



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Case IH News *continued from the previous page*

function loader control, higher 3 point lift capacity, and optional stackable hydraulic remotes. The new Farmall tractors also feature a dual pedal design for quick forward-to-reverse changes and also offer a factory matched loader and improved backhoe with a quick mount system for faster setup and better ground clearance.

The Farmall 35A and 40A come ready for an entry level telematics modem to be installed. This enables easy and simple integration into Case IH FieldOps for five years of connectivity, where customers can monitor their machines in real time and view GPS location through the app.

Case IH Launches Nutri-Tiller 1000 Series to Boost Long Term Soil Health. *The Nutri-Tiller 1000 series is the latest addition to the Case IH soil management portfolio, delivering the best of no-till and conventional tillage benefits.* Case IH is now offering farmers a new strip till solution built on the proven agronomic performance of Case IH tillage equipment, delivering enhanced soil conservation while maintaining strong yield potential. The Nutri-Tiller 1000 series strip till tool offers farmers the best of no-till and conventional tillage benefits with fewer field passes needed, reduced costs, and integrated precision technology.

The Nutri-Tiller 1000 series strip till tool helps farmers

promote strong, early emergence and boost yield potential by creating a uniform strip with an ideal berm shape. The uniform soil environment provides earlier soil temperature warming and more consistent moisture at planting to promote fast, emergence.

“The Nutri-Tiller 1000 series is designed to deliver exceptional tillage results while championing long term soil health and conservation,” said C.J. Parker, soil management marketing manager at Case IH. “By minimizing compaction and leaving protective residue between the strips, it enhances the soil’s nutrient utilization — helping farmers protect their soil while supporting strong yield potential.”

Operators can maintain consistent strip quality with full in-cab control of residue managers, row unit down pressure, strip keepers, and berm conditioning through the independent down pressure control. This guarantees precise tuning without field stops or manual adjustments, saving time and helping operators stay productive throughout the day. Operators can store guidance lines within Case IH FieldOps and seamlessly send them to all connected machines.

The Nutri-Tiller 1000 series utilizes FieldOps to simplify guidance line management and prescription creation, while Active Implement Guidance ensures accurate planting within the strip till passes — all managed through the Pro 1200 display, enabling



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operators to minimize overlap, optimize input use, and achieve more precise placement on every pass.

More Power, More Precision – Upgraded Equipment and Technology Took Center Stage for Case IH at Commodity Classic. *Case IH highlighted a wide range of products and solutions to help meet the evolving needs of every farmer and producer throughout every season at Commodity Classic.* More power and more precision strengthen the latest launches from Case IH. The North American launch of the new Optum series tractors brings cash crop and livestock operations the flexibility, power, and connectivity to do more every season. The Nutri-Tiller 1000 brings a new strip tillage solution designed to drive improved soil conservation.

“We take pride in working alongside our customers, constantly listening to their feedback to learn what’s most important to them,” said Kurt Coffey, Case IH vice president, North America. “We take those insights to heart and use them to develop technology and equipment that work hard to deliver the data insights and automation that help farmers move the needle on their operations.”

North American Debut of Newest Optum Series Tractors Delivers More Power, More Comfort, and More Capability – Farmers looking to maximize productivity in any season have a powerful new option with the latest Optum series tractors, available in three models from 360 to 435 horsepower. Designed for year round performance – from tillage and planting to baling and hauling – the Optum series tractors are engineered to excel across the full range of work producers demand.

At the heart of the newest Optum series tractor lineup is a brand new version of the Cursor 9 engine, which delivers durability and pulling power producers expect. The engine’s low idle speeds help reduce fuel consumption, while the improved heat management system maintains ideal engine temperatures.

A new independent front axle suspension delivers superior comfort and stability on the road and in the field. Combined with the integrated central tire inflation system, which enables in-cab tire pressure adjustment, operators improve traction and reduce field compaction while enhancing fuel efficiency and tire life on the road – boosting productivity across changing conditions.

The newest Optum series tractors also deliver enhanced performance and capability for demanding operations, offering increased fuel capacity, outstanding turning capability, transport speeds of up to 37 mph, and an exceptional braking system for confident road travel while hauling heavy loads.

A high capacity hydraulic system supports demanding implements, while a completely redesigned exterior – featuring a new hood, updated steps, and signature IH branded taillights – gives the Optum series tractor a bold, modern look. Inside the cab, operators will find a quiet, refined workspace designed for long days in the field. Subscription free technology and data access through Case IH FieldOps provide real time operational insight and control, helping operators work efficiently and confidently across every task.

“Producers have been asking for more power, comfort, and integrated technology in a tractor that can handle every season,” said J.E. Cadle, Case IH medium tractor marketing manager. “With the new Optum series, we’ve delivered. From the 435 horsepower Cursor

9 engine to the independent front suspension, it’s built to perform in the field and on the road with a quieter, more refined cab experience.”

Nutri-Tiller 1000 Series – Conserve Soil without Sacrificing Yield Potential – Farmers get the best of no-till and conventional tillage benefits with the Nutri-Tiller 1000 series, a strip till tool designed to help reduce field passes and lower operating costs.

Designed to deliver exceptional tillage results while promoting long term soil health and conservation, the Nutri-Tiller 1000 series helps farmers promote strong, early emergence and boost yield potential by creating a uniform strip with an ideal berm shape. Operators can store guidance lines within FieldOps and seamlessly send them to all connected machines.

The Nutri-Tiller 1000 series also utilizes FieldOps to simplify guidance line management and prescription creation, while Active Implement Guidance ensures accurate planting within the strip till passes – all managed through the Pro 1200 display.

Maximizing Efficiency Through Automation – Visitors at Commodity Classic were able to view the progression of Case IH automation capabilities throughout the seasons at the booth, from tillage to planting to application and harvesting, and see firsthand how Case IH empowers farmers to make on-farm decisions with precision, all managed through FieldOps.

FieldOps, the all-in-one operations management tool, is the key to unlocking full visibility of multi-branded fleets with just a few clicks, anytime and anywhere. Within FieldOps, farmers can access data and connectivity to fleets, fields, and teams to make impactful decisions for their operations.

Case IH understands that the more visibility a farmer has into their operation, the better equipped they are to make operational decisions. That’s why the Optum series tractors, along with other qualifying machines, are equipped with Connectivity Included subscription free technology to ensure farmers can unlock the full potential of their equipment.

For example, operators of the Optum series tractors utilizing FieldOps can share boundaries and monitor machines in real time to better coordinate operational logistics, view as-applied data, create tillage prescriptions, and manage guidance lines.

“Case IH technology is at the core of everything we offer to help make farmers more productive and profitable,” said Coffey. “We’ve developed technology designed for today’s growing season, integrating precision technology right into our machines.”

About Case IH. *Case IH is a global leader in agricultural equipment, committed to collaborating with its customers to develop the most powerful, productive, reliable equipment – designed to meet today’s agricultural challenges. With headquarters in the United States, Case IH has a network of dealers and distributors that operates in over 160 countries. Case IH provides agricultural equipment systems, flexible financial service offerings and parts and service support for professional farmers and commercial operators through a dedicated network of professional dealers and distributors. Productivity enhancing products include tractors; combines and harvesters; hay and forage equipment; tillage tools; planting and seeding systems; sprayers and applicators; and site specific farming tools.*



LIMOUSIN

North American Limousin Foundation

UPDATE

NALF's New Maternal Profit Index (\$MPI) and Industry Profit Index (\$IPI) – along with Mature Cow Weight and Cow Energy Requirement Yearly EPDs. The NALF board approved two new indexes and EPDs to be listed in January of 2026. In 2024, three new EPDs were implemented – Dry Matter Intake, ADG, Feed Efficiency sub-index (\$Gain), and a new terminal index, \$TPI, utilizing iGENDEC software in 2024.

Upon completion of these EPDs, the NALF board moved forward with the development of two additional indexes, \$MPI (Maternal Profit Index) and \$IPI (Industry Profit Index), which is synonymous with an all purpose index in 2025.

These new indexes were built via iGENDEC with the help of Dr. Robert Weaber and Dr. Matt Spangler. iGENDEC was also the platform used to construct NALF's new \$TPI, Terminal Profit Index, in 2024. The new indexes will be implemented in January of 2026. The new indexes will also coincide with the release of MWT EPD (mature cow weight) and CERY EPD (cow energy requirement yearly).

This full suite of indexes for terminal profit, maternal profit, and an all purpose index of IPI will give NALF breeders one of the most progressive index suites in the industry. They are all updated annually with current market price data for feeder cattle prices, fed cattle prices, and carcass prices. All price data uses the most recent ten year average for price data updates and incorporates marginal economic values that are relevant to each index produced.

Maternal Profit Index (\$MPI) – In this production scenario, Limousin bulls are mated to Angus based cows with replacement heifers retained from the calf crop and surplus calves marketed at weaning. EPDs weighted in this index are Calving Ease Direct and Maternal, Weaning Weight, Milk, Mature Weight, Dry Matter Intake, and Stayability. Mature weight is the primary driver and represents

2026 Wolfpack Roundup Sale

Saturday, April 18

E. Carroll Joyner Beef Education Unit

Hosted by the NCSU Livestock Merchandising Class

Tentative Schedule

10:00 am - Educational Program

12:00 pm - Lunch

1:00 pm - 13th Annual Wolfpack Roundup Sale

Selling approx. 35
head of cattle
and 20 sheep and
goats

Sale catalog will be posted online at:

go.ncsu.edu/wolfpackroundup

www.facebook.com/ncsulivestockmerchandising



MARGINAL ECONOMIC VALUES OF MATERNAL PROFIT INDEX:

Trait	Component	Marginal Economic Value
WW	Direct	1.161
WW	Maternal	0.369
FI	Direct	-0.009
MW	Direct	-0.35
STAY	Direct	0.712
CE	Direct	2.764
CE	Maternal	0.391

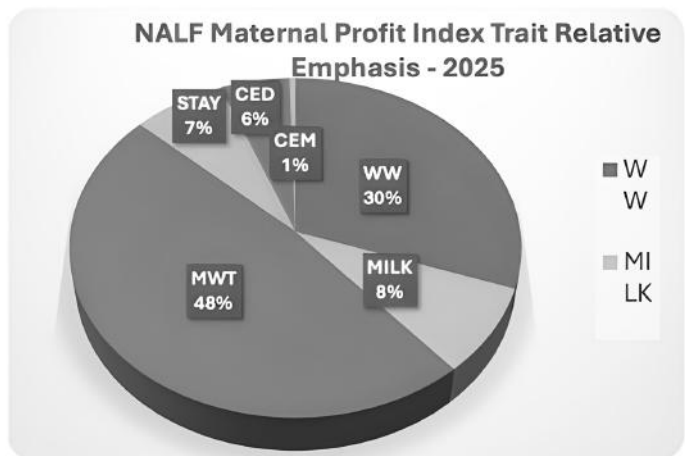


Figure 1

the significant cost of maintenance energy requirement in the cow/calf sector. Weaning Weight and Milk (expressed in pounds of calf weaning weight) represent the principal revenue stream. Stayability helps account for differences in replacement costs in the system and the effect of heifer retention on revenue streams. This index should be used by commercial cattlemen whose production scenario includes marketing calves at weaning and retaining replacements from the herd. Figure 1 reports the relative emphasis of traits included in \$MPI.

Marginal Economic Values for \$MPI are determined by parameters in the iGENDEC program and simply multiplied by each EPD trait and then added up for a total \$ value on each animal in the herdbook.

Industry Profit Index (\$IPI) – The production scenario for \$IPI includes mating Limousin sires to Angus based cows with retention of replacements from the herd and all other calves fed out and marketed on a value based grid that rewards quality and yield. IPI balances both maternal and terminal selection criteria by combining replacement female retention from the herd with carcass endpoint for marketed surplus heifers and all steers. Due to the challenges faced by commercial cattlemen in this production scenario, \$IPI incorporates the largest and most diverse set of EPDs, including carcass traits as the primary revenue drivers, along with cow Mature Weight, Stayability, and Dry Matter Intake as cost drivers. Figure 2 reports the relative emphasis of traits included in \$IPI.

Marginal Economic Values for \$IPI are determined by parameters in the iGENDEC program and simply multiplied by each EPD trait and then added up for a total \$ value on each animal in the herdbook.

Mature Weight – Body weight of cows adjusted to six years of age at body condition score 5. MWT is reported in pounds and is computed from a genetic model that leverages information from weaning weight,

post weaning gain, and mature weights of cows. Reported weights are adjusted for both age at observation and for body condition. Body weights of cows 2–12 years of age are utilized in the evaluation so producers can report data at any age for the evaluation. Preferably, cows should be evaluated at or shortly following weaning, as that’s a convenient time for many producers to process cows. Weight collected at other times in the production cycle are acceptable. Producers should measure full contemporary groups on the same day as the observation date, which helps form the contemporary group.

Cow Energy Requirement Yearly (CERY) – Mature body weight, lactation potential, and birth weight are primary predictors of energy requirements. Mature Weight, Milk, and Birth Weight EPD are utilized to inform prediction equations from beef cow nutrition research to estimate differences in energy requirement over a production year. The CERY EPD is reported in pounds of Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN) required for an age 6 cow.

About the North American Limousin Foundation. The North American Limousin Foundation, headquartered in Englewood, Colo., provides programs and services, including the documentation of more than 25,000 head of cattle annually, for approximately 4,000 members and their commercial customers. The Limousin breed and Lim-Flex hybrid offer industry leading growth and efficiency while being an ideal complement to British breeds. For more information about NALF, please visit www.nalf.org.

MARGINAL ECONOMIC VALUES INDUSTRY PROFIT INDEX:

Trait	Component	Marginal Economic Value
HCW	Direct	2.189
REA	Direct	11.148
FAT	Direct	-145.2
MS	Direct	115.107
WW	Direct	-0.427
WW	Maternal	-0.118
YW	Direct	-0.075
FI	Direct	-26.746
MW	Direct	-0.35
STAY	Direct	1.212
CE	Direct	3.818
CE	Maternal	0.57
ADG		0.352

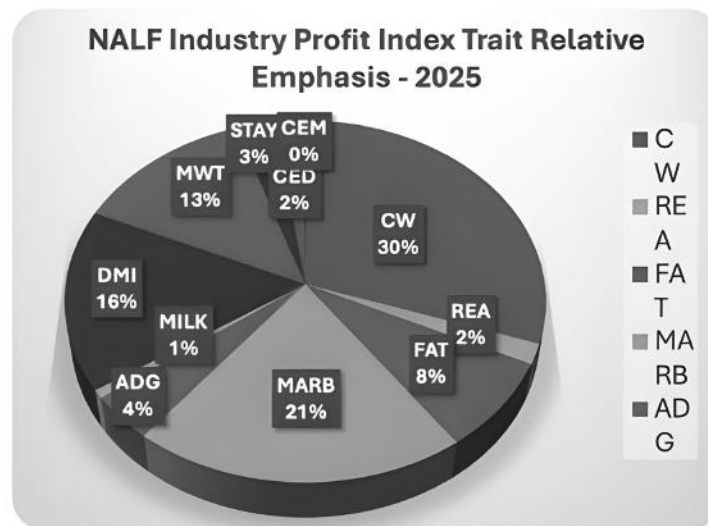


Figure 2

Clemson to Host Regional Forage Conference and Trainings for Educators and Producers

On March 30–April 1, Dr. Liliane Silva, Forages Specialist, will be hosting a joint event in Blackville, South Carolina. This joint event consists of the 2026 Southern Pasture and Forage Crop Improvement Conference and a Regional In-Service Training for forage and livestock extension agents. This event is open to researchers, extension professionals and educators, and producers across the region.

This joint event agenda will deliver multidisciplinary classroom and hands-on activities and field tours to address management strategies to support production, feasibility, and resilience of forage-livestock systems. Several specialists from land grant universities in the region will be in attendance and deliver content on their areas of expertise, also network and exchange and share experiences and research updates. Participants will also tour Yon Family Farms in Ridge Springs and Fox Pipe Farm in Laurens, both in South Carolina, on March 31. Registration is available through the Mississippi State University Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station website at www.msstate.edu/workshops/SPFCIC/. The registration deadline closes on March 30.

On April 1, Silva is also hosting her Annual Edisto REC Forages Field Day. Dr. Nicolas Dilorenzo of the University of Florida will present on strategies to improve beef cattle nutrition, and Dr. Lisa Baxter of the University of Georgia will discuss bermudagrass stem maggot control strategies. Following these presentations, participants will tour cool season demonstration and grazing studies, as seen in Figure 1, and discuss timely topics, including weed control updates. The program will include a trade show, research presentations, and extension poster sessions, giving participants opportunities to learn and network and to interact with industry representatives.

Registration is available through www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-edisto-rec-annual-forage-livestock-systems-field-day-tickets-1981535422791?aff=oddtcreator.

The events will take place at the Clemson University Edisto REC at 64 Research Road in Blackville, South Carolina. For questions, email Liliane Silva at lseveri@clemson.edu.

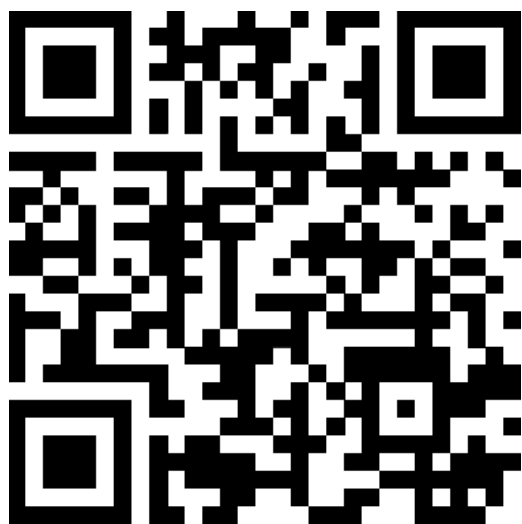


Figure 1. Ongoing research projects at the Edisto REC in Blackville, S.C.



Bavarian Beef Schnitzel with Warm Tangy Slaw

Total Time — 20 minutes

- 4 beef top round steaks, cut 1/8 inch thick (about 1 pound)
- 1 1/2 cups panko bread crumbs
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 3/4 teaspoon pepper, divided
- Chopped parsley (optional)

Warm Tangy Slaw

- 2 slices bacon, diced
- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar



Preheat oven to 425°F. Combine panko crumbs, butter, parsley, paprika, 1/2 teaspoon of salt, and 1/2 teaspoon of pepper in a large shallow dish.

Press one beef steak firmly into the crumb mixture to coat both sides; place on a shallow baking pan. Repeat with the remaining steaks. Evenly press the remaining crumb mixture onto the tops of the steaks. Bake for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, to prepare the warm, tangy slaw, heat a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add the bacon; cook for 5–7 minutes or until the bacon is crispy. Add the cabbage and vinegar; cook for 5–7 minutes. Season with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon of salt and 1/4 teaspoon of pepper.

Serve the schnitzel with slaw. Garnish with parsley, if desired. Makes 4 servings.



Southern Pasture & Forage Crop IMPROVEMENT CONFERENCE

Blacksville, South Carolina
March 30 - April 1, 2026



Monday, March 30

- 12:15–1:00** Registration (Edisto Research and Extension Center)
- 1:00** Introduction & Welcome
Dr. Liliane Silva, Clemson University
Dr. John Andrae, Clemson University
- 1:10** South Carolina Overview
Dr. Liliane Silva, Clemson University
- 1:40** Low pH Alfalfa and Ryegrass Breeding
Ali Missaoui, University of Georgia
- 2:10** SunGrains Forage Breeding Update
Ali Babar, University of Florida
- 2:40** Extension Roundtable
- 3:10** Break and Poster Viewing
- 3:30** SPFCIC Business Meeting
Brett Rushing, Mississippi State University
- 4:30** Reception and Poster Competition
Sheally's BBQ

Tuesday, March 31

- 7:30** Depart Holiday Inn Express Aiken
- 8:10** Yon Family Farms Tour, Ridge Springs, SC
- 11:00** Lunch provided by South Carolina Cattlemen's Assoc.
- 12:00** Depart
- 1:15** Fox Pipe Farm Tour, Laurens, SC
- 4:30** Return to hotel
- 6:00** Arrive at hotel

Wednesday, April 1

- 8:05** Beef Cattle Nutrition
Dr. Nicolas Dilorenzo, University of Florida
- 8:50** Bermudagrass stem maggot control
Dr. Lisa Baxter, University of Georgia
- 9:30** Break and Sponsor Recognition
- 10:00** EREC Field Tour and Demonstrations
 - A - Cool-season demonstration trial
 - B - Weed control Update
 - C - Cool-season mixture grazing trial
 - D - Overseeded bermudagrass trial
- 12:30** Lunch catered by Sheally's BBQ
- 2:00** Adjourn

2026 REGIONAL FORAGE-LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS IN-SERVICE TRAINING

CLEMSON EDISTO RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER
64 RESEARCH ST, BLACKVILLE, SC 29817

Meet the speakers:

THIS EVENT IS PARTIALLY SPONSORED BY
THE SSARE PDP AWARD #SPDP25-040.



Dr. Liliane Silva
Clemson University



Dr. Marcelo Wallau
University of Florida



Dr. Nicolas DiLorenzo
University of Florida



Dr. Ali Missaoui
University of Georgia



Dr. Leanne Dillard
Auburn University



Dr. Jose Dubeux
University of Florida



Dr. Liza Garcia
University of Florida



Dr. Lisa Baxter
University of Georgia



Dr. David Russel
Auburn University



Dr. Ali Babar
University of Florida



Dr. Renata Nave
University of Tennessee



Dr. Mike Marshall
Clemson University



Dr. Jose Pereira-Neto
Louisiana State University



Dr. Carlos Garcia
Clemson University



Dr. Miguel Castillo
North Carolina State University

Questions: Dr. Liliane Silva(lseveri@clermson.edu)

Sponsors





APRIL 1, 2026



2026 EDISTO REC FORAGES FIELD DAY

CLEMSON EDISTO RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER
64 RESEARCH ST, BLACKVILLE, SC 29817

Topics:



8 am- Beef cattle nutrition, Dr. Nicolas DiLorenzo, University of Florida

8:50 am - Bermudagrass stem maggot control, Dr. Lisa Baxter, University of Georgia

9:30 to 10 am - Tradeshow

10:15 - 12:15 pm - EREC tour and demonstrations

12:30 - 1:30 pm - Lunch

Doors open at 7:30 am with light refreshments and tradeshow.

Scan the QR code to register today:



Questions: Dr. Liliane Silva(lseveri@clemson.edu)

Sponsors



In Loving Memory...

Russell Vinson

October 24, 1947 – January 25, 2026

Cary Russell Vinson, 78, passed away on January 25, 2026. Russell was born in Wayne County on October 24, 1947, to the late Milford Russell Vinson and Carrie Mae Parrish Vinson. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a daughter, Andrea Nikole “Nikki” Vinson, and two sisters, Jean Rouse and Kaye Gray.

Known for his unmatched work ethic, Russell worked tirelessly as a livestock farmer for many decades. Skilled at anything he set his mind to, he was also a master carpenter, completing both new construction and renovation work. Especially for his family and his church, he was the man to go to when they needed something done.

In later years, he added “chief cook” to his many talents, preparing

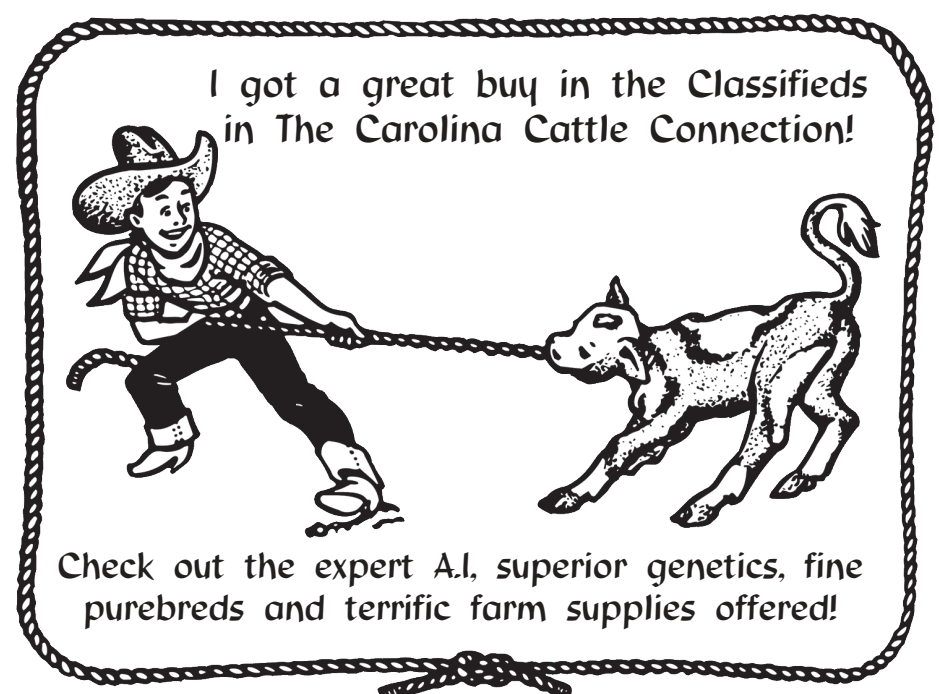
meals for his son’s store, A Hole in the Wall. An exceptional pitmaster, his barbecue was beyond compare. A true perfectionist, he believed no one could do it better, and few would argue.

As a child, Russell would have loved the opportunity to show livestock, and he made sure his grandchildren had that chance. He proudly supported them as they showed cattle, goats, and pigs. He was currently helping his youngest grandchild, Rylee, prepare two pigs for upcoming shows.

Russell loved his family deeply. His children and grandchildren were the light of his life, and he took interest in anything they cared about. In earlier years, he coached his son’s baseball team, played softball with his church, and wherever he went, Brenda was by his side. A devoted provider with a heart of gold, Russell was quiet, calm, and easy to talk to.

A lifelong member of Garris Chapel Church, Russell faithfully worshiped his Lord and sang in the church choir. He was always willing to serve wherever he was needed.

Russell is survived by his wife of 57 years, Brenda Wade Vinson; daughter, Melanie Heath, and husband John Mark; son, Russ Vinson, and wife April; grandchildren, Avery Faulkner and wife Ashley, John Caleb Heath, Nathan Baker, Keiley Cloutier and husband Austin, Tyler Baker and wife Kayla, and Rylee Vinson; great-granddaughter, Bailey Nikole Cloutier; sister, Janet Smith; and many beloved nieces, nephews, and dear friends.





2025



North Carolina Cattlemen's Beef Council Annual Report

North Carolina Beef Producers,

As a cattle producer, I value the responsibility that comes with investing beef checkoff dollars. This year, the North Carolina Beef Council focused on partnerships that helped strengthen beef promotion, education, and consumer trust.

Collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and other partners made it possible to deliver effective advertising and promotional campaigns that kept beef visible with consumers at key times throughout the year. Working together allows us to stretch resources and maximize impact.

The Council also expanded its reach in nutrition education through partnerships with university nutrition programs. These efforts ensure that science-based information about beef is shared with future dietitians and food professionals who influence consumer decisions.

Partnering with other North Carolina agricultural commodities has been equally important. By joining forces on advocacy and education efforts, we amplify shared messages and build greater trust in agriculture. In addition, programs like Team Beef and the NC Beef Ambassador Program connected beef with new audiences and helped develop strong advocates for our industry.

I am proud of the work accomplished and thankful for the partnerships that make this work possible. Together, these efforts help protect demand for beef, build consumer confidence, and support the future of North Carolina's cattle industry.

Brandon Bowman

Consumer Information Promotions Recap



A total of six promotions were completed on behalf of the NC Cattlemen's Beef Council. Our total engagement or reach is 8,420,477 across digital advertising and in person events. This has been an exceptional year in advertising with strategic placement of our Checkoff dollars to gain maximum exposure and drive consumers to beefitswhatsfordinner.com.

Southeast States Summer Grilling Campaign

Our partnership of southeastern states along with generous support from the Midwest allows the *Beef. It's What's For Dinner.* campaign to come to consumers via connected television. The goal of this campaign was to reach consumers with the Beef. It's What's For Dinner. message as they watched live sports throughout the duration of the summer. Some notable events and sports this campaign activated against include MLB and WNBA Regular Season Games, The PGA Tour, Wimbledon, the Tour De France, MLS Soccer Games, Racing, Boxing, and more. With a total spend of \$103,500, this campaign was shown to consumers across the Southeast over 3 million times.

Nutrition

The North Carolina Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics annual meeting hosted Cindy Goody, PhD, MBA, RDN who grew up on an Iowa farm. Cindy's perspective as a nutrition expert with a childhood on the farm is the perfect backdrop for connecting with dietitians. She presented 15 Ways to Grow Your Food Career. The Beef Checkoff supported Cindy in speaking at this event to foster communication between our industry and health professionals.

North Carolina Team Beef



Our inaugural year has been fantastic, with athletes representing NC Team Beef internationally and locally. We offered a sports nutrition webinar with southeast regional dietitian Alex Scott. Runners participated in local 5Ks, the Berlin Marathon, and the Ironman World Championships in Hawaii. The momentum is strong going into 2026.

NCSU Nutrition Science Club Speaker

New for this year, Ashley Herring, Director of Consumer Information, was a guest speaker at two events for the nutrition science department. Students with future careers in the medical field were interested to learn about beef production and had excellent questions in conversations.

A Modern Take on Recipe Photography

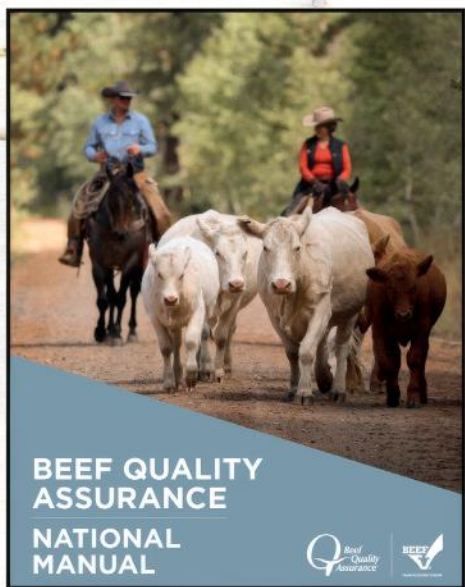


Beef. It's What's For Dinner. recipe imagery is regularly updated to meet changing consumer trends and tastes. When considering beef imagery in need of updating, old and outdated pictures are prioritized based on

popularity and content on *BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com*. While the recipes themselves may not change how they look and the stylized elements around the entrée do. Beef is showcased by modernizing the environment, colors, props and including appropriate colorful garnishes. Another trend in recipe photography is including step-by-step photos in addition to the final dish.

Nutrition is also a focus when highlighting beef in recipes. Current recipe images often feature a full meal, with beef in the center of the plate accompanied by a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables highlighting beef's role in a healthy diet.

Beef Quality Assurance Journey Made Easier With New Resources



For more than 30 years the Beef Checkoff-funded Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program has been driving continuous improvement using science-based production practices that assure cattle well-being, beef quality and safety. The program continues to adapt and develop new resources to guide producers on their BQA journey. Resources are available at bqa.org.

Continuing Education Credits Available for Recertification

Those who are BQA certified through in-person or online training are required to recertify every three years. Instead of going through the same foundational training, the BQA program has developed continuing education courses to create a new educational experience for those who need to recertify.

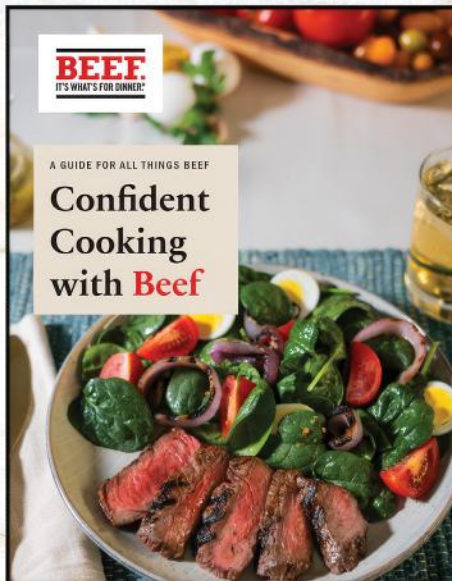
Spanish Language Materials

In response to producer feedback and requests, all BQA materials are in the process of being translated from English to Spanish, with additional Spanish video content to be used for training opportunities.

Updated National Manual & Field Guide

The updated BQA National Manual serves as a resource for science-based cattle production information and is available for free. It was developed to set production standards for beef quality and safety that are appropriate to an operation and that producers can realistically meet or exceed. An abbreviated "Field Guide" version of the manual is also available for cattle producers and on-farm/ranch workers.

The Federation is at Your Service



In addition to the funds invested which supplement the integrated state/national plan, state beef council investments provide services for states and support the governance of the Federation. A variety of services are available at no additional cost to state beef councils, including creative and design services, communications assistance, IT and

website support, human resources facilitation, as well as staff and leadership development, training and education.

Health Professional Toolkits



One project that exemplifies the state-national partnership is the health professional toolkits. These toolkits, sent directly to doctors' offices help correct outdated notions/perceptions and empower medical health professionals to

confidently recommend beef. In 2025, 26 states invested more than \$160,000 to supplement national Checkoff dollars. These additional funds lowered the cost per reach and expanded national impact, which enabled the program to reach more than 5,000 health professionals and more than 500,000 consumers.

1. United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, <https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx?ID=4052>

For more information, visit ncba.org/federation






North Carolina Beef Ambassadors



This year's North Carolina Beef Ambassador team is the largest ever! Fifteen participants from across our state engaged in community as well as state events to advocate for beef. Young advocates have the skills and nuance necessary to speak with consumers in a confident and genuine manner that resonates.

how beef is raised and the nutritional benefits it offers. Our conversations and discussions are engaging for the students, who are curious about how beef can be a part of healthy diets. Reaching this audience is quite beneficial as they are about to begin careers in health and nutrition.

North Carolina 4-H Beef Char-Grill

The statewide competition brings young beef grilling enthusiasts together to showcase their skills. Youth provide a grilling demonstration along with public speaking and question/answer with judges who evaluate their abilities. Their talent and enthusiasm are unmatched and we are proud supporters.

NCSF

Our ag commodity partnerships are effective and efficient at this large public event. Our Mooovie theater in the barnyard brings farm family stories, beef recipes, and more to engage with fair goers. Combined with the Barnyard Beango game, we brought education in a fun delivery style that makes a lasting impression. Thousands of attendees stop in our exhibit space for a game of beango or to simply relax while viewing clips.

Producer Communication

NC Cattle Conference

At our annual conference and business meeting, the NCCBC annual report is shared with producers. Also, Beef Checkoff materials such as retail cuts charts, recipes, and nutrition handouts are displayed and distributed to those selling beef direct to consumers.

UNC Food Science Nutrition Speaker

Our relationship with the University of North Carolina's Gilling's School of Global Health nutrition program has offered an opportunity to speak with future registered dietitians about

Southern Farm Show

The NCCBC participates in this agriculturally focused event to communicate with beef producers about the value of the Beef Checkoff. Beef Checkoff Return on Investment handouts are shared which demonstrates how the Checkoff works for producers to drive demand for beef.

NORTH CAROLINA ANNUAL REPORT FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

Revenues

Assessments Received	310,041
Interest Income	4
Miscellaneous Income	3,165
Total Revenues	313,210

Expenditures

Cattlemen's Beef Board	152,872
Salaries - Administration	12,774
Program Imp. - Promotion	7,689
Program Imp. - Consumer Information	15,620
Program Imp. - Industry Information	3,760
Program Imp. - Producer Communications	17,939
Compliance	219
States Beef Boards	26,034
National Programs	18,511
Promotion	7,797
Research	-
Consumer Information	7,399
Industry Information	1,167
Producer Communication	8,046
Rental & Other Administrative Costs	32,219

Total Expenditures **312,046**

Excess of Revenue Over (Under) Expenditures	1,164
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	139,307
Net Assets at End of Year	140,471

Promotion

Foodservice



The North Carolina Beef Backer Award is presented to Dampf Good BBQ of Cary, NC. The food truck was featured in a highlight video by Beef Checkoff contractor National Cattlemen's Beef Association, highlighting their outstanding beef and popularity as a lunch spot.

May is Beef Month Radio with Curtis Media Group

Thanks to financial support from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, we offered a month long multi-faceted approach to celebrating beef month. *Beef. It's What's for Dinner.* ads were played to 1.2 million weekly listeners on several stations. A five day beef jerky giveaway with on air highlights gave listeners a chance to receive NC beef jerky gift cards. The Weekend Gardener Show featured a live on air interview with Ashley Herring, Director of Consumer Information. An interview with NC beef cattle farm Wilder's Wagyu was showcased. The grand finale was the ultimate grill giveaway with a wagyu steak gift card. Daily beef recipes were highlighted on the Curtis Media Group's website. The all encompassing campaign was a big boost for demand.



Dear Fellow Producers,

The Federation of State Beef Councils is the perfect example of how working together delivers so much more, and it all starts with you. Cattle producers from across the country share their ideas and expertise to build beef demand by inspiring, unifying and supporting an effective and coordinated state and national Checkoff partnership.

The Federation plays a critical role because we have states that have more cows than people. And then we have other states where their human population is greater. By pooling our money and resources, we can accomplish more to educate people from coast to coast about beef's taste, versatility and nutritional value. Your investment continues to drive demand for beef, and our industry is growing. According to the USDA, beef (cattle and calves) is the top agricultural commodity in the United States.¹

As a volunteer-led organization, we work hard to be effective stewards of the money. The Federation funds research, promotion and outreach that individual producers and states may not be able to do on their own.

This "State of the Federation" demonstrates how producers have come together to direct Federation-supported programs. State beef council investments in the Federation fund research, promotion, consumer and industry outreach, as well as state services and human resources. Your investment truly makes a difference, so thank you for your commitment to this work. You have helped to make beef the number one agricultural commodity in America,¹ and through the Federation, we work to make it consumers' first choice.

Sincerely,

Nancy Jackson

Eupora, Mississippi

Chair, Federation of State Beef Councils

United Through The Federation

The Federation of State Beef Councils builds a larger, more impactful, coordinated plan that is executed as a partnership between the Federation and individual state beef councils (SBCs). State beef councils voluntarily invest in the Federation each year. More than 50% of the Federation's annual budget supplements tactics within Authorization Requests (ARs) approved by the Beef Promotion Operating Committee (BPOC) and executed by NCBA, home of the Federation of State Beef Councils. Supplementing these tactics helps the national Checkoff program have a larger impact on consumer demand.

In 2025, with input from SBC staff, the Federation Executive Committee approved more than \$3.1 million to supplement national efforts. Specific programs made possible by SBC contributions to the Federation include, but are not limited to:

PROMOTION

State Beef Councils Supplement: \$898,600

The Federation supports *Beef. It's What's For Dinner.* marketing and advertising efforts to educate and inspire consumers nationally. The Federation investment supplements media buys including cable television advertising and content partnerships focused on nutrition and wellness. Content is developed using trusted influencers and chefs and is used on *BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com* and across media channels to drive brand affinity, increase credibility and attract new consumers.

RESEARCH

State Beef Councils Supplement: \$1,048,036

Through the partnership of national funding and state investments in the Federation and to specific projects, the foundation of research provides insights for other Checkoff programs and contractors as well as insights for industry action. Research is conducted in the areas of product quality, beef safety, human nutrition, sustainability and market research.

CONSUMER INFORMATION

State Beef Councils Supplement: \$787,000

The Federation advances consumer information efforts including thought leader engagement; nutrition, health and medical expert outreach; and public relations, including the development and distribution of "Cattle Calling" documentary episodes, and other educational content. Examples include supporting states by placing speakers at annual dietetics meetings through the Nutrition Seminar Program; sending beef toolkits to physicians and health professionals; creating content partnerships with food-focused digital media outlets that utilize influencers and pitching beef stories to national media.

INDUSTRY INFORMATION

State Beef Councils Supplement: \$394,000

Providing information and resources to the industry remains a critical component of the Federation budget, with funding elevating the Trailblazers advocacy program and supporting the Beef Quality Assurance program with training, advertising, and updating materials.

Cattlemen's Beef Board Elects New Officers

Cattle producers Dr. Cheryl DeVuyst of Oklahoma, Terry Quam of Wisconsin, and Kalena Bruce of Missouri are the new leaders of the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion & Research Board (CBB). Elected by their fellow CBB members at the 2026 Cattle Industry Convention in Nashville, this new officer team is responsible for guiding the national Beef Checkoff throughout 2026.

DeVuyst, the 2025 vice chair, is now the CBB's chair, while Quam will transition from his role as the 2025 secretary-treasurer to become the 2026 vice chair. Bruce is the newest member of the officer team, taking on Quam's former responsibilities as secretary-treasurer.

DeVuyst and her husband, Eric, own DeVuyst Ranch, a cow/calf and stocker operation. DeVuyst is also a professor of agricultural economics at Oklahoma State University and head of its Ag Econ department. DeVuyst is involved with numerous agricultural organizations, including Oklahoma CattleWomen, Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), Oklahoma Farm Bureau, Pawnee County CattleWomen, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, and American National CattleWomen. She's also a faculty advisor for the Oklahoma Collegiate CattleWomen and is a past board member of the Western Agricultural Economics Association.

"As I step into this role, I do so at a pivotal time for the beef industry," DeVuyst said. "Producers are navigating a challenging environment shaped by tight cattle supplies, rising costs, and an increasingly complex marketplace, all while consumer expectations continue to evolve. In moments like this, the role of the Beef Checkoff is more important than ever. It's an honor to serve as chair of the Cattlemen's Beef Board and to work alongside other producers and industry partners who share a commitment to protecting and strengthening beef demand."

Vice Chair Terry Quam operates an Angus seedstock operation, Marda Angus Farms, in Lodi, Wisconsin. Since 1940, the farm has raised cattle that meet the needs of commercial cattlemen and purebred producers throughout the country. Quam has been a longtime, active member of his community and the agricultural industry at large. His activities and leadership roles include the Wisconsin Beef Council, NCBA, Farm Bureau, local and state cattlemen's associations, president of the Lodi Agricultural Fair, chairman of the University of Wisconsin Discovery Farms, the Cotton and Wisconsin Corn Boards, and Wisconsin Corn Growers.

A fifth generation farmer from Stockton, Mo., Kalena Bruce is a licensed CPA with a B.S. in accounting from Southwest Baptist University. She is the managing partner of Integrity Squared, a CPA firm she started more than a decade ago. Bruce and her husband, Billy, also run a commercial cow/calf operation. Bruce is a member of Missouri Farm Bureau, NCBA, the Missouri Cattlemen's Association, the Missouri Young Farmer & Rancher Committee, and the American Foundation for Agriculture. She was also a member of Class XVIII Agriculture Leaders of Tomorrow.

"It's a pleasure to welcome this talented team of officers as they step into their roles for 2026," said Greg Hanes, CEO of the Cattlemen's Beef Board. "Their diverse backgrounds, leadership, and passion for beef will be instrumental as we continue advancing the Beef Checkoff's work. I'm excited about what we can accomplish together as we focus on growing demand, strengthening consumer trust, and supporting a strong future for the beef industry."

For more information about the Beef Checkoff and its programs, including promotion, research, foreign marketing, industry information, consumer information, and safety, contact the Cattlemen's Beef Board at 303-220-9890 or visit DrivingDemandForBeef.com.



From left to right – Dr. Cheryl DeVuyst, Terry Quam, and Kalena Bruce are the CBB's new officers for 2026.

Where Would We Be Without the Beef Checkoff?

By RYAN MOORHOUSE, *Cattlemen's Beef Board*

Celebrating 40 Years of Driving Beef Demand. A lot has happened in the beef industry over the last 40 years. Back in the early 1980s, consumer confidence was slipping. Demand was declining. Cattle producers across the country knew something had to change.

That's why, in 1985, producers came together to build the Beef Checkoff, with the first Checkoff funded work beginning in 1986. It wasn't easy, but it was necessary, and it still is. In 2026, as we celebrate 40 years of the Beef Checkoff, I'm thankful to those before us who built this program and encouraged by the work we continue to execute today.

As chair of the Cattlemen's Beef Board, I thought about what I would like producers and importers who invest in the Beef Checkoff to feel after reading the current issue of *The Drive* — and that is proud. Proud of what we've built, but more importantly, grateful for the

challenges we've helped to prevent by staying proactive and vigilant.

Because when you stop and ask, "Where would we be without the Checkoff?" — the answer becomes clear. We'd be facing a very different industry than the one we know today.

Then vs. Now - There was a time, not so long ago, when beef practically sold itself. Cattlemen and women focused on producing cattle, not marketing them. Promotion seemed like a luxury. Research was something other industries did. And quality control? That was the packer's problem.


But by the late 1970s and early 1980s, things started to change. Doctors, dietitians and opposing groups took aim at beef. And whether their claims were true or not didn't matter. Perception became reality. Beef consumption dropped, exports were nearly nonexistent and we were losing ground to competing proteins.

Today, we have a completely different story to tell. We're not just selling cattle; we're helping shape how beef is viewed in grocery stores, classrooms, export markets, doctors' offices and on digital screens. We're building relationships with health professionals, chefs and influencers who shape how people understand beef. And we're backing that story with science.

Where Would We Be Without It? There are countless examples of how the Beef Checkoff has contributed to the growth, improvement and longevity of our industry. But when I really think about its value, these are the questions I come back to.

Where would we be if the Checkoff hadn't:

- Invested in research to extend beef's safe shelf life by reducing carcass bacteria and improving carcass quality through a national genetic evaluation program?
- Launched the iconic Beef. It's What's For Dinner. brand?
- Supported research to identify pathogens like *E. coli* O157:H7 — and develop the mechanisms to control them?



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences

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MARCH 12TH
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BRING THE KIDS
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CATTLEMEN'S

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- Developed low fat ground beef and other new products through groundbreaking Muscle Profiling Research, helping add value to underutilized cuts from the chuck and round?

- Conducted the *National Beef Quality Audit*, reshaping the industry’s management mindset to improve product consistency and restore consumer demand?

Each of these investments significantly shifted the direction of our industry. And they were only made possible because producers came together to fund this program.

And the return? For every \$1 invested in national Beef Checkoff demand driving programs between 2019 and 2023, producers saw a return of \$13.41 — a measurable impact that reflects increased domestic sales, export growth and stronger demand for U.S. beef.¹

A Program Built by and for Producers – The Beef Checkoff doesn’t own cattle, beef products, or packing plants, and it cannot prevent cattle prices from falling. But it was never designed to do that. What it was designed to do and still does today is drive consumer beef demand.

It helps connect nutrition scientists with health professionals. It links safety researchers with processors. It aligns product developers with retailers. And it helps bring valuable market signals back to you and me — the producers.

The program is accountable. The USDA oversees it. Contractors

are reimbursed on a cost recovery basis. Financials are audited and public. Most importantly, it’s driven by cattle producers like you — serving on the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, overseeing budgets, reviewing projects and evaluating results. We’re out feeding and treating cattle, too, but we volunteer some of our time to facilitate the Beef Checkoff, and we encourage all producers to get involved.

Looking Ahead – The Beef Checkoff doesn’t solve every problem, and it never claimed to. But what it has done, for 40 years and counting, is give producers a voice in how beef is promoted, researched and defended. It’s helped us play offense, not just defense.

As we look to the next 40 years, we know we’ll face new challenges — shifting consumer expectations, global competition, misinformation and economic pressure. But if history is any indicator, we’re ready, because of the strong Beef Checkoff program producers built.

And if you’ve ever wondered where we’d be without the Checkoff — I hope you agree — I’m glad we don’t have to find out.


Reference


¹Watts, Harry M., and Gary W. Williams. “Economic Analysis of the National Beef Checkoff Program.” *Cattlemen’s Beef Board*. July 1, 2024. www.beefboard.org/return-on-investment.

REDS RISING

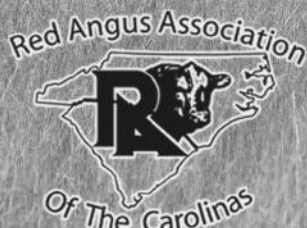
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Red Angus boosts profitability with docile temperaments, environmental resilience, premium carcass quality and exceptional maternal traits. Registrations have surged by 24% over the past decade, underscoring Red Angus’ significance across all segments of the beef industry.





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 828-302-8659
ronnie@hardrockbeefcattle.com

JK RED ANGUS
Jeff Banfield & Madison Adams
 331 Tee Jay Farm Road | Aberdeen, NC
 910-315-3821

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 919-796-5010
johnlangdon5@gmail.com

ROGERS CATTLE COMPANY
Johnny & Sharon Rogers
 945 Woodsdale Road | Roxboro, NC
 336-504-7268
rccbeef@gmail.com

BULL HILL RANCH
Jim & Alvina Meeks
Raymond Prescott, Manager
 1986 Trinity Church Road | Gray Court, SC
 864-981-2080
bullhill2@prtcnet.com | bullhillredangus.com

COUNTRY BOY FARMS
David Miller
 316 Key Road | Edgefield, SC
 706-840-3709

P & J FARMS
Andy Smith
 7007 Sugar and Wine Road | Monroe, NC
 704-400-3436



Celebrating 40 Years of the Beef Checkoff. For 40 years, the Beef Checkoff has supported the beef industry. Since its start in 1985, the Checkoff has significantly and positively altered the beef industry's course, providing much needed funding for promotion and research while helping create a clear, unified message about beef for consumers. The Beef Checkoff has brought producers, industry organizations, and other stakeholders together with a common purpose — driving demand for beef.

Here are just a few highlights of Beef Checkoff wins throughout the years.

- 1987 – The Beef Checkoff launched its first advertising campaign, “Beef: Real Food for Real People,” featuring celebrity talent James Garner.

- 1989 – The Checkoff funded “Manhattan, Montana” TV spot was selected as the top food commercial of 1989 by *Advertising Age*.

- 1992 – The iconic Beef. It's What's For Dinner. campaign kicked off.

- 1994 – Several Checkoff funded research projects identified pathogens like *E. coli* throughout the cattle and beef production system and developed control mechanisms.

- 1997 – A Checkoff funded study mapped where pathogens enter packing plants — leading to high temp vacuuming practices that now save the beef industry an estimated \$200 million in trimming costs.

- 1999 – Studies showed that all potentially harmful bacteria are removed or destroyed when Checkoff developed technology is used during beef harvesting.

- 2000 – U.S. packers spent more than \$75 million installing food safety intervention systems that were developed with Checkoff dollars, including steam vacuuming, steam pasteurization, organic acid wash, and hot water rinse.

“The Beef Checkoff's early investments in food safety research were nothing short of transformational. They helped pinpoint and eliminate dangerous pathogens throughout the beef supply chain. These advancements not only saved the industry hundreds of millions of dollars but also built consumer confidence and ensured a safer product.” — Terry Quam, Wisconsin seedstock producer and secretary/treasurer of the Cattlemen's Beef Board.

- 2001 – Groundbreaking “Muscle Profiling Research” reinvented and added value to portions of the beef carcass — the chuck and round — that previously were underutilized and undervalued, thus enhancing overall carcass value.

- 2002 – More than 1,500 new beef products came to market

after the Checkoff launched its beef product research and development efforts in 1998.

- 2004 – Checkoff developed flat iron steak and petite tender cuts outsold T-bone and Porterhouse steaks in foodservice.

- 2008 – The Checkoff introduced five new cuts from the chuck roll — the Delmonico steak, Denver cut, America's beef roast, boneless country style beef chuck ribs, and the Sierra cut.

- 2010 – The Checkoff developed six new cuts from the beef round, comprising a portfolio of lean steak and roast options. The Checkoff funded Culinary Innovations Team created 100 new beef recipes during the year.

- 2012 – The “Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet” study provided evidence that including lean beef as part of a heart healthy diet is as effective as the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet in lowering heart disease risk, the most recommended heart healthy diet at the time.

“The Checkoff's investment in muscle profiling and innovation reshaped how we value the beef carcass. By identifying premium cuts like the flat iron and Denver steak in previously overlooked areas, we brought more dollars back to producers and gave consumers new reasons to choose beef.” — *Dr. Cheryl DeVuyst of Oklahoma and Vice Chair of the Cattlemen's Beef Board*

- 2019 – New beef production science based courses were introduced to middle and high school classrooms across the United States.

- 2021 – Checkoff funded “Beef in the Early Years” campaign focused on educating a niche audience — expectant parents and new parents of infants and toddlers — about the benefits of introducing beef in early childhood.

- 2022 – The Beef Checkoff unveiled four successful consumer facing advertising campaigns featuring spokesperson and former Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo and the Beef. It's What's For Dinner. slogan.

- 2023 – The Beef Checkoff's “Voices of the Outdoors” video series highlighted shared values between ranchers and outdoor enthusiasts, showing how producers care for cattle and the land.

- 2024 – The Beef Checkoff aligned beef and athletics — especially in the highly populated Northeast region near New York City — through partnerships with college and high school sports teams.

- 2025 – A Beef Checkoff funded high school biology unit, “Unravel Genetics to Raise the Steaks,” earned the NGSS Design Badge, a top recognition from NexGenScience that's only granted to the highest quality instructional materials.

“The Beef Checkoff hasn't let up when it comes to getting beef in front of consumers. From sports partnerships in the Northeast to award winning science lessons in classrooms, we're showing up where it matters with nutrition influencers, families and students.” — *Ryan Moorhouse of Texas and Cattlemen's Beef Board Chair*.

The Beef Checkoff at Work. For four decades, beef producers and importers have built the Beef Checkoff into more than a marketing tool — it's a producer led system for growing demand and keeping beef competitive.

Let's dive into how the Checkoff is structured with our first ten facts:

Governance & Representation – Beef Producers in the Driver’s Seat:

1. Beef producers and importers on the Cattlemen’s Beef Board (CBB) are nominated to the USDA by state certified nominating beef industry organizations and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.
2. The CBB is the governing producer and importer body for the Beef Checkoff.
3. The U.S. Department of Agriculture oversees the Beef Checkoff and 21 other commodity Checkoff programs.
4. Board representation is based on the number of cattle in each state. Currently, the CBB has 99 members.
5. The number of members is reapportioned every three years, based on the cattle numbers in each state.
6. CBB members volunteer their time to serve on the board for one three year term, with the possibility of reappointment by the USDA for a second three year term.
7. When broken out, 92 members are producers (cow/calf, feeders, stockers, dairy) and 7 are importers.
8. The entire CBB only meets twice annually; the day-to-day business of the board is conducted by the Executive Committee (with ratification of decisions made by the full board at the next gathering).
9. All CBB meetings are open to those who pay into the Beef Checkoff. Contact the CBB office for more information.

10. The CBB cannot legally lobby or participate in policy discussions, per the Beef Act and Order. Their entire focus is driving beef demand.

Where Did the Beef Ads Go? “Why Don’t We See Beef Checkoff Ads Anymore?” Here’s What Producers Should Know. For 40 years, the Beef Checkoff has collected \$1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products. The \$1 collection has not changed since that amount was established under the 1985 Farm Bill. The dollar investments have been the cornerstone of the Beef Checkoff ever since, funding efforts to drive demand for beef through promotion, research, education, and consumer information.

But here’s the question we often hear from producers – “Why don’t we see beef commercials on TV like we used to?” The simple answer isn’t that beef advertising stopped – it’s that the Beef Checkoff has adapted to be even more efficient with every dollar.

A Dollar Then vs. A Dollar Now – Many things have changed in 40 years. In 1985, \$1 went much farther than it does now. With inflation increases, \$1 in 1985 is worth about 33¢ today.¹ That means the same \$1 today buys only a fraction of the media reach and video production it once did. The Beef Checkoff has had to adapt, with

Checkoff News continued on the next page



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efficiency and targeting more important than ever.

Efficiency Through Targeted Advertising – Today’s Checkoff funded promotional brands, like the highly recognized Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner. (BIWFD), still reach consumers, but in smarter, more targeted ways. Instead of expensive broadcast TV buys that put ads in front of everyone (including people already committed to beef), BIWFD now emphasizes social media, digital ads, and Connected TV (CTV) – streaming entertainment delivered over the internet that allows messages to be placed in front of specific audience segments with greater precision.

Today, Beef Checkoff campaigns are designed to persuade consumers in urban markets to choose beef. Targeted consumer groups like urban shoppers, Millennial moms, and Gen Z see these ads in their living rooms and on their phones. That’s by design. The Checkoff is using data and targeting to reach new or lapsed beef consumers, not those who already prefer and buy beef. For example, because most beef producers already choose beef, they are not a target audience for beef advertising.

It’s Still on “TV” – Just a Different Kind – Traditional TV buys are increasingly expensive and inefficient for niche targeting. Connected TV placements – on platforms like ESPN, Peacock,

and Hulu – allow the Checkoff to show ads during live sports and streaming content that matter to key demographic groups.

Beyond Ads – Smarter Engagements – Checkoff funded initiatives go beyond commercials. Partnerships with popular influencers, sports programs, athlete nutrition education, and immersive digital content all work together to connect beef’s nutrition story with consumers in the places and on the platforms they frequent most.

So, while you might not flip on network TV and see a beef ad anymore, Beef Checkoff funded advertising is still driving demand in a way that’s more targeted, more efficient, and better aligned with today’s media landscape.

Reference

¹U.S. Inflation Calculator, “Value of \$1 from 1985 to 2024,” www.usinflationcalculator.com.

Sports Partnerships Are a Smart Investment in Beef’s Future. As a beef producer raising a young family in the Black Hills of South Dakota, I think a lot about the future of our industry. Like many producers, I’m proud of the work we do, and I want to make sure the next generation has the same opportunities.

That’s one reason I serve on the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, which oversees the Beef Checkoff. I also serve on the Checkoff’s Promotion Committee, which helps guide investments that build confidence in beef’s nutrition, safety, and responsible production.

In that role, I’ve seen how important it is to meet consumers where they already are. Today, one of the best places to do that is in the world of sports and entertainment.

Many producers ask why they don’t see Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner. ads on TV like they used to. The reality is that national TV advertising is extremely expensive, and it reaches an audience that’s already more likely to eat beef. The Checkoff has a responsibility to invest producer dollars where they can make the biggest impact. And that’s by reaching consumers who eat less beef, have questions about how it’s raised, or live in regions where beef demand has room to grow. Sports partnerships can offer that kind of smart, targeted reach.

A great example is the work happening in the Northeast through the Northeast Beef Promotion Initiative (NEBPI). This region’s huge population has tremendous purchasing power. NEBPI partners with both athletic teams and student-athletes, using a mix of team sponsorships and Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) agreements to reach Northeast fans and young consumers where they gather. These on-field and athlete driven activations help beef connect with audiences in ways traditional ads often can’t.

Across the country, State Beef Councils are leading equally creative efforts. The Kansas Beef Council partnered with the Kansas State football team’s offensive line – the “protectors” – to help tell beef’s story in a fun and relatable way.

Texas, Iowa, and Colorado have run their own athletic activations, from stadium promotions to community race events to college partnerships. These efforts help keep more Checkoff dollars

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Contact: Greg Little
704-219-1294

close to home while engaging the students, families, and fans who will shape beef demand in the years ahead.

Sports partnerships also give us the chance to highlight beef's strong nutrition story — something I care about personally as a beef producer and as a member of the Promotion Committee. Programs like Build Your Base provide performance nutrition education, refueling stations, and hands-on experiences for athletes and families, all backed by current science. These efforts help reinforce what many of us already know: beef delivers high quality protein, iron, zinc, and B vitamins that support strength, recovery, and endurance.

Recent reports from the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission — a federal health initiative focused on improving diets and reducing chronic disease — have reinforced that message. The commission's report highlighted the benefits of high quality protein like beef. For producers, it's encouraging to see national nutrition discussions acknowledge what we already know from experience: beef fits squarely within healthy, balanced eating patterns.

Sports also tap into something many producers understand well — community. Teams, school spirit, mascots, and tailgates create traditions passed down through generations. People build memories around those experiences, and food is always part of it. When beef is present in those settings — at tailgates, stadium events or through athlete partnerships — it becomes part of those traditions too. That kind of connection can help build long term loyalty and demand.

Athletic partnerships might not look like the traditional advertising some of us grew up with, but they're helping us reach diverse new audiences, build trust, and reinforce beef's role in a healthy lifestyle. If we want to maintain strong demand, we need to be visible in the places where consumers spend their time.

Looking ahead, I don't know if there's one single "big opportunity" for beef in the sports world. What I do see is potential across many sports, campuses, and communities. The more places we show up with a positive, science supported message, the more opportunity to influence how people think about and choose beef.

Beef delivers — What's trending on plates in 2026. *The Beef. It's From classic comfort foods to globally inspired flavors, beef recipes are leading the year ahead.* As 2026 gets underway, beef is showing up on plates in ways that feel both familiar and fresh. The Beef. It's What's For Dinner. brand, funded by beef farmers and ranchers, is taking a look at a few trends expected in the year ahead where beef continues to shine.

• **Authentic and Foreign Cuisine** — Global flavors continue to take center stage in 2026 as consumers look beyond borders for recipe inspiration. A great example is Korean inspired Mini Beef Patties (Wanja Jeon). Using ground beef, these patties are coated in egg batter, fried to perfection, and then served with Korean barbecue sauce and spicy mayonnaise — serving as the perfect dish that represents utilizing bold spices and authentic flavors.

Checkoff News continued on the next page

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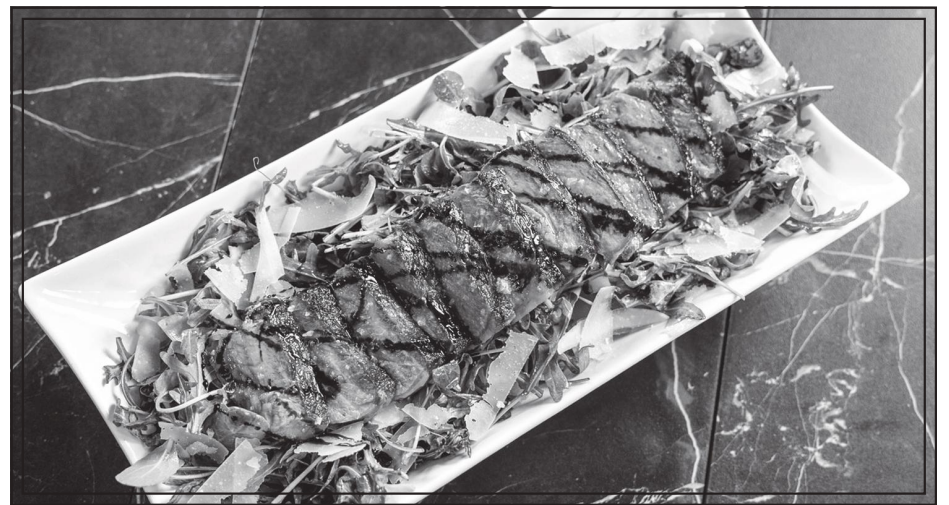


• **Convenience Driven Recipes** – Quick and easy cooking is a priority in the year ahead, fueling the popularity of quick cooking methods such as air fryer recipes. Beef Brisket Taquitos show how beef can deliver big flavor with minimal effort – where leftover brisket, cheese, and salsa are tucked inside tortillas and then crisped in an air fryer. It's recipes like this that prove that easy, weeknight meals can be anything but boring.

• **Leaning on Nostalgia** – Nostalgic recipes are making a strong return in 2026 as people gravitate towards familiar dishes that offer comfort and connection. Meals like Classic Beef Stroganoff and Hearty Shepherd's Pot Roast Pie are what consumers are looking for when they want to tap into family traditions and "grandma's cooking." The timeless appeal of dishes like these also resonates with those who want to focus on home cooked meals.

No plane ticket required – Italian recipes fans can make at home. The Beef. It's What's For Dinner. brand shares Italian inspired recipes great for watch parties and weeknights. With Italy on the world stage, it's no surprise many have been inspired to bring Italian flavors into their own kitchens. To satisfy that hunger, the Beef. It's What's For Dinner. brand, funded by Beef farmers and ranchers, partnered with chef and influencer Marcia Smart to share some of her favorite Italian inspired beef dishes and discuss how global sporting events can bring the world together and spark culinary curiosity.

"When people gather around the TV, food becomes part of the experience, and leaning into trends and pop culture keeps cooking fun," said chef and influencer Marcia Smart. "Beef and Italian flavors are always two of the most popular topics in my cooking classes because they deliver dishes that are big on flavor, easy to share, and packed with high quality protein and nutrients that help support energy and strength for everyday life."



Beef Tagliata highlights how simple ingredients can create an Italian restaurant style experience at home. The classic Italian dish features a seared steak, either strip steak or boneless ribeye steak, that is sliced over a bed of fresh arugula – then finished with balsamic vinegar and shaved parmesan cheese. A great dish that is prepared quickly and easily and served family style for parties or busy weeknights.

Another recipe that offers the authentic flavors of Italian cuisine with ease is Quick Beef Ragu. In this recipe, ground beef simmers with ingredients traditionally found in your classic Italian red sauce for just 30 minutes. The sauce is easy to customize and pairs perfectly with pasta, polenta, and even spaghetti squash to take your taste buds to Italy even if you're short on time.

For more inspiration and additional meal ideas, visit [BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com](https://www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com).

About the Beef Checkoff. The Beef Checkoff Program was established as part of the 1985 Farm Bill. The checkoff assesses \$1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products. States may retain up to 50¢ on the dollar and forward the other 50¢ per head to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board, which administers the national checkoff program, subject to USDA approval.

West End Precast

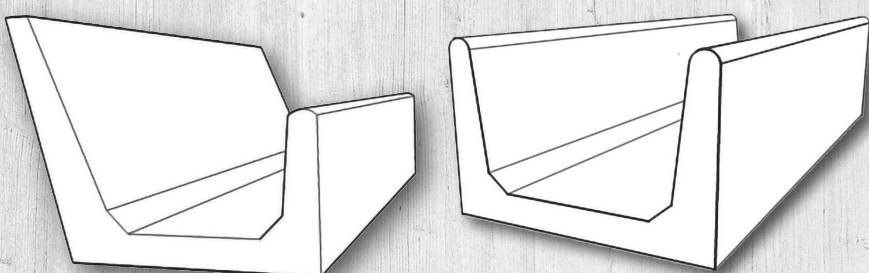
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Trending in Food & Media

TRENDSPOTTING



Whole Foods called for a 'beef tallow takeover' in 2026. In its report on food trends for 2026, Whole Foods listed beef tallow at the top of its list saying tallow is being rediscovered by consumers who value ancestral ingredients.²



Out of more than 1,000 recipes tested and published in 2025 by the The New York Times, the most popular one is for smashed beef kebab with cucumber yogurt.³



Protein continues to be a top trend for consumers. Several of the top dishes listed in Google's Year In Search 2025 featured Ground Beef.⁴

BEEF PRICES



CNBC posted a 12 minute video detailing how low supplies and soaring demand have contributed to rising beef prices. The video included interviews with ranchers and industry leaders.⁵



More than 450 news reports talked about how much beef prices increased in the the latest Consumer Price Index released in the middle of December.¹



Dozens of news reports discussed the latest earnings report from Darden Restaurants, which focused on sales growth for its steakhouse brands in the third quarter.^{1,6}

NEWS FROM THE ISSUES MANAGEMENT & PUBLIC RELATIONS (IMPR) TEAM



The IMPR team's release on holiday beef recipes that make the season simple was picked up by more than 400 news outlets with a potential reach of 145 million.¹



Recent IMPR placements include Marcia Smart's shredded beef cooking demonstration on Fox News⁷ and Joe Sasto's meatloaf Wellington in MSN.⁸



Yahoo! Life picked up Chowhound's interview with BIWFD executive chef Dagan Lynn. The articles had the potential to reach consumers 383 million times.^{1,9}

ARMS #122225-09

1. National Cattlemen's Beef Association. (2025). *Traditional and social media listening dashboards*. Retrieved from Meltwater: www.meltwater.com
2. Whole Foods The Next Big Things: Our Top Food Trend Predictions for 2026: <https://shorturl.at/AruWL>
3. The New York Times, Here's Our Most Popular Recipe of 2025, Dec. 5, 2025: <https://shorturl.at/o04TD>
4. Allrecipes, Dec. 4, 2025 <https://www.allrecipes.com/most-viral-recipes-2025-google-11861417>
5. CNBC, Beef prices are soaring. Dec. 7, 2025: <https://shorturl.at/n6iKb>
6. The Wall Street Journal, Dec. 18, 2025: <https://shorturl.at/PbpRu>
7. Fox News, Simple chipotle-lime beef recipe offers rich flavor, Nov. 22, 2025: <https://shorturl.at/n6iKb>
8. MSN, 30 Thanksgiving recipes from celebrity chefs, Nov. 24, 2025: <https://shorturl.at/JRcTf>
9. Yahoo! Life, The little-known secret to making cheap steak taste expensive, Nov. 22, 2025: <https://shorturl.at/v06ao>



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- 60 6-7 in x 8 ft. Pasture Management CCA .40 Treated Wood Posts
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- 37 10 ft. H-Brace Brace Pipes
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- 40 Speed Brace Kits
- 1 Speed Brace Kit Tensioning Tool
- 2 52 in. Stretcher Bars
- 2 Stretcher Bar Pullers
- 1 Knipex Wire Cutters
- 1 100 ct. Jars of Long 2-3 Crimp Sleeves
- 1 Crimping Tool
- 3 Rolls of 4,000 ft. 12.5 ga High Tensile Electric Fence Wire: Class 3 Galvanized, 170 K psi
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- 12 Bags of 25 Pasture Management Wood Post Pinlock Insulators
- 200 10 in. Steel Offset Insulators
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Alamance	0	Cumberland	0	Johnston	1	Randolph	0
Alexander	1	Currituck	0	Jones	0	Richmond	1
Alleghany	0	Dare	0	Lee	2	Robeson	2
Anson	1	Davidson	0	Lenoir	0	Rockingham	0
Ashe	0	Davie	0	Lincoln	3	Rowan	1
Avery	0	Duplin	0	McDowell	0	Rutherford	18
Beaufort	0	Durham	0	Macon	4	Sampson	1
Bertie	0	Edgecombe	0	Martin	0	Scotland	0
Bladen	2	Forsyth	1	Madison	0	Stanly	1
Brunswick	0	Franklin	0	Mecklenburg	0	Stokes	1
Buncombe	6	Gaston	0	Mitchell	0	Surry	2
Burke	1	Gates	0	Montgomery	0	Swain	0
Cabarrus	1	Graham	0	Moore	1	Transylvania	0
Caldwell	2	Granville	1	Nash	2	Tyrrell	0
Camden	0	Greene	0	New Hanover	0	Union	0
Carteret	0	Guilford	0	Northampton	0	Vance	1
Caswell	0	Halifax	1	Onslow	0	Wake	0
Catawba	4	Harnett	0	Orange	0	Warren	0
Chatham	2	Haywood	2	Pamlico	2	Washington	0
Cherokee	0	Henderson	4	Pasquotank	0	Watauga	1
Chowan	0	Hertford	0	Pender	0	Wayne	1
Clay	0	Hoke	0	Perquimans	0	Wilkes	3
Cleveland	2	Hyde	0	Person	0	Wilson	1
Columbus	0	Iredell	1	Pitt	1	Yadkin	3
Craven	0	Jackson	1	Polk	0	Yancey	1

Grand Total 87

New NCCA Members for 2026

During the Membership Committee meetin at the 2007 N.C. Cattle Conference, members decided to list the name and county of residence of **NEW** members of NCCA in *The Carolina Cattle Connection*. A new member is someone who has never been a member or has rejoined after a brief break in their membership. Below is a list of NCCA's new members:

Alexander County

Edgar Wilson Friday – Friday Farm

Anson County

Regina Griggs – Borderline Farm

Bladen County

Brian Pait – Owen Hill Farms
Richard Pait – Owen Hill Cattle Company

Buncombe County

Caleb Bradshaw – Bradshaw Farms
Mason Carpenter – Biltmore
Thomas Greene – Biltmore
Timothy Heath – Biltmore Livestock
Carter Shook – Biltmore
Lane Worley – Biltmore

Burke County

David Berry – Berry's Brand Farm

Cabarrus County

Richard Funderburk – Mount Mini Moos

Caldwell County

Scott Hatton – Bobcat of Lenoir
Craig & Tracey Long – Farm Wonderful

Catawba County

Jacquelyn S. Campbell
Mayson Ladd
Benjamin Lail
Jared Lail – C4 Cattle Company

Chatham County

Steve Marsh
Joshua Millsaps

Cleveland County

Donald S. Peeler – Grassy Branch Farms
Greyson Peeler - Grassy Branch Farms

Forsyth County

Amber Coley – LC Cattle

Granville County

Thomas Cobb – Umstead Beef Unit

Halifax County

Archie M. Jones – Jonesco Farms

Haywood County

Sara Best – Stillhouse Creek Farms
Tony McGaha – T and T Farms

Henderson County

Denver Capps
Payton Corn
Madison MacGregor
Joshua McMinn

Iredell County

Jacob Rase

Jackson County

Dennis Bryson

Johnston County

Daisy Brown – Shotgun Farms

Lee County

Terry Langston
Steve Thomas

Lincoln County

Russell Harrelson – Lucky H Farms
Mitchell Lingerfelt – Little Creek Farm
Tripp White – October Glory Farms

Macon County

Addie Deal
Kenleigh Deal
Jacob Johnson
Kalyn McHan

Moore County

Jackie & Lois Richardson

Nash County

Bill Freeman
Adam N. Hare.

Pamlico County

James B. Hardison – Hardison Farm & Ranch
Mack Prescott III – Mack Prescott Farms



Pitt County

Josh Coward – Coward Cattle

Richmond County

Chip Gordon – Gordon Family Farm

Robeson County

Lucas Baxley – Baxley Family Farms
Orlando Locklear – 5-Kids Farm

Rowan County

Jay Moore – 4M Farm and Ranch

Rutherford County

Avery Blackwell
Gracie Branch
Lorann Couch
Phoebe Godfrey
Henry Hodge
Mason Jones
Alana Mathes
Wesley Mayse
Robert G. Moore – Laurel Creek Farm
Marilla Okpych
Chase Pacheco
Aaron Pressley
Braden Reid
Max Smith
Eyan Spangler
Hayden Sprouse
Ava Toney
Jerrick Vargas

Sampson County

William (Bill) Hering Jr. – Hering Farms

Stanly County

W. Chester Lowder – Fork L Enterprises

Stokes County

Patrick Brinson – Rocky Creek Veterinary Service

Surry County

Eli Bullington – Bullington Farm & Cattle
Nora Laws – Buttercup Family Farm

Vance County

Lee Gill – G6

Watauga County

William Braswell – Braswell Mountain Farms

Wayne County

Graham Price – Price Cattle Farm

Wilkes County

Billy Ashley – Circle ‘A’
Henry Church
Eddie Settle – Settle Cattle Company

Wilson County

Trent Parker – Parker Beef Cattle Company

Yadkin County

Joe Dezern
Nathan Ireland – Walkers Branch Angus
Jeanne McLelland – White Oak Farm

Yancey County

Nick Styles – Horton Creek Highlands



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A NEWS

Animal Ag Alliance

2026 Stakeholders Summit to focus on rising to the “high steaks” moment with cross sector collaboration. The Animal Agriculture Alliance’s 2026 Stakeholders Summit will open and close with two powerful keynote sessions focused on leadership and collaboration across the animal protein value chain. The 2026 Summit, themed “High Steaks: Navigating Pressure on Animal Protein,” is set for May 5-7 in Kansas City, Mo., and an initial agenda has been posted.

“The pressures facing animal protein today are real, complex, and growing, but we don’t have to face them alone,” said Hannah Thompson-Weeman, Alliance president and CEO. “We’re excited to have two high energy keynotes to open and close the 2026 Summit

with an emphasis on the importance of collaboration across the food system. The annual summit focuses on practical strategies that can be implemented immediately, and this year’s speakers will focus on how we can effectively navigate a challenging, ever changing environment.”

Animal agriculture leaders face growing complexity, from volatile markets and sustainability pressures to workforce challenges and shifting expectations. In the opening session, agriculturally rooted leadership coach Sarah Bohnenkamp will draw on cross commodity experience in leadership, strategy, and grassroots engagement to challenge leaders to move beyond the status quo. Through real-world examples from across the value chain, this session will highlight common pitfalls, unspoken challenges, and practical lessons that strengthen alignment, sharpen execution, and improve communication. Attendees will leave with clear insights on how effective leadership rooted in strong communication drives meaningful progress in animal agriculture.

Bohnenkamp is a high energy leadership coach, speaker, and strategist who helps high achievers unlock their full potential. With over two decades of experience and nearly 200 stages under her belt, Sarah specializes in coaching leaders and organizations to communicate boldly, navigate change with confidence, and craft powerful leadership brands.

Closing out the summit, Crystal Mackay will provide a high



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- Charolais Sale - 4:30 p.m.

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Katherine Carter, Youth Events
carterke@vt.edu

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energy keynote that will challenge the audience. Drawing on real world lessons and practical frameworks like Collaboration Math, the session will deliver clear strategies to build stronger relationships, overcome barriers, and accelerate results — equipping attendees with actionable tools to work smarter together and fuel the future of the food system.

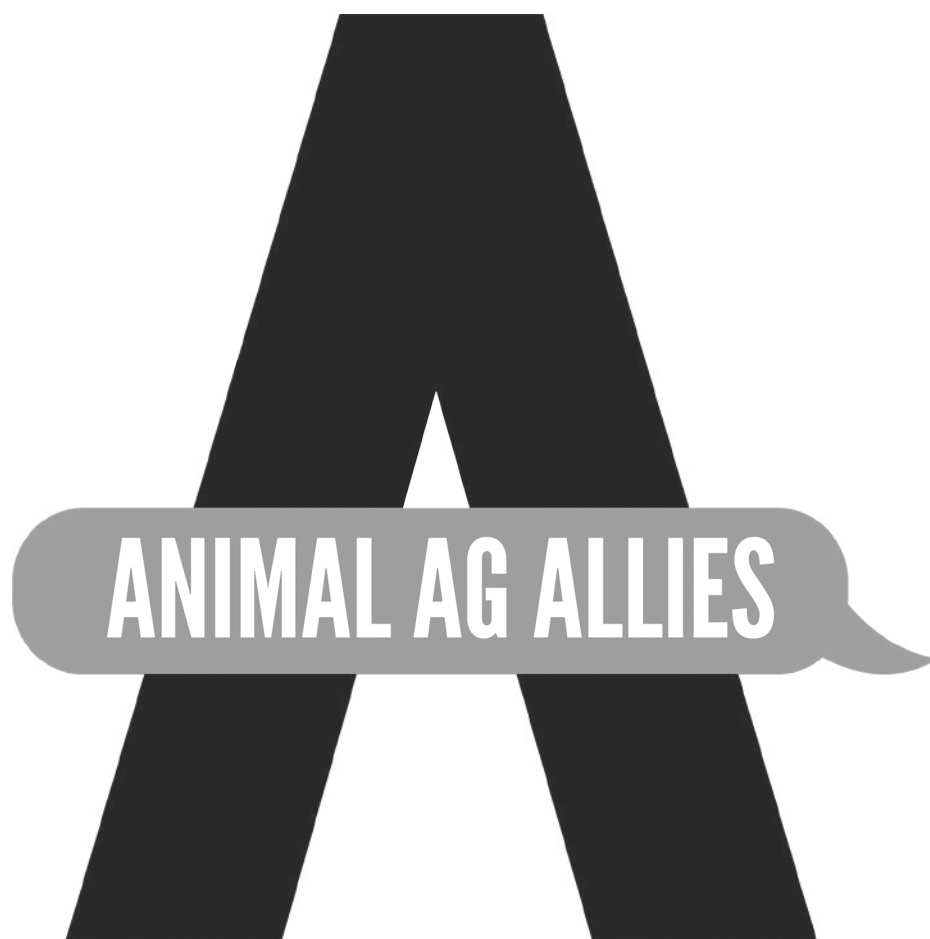
Mackay is a professional speaker with a rich background in agriculture and food. She is passionate about fueling the future by inspiring the dedicated individuals who make the agri-food world turn. Mackay has an impressive track record for collaborating and connecting across North America's food system. She created many award winning farm to fork efforts — including starting and leading two non-profit organizations, Farm & Food Care and the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity, and her own company, LOFT32, in 2019.

The 2026 Summit would not be possible without the support of sponsors, including U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, *Farm Journal*, Meatingplace, Watt, Cargill, Zoetis, U.S. Soy, Agri-Pulse Communications, Inc., Amick Farms, Aviagen, CoBank, Dairy MAX, Farm Credit Council, Mountaire Farms, National Pork Board, National Pork Producers Council, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Lamb Board, Cal-Maine Foods, Cobb-Vantress, National Chicken Council, N.C. Farm Bureau, Progressive Dairy, Trans Ova Genetics, Tyson Foods, United Egg Producers, Vivayic, Eggland's Best, and Eocene Environmental Group.

Animal Agriculture Alliance continues Animal Ag Allies program. The Animal Agriculture Alliance's Animal Ag Allies program, launched in 2020, is a development program to empower farmers, ranchers, veterinarians, and industry professionals to be outspoken advocates for agriculture online and in person.

The Animal Ag Allies program provides opportunities for networking, training, and continuous development of issue expertise and communication skills. Animal Ag Allies are on the front lines of responding to emerging issues and sharing positive content about animal agriculture. Coming into 2026, nearly 170 participants have completed the modules and have consistently rated the overall value and usefulness of the program and its resources as a 5 out of 6.

The program consists of two phases — five self paced, online training modules and continuing education webinars focused on



engagement strategies and emerging issues. Participants will have eight weeks to complete the modules and will then be invited to a private online group where they will have the ability to interact with other Allies. Program modules include:

- Overviews of each sector of animal agriculture
- Hot topics and emerging issues facing animal agriculture
- How to address contentious issues
- Growing your social following and reaching outside the choir
- Engaging in public outreach

“Research has shown time and time again that the most effective ambassadors we have within animal agriculture are those on the farm every day — in particular, farmers, ranchers, and veterinarians,” said Abby Kornegay, director, issues and engagement, Animal Agriculture Alliance. “The Animal Ag Allies program equips those with their boots on the ground to feel confident telling their story and engaging with the public on key issues in animal agriculture.”

The Animal Ag Allies program would not be possible without the generous support of our founding sponsor, Zoetis, and program sponsors Animal Health Institute, California Milk Advisory Board, Colorado Pork Producers Council, and National Pork Producers Council.

About the Animal Agriculture Alliance. *The Alliance safeguards the future of animal agriculture and its value to society by bridging the communication gap between the farm and food communities. We connect key food industry stakeholders to arm them with responses to emerging issues. We engage food chain influencers and promote consumer choice by helping them better understand modern animal agriculture. We protect by exposing those who threaten our nation's food security with damaging misinformation. For more information, visit www.animalagalliance.org.*



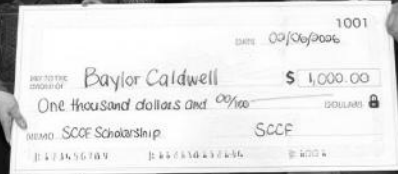
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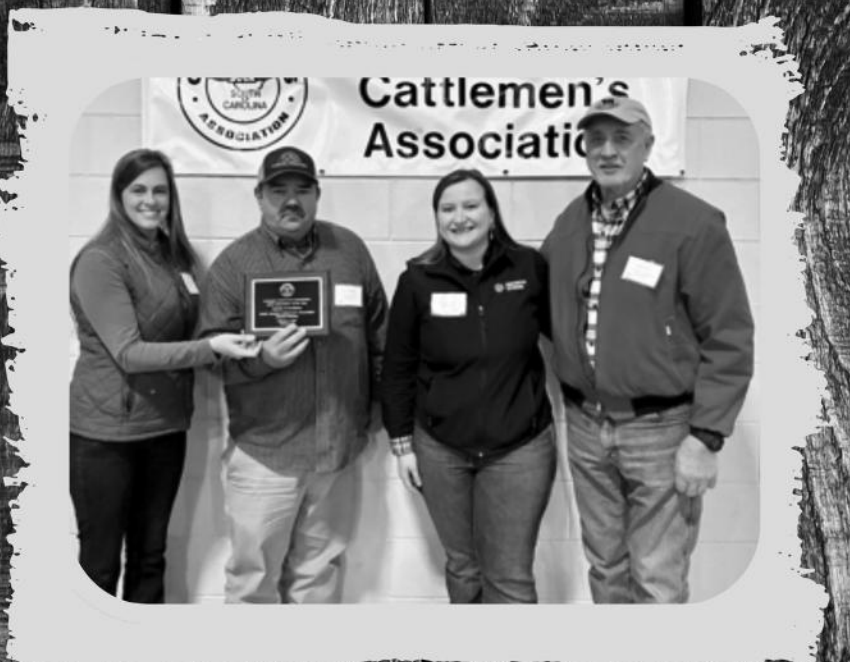
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The CEO's Corner



Dairy's Future Bright, But Present Needs Matter

By GREGG DOUD, *National Milk Producers Federation*

Our prominence in the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans will send a positive message about the value of nutritious dairy products for years to come and make it easier for consumers to have access to those products through federal food programs. Meanwhile, the president's signature on the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act cements a legislative victory for the next generation of milk drinkers, allowing them to have in school what they already have at home and encouraging consumers to keep dairy central to American diets.

But great times for dairy do not necessarily mean great times for individual dairy farmers. Supply and demand that is out of alignment means lower prices, lower margins, and hardship for producers now. As the nation's leading advocate for dairy farmers, we have already started conversations on Capitol Hill and with the White House on what can be done to help farmers continue producing the milk that fuels the nation.

We are optimistic that dairy advocates in the federal government understand what farmers are facing and that meaningful assistance can be achieved. But politics remains, as they say, the "art of the possible." We're focusing on what policies will truly benefit producers and will be achievable in the short term, without falling into the trap of calling for nostrums that could have unintended consequences for producers and commodity markets.

Here are a few approaches we are advocating:

- Immediate, forceful support for whole milk in schools. We are incredibly encouraged by the administration's embrace of whole

milk in the Dietary Guidelines, which follows Congress's unanimous support of the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act. Now, the challenge is to get into school meals. That means quickly implementing the rules needed to introduce whole and 2% milk to menus and offering funding that will help schools cover any additional expense needed to make these healthy products available.

While whole milk has always been about nutrition for the next generation of milk drinkers, it's also important to note the immediate effects that greater support could bring — Because whole and 2% absorb butterfat, it will help alleviate some of the supply overhang that's harming milk checks.

- As it did during the COVID-19 pandemic and at other times of dairy industry turmoil, we are asking USDA to consider targeted purchases of dairy products to distribute to communities that need them. This is not a heavy lift, considering that USDA purchases of dairy under Section 32 commodity programs have declined in recent years. Simply returning butter purchases to 2021 levels and cheese and fluid milk to 2024 would significantly reduce surpluses and boost dairy income, helping balance supply with demand.

- Bolstered support for federally supported risk management programs. Dairy farmers can help themselves by signing up for the DMC Program, which was improved in last year's One Big Beautiful Bill Act. With updated production histories and a larger number of pounds covered, DMC is more attractive for farmers now than it was in the past.

Still, DMC is just one part of the federally supported risk management system for dairy. Improving Dairy Revenue Protection (DRP) coverage with enhanced premium support is appropriate to consider under dairy's current circumstances. Improvements to both DMC and DRP will ensure dairy producers of all sizes have adequate and affordable risk management tools.

Disaster assistance. NMPF appreciates USDA's announcement of \$1 billion in September through the Emergency Livestock Relief Program to help offset increased supplemental feed costs due to floods or wildfires in 2023 and 2024. We encourage USDA to continue moving as quickly as possible to get this funding delivered to producers and to be mindful of opportunities to assist as other disaster related needs become available.

The ideas above are by no means the only ways to assist dairy in a challenging moment, but they're clear, they're tangible, and we believe they are achievable, working with the team at USDA and our advocates in Congress. They go hand in hand with the work we do every day for dairy farmers, from pushing for vigilance on H5N1 and New World screwworm to supporting efforts to open markets and promote U.S. dairy products overseas.

We are not looking for extreme government intervention, which is neither necessary nor likely. But we do know — as support for whole milk and dairy in legislation and the Dietary Guidelines shows — that our federal government appreciates dairy farmers and that there are tools that can effectively support markets in times of need. We look forward to working across the public and private sectors for solutions that benefit dairy farmers and the cooperatives they own. It's what we do in good times, in bad times, and in times when good and bad are both happening, in different ways, at once.

New USDA Report Explores the Economics of Precision Agriculture in Dairy Farming

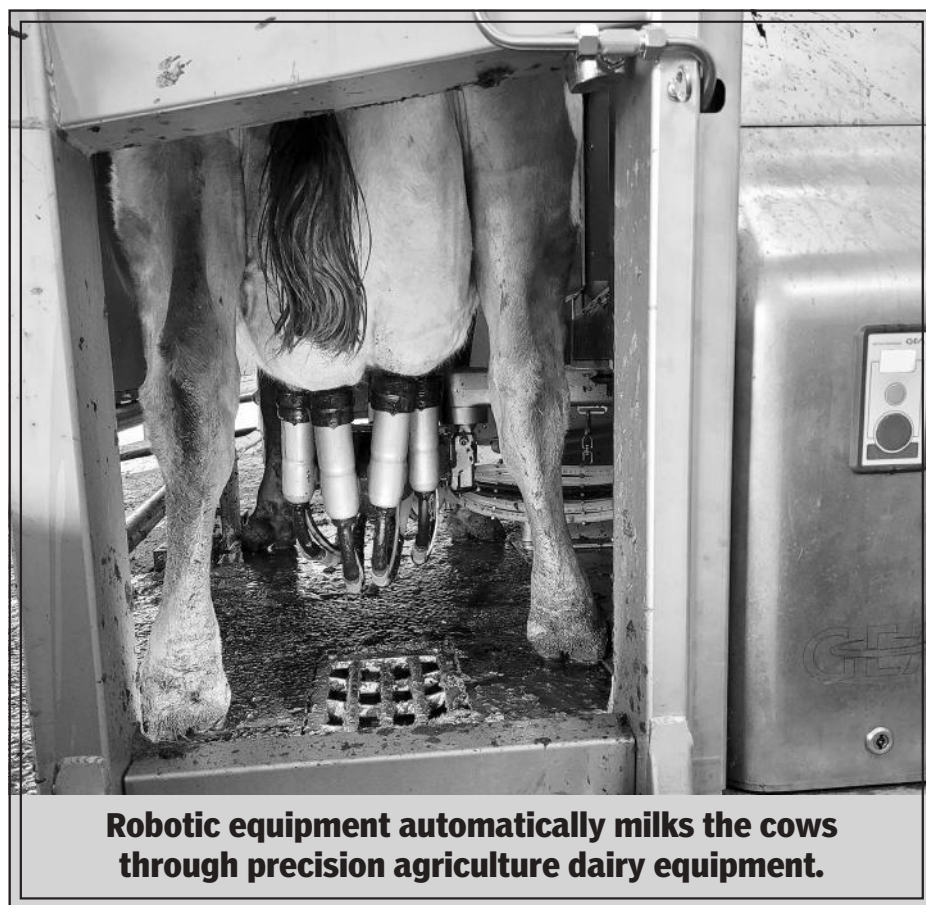
By **AMANDA KERR**, *N.C. State University*

One after another, cows casually make their way in and out of stalls at G.W. Bell and Sons Dairy, where they get milked and then go on their way. The scene is nothing out of the ordinary for a day's work at a dairy farm, except for one thing — robots complete the milking process without the need for any human hands.

Based in Kings Mountain, N.C. — about 30 miles west of Charlotte — G.W. Bell and Sons Dairy began the shift to robotic milking a few years ago. Today, the operation has fully converted to voluntary milking systems, also known as box robots.

“Our farm has always been interested in the newest technology that was offered to farms,” says Marybeth Black, whose family owns G.W. Bell and Sons Dairy. “We started reading about the technology and visiting other robot farms around seven or eight years ago. When we started finding it harder to find good quality milk hands, we decided to make the jump.”

The technology is changing not only the functional landscape of dairy farming but also the economics of running a modern day operation. A new report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, co-authored by Zach Raff, assistant professor of agricultural and resource economics at N.C. State University, explores trends



Robotic equipment automatically milks the cows through precision agriculture dairy equipment.



Visitors to G.W. Bell and Sons look at the robotic milking stalls the dairy uses.

in precision dairy farming and robotic milking and how these technologies are impacting profitability in the dairy industry.

“These box robots, they cost around \$200,000 a unit,” Raff says. “So, if you’re putting those kinds of costs into the operation, people want to see that they’re profitable.”

Investing in the Future — G.W. Bell started with two robotic milking systems before installing two more last year. Today, the dairy’s four milking robots serve the operation’s 230 milk-producing cows.

“The cows absolutely love it,” Black says. “The cows are less stressed in this type of system and spend most of their days just being a cow.”

But the robots cost a lot of money to install and maintain, and while workers are no longer needed to directly milk the cows, they are still needed to monitor the cows, troubleshoot equipment problems, and review data from the milking systems.

“We have had many ups and downs,” Black says. “We still have times when we struggle to stay ahead of repairs since the robots run 24/7.”

The USDA report uses data from 2000–2021 for dairy producers from the Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) to evaluate a range of technologies in dairy farming, from computerized milking systems to computerized feed delivery systems to robotic milking.

USDA and HHS update the guidelines every five years and affect government policies in numerous ways, including school meal offerings. The latest guidelines maintain the previous recommendation of three dairy servings per day for those consuming a 2,000 calorie diet. This year's edition explicitly endorses full fat dairy consumption, including whole milk, which is a marked departure from previous guidelines that recommended only low and non-fat milk.

"NMPF thanks HHS and USDA for recognizing dairy's critical role in a healthy diet in the new *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, as shown by its continued recommendation of three servings of dairy for Americans, its recognition of dairy's benefits at all fat levels, and dairy's prominence in diverse diets," Gregg Doud said in a statement. "We are proud to benefit American health in fundamental ways, and we welcome the potential these guidelines hold for expanding upon dairy's critical role in the diet."

NMPF's work to highlight advances in nutrition and scientific research showing the value of dairy consumption of all fat levels, including evidence that substituting higher fat dairy for lower fat dairy is not linked with increased risk of cardiovascular disease morbidity. The scientific review committee that makes recommendations for dietary guidelines previously acknowledged that reducing or eliminating dairy from the diet leads to undernourishment in key nutrients for millions of Americans, which is reflected in the final guidelines.

The new guidelines also include stricter limits on added sugars, stating that while no amount of added sugars or non-nutritive sweeteners is recommended or considered part of a healthy or nutritious diet, one meal should contain no more than 10 grams of added sugars. The naturally occurring sugar in milk is acknowledged as not counting towards those 10 grams; still, the new guidelines may pose a challenge for some flavored milks and dairy products, such as yogurt, as the administration signals work on a new school meals rule.

The accompanying document to the guidelines, "*Daily Servings by Calorie Level*," also includes concerning language about "fortified dairy alternatives" in its definition of the "dairy" food group. Previously, the guidelines only acknowledged fortified soy as a dairy substitute.

NMPF has repeatedly emphasized that imitators do not offer the same consistent package of nutrition provided by real milk, which the scientific review committee agreed in its 2024 report. Any encouragement of plant based alternatives when lactose free milk is available to those who are lactose intolerant is out of step with otherwise encouraging recommendations.

With the guidelines out, the federal government will begin applying them across federal programs.

NMPF Champions U.S. Dairy in Indonesia. NMPF executive vice president Shawna Morris joined a USDA Foreign Agricultural Service trade mission to Indonesia from February 1–4, meeting with government officials and industry partners to discuss trade barriers and explore opportunities for expanded U.S. dairy exports.

NMPF's continued engagement in Indonesia supports ongoing efforts to expand market access into the world's fourth most populous country as reciprocal trade negotiations continue.

While in Jakarta, Morris met with Enny Indarti, director of fulfillment systems for the National Nutrition Agency's Direct of Fulfillment Systems, to discuss how U.S. milk powders can be used to

support the Indonesian government's initiative launched in late 2024 to provide free milk in schools. She also met with officials from Indonesia's Trade Ministry and the agency coordinating the school meals program.

Morris hosted a dinner to bring together NMPF and USDEC members attending the mission with key partners and dairy importers in Indonesia. She also moderated an industry partner roundtable session headlined by Under Secretary for Trade Luke Lindberg that included NMPF and USDEC members as well as one of USDEC's formal partners in Indonesia, the Indonesian Food & Beverage Association. The roundtable explored areas for further industry collaboration to drive greater dairy consumption and trade between the U.S. and Indonesian dairy and food processing sectors.

The trade mission follows a July 2025 announcement of a reciprocal trade framework with Indonesia that included commitments to eliminate tariffs on the vast majority of U.S. exports and pledges to remove longstanding nontariff barriers affecting American dairy products. U.S. dairy suppliers are currently at a tariff disadvantage with New Zealand, with a potential additional disadvantage as the EU-Indonesia trade agreement nears conclusion.

Morris' participation in the mission also builds on NMPF's collaboration with the USDEC on a new U.S.-Indonesia Dairy Partnership Program to provide farmer training and education sessions in Indonesia. NMPF strengthened its network of in-country supporters in May 2025 with the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (KADIN) to facilitate trade and grow dairy demand in the market.

FARM Shares Animal Care Program Insights. FARM Animal Care, in partnership with ACER Consulting, released two reports in January related to program development and on-farm practices. The program continues to identify areas for advancing animal welfare centered on science and best practices.

The Animal Care Version 4.0 Data Highlights summarizes the characteristics of participating herds, presents performance measures on each Animal Care Program standard under Version 4.0, and highlights key strengths and areas for improvement.

Version 4.0 affirmed the program area's commitment with clearer requirements, mandatory documentation, expanded animal based measures, and structured corrective action plans to improve consistency and accountability.

The Animal Care Program is now administering Version 5 standards and guidelines after FARM extended the Version 4 cycle due to COVID-19. Version 5 will be in effect through January 2028. FARM revises Animal Care standards every three years.

The Animal Care Stakeholder Survey was conducted to inform early discussions related to the development of Version 2028. The survey launched last July and was available for seven weeks, capturing 557 usable responses.

The NMPF Animal Health and Wellbeing Committee, the FARM Animal Care Task Force, and the Farm Advisory Council reviewed initial survey results. The summary findings will be considered alongside committee review, scientific input, and additional engagement as the

NMPF News *continued from the previous page*

version cycle is developed. This survey supports informed discussion and decision making and is not a standalone directive for program changes.

To stay up-to-date on Version 2028 development, visit the FARM website at nationaldairyfarm.com/animal-care-version-2028-development.

U.S. Dairy Supports Launch of New Ag Coalition for USMCA. NMPF and the USDEC co-led the recent launch of “The Agricultural Coalition for USMCA,” an industry wide effort to support the strengthening and renewal of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement..

USMCA, which replaced the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 2020, mandates a “joint review” in 2026, which allows the countries to consider potential changes to the agreement. Since the stakeholder engagement process began in October 2025, the U.S. dairy industry has spoken to the importance of the agreement while stressing that certain critical shortcomings must be addressed.

“USMCA has helped grow vital export opportunities that support dairy farm incomes across the country,” Gregg Doud said. “Unfortunately, Canada has clearly not upheld their end of the deal, and Mexico needs to fully implement USMCA commitments to respect our use of common cheese names. We look forward to working with the Administration during the review to ensure our trading partners honor their commitments so the agreement can best deliver for dairy farmers.”

“USMCA has been critical to maintaining strong export demand for U.S. dairy farmers, manufacturers, and exporters, providing greater opportunities in the Mexican market in particular,” Krysta Harden said. “At the same time, persistent market access barriers, particularly in Canada, limit the full potential of the agreement and must be addressed to ensure that U.S. dairy exporters receive the benefits they were promised.”

The U.S. dairy industry exported about \$3.6 billion in dairy products to Canada and Mexico in 2024, which accounts for about 44 percent of total export value. At the same time, USMCA has fallen short in certain key areas. USDEC and NMPF will continue to fight for several priorities in the review, including through the Coalition:

Combatting Canada’s continued manipulation of its administration of dairy tariff rate quotas, denying U.S. exporters the meaningful market access guaranteed under USMCA.

Tackling Canada’s circumvention of USMCA dairy protein export disciplines, which has resulted in continued offloading of artificially low priced dairy proteins, undercutting U.S. products in both domestic and global markets.

Ensuring that Mexico upholds its USMCA commitments to protect common cheese names such as “feta.” The issue is increasingly pressing as European Union trade negotiations seek to restrict the use of generic terms worldwide.

NMPF and USDEC will continue to work with trade negotiators to address USMCA noncompliance areas ahead of the July 1 joint review deadline.

U.S. Dairy Welcomes U.S.-Argentina Trade Agreement. NMPF, USDEC, and CCFN recently celebrated the signing of a U.S.-Argentina Agreement on Reciprocal Trade and Investment late

yesterday that includes tariff and nontariff barrier concessions for U.S. dairy exports.

Argentina commits in the trade deal to eliminate tariffs that currently range up to 28 percent on select dairy products, including milk powders, dairy proteins, lactose, and other dairy ingredients. The agreement also establishes a 1,000 metric ton quota for certain U.S. cheeses. In addition to tariff reductions, Argentina agrees to prevent several nontariff barriers, including refraining from imposing processing facility registration requirements on U.S. dairy exports and providing explicit protections for 39 common cheese names like “parmesan.”

“The commitments secured in the U.S.-Argentina reciprocal trade deal bring new, real opportunities for our dairy exports to South America,” said Krysta Harden. “USDEC appreciates USTR’s hard work in securing agreements that lower tariffs and meaningfully address nontariff barriers, particularly those to protect common cheese names. We look forward to building our market presence in Argentina as the agreement is implemented.”

“Trade deals like this one bring dairy farmers promise for the future,” said Gregg Doud. “Dairy farms operate 365 days a year, and the U.S. negotiating team is keeping pace to secure new market access. NMPF will continue to work with the Administration as all the reciprocal trade agreements are translated into real results on the ground for our farmers.”

“Argentina’s commitment to protect 39 common cheese names and 10 generic meat terms could not have come at a more important time,” said Jaime Castaneda. “As the European Union is advancing toward implementation of its trade agreement with the Mercosur bloc of countries, our ability to use common names is increasingly at risk. We cannot thank Ambassador Greer and the USTR negotiating team enough for the foresight and leadership in protecting U.S. exporters’ rights.”

The trade deal follows reciprocal trade agreements that the U.S. signed recently with El Salvador and Guatemala last week that included commitments to prevent barriers to U.S. dairy exports. USDEC and NMPF will continue to work with the U.S. government as the reciprocal trade negotiations progress to identify and address impediments to dairy trade and grow U.S. export opportunities..

Dairy Industry Leader Testifies to Congress on USMCA Review Priorities. Ted Vander Schaaf, an Idaho dairy farmer and member-owner of Northwest Dairy Association, testified recently before the Senate Finance Committee on the importance of the USMCA to the U.S. dairy industry and the improvements needed for the agreement to fully deliver for American dairy farmers..

Vander Schaaf serves on the board of directors for the Northwest Dairy Association, the cooperative that owns Darigold, and the Idaho Dairyman’s Association, both of which are members of the NMPF and the USDEC.

“Strong, enforceable trade agreements are critically important to the U.S. dairy industry. The U.S. exported approximately \$9 billion in dairy products in 2025, including a record 559,000 metric tons of cheese last year through November,” Vander Schaaf said at the hearing.

Mexico and Canada are critical markets for U.S. dairy, purchasing \$3.6 billion in American dairy products in 2024 and accounting for 44 percent of total U.S. dairy export value. USMCA is vital to those trade

flows. However, Canada’s ongoing, blatant disregard of key USMCA obligations has undermined the agreement, and Mexico’s strong collaboration and partnership with the U.S. has yet to extend to its intellectual property office, as it pertains to common food names.

Vander Schaaf highlighted Canada’s continued manipulation of its dairy tariff rate quotas and its circumvention of USMCA dairy protein export disciplines, which have limited U.S. producers’ ability to compete in Canada and other markets. He also noted that while Mexico has been a great partner, it has still not fully met its commitments to protect common cheese names such as “parmesan” and “feta.”

USMCA mandates a “joint review” in 2026, offering the U.S. government an opportunity to negotiate solutions to the current shortcomings in dairy trade.

“For U.S. dairy producers, exports are critical not just for growth but for survival, and we all agree it must continue. But a firm base

depends on Canada upholding their end of the bargain and on preserving our fully open trade flows with Mexico,” continued Vander Schaaf. “The U.S. dairy industry is counting on Congress and the Administration to help us fix the issues that I have laid out today and to secure a better, stronger USMCA for American dairy farmers.”

Vander Schaaf’s testimony also builds on the February 5 launch of the Agricultural Coalition for USMCA. Co-led by USDEC and NMPF, the Coalition is advocating for the strengthening and renewal of USMCA.

U.S.-Taiwan Trade Agreement Delivers Major Wins for U.S. Dairy.

NMPF, USDEC and CCFN recently commended the signing of a landmark trade agreement between the U.S. and Taiwan that will eliminate tariffs on all U.S. dairy products and preempt nontariff barriers that could otherwise limit the full potential of bilateral dairy trade.

Taiwan is the third largest fluid milk destination for U.S. exports, and this agreement represents a transformative step forward for the growing market. By securing comprehensive tariff reductions for U.S. dairy products and incorporating meaningful commitments to ensure nontariff measures do not derail trade, the deal positions U.S. dairy suppliers to compete on a level playing field and expand their presence in one of Asia’s most dynamic food markets.

“Taiwan is a trusted partner and a high value market for U.S. dairy,” Krysta Harden said. “This agreement improves our competitiveness compared to other suppliers and provides assurances that nontariff barriers will not hinder the expansion of U.S. dairy exports. USDEC looks forward to continuing work with the Taiwanese government and the domestic industry to increase dairy consumption and grow the U.S.’s contribution to supplying Taiwan’s fluid milk and other dairy needs.”

The agreement builds on strong industry-to-industry collaboration between the U.S. and Taiwan. Last year, NMPF and USDEC representatives traveled to the market to advocate for dairy’s prioritization in the negotiations and deepen engagement with local stakeholders. While there, USDEC and NMPF signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Dairy Association of Taiwan to strengthen market development and information exchange efforts.

“The agreement with Taiwan builds on the incredible momentum we’ve seen from the Administration in securing new trade agreements around the world,” Gregg Doud said. “Each deal to reduce barriers and expand market access strengthens American dairy farms and the communities they support.”

“Taiwan is an important market for the U.S., and the commitments to protect common names included in this agreement preempt third countries like the European Union from abusing intellectual property tools to monopolize generic terms and take away U.S. export opportunities,” Jaime Castaneda said. “We cannot thank Ambassador Greer, Ambassador Callahan, and the entire negotiating team enough for prioritizing this issue and ensuring our exporters can continue using the terms known by consumers around the world.”

NMPF, USDEC and CCFN look forward to working closely with U.S. and Taiwanese officials to ensure swift implementation of the agreement and to fully realize its benefits for dairy producers, exporters, and consumers on both sides of the Pacific.

S.C. Cattle Receipts, Trends, and Prices for the Month of JANUARY 2026

Cattle Receipts: 7,407 • Previous Month: 4,030
Feeder supply - 21% steers • 41% heifers • 38% bulls

SLAUGHTER CLASSES

	<u>Avg. Wt.</u>	<u>Price</u>
Cows - % Lean		
Breaker	1,474	\$164.32
Boner	1,256	\$164.30
Lean	1,131	\$147.25
Bulls - Yield Grade 1-2	1,726	\$191.95

FEEDER CLASSES

FEEDER STEERS (Medium and Large 1-2)

<u>Wt. Range</u>	<u>Avg. Wt.</u>	<u>CWT</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
400-450	429	467.57	\$2,005.88
450-500	477	445.15	\$2,123.37
500-550	520	405.64	\$2,109.33
550-600	571	387.97	\$2,215.31
600-650	625	372.94	\$2,330.88
650-700	665	349.93	\$2,327.03

FEEDER BULLS (Medium and Large 1-2)

<u>Wt. Range</u>	<u>Avg. Wt.</u>	<u>CWT</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
400-450	429	452.27	\$1,940.24
450-500	467	455.33	\$2,126.39
500-550	520	400.51	\$2,082.65
550-600	568	383.98	\$2,181.01
600-650	622	351.61	\$2,187.01
650-700	667	340.18	\$2,269.00

FEEDER HEIFERS (Medium and Large 1-2)

<u>Wt. Range</u>	<u>Avg. Wt.</u>	<u>CWT</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
400-450	400	420.44	\$1,681.76
450-500	470	408.40	\$1,919.48
500-550	519	359.08	\$1,863.63
550-600	569	350.73	\$1,995.65
600-650	628	332.90	\$2,090.61
650-700	668	326.30	\$2,179.68

Source: S.C. Department of Agriculture - USDA Market News Service
 Columbia, S.C. - 803-737-4491

NMPF News continued on the next page

NMPF News continued from the previous page

New U.S.–Indonesia Agreement Secures Access to Critical Dairy Market. NMPF, USDEC, and CCFN celebrated the recent signing of a new U.S.–Indonesia trade agreement that would provide key market access expansions and protections for American dairy products.

Following years of USDEC, NMPF and CCFN advocacy, the deal will eliminate tariffs on all U.S. dairy exports; recognize U.S. regulatory oversight, including by listing all U.S. dairy facilities and accepting dairy certificates issued by U.S. regulatory authorities; and commit to protecting 40 common cheese names like “parmesan.” U.S. dairy exporters have long faced challenges with Indonesia’s excessively slow and burdensome facility registration process, making the issue’s resolution critical.

“This important agreement enhances the strong and growing relationship we’ve developed with Indonesia’s government and dairy industry,” said Krysta Harden. “Through sustained engagement, we’ve laid a solid foundation for partnership. This deal reinforces that progress and positions U.S. dairy to expand its capacity to serve as a reliable

partner in supporting Indonesia’s dairy sector and nutrition goals.”

The agreement builds on the U.S.–Indonesia Dairy Partnership, launched in 2024 to deepen cooperation across multiple fronts. As part of this collaboration, USDEC partnered with Indonesian institutions to support the government’s Free and Nutritious School Meals initiative, which includes the goal of providing school milk to students.

USDEC and NMPF also signed an MOU with the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN) last May to expand dairy trade and strengthen commercial ties. USDEC also signed an MOU with the Indonesian Food and Beverage Industry Association (GAPMMI) last October. A USDEC-GAPMMI roundtable led by USDA Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Luke Lindberg was held earlier this month to deepen that connection.

“Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world, and it’s a critical market for U.S. dairy farmers,” said Gregg Doud. “Thank you to Ambassador Greer and the USTR team for securing expanded access that will directly translate into stronger demand for U.S. dairy products.”

“The common names protections included in this agreement are especially important for America’s farmers and exporters,” said Jaime Castaneda. “Ensuring U.S. producers can continue to market and sell products like ‘parmesan’ and ‘feta’ in Indonesia without unfair restrictions helps preserve export opportunities and supports the livelihoods of farmers and manufacturers across the United States.”

Indonesia is currently the eighth largest export market for U.S. dairy products. U.S. dairy exports to Indonesia in 2025 totaled \$222 million, including strong demand for milk powders, whey products, cheese, and other dairy ingredients. The agreement is the ninth trade deal secured to date by the Administration that includes new market access for U.S. dairy products, including an agreement signed with Taiwan last week. USDEC, NMPF and CCFN will continue to work with the U.S. and Indonesian governments to swiftly and fully implement the agreement’s provisions.

About the National Milk Producer’s Federation. NMPF was organized in 1916 to provide a forum for dairy producers and the cooperatives they own to participate in public policy discussions. NMPF advocates policies to Congress, U.S. and foreign government agencies, industry organizations, the news media, and the public.

We use our unique resources to harness the ever changing climate in the politics and marketing of milk and dairy products from farm to table to promote the economic well being of dairy producers and their cooperatives through coordinated industry efforts.

NMPF addresses policies concerning milk pricing, domestic and international market development, agriculture credit and taxation, environmental issues, food safety and health, animal welfare, product standards and labeling, and research and biotechnology.

Our mission is to foster an economic and political climate in which dairy producers and the cooperatives they own can thrive and prosper. Achieving such success assures consumers of adequate supplies of wholesome and nutritious dairy products at affordable prices.

This helps improve the bottom line of the associate members who provide services to dairy producers and cooperatives that they represent. For more information, visit www.nmpf.org.

2026 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES SCHEDULE

Most of the breed associations in North and South Carolina have stepped forward and renewed their contracts for Spotlight sections in *The Carolina Cattle Connection* for 2026. If your breed is not featured as a Spotlight section and you would like to inquire on any open months please feel free to contact me. Below is the tentative schedule for the upcoming year.

2026 RESERVED SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

JANUARY	CHAROLAIS
FEBRUARY	FORAGES
MARCH	ANGUS
APRIL	PIEDMONTESE
MAY	BRAHMAN
JUNE	HEREFORD
JULY	BELTED GALLOWAY
AUGUST	SIMMENTAL
SEPTEMBER	SANTA GERTRUDIS
OCTOBER	WAGYU
NOVEMBER	BRANGUS
DECEMBER	

For more information
about your breed’s Spotlight Issue, contact:

THE CAROLINA CATTLE CONNECTION

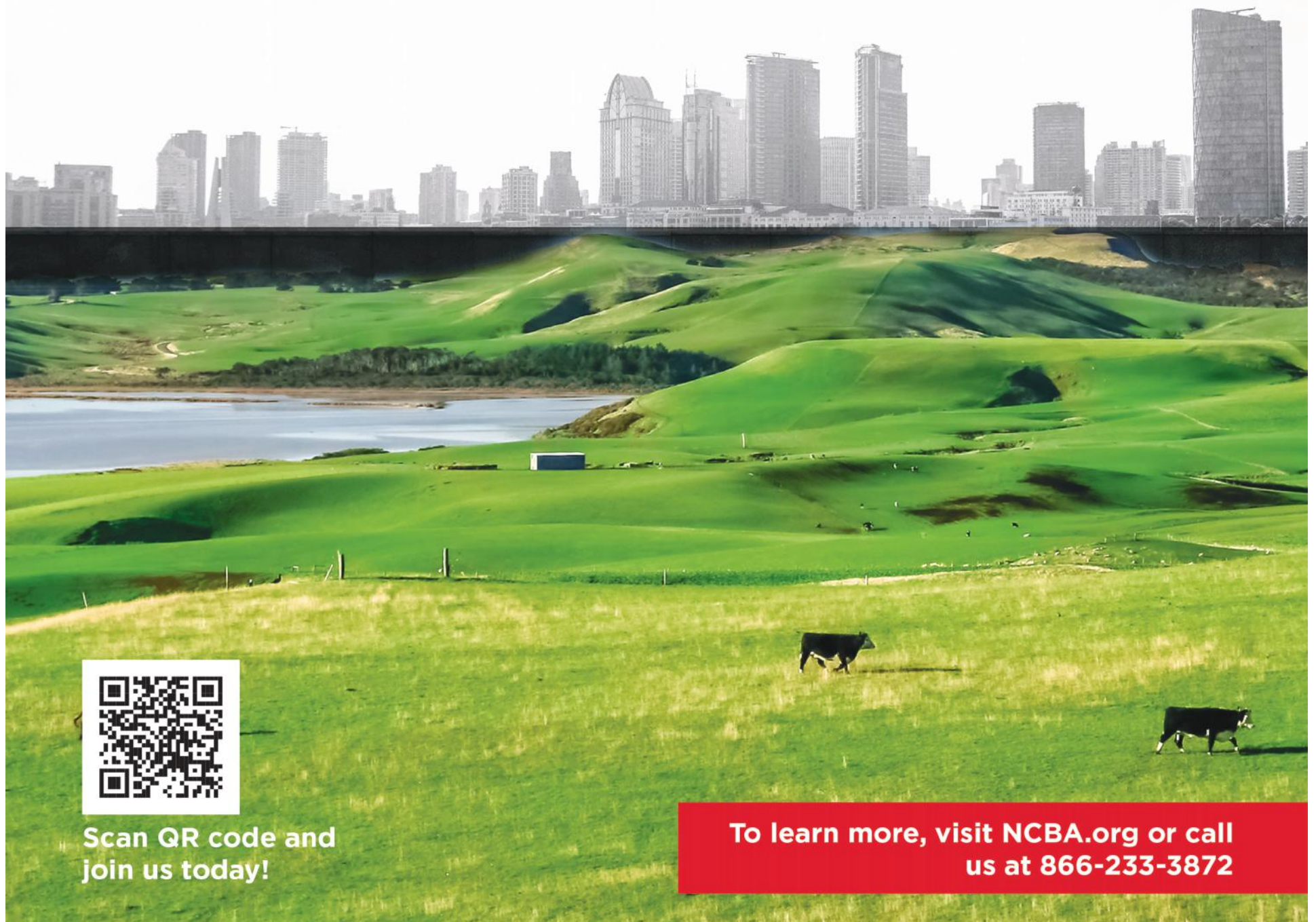
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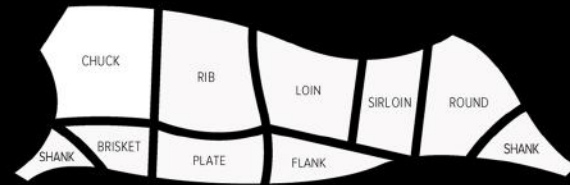


Our industry is under threat and we need cattle producers to **band together**. To keep our farms and ranches successful, **we need your help**. Help secure the future of our industry by recruiting your friends, family and neighbors to **join our fight**. Recruit new members and be rewarded for your support with special gifts and prize drawings!



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CHUCK		RIB		LOIN		SIRLOIN		ROUND		INGREDIENT CUTS	
Arm Chuck Roast 	Cross Rib Chuck Roast 	Prime Rib Roast 	Porterhouse Steak 	Top Sirloin Steak LEAN 	Top Round* LEAN 	Kabobs* 					
Arm Chuck Steak 	Shoulder Roast LEAN 	Ribeye Steak, Bone-In 	T-Bone Steak 	Top Sirloin Petite Roast LEAN 	Top Round Steak* LEAN 	Stew Meat 					
Blade Chuck Roast 	Shoulder Steak* LEAN 	Back Ribs 	Strip Steak, Bone-In LEAN 	Top Sirloin Filet LEAN 	Bottom Round Roast LEAN 	Strips 					
Blade Chuck Steak* 	Ranch Steak LEAN 	Ribeye Roast, Boneless 	Strip Steak, Boneless LEAN 	Coulotte Roast 	Bottom Round Steak* LEAN 	Cubed Steak 					
7-Bone Chuck Roast 	Flat Iron Steak 	Ribeye Steak, Boneless 	Strip Petite Roast LEAN 	Coulotte Steak LEAN 	Bottom Round Rump Roast LEAN 	Ground Beef and Ground Beef Patties 					
Chuck Center Roast 	Top Blade Steak 	Ribeye Cap Steak 	Strip Filet LEAN 	Tri-Tip Roast LEAN 	Eye of Round Roast LEAN 	Shank Cross-Cut LEAN 					
Denver Steak 	Shoulder Petite Tender LEAN 	Ribeye Petite Roast LEAN 	Tenderloin Roast LEAN 	Tri-Tip Steak LEAN 	Eye of Round Steak* LEAN 	Tenderloin Tips 					
Chuck Eye Roast LEAN 	Shoulder Petite Tender Medallions LEAN 	Ribeye Filet LEAN 	Tenderloin Steak (Filet Mignon) LEAN 	Petite Sirloin Steak 	BRISKET LEAN 		Inside Skirt* 				
Chuck Eye Steak 	Short Ribs, Bone-In 	KEY TO RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS Grilling Oven Roasting Stewing Braising Skillet-to-Oven Stir-Fry Broiling Skillet Cooking Pressure Cooking Indirect Grilling Smoking		Sirloin Bavette Steak 	Brisket Point 	Flank Steak* LEAN 					
Country-Style Ribs 	 Funded by Beef Farmers and Ranchers <small>© 2021 Cattleman's Beef Board and National Cattleman's Beef Association ARMSF</small>	<small>*Marinate before cooking for best results</small>		LEAN <small>These cuts meet the government guidelines for lean, based on cooked servings, visible fat trimmed.</small>	<small>A cut of cooked fresh meat is considered "lean" when it contains less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat and less than 95 mg of cholesterol per 100 grams (3 1/2 oz) and per RACC (Reference Amount Customarily Consumed), which is 85 grams (3 oz).</small>	Short Ribs, Bone-In* 					



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The North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment will support youth activities, promotion, issues management, research, and education.

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Both the seller and the buyer have the responsibility to have the \$1 per head assessment for the National Beef Checkoff and the \$1 per head assessment for the North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment collected and remitted to the N. C. Cattlemen's Beef Council. This form is designed for the seller to use in private treaty sales of North Carolina cattle.

Date of Sale _____

Seller's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Seller's Signature _____

Buyer's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Buyer's Signature _____

National Beef Checkoff

Total Number of Cattle Sold _____ x \$1.00/head = \$ _____

North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment

Total Number of Cattle Sold _____ x \$1.00/head = \$ _____

Total Amount Remitted \$ _____

Person remitting assessment Seller Buyer

Send Form and Remittance to: **N.C. Cattlemen's Beef Council**
P.O. Box 1207
Cary, NC 27512

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Check No.: _____

Postmark Date: _____

Premium Nutrition Pays. BioZyme and LiveAg Partner for Profitable Cattle Programs. Cattle health starts with proper nutrition. BioZyme Inc., a leader in animal nutrition and health, is excited to partner with LiveAg, one of the fastest growing livestock marketing firms in the country. Through LiveAg's nationwide video auction platform and sale broadcast services, cattle backed by premium nutrition programs are positioned in front of a national, competitive buyer base on sale day.

"We live in a world where information is powerful. The use of data and the ability to track and share information about the management of cattle will continue to help buyers make more informed decisions and increase their profits," said Alan Lee, BioZyme Vice President of Commercial Operations. "If premium nutrition on these cattle that are selling can help producers make more money, we want to help them profit."

When producers commit to stronger nutrition and sound management, that investment deserves to be recognized in the marketplace. The partnership between LiveAg and BioZyme helps ensure that cattle backed by proven programs stand out and are rewarded on sale day. Through its network of 55+ livestock marketing representatives across the country, LiveAg works directly with producers to market cattle from the ranch via video auction — coordinating delivery logistics and connecting sellers with buyers nationwide. As

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NEWS

part of that commitment to value added marketing, LiveAg recognizes VitaFerm and GainSmart fed cattle within its programs.

"We believe good cattle start with good management and strong partnerships," said Jason Barber, LiveAg CEO. "BioZyme shares our commitment to quality and consistency. When producers enroll in these programs and follow them through delivery day, they're not just checking a box — they're building cattle that perform for the next owner. Our job is to make sure that added value is visible and competitive when those cattle sell on video."

That focus on performance starts with nutrition. Research shows that approximately 70 percent of the immune response



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begins in the digestive system. Feeding cattle vitamin and mineral supplements powered by AO-Biotics Amaferm, such as VitaFerm or Gain Smart, helps support digestive efficiency, immune function, and overall performance. Amaferm is a research proven prebiotic designed to enhance the gut microbiome and improve digestibility. It is backed by more than 150 peer reviewed and published studies demonstrating its effectiveness.

Value Added Programs Pay – Gain Smart, a line designed specifically for stocker and feeder cattle, promotes optimal growth and overall health. When used in combination with a sound vaccination protocol, this program gives your calves an extra edge – and an additional badge that buyers recognize. To qualify, cattle must receive Gain Smart mineral supplementation for at least 45 days leading up to auction and continue through delivery. The Gain Smart Value Added logo helps clearly communicate that investment to buyers bidding nationwide.

“VitaFerm Raised” identifies calves from cow/calf operations where either the dam received VitaFerm mineral throughout gestation and lactation or the calf was fed VitaFerm mineral for a minimum of 45 days during preconditioning and continued through delivery. By combining this program with a robust health protocol and LiveAg’s competitive marketing environment, producers position their cattle for recognition and potential premiums. Qualified lots receive the VitaFerm Raised badge, visible in auction materials and on-screen during bidding.

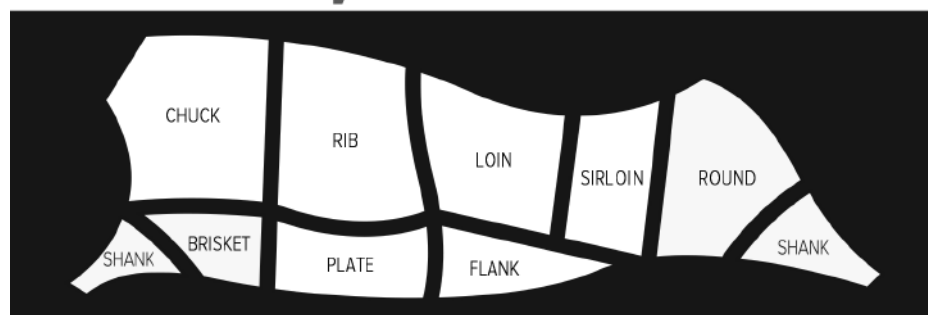
In addition to further premium opportunities, BioZyme and LiveAg plan to provide joint education to producers who use the nutrition and marketing services of both companies. This collaboration creates added transparency, credibility, and opportunity on sale day.

“Our goal is to create a network that helps producers receive a premium for what they do,” Lee said.

About BioZyme Inc. With a continued commitment to excellence, the BioZyme Stockyards location earned the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) and Feedstuffs 2024 Feed Facility of the Year honor. BioZyme Inc., founded in 1951, develops and manufactures natural, proprietary products focused on animal nutrition, health, and microbiology. With a continued commitment

to research, BioZyme offers a complete line of feed additives and high density, highly available vitamin, mineral, trace mineral, and protein supplements for a variety of animals, including cattle, pigs, poultry, sheep, goats, horses, and dogs. BioZyme brands include AO-Biotics, VitaFerm, Gain Smart, Sure Champ, Vitalize, DuraFerm, and Backyard Boost. With headquarters in St. Joseph, Mo., the company reaches a global market of customers that stretches into countries across five continents. For more information about BioZyme, visit www.biozymeinc.com.

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Sign up

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For more information about Meat Suite, contact Lee Menius at lamenius@ncsu.edu



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture



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A Message from the CEO

Swamp Creatures

By COLIN WOODALL, *National Cattlemen's Beef Association*



President Trump has made “draining the swamp” a core piece of his political agenda. “The Swamp” has become a popular moniker for Washington, D.C., and is meant to describe the dark, slimy, and unsavory perceptions many have of our government and those who work within it. Those perceptions are rooted in what most Americans see in the news. As someone who spent 20 years living in “the swamp,” the perceptions are not far off. However, there are some in the Trump administration who believe NCBA — and other agriculture trade associations — are swamp creatures and part of the problem. Let’s explore this.

The daily antics of those in Washington generate the onslaught of news we’re exposed to minute-by-minute, but when talking about draining the swamp, the first group that comes to mind are lobbyists. There are thousands of people who are registered lobbyists working to influence the decisions of our federal government. Hundreds of millions of dollars are exchanged in the business of setting up meetings, working to gain government contracts, passing or killing legislation, and representing everything from individuals to major corporations. While there are robust laws and regulations that apply to lobbying, you don’t have to spend much time to realize dark, slimy, and unsavory actions take place.

Many lobbyists work for more than one paying client. One day they might be representing a defense contractor and the next day a car manufacturer. These individuals serve their many clients and will get paid whether they are successful or not. I spent some time working in a Senate office on Capitol Hill, and we would see the regular rotation of familiar lobbyist faces. When they would call to set up meetings, we always had to clarify who they were representing for that particular meeting. It would definitely be a different group the next time around.

Now, it’s important to note that many lobbyists who operate this way are good people who work hard at representing their clients and do it legally. Over the years, we have worked with many lobbyists like this on policy issues we shared with other groups. Several past NCBA employees make their living like this. However, there are many more who have given lobbying the sullied reputation it has and have precipitated the need to drain the swamp.

NCBA employs federally registered lobbyists, and we must report our lobbying activities to both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. In addition, we are required to report all activities of our Political Action Committee, or PAC. The lobbying rules are

serious, and violating them can result in fines or jail time. We are diligent when it comes to compliance because we are not going to risk the reputation of this association.

Even though we employ lobbyists, they only have one client — YOU! When we arrive for a meeting, the staff don’t have to ask who we are there representing. They know we are there to speak for you and the policy you set for NCBA. They know when we show up, they will get the facts without the spin because our grassroots policy process doesn’t allow for staff opinions to influence it. It is your policy, and we are known for shooting straight. This approach to lobbying is why we have the reputation and successful track record we have.

Among the general American public, the lobbying profession probably ranks between cockroach and used car salesman. Again, building the case against the swamp. At NCBA, our lobbyists are working each day with federal departments and agencies, members of Congress, foreign embassies, and other organizations to advance your policy positions. Yes, we are there to influence outcomes, but to do so in a way that keeps the government out of your business. You don’t have the time to fly back and forth to D.C. to lobby your representative or senator, so it is our collective effort as a producer led and driven association that yields the policy wins we have seen in the past year. We are your voice and your advocate.

That is why we bristle when Trump officials say we are part of the swamp. Just the contrary. We bring integrity to public policy advocacy that more people should emulate. We represent you, and only you, and do so with the backing of a grassroots policy book created by NCBA producer-members, not swamp creatures.



**Have you forgotten something?
Make sure your cattle loving friends are members of your state and national associations!**

Virginia Cattleman Takes Helm as NCBA President. Since 1850, Gene Copenhaver's family has been rooted in the land — raising crops and livestock. The Virginia cattleman now takes the helm as the new president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). Copenhaver's new leadership role began at the end of CattleCon 2026, held last month in Nashville, Tennessee.

The 2026 NCBA officer team was approved by the NCBA Board of Directors and includes Kim Brackett of Idaho, president-elect, and Skye Krebs of Oregon, vice president. Kenny Rogers of Colorado was elected chair of the NCBA Policy Division, and Scott Anderson of Oklahoma was elected policy vice chair. Travis Maddock of North Dakota and Dan Hanrahan of Iowa were elected as chair and vice chair of the NCBA Federation Division, respectively. Brad Hastings of Texas will serve in the role of NCBA treasurer.

Copenhaver currently manages his family's stocker operation in southwest Virginia with his son, Will, and was an agriculture loan officer for 38 years. He has been married to his wife, Jodi, for more than 35 years, and they have three grown children, Brad, Will, and Jaymee, and three granddaughters.

Copenhaver's father taught him early to "be at the table," especially when policy decisions were being made. About 25 years ago, he helped launch a county cattlemen's group, then worked his way through leadership roles at the state level, eventually serving as president of the Virginia Cattlemen's Association. Nationally, he became involved with NCBA, serving on the Tax & Credit and International Trade committees, multiple task forces, and the officer team. If there is a single theme to his leadership philosophy, it is grassroots engagement.

"I'll go to my grave saying our greatest strength is grassroots," Copenhaver said.

The new president's priorities are straightforward: continue what works, stay grounded in grassroots input, remain open minded, and focus on profitability. Copenhaver wants every sector and every scale of operation to be viable. That means pushing back against regulatory barriers, supporting policies that allow reinvestment, and building on recent momentum around tax provisions.

"We can't build the future if every good year gets taxed away before we can shore up our infrastructure," he said.

Copenhaver remains optimistic about the future for two reasons. First is the demand the beef industry has built steadily in the last four decades. Second is the next generation — young producers who are smart, relationship driven, and family centered and who want to build operations that last.

Success, for Copenhaver, is not complicated. "Build a good operation. Involve your family. Treat people right," he said. For the industry, it means continuing to grow demand and profitability across all sectors without losing sight of its roots. *s nonsequosae vel molecero doloresque vollit faccust rem in etur?*

Meet Your Officers

• **Gene Copenhaver, President – Washington County, Virginia** – Gene's focus for the year ahead is on the next generation, and he is ready to advocate for policy and practices that lay solid groundwork for future cattle producers to succeed. In the upcoming



year, Copenhaver will guide NCBA to continue the work of his predecessors, building upon wins and continuing to push back on burdensome regulation as well as elevating the application of risk management tools.

Watching families teach and raise the next generation of cattle producers excites Copenhaver for the bright future of beef production. To him, keeping clear communication at the forefront among all sectors and participants of the industry is key to providing nutrient dense beef for the world.

• **Kim Brackett, President-Elect – Three Creek, Idaho** – Kim and her husband, Ira, operate Brackett Ranches Limited Partnership, a cow/calf and stocker operation based on the Idaho/Nevada border where their primary goal is to produce superior calves while improving range health.

A longtime member of NCBA, Brackett has seen her own family operation benefit from the work NCBA leads in Washington, D.C., and she serves as an officer to give back and contribute to similar efforts. She wants to see the regulatory burden on cattle producers reduced to improve profitability for cattlemen and women. Brackett views her leadership role as an opportunity to thoughtfully serve NCBA members by helping guide strategic decisions that will prepare the association to navigate future challenges and opportunities.

The best part of ranching for Brackett is creating memories with her family watching her kids' love for animals grow, whether that be their favorite horses, their first dogs, or when newborn calves hit the ground.



Skye Krebs, Dan Hanrahan, Travis Maddock, Brad Hastings, Kenny Rogers, Buck Wehrbein, Kim Brackett, Gene Copenhaver, and Scott Anderson.

• **Skye Krebs, Vice President – Eastern Oregon** – Skye is a long time leader in both the cattle and sheep industries, with more than 40 years of experience guiding progress in livestock organizations. Through advocacy and leadership with the Public Lands Council and Oregon Sheep Growers Association, Krebs has proven to be a leader focused on delivering outcomes that benefit the entire industry. His service oriented approach and commitment to moving the industry forward guide his decisions. He is always eager to volunteer his time so the cattle industry can be profitable, sustainable, and carry on for generations.

Krebs and his family operate Krebs Sheep Company, a diversified ranch raising both cattle and sheep. His family has been ranching in eastern Oregon for more than 100 years, and Krebs hopes to pass that legacy to his son and grandsons. He believes, “family time is quality time,” and he works to ensure that even when the job is tough, the work remains enjoyable for everyone involved.

Krebs looks toward NCBA’s policy priorities with the goal of building upon NCBA’s momentum and continuing to partner with legislators to promote sound policy, especially regarding federally protected predators, property rights, and public lands grazing.

• **Kenny Rogers, Policy Division Chair – Yuma, Colorado** – Kenny values participating in organizations like NCBA that have decades of grassroots producer support and the ability to affect meaningful change. This is why he is honored to serve as an NCBA officer. Rogers likes to say, “If you’re not involved, then you’ve got no right to complain.”

To him, NCBA exists to protect cattle producers from the “slings and arrows” of detractors who seek to do harm to the industry. Rogers recognizes NCBA’s influence comes from its many members, and its scale gives NCBA the ability to see issues over the horizon, prepare, and respond as needed.

Easy to get along with, quick with a joke, and understanding of the diverse challenges facing NCBA members across the nation, Rogers is willing to “get in the trenches” and work toward a solution. He enjoys working alongside his fellow officers and is eager to see new and old friends as he serves as Policy Division Chair. Rogers’ family has been in the cattle business for more than 70 years, and just as he is committed to his family operation, Wagon Wheel Ranch, he is just as committed to advocating for other ranching families.

• **Scott Anderson, Policy Division Vice Chair – Guymon, Oklahoma** – Scott is a servant at heart who believes his role as a leader is to help others succeed and pave a path for the next generation. He has spent his entire career dedicated to production agriculture and the people and products involved in that process. He grew up on a small, diversified livestock and grain operation in eastern Nebraska, then grew into management and later partial ownership of a custom cattle feeding operation in the Panhandle of Oklahoma.

Anderson finds using what is known today and turning it into a plan for tomorrow exciting. His enthusiasm for continuous improvement guides his work as Policy Vice Chair. He believes NCBA’s strength emanates from its members, and that together, we are stronger. He has a passion for the beef industry and the people involved in all aspects of the business.

Anderson is active in the Texas Cattle Feeders Association and has also been engaged with the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable

Beef. Anderson values membership driven associations, which led him to serve on different task forces and committees with NCBA over the years, most recently having served on the Executive Committee as the Policy Vice President for Region IV.

• **Travis Maddock, Federation Division Chair – Benson County, North Dakota** – Travis is dedicated to leading and serving the beef cattle industry and his fellow ranchers. A firm believer that decisions are made by those who choose to participate, Maddock enjoys bringing the voices, perspectives, and ideas of the ranching and farming community into the conversations shaping the cattle business.

With beef demand at its highest point in decades, Maddock is focused on sustaining that momentum through innovation, research, and promotion of beef’s role in everyday diets. He is passionate about helping consumers understand what makes beef special – its flavor, versatility, and, most importantly, its nutritional value – and is committed to carrying that message forward with energy and purpose.

At home, Maddock and his wife, Mistte, are raising their children on the ranch, where the next generation learns the value of ranch life from grandparents and extended family. Beyond the ranch, they are co-owners of Maddock Ranch Supply, LLC, a retail livestock supply business, and 6 In 1 Meats, LLC, a local harvest and processing facility. For them, building a life and livelihood alongside family is not just a way of doing business – it’s one of the great rewards of being active in the cattle industry.

• **Dan Hanrahan, Federation Division Vice Chair – Cumming, Iowa** – Empowerment starts at home for Dan. His family has become an essential part of keeping their Iowa cattle farm running while he takes on greater leadership responsibilities. His commitment extends far beyond his own operation; he strives to bring cattle producers together nationwide to collaborate, overcome challenges, and keep the industry moving forward. Hanrahan knows the work NCBA will accomplish in 2026 is formidable. He sees the record demand and shift in how consumers view beef as a nutrient dense protein source as an immense opportunity for cattlemen and women.

Hanrahan comes to the NCBA officer team with a deep respect for the work of leaders before him and said the extensive knowledge and passion of the producers who make up NCBA’s membership across all sectors of the beef industry inspire him. Hanrahan doesn’t want to leave any value on the table but wants producers and contractors to continue to come together to drive demand for beef and connect consumers to a product of exceptional quality and the great people who raise it.

Hanrahan credits his family, including his sisters, brothers-in-law, and nephews, with supporting him beyond measure with the daily tasks and challenges of the farm so he can serve in this role.

• **Buck Wehrbein, Past President – Elkhorn, Nebraska** – As immediate past president of NCBA, Buck celebrates NCBA’s accomplishments in areas of trade, tax relief, and updated Dietary Guidelines for Americans. He knows it is important to keep our foot on the gas pedal to continue that momentum, especially with the threat of foreign animal disease and the challenges producers face across the country with a variety of federally protected predators.

NCBA News continued from the previous page

Wehrbein believes strongly in leading by example, a principle he views as especially critical when it comes to developing the next generation of cattle industry leaders. He is passionate about mentoring younger producers as they begin participating in local, state, and national associations. Wehrbein challenges national and state leadership to continue identifying and developing future leaders, equipping them with the tools and confidence they need to lead effectively.

As a dedicated husband, father, grandfather, and even great-grandfather, Wehrbein is grateful that his family has the opportunity to grow up within the beef industry, and he and his wife, Sandy, greatly value spending time with family.

• **Brad Hastings, Treasurer – Amarillo, Texas** – Brad understands strong organizations are effective when decisions are grounded in real world experience, and NCBA gives a voice to producers. Hastings' goal is for that voice to remain practical, thoughtful, and focused on long term success. Beyond leadership roles with NCBA, Hastings has experience leading as an executive

in multiple agricultural companies, including as former co-CEO and current board member of Cactus Feeders.

NCBA Releases 2026 Policy Priorities. NCBA recently announced its 2026 policy priorities following approval by the organization's Executive Committee at CattleCon 2026. NCBA's focus centers on policies that directly impact producer profitability, including reducing regulatory costs, defending free markets, expanding trade opportunities, and maintaining strong beef demand.

"NCBA focused on practical, workable solutions that produced meaningful policy wins in 2025," said NCBA President Gene Copenhaver. "NCBA's efforts resulted in key tax and regulatory improvements, including expanded estate tax exemptions, a new Waters of the U.S. rules, and the rescission of the Bureau of Land Management Public Lands Rule, providing greater certainty and opportunity for cattlemen and cattlemen."

NCBA leaders noted those achievements provide a strong foundation for the organization's 2026 policy agenda, which focuses on strengthening producer profitability and addressing emerging challenges across the cattle business. The organization will advance regulatory reform, animal health protections, expanded market access, and workforce solutions that ensure the cattle and beef supply chain can continue meeting strong consumer demand.

"Now is the time to continue reforming federal regulations that have hindered conservation efforts for decades, strengthen protections against the northward spread of New World Screwworm, expand foreign market access for U.S. beef, and advance science based policies that keep beef at the center of the plate." Copenhaver said.

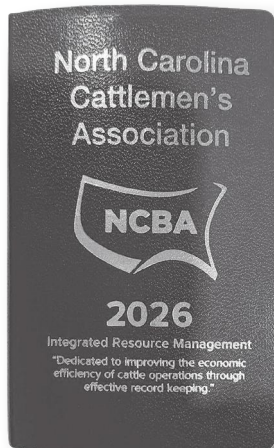
NCBA's 2026 policy priorities:

- Continue to press the administration to roll back harmful regulations to keep working lands working.
- Enhance and strengthen U.S. mitigation measures against the incursion of New World Screwworm.
- Protect the U.S. cattle herd from foreign animal diseases and pests through heightened awareness and preparedness actions.
- Expand market access for U.S. beef exports and hold trade partners accountable to ensure equivalent animal health and food safety standards for imported beef.
- Promote science based nutrition policies and sound, fact-based information for consumers.
- Push for further hours-of-service flexibility, increased truck weights, and continue delaying ELD requirements for livestock haulers.
- Safeguard the U.S. cattle and beef supply chain by working with the administration to ensure there is a strong workforce to limit processing disruptions for producers.

About the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. NCBA has represented America's cattle producers since 1898, preserving the heritage and strength of the industry through education and public policy. As the largest association of cattle producers, NCBA works to create new markets and increase demand for beef. Efforts are made possible through membership contributions. To join, contact NCBA at 866-BEEF-USA or membership@beef.org.

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CattleCon 2026 Kicks Off in the Heart of Downtown Nashville.

CattleCon 2026 broke the all time event attendance record, with more than 9,400 cattle producers and industry stakeholders converging in downtown Nashville, Tenn., for CattleCon 2026. The largest cattle industry event of the year took place February 3–5. Attendees participated in business meetings, learned the latest during educational sessions, networked with peers, and experienced all Music City has to offer.

“It is exciting to see thousands of producers gather together with the common goal of moving our business forward. This record attendance demonstrates the dedication our producers have to driving beef demand and creating policy that secures a bright future for the next generation of producers. We had an excellent lineup of educational and inspirational speakers and enjoyed seeing everyone,” said NCBA Past President Buck Wehrbein.

Throughout CattleCon, guest speakers including NASCAR legend Dale Earnhardt, Jr., New York Times bestselling author Jon Acuff, and award winning songwriter Jimmy Yeary inspired and sparked innovation. The CattleFax team, including CEO Randy Blach and atmospheric scientist Matt Makens, also provided a glimpse into what 2026 and beyond have in store for the industry. Familiar faces – and voices – Buzz Brainard, host of Music Row Happy Hour, and Bill Cody, Country Radio Hall of Famer and longtime Grand Ole Opry announcer, were also on hand.

CattleCon 2026 included many new activities, such as “Next Generation Day.” Collegiates were invited to join American National CattleWomen for an engaging and educational session dedicated to shaping the future of the cattle and beef industries. During the Emerging Leaders event, attendees connected with industry leaders, gained valuable insights, and explored exciting career and networking opportunities. Attendees could also visit participating “Career Crawl” companies at the NCBA Trade Show to explore internships, job openings, and career opportunities while engaging in meaningful conversations with agriculture professionals.

Another new event was the Prime Cut Awards – featuring the National Environmental Stewardship Award and Beef Quality Assurance Awards. This signature event brought together cattlemen and women for a night of celebration, connection, and industry pride.

Education was a cornerstone of CattleCon and new this year, all registration options included Cattlemen’s College sessions and demonstrations. In addition, while roaming the NCBA Trade Show, attendees could stop in the Learning Lounge to enjoy informal, face-to-face talks and listen to Cattle Chats, which featured beef industry educational sessions. The new Marquee Stage on the trade show floor also offered top tier programming, live broadcasts, and exclusive conversations.

Nashville is known as Music City, and CattleCon 2026 celebrated the city’s country music heritage throughout the week. Gracyn Stevens, winner of the 13th annual NCBA National Anthem Contest, performed; Paul Bogart, a CattleCon favorite, brought his down-to-earth charm to Wednesday’s Boots on Broadway (*Almost*) event; and country music stars, including headliner Vince Gill, along with The SteelDrivers, The Castellows, and Don Schlitz, shone during Cowboy’s Night at the Opry at the historic Ryman Auditorium on Thursday evening.



REGAP!

In addition, producers were hard at work guiding both NCBA policy and Beef Checkoff programs. Annual meetings of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, American National CattleWomen, CattleFax, and National Cattlemen’s Foundation also took place.

CattleFax Outlook Signals Cattle Cycle Turning as Strong Demand Meets Tight Supplies in 2026. The popular CattleFax Outlook Seminar shared expert market and weather analysis at CattleCon 2026.

“The U.S. cattle and beef industry enters 2026 with strong but volatile market conditions, as historically tight cattle supplies, record setting beef demand, and elevated policy and weather uncertainty continue to support prices, even as markets appear to near cyclical highs. Tight inventories and exceptional demand remain the dominant forces shaping the market; however, producer demographics, high input costs, and policy uncertainty point to a slow and measured expansion phase,” said Mike Murphy, CattleFax chief operating officer.

• **Weather Outlook – Transition Brings Risk** – La Niña continues to weaken and is expected to dissipate by March, with a transitional phase most likely through spring and early summer. “We’re watching a classic transition year unfold,” said Matt Makens atmospheric scientist. “Even as the ocean changes, the atmosphere typically takes four to eight weeks to respond, so weather impacts will lag.”

In the near term, drought risks remain elevated across the Southern U.S. and Central Plains, with a 70 percent chance of intensification, especially south of I-70 and west of I-35. Spring’s neutral setup may help moisture distribute more evenly, though

lingering La Niña effects could still limit precipitation west of I-35.

Summer outcomes hinge on how quickly a potential El Niño develops. A fast forming El Niño could deepen drought in corn growing regions while increasing precipitation in the West, whereas slower development may support more balanced moisture. By fall, El Niño becomes increasingly likely, though global climate factors could still alter its typical impacts. “El Niño isn’t a guarantee of rain for everyone,” Makens said. “Other global patterns can amplify or mute its influence, so close monitoring remains essential.”

• **Economic, Energy, and Feed Grain Outlook** – Shifting the discussion to an outlook on the economy, energy, and feed grains, Troy Bockelmann, CattleFax director of protein and grain analysis, noted that inflation continued to moderate in 2025, ending the year at 2.7 percent CPI growth and spending most of the year below 3 percent, the lowest since 2020–2021. With inflation relatively low, the U.S. Federal Reserve lowered interest rates in 2025, finishing the year with the Prime Rate just below 7 percent, which is still relatively high relative to the 3 percent level seen from 2009 to 2021.

“After several years of navigating economic turbulence, the U.S. is finally entering 2026 with a macroeconomic foundation that feels steady and more predictable,” said Troy Bockelmann. “Moderating inflation, improving monetary policy, and strong consumer spending are reinforcing the sense of stability across the industries we serve.”

U.S. corn production reached a record 186.5 bu/acre in 2025, driving total output to 17 billion bushels from 98.8 million planted acres. Competitive prices and ample supply are expected to boost exports in 2026. With a 13.6 percent stocks-to-use ratio, corn prices should stay in the \$4–\$5/bu range.

CattleFax shared that U.S. hay production increased slightly in 2025 to about 123 million tons. Hay prices are expected to average around \$145/ton in 2026. On the energy front, Bockelmann said that energy supply should remain adequate, keeping prices low and range bound for diesel, natural gas, and oil. When taking a look at competing proteins, pork and poultry markets are expected to see modest growth in 2026.

• **Cattle Markets – Strong Fundamentals, Shifting Dynamics** – Kevin Good, vice president of market analysis at CattleFax, reported the U.S. beef cow herd decreased 280,000, while dairy cow inventories increased by 190,000 head.

Cattle availability will remain constrained in the first half of 2026 due to limited feeder cattle supplies. Fed slaughter is projected to decline by 600,000 head, primarily early in the year, and non-fed slaughter is expected to remain historically tight at 5.6 million head. Total commercial beef production is projected to decline again in 2026, albeit at a slower pace than in 2025. With imports up 5 percent and exports down 5 percent, U.S. per capita beef supplies are forecast to be 0.2 lbs. larger in 2026 to 59.2 lbs., the largest since 2010.

Retail beef demand remained historically strong in 2025, with record retail prices supported by steady consumption and exceptional product quality. Consumer preferences continue to favor high protein, nutrient dense foods, reinforcing demand even as higher prices move through the supply chain.

“With 84 percent of fed cattle grading Choice or higher and 12 percent grading Prime, the industry is well positioned to sustain

premium pricing,” Good noted. “Beef demand continues to be anchored by exceptional quality and strong consumer confidence in beef as a premium protein. Even as markets adjust and trade flows shift, the fundamentals supporting long-term beef demand remain solid.”

• **Price Outlook for 2026** – Cattle and beef prices are forecast to average steady to higher in 2026, with risk increasing later in the year as markets anticipate larger supplies in 2027.

Cow/calf producers are expected to retain the strongest leverage as the cycle turns, supporting continued profitability for several more years. CattleFax forecasts the average 2026 fed steer price at \$224/cwt, steady from 2025. All cattle classes are expected to trade higher, with 800 lb steer prices expected to average \$335/cwt and 550 lb steer prices averaging \$440/cwt. Utility cows are expected to average \$155/cwt, with bred cows at an average of \$4,000/cwt.

The 2025 USDA All Fresh Retail Beef prices are expected to average \$9.25/pound; however, the continued increase in retail prices has CattleFax predicting consumer resistance to further price increases, even as demand is supported by a strong economy, beef quality, and dietary focus on protein.

“As we look ahead, several factors will shape the trajectory of the beef industry. The potential threat of New World Screwworm and the status of Mexican feeder cattle imports are something we’re watching closely,” Murphy said. “At the same time, shifts in packing capacity are rebalancing market leverage. Finally, the dairy industry will continue to be a growth industry, supplying more cattle to the beef industry, following strong financial performance in 2025.”

Despite near term volatility, the long-term outlook remains positive. Strong domestic demand, improving beef quality, and sufficient packing capacity are expected to continue supporting profitability for the cow/calf sector as the industry moves into the next phase of the cattle cycle.



NCBA PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

What We've Accomplished Together

By **BUCK WEHRBEIN**, *National Cattlemen's Beef Association*



I know, I know. Time goes by fast. We all say it — but still — it's hard to believe I'm sitting down to write my final column to NCBA members.

NCBA has existed for more than 125 years for one simple but vital reason: to stand up for America's cattle producers — the men and women who care for the land, raise cattle, and put in long days to keep this business moving forward. None of that work happens without engaged cattlemen and women like you. Your involvement is the foundation of everything we do, and as I close my term as president, I've never been more proud to stand alongside you as members of this association.

Because of that strong grassroots presence, NCBA was able to deliver meaningful results this past year. Together, we have voiced strong opposition to increased beef imports from Argentina, secured tax relief to help producers keep more of what they earn, and defended private property rights by pushing back against regulatory overreach through WOTUS. We've fought for common sense reforms to the Endangered Species Act, worked to create a more favorable tax and regulatory environment for future generations of cattle producers, led the effort, along with our state affiliate partners, to keep New World Screwworm out of the U.S., and advanced trade opportunities that promise long term benefits — including Australia opening its doors to imports of U.S. fresh beef. We made some meaningful progress with Secretary Rollins as our government works with grassroots producers to understand the true needs of rural America and how our business contributes to the fabric of our communities.

This past year also reminded us that market signals matter. We're experiencing record prices for cattle and beef, reflecting both historically low cattle numbers and strong demand for our product. For generations, cattle producers have worked to deliver the safest, highest quality beef in the world, and today we are finally seeing fair prices for our products. Even amid market turbulence and political rhetoric surrounding prices, our markets proved resilient, just as they always do. To witness this level of demand is truly remarkable. It's something I wish my dad could see. For everyone to recognize what we've always known — that our product is exceptional — is nothing short of incredible.

Of course, our work as an association is never finished. There will always be more to accomplish, especially as we continue to invest in the next generation of leaders, because the future depends on them just as much as it depends on us. At the same time, NCBA continues to grow and adapt, evolving to meet the changing needs of our members and the business we serve. As the German proverb reminds us, "Food is never eaten as hot as it's cooked." In other words, things often seem more daunting in the moment than they truly are. We can get bent out of shape and scared to death, but when we arrive at the challenge, it's rarely as bad — or as good — as it first appeared. Perspective matters, and with steady leadership and collaboration, we navigate uncertainty and keep moving forward.

When I began this year, I wrote that I was truly honored to serve as your NCBA president. That hasn't changed. Your trust in me has been humbling, and I am deeply grateful for it. From day one, I said my confidence didn't come from what I could accomplish alone, but from the incredible people I stand alongside, and you have proven that true at every turn.

The true strength of this association lies in its members. You are the backbone of our industry, the driving force behind our advocacy, and the reason we continue to grow and adapt. Your engagement, insight, and commitment to our shared mission — to improve the business climate, grow beef demand, and expand the world's access to U.S. beef — are what make NCBA so effective.

This year reinforced something I said early on — leadership is about listening. I've endeavored to hear you, to respect every voice, and to lead with honesty. Together, we've faced emerging threats, navigated policy shifts, and secured wins that will shape the future of our industry. As I prepare to pass the gavel, I'll leave you with this — your membership matters more than ever. Every voice and every perspective strengthens our ability to fight for your interests. Stay engaged. Share your ideas. Encourage young producers to get involved.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving as your president. It has truly been the honor of a lifetime.

God bless, and happy trails.



COLLECTIVE ACTION *Creates Change*



JOIN TODAY

☎ 866.233.3872

As your partner, NCBA champions your interests on Capitol Hill, ensuring your voice is heard in the policymaking process. Join us to amplify the impact and protect your operation for future generations.



**National Cattlemen's
Beef Association**



2025 POLICY SCORECARD

HOW DID WE DO?

PURSUE REGULATORY ACTIONS THAT ENHANCE PRODUCER PROFITABILITY

- ✓ Remove harmful regulations instituted during the Biden Administration that harm cattle producers, including:
 - ESA rules
 - NEPA rules
 - WOTUS
 - 2001 Roadless Rule
 - BLM Public Lands Rule
 - Packers and Stockyards rulemakings
- ✓ Roll back climate policies that create unnecessary regulatory burdens.
- ✓ Fight to keep beef on the plate and pursue Dietary Guidelines and federal nutrition policies that reflect the excellent nutritional value of our product.
- ✓ Ensure that all labeling requirements for fake meat products are transparent, accurate, and fair.
- ✓ Protect the U.S. cattle herd from the incursion of foreign animal diseases and support heightened preparedness actions.
- ✓ Ensure access to the use of antimicrobial drugs that will allow veterinarians to prevent, control and treat diseases in cattle.
- ✓ Push for further hours-of-service flexibility and continue delaying ELD requirements for livestock haulers.
- ✓ Fight for meaningful long-term relief from the burdensome reporting requirements of the Corporate Transparency Act.
- ✓ Work with USDA to implement the reformed "Product of USA" label to promote voluntary,

verified, trade-compliant labeling that returns greater value to producers.






- ✓ Expand market access for U.S. beef exports and ensure equivalent animal health and food safety standards for imported beef.
- ✓ Keep working lands working by protecting family farms from undue regulatory burdens under the ESA, NEPA, CWA, CAA, and other regulations.
- ✓ Streamline the federal permitting process and increase flexibility to adapt to local conditions.
- ✗ Safeguard the U.S. cattle and beef supply chain by working with the administration to ensure there is a strong workforce to limit processing disruptions for producers.

WORK WITH CONGRESS TO STRENGTHEN PRODUCER PROFITABILITY

- ✓ Work to retain core wins in the 2024 House Agriculture Committee-passed Farm Bill.
- ✓ Preserve family farms and ranches for future generations by advocating for essential tax relief for cattle producers.
- ✓ Enhance wildfire prevention utilizing targeted grazing, controlled burns, and forest management practices to protect grazing lands.
- ✓ Secure resources to support cow-calf producers as industry works to implement current disease traceability requirements.
- ✓ Protect producer access to voluntary conservation tools to support their long history of science-based resource stewardship.
- ✓ Support effective predator control measures and compensation programs for livestock depredations and ensure depredation standards work with ranchers utilizing federal lands and not against them.

NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION

1275 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 801 Washington, D.C. 20004

202.347.0228 | @BeefUSA     



National Cattlemen's
Beef Association

2026 NCBA POLICY PRIORITIES

NCBA's policy focus for 2026 is to defend the free market, promote free trade, and reduce regulatory burdens to preserve opportunities for producer profitability and strong beef demand. There will be an increased focus on elevating and defending the voices of real cattle producers and grassroots membership driven policies.

- Continue to press the administration to roll back harmful regulations to keep working lands working.
- Enhance and strengthen U.S. mitigation measures against the incursion of New World Screwworm.
- Protect the U.S. cattle herd from foreign animal diseases and pests through heightened awareness and preparedness actions.
- Expand market access for U.S. beef exports and hold trade partners accountable to ensure equivalent animal health and food safety standards for imported beef.
- Promote science-based nutrition policies and sound, fact-based information for consumers.
- Push for further hours-of-service flexibility, increased truck weights, and continue delaying ELD requirements for livestock haulers.
- Safeguard the U.S. cattle and beef supply chain by working with the administration to ensure there is a strong workforce to limit processing disruptions for producers.

NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION

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GEORGE BARBER
Cleveland Community College



MICAH BOSEMAN
N.C. State University



LILAH BYRUM
N.C. State University



MACY CHAPMAN
N.C. State University



MICAH CHAPMAN
N.C. State University



JOSIE CORRELL
Oklahoma State University



TALTON CORRELL
Mississippi State University



TRAVIS COX
Hutchinson Community College



ADELEE DILLON
University of Tennessee



SAMANTHA DURHAM
N.C. State University



KIRSTEN GREENE
N.C. State University



MORGAN HARRINGTON
University of Wyoming



MICHELLE HARTMAN
N.C. State University



EMMA HAYNES
University of Mount Olive



LYDIA HILL
Abraham Baldwin Ag College



LAUREN HOESLI
N.C. State University



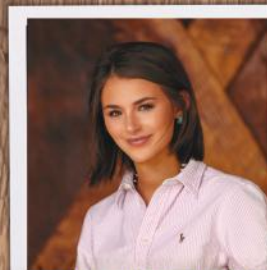
ALLEIGH JOHNSON
N.C. State University



SHANE KENDALL
Northeastern Oklahoma A&M



MAGGIE LOVE
N.C. State University



JORDAN MITCHEM
N.C. State University

NORTH CAROLINA
NCCCF
CATTLEMEN'S FOUNDATION
2025-2026
Scholarships & Travel Award



MYLEE PONDER
Asheville-Buncombe Tech



EMMA RAYNOR
N.C. State University



CAROLINE SCARLETT
N.C. State University



ABIGAIL SHAEFFER
East Carolina University



ELLIE SHUPING
N.C. State University



EMMALINE STACH
N.C. State University



OLIVIA STEGALL
N.C. State University



RACHEL THOMASON
University of Mount Olive



KINSLEY TYSON
N.C. State University



HANNAH VANOY
N.C. State University



SHAYENN VOTAW
N.C. State University



BEN WILSON
N.C. State University



AVA WOOD
N.C. State University



ALLYSON MCCARTY
N.C. State University

NORTH CAROLINA NCCCF CATTLEMEN'S FOUNDATION UPDATE

2025-2026

Scholarship Winners

The N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation awarded 33 college scholarships and 1 graduate travel award to students with backgrounds and interests related to cattle for the 2025-2026 academic year. These students aspire to pursue careers in agriculture or allied fields, particularly those related to cattle. Scholarships were awarded to students at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Cleveland Community College, East Carolina University, Hutchinson Community College, Mississippi State University, N.C. State University, Northeastern Oklahoma A&M, Oklahoma State University, the University of Mount Olive, the University of Tennessee, and the University of Wyoming.

The scholarships are funded by earnings on donations to the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation, which has been significantly supported by cattle producers in the state. The Foundation was established in 1982 with a significant donation from N.C. State University graduate E. Carroll Joyner. Since that time, numerous others have contributed to the Foundation.

The N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation is also supported by proceeds from sales of North Carolina Cattle Reflections, a history of cattle in North Carolina. The book may be purchased by contacting Kim Burdge of the N.C. Cattlemen's Association at 919-552-9111 or kim@nccattle.com or online at www.nccattle.com/resources/merchandise/cattle-reflections-order-form.

The following personal stories were provided by the 2025-2026 scholarship and travel award winners in the spring of 2025:

GEORGE BARBER

Growing up on Barber Farms my whole life and being a part of agriculture has always been something I appreciate and cherish. Impacting us from the food we eat to the clothes we wear every day, agriculture is the reason we can survive. I have been exposed to

many different aspects of agriculture. Our family farm has allowed me to learn how to raise, purchase, and manage cattle; grow, cut, and bale hay; and operate and maintain many different types of machinery. Additionally, our farm grows and sells round and square bales of equine hay to our thriving horse community. Selling quality hay has been one of the more fulfilling parts of the farming business for me because I have had the opportunity to meet a lot of different people and always enjoy making our customers happy.

With the mass urbanization going on across the state, support for our farmers is something we have to stand for more than ever. With the population of the U.S. growing, keeping food in stores is going to be one of the issues. As cities expand their size, taking over farmland and learning how to increase food production on less acreage is going to be a challenge. Educating these new neighbors about our livelihood will be more important than ever. As a future business owner, promoting farmland conservation and managing water quality and usage in agriculture are things I want to incorporate into my business. Additionally, I want to continue to work on my family's farm and expand the operation, even though I know the challenges that I will face.

This scholarship is not only going to help me financially, but I now have a stronger connection with the N.C. Cattlemen's Association and N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation and will continue to promote both. I really appreciate the support from the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation.

MICAH BOSEMAN

My name is Micah Boseman. I am from Aventon, N.C., which is in the northern part of Nash County. I'm the son of Wayne Boseman and Gretchen Journigan Boseman. I have been involved with agriculture my entire life. Both sides of my family are farmers, so I have always been interested in it. I began my involvement with cows at three years old. For Christmas that year, I asked Santa for my own cow. I was thrilled when my grandfather, Richard Journigan, also a cattle farmer, brought me an Angus cross heifer that Christmas morning in 2010. From then on, my passion for cattle and agriculture as a whole has continued to grow. My grandpa taught me how to rake hay on his AgCo-Allis tractor at the age of six, and that's where my interest began in the mechanical side of agriculture. My dad also taught me how to disc land with his uncle's John Deere 4960 at that age, and I was obsessed with both. As I got older, I began to take on more responsibility on the farm. Also, my aunt Anne J. Godwin, a cattle farmer, encouraged me at age 9 to raise beef cattle as 4-H projects.

I had learned a lot about row crop farming working for my great-uncle, Joel Boseman, in the summer. Working for him sparked my interest in row crop farming, so I began growing my own crops when I was fourteen. With the help of multiple family members, I started by growing a small amount of organic corn. I now also grow organic soybeans, and I have expanded in land, equipment, and experience.

I plan to continue farming as I study at N.C. State University. I am excited to be majoring in biological and agricultural engineering

NCCF Update continued on the next page

NCCF Update *continued from the previous page*

technology. I plan to earn my degree in four years and work in the field of agricultural engineering. No matter where I work, I intend to keep a strong connection with my family farm and the cattle industry as a whole.

I am very grateful to be receiving this scholarship. This achievement will be an amazing opportunity to continue my education. I am not only thankful for the financial benefits of this scholarship, but I am even more grateful for what it represents. With the encouragement of my neighbor, Linda Fisher, an NCCA member, I joined the NCCA when I was 15. I immediately put the NCCA license plate on my truck as soon as I got my driver's license. I am proud to carry on and be a part of the North Carolina cattle industry and grateful for those who have encouraged me along the way. This scholarship will not only help me continue my education but also help me stay active in the cattle industry. Thank you again to the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation and others who made this scholarship possible. .

LILAH BYRUM

Being a fifth generation Hereford cattle breeder, farmer's granddaughter, cattle showman, and proud member of FFA, I have a profound love for the livestock industry. Agricultural roots run deep in my heritage and in my bloodline. They are at the forefront of the memories of times spent with my grandfather riding along to care for his herd as a child. Fast forward a decade to my junior year in high school when I had the honor of completing an internship and shadowing a local traveling livestock veterinarian. After 300 hours of service with this vet, I became a certified veterinary assistant. In this I found my calling. Delighted to have a defined plan, I decided to apply to and pursue my undergraduate degree at N.C. State University in animal science and ag business management with a minor concentration in cattle genetics. Upon completion of this degree, I will apply to the N.C. State College of Veterinary Medicine to become a large animal vet. After becoming familiar with and networking with so many livestock operations in the Albemarle area, I realized the tremendous need for large livestock care here. After my education is completed, I would like to practice in the Albemarle area and take care of the people who always supported me.

The bonus of this degree in veterinary medicine, as well as my studies in cattle genetics, is the wealth of knowledge that I will use to care for and improve my own herd genetics. My deepest passion is to raise show heifers and steers for competition and to mentor youth, as I once was. My freshman year, I was afforded the opportunity to be mentored by a local cattleman and his family, and they took me under their wing and opened up a door that changed my life. Through 4-H showmanship, I found myself and a love that grew for the industry. It is because of this that I plan to pay it forward and provide showmanship, mentorship, and cattle for kids who would not otherwise have been afforded the opportunity to show. My degrees and love for FFA will also be woven into my future tapestry, and I will continue to advocate for agriculture, livestock, and the small family farm. I feel it only fitting to apply the FFA motto to my

life, as it has been the heart of what I have done for the past four years — "Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve." After the hard work, the degree, the goals achieved, and the money made, knowing I served others will be my greatest reward.

This scholarship means the world to me because my maternal grandfather was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in 2020, and we took over his cattle operation. Our intent is to keep his legacy alive and grow it and hold onto it for me, but this endeavor has been costly. This scholarship will greatly benefit me in college by alleviating the financial burden that comes with tuition and other educational expenses. As a first generation college student, I am committed to focusing on my academic and career goals without the constant stress of how to cover the costs of my education. Receiving this scholarship will allow me to dedicate more time to studying and participating in extracurricular activities, helping me to develop the skills and experiences needed for success in my field. Ultimately, this scholarship will provide me with the opportunity to maximize my potential, contribute to my community, and graduate with a strong foundation for my future career.

I would like to sincerely thank the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship committee for selecting me as a recipient of this award. I am truly honored and grateful for your support. I also want to extend a special thank you to Mr. Scott West for driving two hours to attend my high school awards banquet and personally presenting me with my scholarship certificate and a copy of *North Carolina Cattle Reflections*. It was an unforgettable moment — especially discovering that the property where my family's cattle are raised is featured in the book under "Land's End." The support I have received from this organization has meant the world to me, and I will be forever grateful.

MACY CHAPMAN

Growing up on my family's beef and dairy farm, I developed a deep rooted passion for agriculture at a young age. From feeding calves before school to helping with hay in the summer, I learned the value of hard work, responsibility, and the importance of the cattle industry in our rural communities. These experiences inspired me to pursue a career in agricultural education, where I can give back to the industry that has shaped who I am.

Currently, I am a student at N.C. State University majoring in agricultural education, with minors in ag business management, animal science, and extension education. My goal is to become an agriculture teacher and advocate who can inspire the next generation of agricultural leaders, especially those from non-farm backgrounds. I want students to understand where their food comes from and how agriculture impacts their daily lives.

I also give all the glory to God for the opportunities I've been given. My faith has guided me through the challenges of college and farm life, and it continues to strengthen my purpose in serving others through agriculture.

Receiving the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship is an incredible honor. This support not only helps relieve some of the financial burden of college but also affirms my dedication to the

cattle industry and agricultural education. It motivates me to work even harder and continue learning so I can one day make a difference in the classroom, the community, and the agricultural world at large.

I am truly thankful to the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation for investing in my future, and I look forward to giving back to the industry that has given me so much.

MICAH CHAPMAN

My name is Micah Chapman, and I am interested in agriculture as a career because it is all I have ever wanted to do. I have worked on my family's dairy and beef farm my whole life. My brother and I want to continue the farm that my grandpa started in 1967 and that my dad and uncle took over. Furthermore, agriculture has always been a central part of my life. My dad often reminded me of its importance, explaining that without farmers, there would be no food.

Through my involvement in FFA, where I served as vice president, I've developed a strong understanding of agriculture's role in our world. I've gained leadership skills, competed in events, and grown more passionate about educating others on the significance of farming. I am interested because I want to continue to feed our world and teach them that their food comes from farmers and not just the grocery store.

Ultimately, I believe that agriculture is the backbone of our world, even if many people don't recognize its importance. I hope to share this message with others, especially through my future career in agronomy and continuing my family's farm.

The lessons I've learned on my family's dairy farm — patience, hard work, compassion, resilience, and a love for agriculture — have shaped who I am. I had the opportunity to attend IFAL at N.C. State University, which furthered my interest and made me realize that I wanted to pursue agriculture as a career. I am excited to continue my journey at N.C. State University, where I can deepen my knowledge and passion for this vital industry and help people realize the importance of agriculture.

My future career plans are to build two chicken houses and have a poultry farm on the side. I want to continue to help my family with the dairy farm and bring home ideas from college to grow our family dairy farm in a community where small dairy farms are dying. I also want to continue to grow our beef farm and sell stocker cattle for meat.

At N.C. State University, I plan to get a bachelor's degree in crop and soil sciences. With this degree, I have thought about becoming an agronomist. Growing up on a farm, I've seen firsthand how challenging it can be to grow crops. You never know if the weather will cooperate or if pests and weeds will affect the harvest. I want to help farmers overcome these challenges. Whether it's identifying the right chemicals for weed control or figuring out insect problems, I want to support farmers in getting the best possible crop yield so they can have a successful year.

The N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship means a lot to me. It means that I can use this money to help pay for my education and take the financial burden off me and my family, allowing me to focus on my studies more so I can make the agricultural industry better.

JOSIE CORRELL

As a senior at Oklahoma State University, I am incredibly grateful for the continued support of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation and their generous scholarship program. Their investment in my education has made a meaningful impact on my journey.

At OSU, I've found a strong sense of community and purpose through my involvement in organizations such as the Oklahoma Collegiate Cattlemen's Association, Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow, Sigma Alpha Agricultural Sorority, and Baptist Collegiate Ministries. These groups have helped me grow personally and professionally, and they've provided me with countless opportunities to connect with others who share my passion for agriculture.

Despite only being at OSU for a short time, I've already had the chance to apply my academic knowledge in meaningful ways. Last spring, I returned to North Carolina to photograph the N.C. Hereford Classic sale. It was an incredible experience that allowed me to showcase not only the cattle but also the camaraderie and tradition that define the cattle industry. One of my greatest goals is to return to North Carolina and use my skills — especially in photography, print media, and graphic design — to help promote and tell the story of the cattle industry.

This past summer, I interned with the American-International Charolais Association. As the lead intern, I managed social media for the junior association and assisted with a variety of projects related to the Junior National and VitaFerm CharFocus. I also contributed content for the Charolais Journal, which allowed me to put into practice many of the skills I've developed through my coursework.

My deep rooted involvement in North Carolina agriculture through 4-H, FFA, the N.C. Hereford Association, and the National Junior Hereford Association sparked my passion for agricultural communication. That foundation continues to guide me as I pursue a career dedicated to advocating for and promoting the industry that shaped who I am today.

TALTON CORRELL

I recently completed my freshman year at Mississippi State University and am incredibly thankful for the continued support of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation. I'm currently majoring in poultry science with minors in Spanish and international studies in agriculture. I plan to study abroad during my junior year to broaden my perspective on global agriculture.

While I'm still exploring the many career opportunities within the agricultural industry, I'm confident that the education you're helping make possible will prepare me to choose the path that's right for me.

This past summer I was back home working on my family's farm, where I helped with our vegetable crops, cared for my egg laying hens, and assisted with our cattle. Before college, I was actively involved in 4-H and FFA at the local, state, and national levels. I showed sheep, goats, pigs, and turkeys at the N.C. State Fair and played a role in managing our cattle at home.

NCCF Update *continued from the previous page*

Agriculture has always been a central part of my life, and I've been inspired by my grandparents, who are deeply involved in the N.C. Cattlemen's Association and the N.C. Hereford Association. I'm truly grateful to the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation for their support and investment in my future.

TRAVIS COX

I am incredibly honored to be selected as a recipient of the N.C. Foundation Scholarship. As someone passionate about agriculture and deeply rooted in rural North Carolina, this support means the world to me — not only financially, but personally as well. Being recognized by an organization that plays such a vital role in our state's cattle industry inspires me to work even harder toward my goals.

My interest in agriculture began at a young age. Whether it was helping with livestock at home, showing cattle through FFA or 4-H, or simply learning about the importance of animal husbandry, I have always felt a strong connection to this way of life. The cattle industry represents more than just a career path to me — it represents heritage, hard work, and the future of sustainable food production.

Currently, I am pursuing a degree in agribusiness at Hutchinson Community College. My long term goal is to return to my family's farm and continue to raise produce and sell cattle and their products for my family and community. I hope to make a meaningful contribution to North Carolina's cattle industry, whether through hands-on work or through leadership in agricultural education or policy.

This scholarship is more than just a financial award; it's a vote of confidence in my potential. The N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation has helped ease the financial pressure of college expenses, allowing me to focus on my studies and build a strong foundation for the future. I am truly grateful and look forward to giving back to the agricultural community that has given me so much.

ADELEE DILLON

My passion for animal science began at age seven when I received my first two 4-H show lambs. Caring for these animals taught me responsibility and sparked my interest in raising quality market animals. By age ten, I joined livestock judging, where I developed my ability to evaluate livestock and communicate my decisions effectively. At 13, I recognized the importance of mentoring and coaching younger members through the 4-H livestock program. These experiences laid the foundation for my ambitions in animal science and my future career goals.

I am pursuing a major in animal science and plan to add a dual major in agricultural business and marketing. My goals include contributing to research on improving animal nutrition, educating consumers on its importance, and continuing livestock judging. I also hope to advocate for agriculture through roles in the legislature or the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship presents an opportunity to support my collegiate journey at the University of Tennessee (UT), where I am eager to delve deeper into the realm

of animal science while remaining actively engaged in livestock judging and shows. With this scholarship, I can fully immerse myself in academic pursuits with fewer financial constraints, enabling me to explore diverse facets of animal science and cultivate invaluable practical skills.

At UT, I aspire to participate in the Herbert Scholars Program, a ten week summer experiential learning opportunity. Additionally, I aim to engage in animal science undergraduate research through the Herbert Experiential Research Opportunities program. My focus would be on breeding, genetics, and nutrition, as these areas are pivotal to advancing the livestock industry. My years of researching lamb nutrition for livestock shows will be an asset in my academic and professional research endeavors. These experiences will equip me with the skills and knowledge necessary to make meaningful contributions to agriculture.

A dual major in agricultural business and marketing will prepare me to bridge the gap between scientific research and public understanding. Addressing misconceptions about food safety, animal welfare, and the environmental impact of livestock operations is critical. I am determined to foster constructive dialogue and trust between consumers and agricultural producers.

My active involvement in 4-H has exposed me to various causes and organizations supporting agriculture. I have had the privilege of meeting with legislators to advocate for the importance of 4-H and agricultural education initiatives. One memorable experience was being part of a national team that researched and presented findings to the USDA, highlighting the impact of agricultural programs on youth development. I envision myself having more conversations and presentations with the USDA and legislators in support of agricultural research in my future.

Conversations with livestock judges have helped me develop strong communication skills and industry terminology. I have enjoyed coaching children in sheep showmanship for five years, including serving as a mentor in the N.C. 4-H Leap Into Sheep Program. This year, I will compete on the UT Collegiate Livestock Judging Team. As a member of the UT Block and Bridle Club, I aspire to serve as a counselor at collegiate livestock judging and animal science camps, inspiring future agricultural leaders. I hope to always be a part of the show ring, eventually as a livestock show judge sharing my animal science knowledge and skills with youth and families for years to come.

My participation in livestock shows has also given me practical veterinary care experience, which has proven valuable in my current role as a veterinary assistant at Rocky Hill Veterinary Hospital in Knoxville. My understanding of livestock anatomy and physiology contributed to my success in class, earning me a teaching assistant position in anatomy and physiology at UT for Fall 2025. I continue to work on my family's sheep farm and participate in livestock shows.

These experiences demonstrate my ability to apply hands-on skills in professional settings with minimal additional training. I am considering veterinary school after I finish my undergraduate degree.

Looking ahead, I am driven to contribute to animal science

research and advocacy. My experiences in livestock judging, showing, and 4-H have provided me with industry knowledge, research skills, veterinary practice experience, and strong communication and mentoring abilities. With this scholarship's support, I will continue developing the skills needed to drive meaningful change in animal science and agriculture. Whether working in genetics, nutrition, or agricultural policy, I aim to promote sustainability and innovation in the livestock industry.

SAMANTHA DURHAM

My name is Samantha Durham, and I'm a junior at N.C. State University majoring in animal science with a concentration in veterinary bioscience. I was raised on a black Angus cattle farm in southern Orange County, where my family produces around 70 feeder lot calves annually. Growing up immersed in agriculture has given me a strong work ethic, invaluable life skills, and a deep appreciation for the cattle industry — a legacy I'm passionate about continuing.

In addition to raising feeder calves, I've developed a strong interest in livestock judging. In high school, I competed with our FFA Livestock Evaluation team, which won first place at the state level and earned gold honors at the National FFA Convention in Indiana. This experience taught me the value of teamwork, discipline, and shared knowledge. At N.C. State University, I've continued this passion through the collegiate livestock judging team, competing in smaller contests and preparing for larger ones in the upcoming season. I'm also an active member of the Collegiate Young Farmers and Ranchers Club, where I've built strong relationships with peers who share my dedication to agriculture.

Last summer, I had the opportunity to work on a ranch in Ellsworth, Neb., where I helped manage 700 head of Angus and Red Angus cattle across 30,000 acres. This experience gave me a broader perspective on ranch operations and strengthened both my practical skills and personal growth. After completing my undergraduate degree, I plan to attend veterinary school to specialize in large animal medicine. My long term goal is to establish a veterinary practice on our family farm, complete with a mobile unit for on-farm calls and a working facility for diagnostic testing in bovine and equine care. I also plan to grow a herd of registered black Angus cattle, using my artificial insemination certification to improve genetics and market value.

Receiving the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation Scholarship is a tremendous honor. It eases the financial burden of my education and encourages me to continue working hard toward my goals. I'm deeply grateful for the support of the cattle industry in North Carolina and excited for the opportunities ahead as I pursue a future rooted in agriculture.

KIRSTEN GREENE

My name is Kirsten Greene. I am currently attending N.C. State University's Ag Institute, double majoring in livestock and poultry management and ag business. I hope to use my skills and education to further promote the beef industry and agriculture as a whole.

Growing up on a farm and with my parents' careers rooted in the agricultural industry, I was naturally drawn to agriculture. I

began showing goats and sheep at a young age in 4-H and later added heifers. In high school, I enjoyed holding multiple leadership roles as an FFA officer. I was also fortunate to serve as an N.C. Beef Ambassador, where I had the opportunity to promote the beef industry and share my passion with others.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year at N.C. State University, where I've had the opportunity to meet many incredible people. From professors with diverse academic and cultural backgrounds to friends from farms across the state, I've been exposed to a wide range of perspectives and practices within agriculture. This experience has deepened my appreciation for the field and expanded my understanding of its impact on communities and the environment.

I would like to thank the donors of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation Scholarship for their continued support in allowing youth like myself to further our education.

MORGAN HARRINGTON

My name is Morgan Harrington, and I am one of this year's N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship recipients. I have been involved in agriculture since I was little, mainly coming from an equine based background. My parents have both contributed to this, as my dad is a farrier and my mom worked at an emergency equine hospital. I compete in both Western and English riding events such as ranch work, hunter shows, and jumping. While it may seem I am on a single agricultural path in the equine industry, being in FFA has opened so many new ideas and opportunities.

I first became interested in agricultural communications in my freshman year of high school. Since then, I have decided that it is the career path I plan to take and pursue in college. I am finishing my bachelor's degree in agricultural communications at the University of Wyoming. I hope to get internship opportunities with companies such as the PBR and *Cowboy Channel* while in school to help pursue my career. I served as the reporter for my FFA chapter, and in doing so I gained skills in social media and marketing that I can use in my career. I have a love and passion for the American farmer and rancher. I hope to use my degree in agricultural communications to inform others on how important the agriculture industry is.

I would like to thank everyone involved with the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation for supporting young agriculturalists like myself. Your efforts do not go unseen, and this scholarship will help in providing for my future educational goals. I plan to make an impact on the agriculture industry, and it is because of you that I can do so.

MICHELLE HARTMAN

Agriculture has always been a passion of mine from an early age. Following in the footsteps of a long line of family tradition, agriculture is a big part of me. The best day of my life was when I was able to handle a show steer on my own, and thus began my showing career. I take part in all aspects of our cattle operations, from feeding to record keeping, but the most rewarding part is when I market a finished show steer, aid with the processing at our family

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meat market, and help load the product into the satisfied customer's vehicle. This is helping our economy stay local, all the while getting the public to support children's 4-H projects. In my eyes, this is a win for everybody!

I currently attend N.C. State University with my major being agricultural science. My passions are agriculture and science, so pursuing a future career in veterinary medicine will allow me to fulfill my lifelong dream. Coming from a rural farming county, I see the importance of both. Science keeps the world evolving, and agriculture keeps the world fed. Growing up on a family tobacco farm and showing livestock has given me first hand experiences and an amazing work ethic that I feel will help me excel in the profession. My interest is to give back to my rural community and educate anyone that will listen about agriculture. I am grateful to the president and the board of directors of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation for investing in my future with this scholarship and putting me one step closer to achieving my dream.

EMMA HAYNES

Imagine this — you walk into a convention center, and as far as the eye can see are rabbits. This is where my journey in agriculture began. Throughout my time in North Carolina agriculture, I have been a member of 4-H since I was five years old, a member of FFA, an IFAL (Institute for Future Agricultural Leaders) graduate, and I have advocated for agriculture through the Miss U.S. Agriculture Program. While in college, I have joined the UMO Honors Program, Animal Science Club, Collegiate Young Farmers and Ranchers, and Collegiate Future Farmers of America. While growing up in Granville County, I have realized that my life's motto is to always strive to keep agriculture alive for generations to come.

With a degree in animal science from the University of Mount Olive, I would like to teach others the importance of agriculture and fight for it. I want to help the general public see that agriculture is not an idea to throw away as soon as they hear about it. Agriculture is how we work, how we live, and how we strive as a society. It widely impacts us on a daily basis, so I believe it is my job to advocate for the way of life that I enjoy most and find intriguing at the very same time.

My ideal future profession would be either a livestock/4-H agent, owning a farm, or becoming a professor in animal science. Another goal of mine is to learn how to do artificial insemination! I come into contact with many people who think their food magically appears at the grocery store, which needs to be changed. You have to remember — No farmers. No food. No future. In addition to this, I worked on a horse farm from late 2021 to early 2023 and absolutely enjoyed my time there. It felt like home every time I went to work, so I would like to continue this within my career and life.

Thankful is quite an understated choice of wording when it comes to how much I appreciate agriculture being a part of my life and having the opportunity to receive the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship. To give a personal anecdote, I grew up snapping green beans with my grandparents. It made me realize

that almost everything we see in life involves agriculture — books, blankets, pearls (aquaculture), leather shoes or jackets, etc. Whether it is learning how the world works or gaining knowledge on agriculture every day, I am determined to set my eyes upon educating the community.

Overall, it means the absolute world to me knowing the fact that the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation has my back in furthering my education. It makes me feel incredibly honored and grateful to have their support. Education helps someone make connections and learn about the world we live in. If people have no idea where the clothes on their backs or where their food comes from, then where and how will the world go forward in the future? It will ultimately cease to exist if we decide not to focus on educating the community on agriculture; therefore, thank you, N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation, for this opportunity in not only helping me achieve my educational goals but also helping others see that it is essential for agriculture to stay in our lives for generations to come.

LYDIA HILL

Born and raised on a commercial cow/calf operation in Marshville, N.C., I have always had a strong connection to agriculture. Whether feeding, tagging, or working our cattle, I was helping on the farm from a young age. Still, my passion for agriculture did not fully blossom until my first year at West Stanly High School.

While I spent my childhood in competitive dance, everything changed when I began taking agriculture classes with Mrs. Rogers. She introduced me to our FFA chapter, where I quickly discovered that the agricultural industry was where I truly belonged. I competed in career development events, held multiple officer positions, and began showing registered Angus and Simmental heifers through the Carolina Farm Credit Show Circuit and at the N.C. State Fair. My favorite CDEs — Meats Judging, Livestock Judging, and Employment Skills — allowed me to sharpen practical skills while growing as a leader.

These opportunities ultimately sparked my passion for leadership and agricultural advocacy, which led me to become an N.C. Beef Ambassador. Talking about agriculture came naturally, but speaking about cattle made it even more meaningful. I earned the ambassador title in 2023 after attending the Perry & Doris Teeter Beef Leadership Institute, a transformative experience that strengthened my communication skills and helped me build lasting industry connections.

I was a busy student, but I was never alone. My grandfather, a former FFA advisor at Central Cabarrus High School, was my number one supporter. He always called to check in after my judging contests, asked about my work as a beef ambassador, and loved sharing stories of his teaching days. When he passed away on March 14, 2024, I struggled with the loss of someone I expected to be by my side for key milestones, like retiring from my senior FFA officer role. For a while, I considered giving up on my dreams. However, after time spent grieving and reflecting, I realized he would want nothing more than for me to chase those dreams even harder in his honor.

Today, I am a full time student at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) in Tifton, Ga., majoring in agricultural communications with a minor in agribusiness. I plan to graduate in December 2026 and have made it a personal goal to embrace every opportunity that comes my way. Since arriving in August of 2024, I have served as a Georgia Collegiate Beef Ambassador (GCBA), joined ABAC's National Ag Communicators of Tomorrow (NACT) chapter, and taken a part time position working at the Georgia Department of Agriculture Seed Lab. I recently transitioned from my role as a GCBA to serve as secretary on the Georgia Junior Cattlemen's Association officer team. I was elected as the Member Relations Coordinator for NACT this past summer.

In addition to completing my undergraduate studies, I plan to continue exploring Georgia agriculture, build professional relationships, and gain valuable career experience through internships. After earning my bachelor's degree, I plan to pursue graduate studies, focusing on advocacy and policy based research. While I do not have a specific employer, my long term goal is simple – I want to advocate for agriculture through writing, traveling, and public speaking. Eventually, I hope to give back to the N.C. FFA Association, which shaped my identity. Once I have spent my early career years traveling and working, I would love to return to my roots by running my own cow/calf operation, giving back to the part of the agricultural community that raised me.

It is an incredible honor to receive the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation Scholarship again. No other industry compares to agriculture's generosity and its family like atmosphere. As producers, we must stand together to feed the world, and the NCCF is doing just that by investing in the next generation of cattlemen and women. Attending college out of state is a significant commitment, but this scholarship helps make my goals more attainable. Thanks to this support, I am one step closer to becoming the advocate that agriculture needs.

LAUREN HOESLI

My interest in the cattle industry began as a young livestock kid spending time in the barns at our county fair. I was always eager to sit ringside, ask questions, and soak up everything I could about the livestock world. Although I primarily showed market lambs and swine, I developed a deep passion for cattle and agriculture as a whole. I also had the opportunity several times as a youth to help family friends with their cattle operations, assisting during brandings and herd health days, which only strengthened my interest.

In high school, I joined the FFA and began livestock judging, which became a gateway to truly understanding and appreciating the livestock industry. Through judging contests, I traveled across the country, met producers, and learned firsthand about different operations. These experiences not only broadened my knowledge of livestock production and industry trends but also solidified my desire to be involved in agriculture long term.

As I considered my future, I realized agriculture wasn't just a passion, it was my calling. I'm now pursuing a degree in communication: public relations and agricultural science at N.C. State University. My goal is to work in event operations or public

relations for a major agricultural non-profit organization. Through my studies, I've explored the diversity of agriculture in North Carolina and across the United States. I've gained insight into not only the livestock sector but also agronomy, precision agriculture, and horticulture. Even as I expand my knowledge, I always find myself drawn back to livestock, especially cattle.

Receiving the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship means that the Foundation sees potential in me as a future leader in agriculture and wants to invest in that journey. I'm incredibly grateful for this support. It allows me to continue taking advantage of opportunities that will equip me with the skills and knowledge I need to give back to the industry that has given me so much.

ALLEIGH JOHNSON

I am a recipient of the 2025-2026 N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship and would like to share why I am deserving of this scholarship. This scholarship is incredibly important to me, as it represents recognition for my hard work and dedication. It will provide me with the financial support I need to pursue my academic and career goals without worrying about the burden of student debt. This scholarship displays that my efforts have been noticed and appreciated, and it gives me the motivation and encouragement I need to continue striving towards my academic and career goals within the agriculture industry. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity, and I will make the most of it by working hard and making a positive impact in my field. Thank you for believing in me and investing in my future within the agriculture and cattle industry.

I have been raised exclusively on a dairy farm my entire life, at least until the past couple of years. My family and I have just recently become more familiar with other avenues of agriculture. We now have an Angus cow/calf operation, and we raise soybeans, wheat, and other crops as well. We also produce hay and sell it to other local livestock producers. I continue to carry some of the responsibilities I had on our dairy farm, but with our beef herd. Even though a lot has changed, I have gained so much knowledge and new opportunities through the many different aspects of agriculture I have been involved with.

I am currently a junior at N.C. State University working towards obtaining a bachelor's degree in agricultural science to educate the next generation of future leaders in the agriculture industry. I chose this major because I want to educate students about what it takes to feed this world's ever growing population and, in the process, hopefully ignite their own interests in the agricultural field. Since I was born into a farming family, I feel very blessed and fortunate to have grown up in this background, as less than two percent of the U.S. population farms today. Growing up on our farm has given me various responsibilities and taught me skills that otherwise wouldn't have been provided for me. My heavy involvement within FFA and 4-H has made a lasting impact on me and inspired me to further my career in agricultural education. Because of my unique upbringing, I feel the need to now go and share my agricultural experiences with the next generation of students.

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SHANE KENDALL

I grew up on a small family farm in Sampson County. With my father being a swine nutritionist for Prestage Farms and my mother growing up on a farm and working as an extension agent, I was not a stranger to agriculture or hard work. Growing up, both of my parents supported my older brother Wyatt and me in showing lambs, pigs, and cattle. From my first calf being a bottle fed steer to winning the state fair and other shows, I believe there is not a thing you can't do in the agriculture industry if you put your mind to it. The cattle industry has led to many opportunities throughout my life and meeting some of the smartest and nicest people in the agricultural industry in North Carolina.

With time, our family settled on showing cattle naturally with the help of Nicholas Edwards and Edwards Land and Cattle. I was given the opportunity to travel across the U.S., showing cattle and meeting new people. I went on to find many good people in the Limousin industry and joined the National Junior Board for that association.

Being a part of that board has opened many doors to places to go for college, but I ended up settling with Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College in the small town of Miami, Oklahoma. I have finished my first year there as a part of the livestock team, learning many new things in a different part of the show world but still being able to stick to my production cattle roots. Like my grandpa taught me working for him many summers in southern Indiana. At college I met more people in the agricultural sector, which led me to work with one of my friends for the summer in Montana and see the world from another, different perspective.

My future plans include attending Oklahoma State University in search of a degree in animal nutrition. The 2025 N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship will be very helpful towards this goal and help me pay for school but also to know that people back in my home state still support my endeavors. I still hold to the values that my parents and the state of North Carolina have taught me and look forward to sharing it with other parts of my life.

MAGGIE LOVE

Growing up on my family's row crop and livestock farm in Rowland, N.C., I developed a deep passion for the food animal industry. From helping with hay and repairing fences to bottle feeding calves from our small cow/calf herd, I've been hands-on in agriculture from an early age. These experiences have been both encouraging and inspiring, planting the seed for my future in the field.

Both sides of my family have long been involved in the N.C. Cattlemen's Association. I grew up attending cattle sales and conferences with my dad and granddad, and those early experiences left a lasting impression on me. They fueled my love for the cattle industry and gave me a first hand look at the hard work, dedication, and community that make this industry so special.

My involvement in agriculture expanded through participation in Robeson and Bladen County 4-H, where I showed goats, chickens, and even a turkey at local and state fairs. These youth experiences helped lead me to pursue a double major in animal and poultry science at N.C. State University. While there, I've been fortunate to stay actively engaged in student organizations, serving as an officer for the Poultry Science Club and the National Wild Turkey Federation Collegiate Chapter. I'm also a member of the N.C. Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Club, both collegiate and local. During my summers, I completed two valuable internships in the turkey and swine divisions with Prestage Farms, which helped me build practical experience and deepen my knowledge of the food animal industry.

Currently, I am serving as an intern with the N.C. Cattlemen's Association, and I am loving every minute of it. This experience has been incredibly rewarding. I've learned so much, met amazing people, and had the opportunity to contribute to an organization that has played such a big role in my life. It's an experience that has further deepened my love for agriculture and confirmed that I'm on the right path.

I am also super excited to share that I have been accepted into N.C. State University's Food Animal Scholars program, with plans to begin veterinary school in the fall of 2026. As a Food Animal Scholar, I will receive focused mentorship, hands-on experience, and early admission to the College of Veterinary Medicine, all of which are helping me prepare to serve the livestock industries of North Carolina.

Receiving the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation Scholarship means so much to me. I appreciate this support more than words can express. I truly would not have been able to accomplish all that I have without the support of organizations like this one and the generosity of its donors. This scholarship is more than financial

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help; it's a reminder that I'm part of a strong, supportive agricultural community that believes in the next generation.

After completing my degree, I hope to pursue a career that allows me to give back to the food animal industries that have shaped my life. I also look forward to returning home and helping grow our family's cow/calf operation, bringing back knowledge gained from my studies and opportunities such as this. I'm incredibly grateful for this scholarship and for the opportunity to be a part of a community that invests in the future of agriculture.

JORDAN MITCHEM

I'm a sixth generation farmer. My mom was raised on an eastern North Carolina tobacco and cattle farm. My dad and mom continue my father's family row crops, fruit, and cattle farm in western North Carolina. My earliest memories are of being in the cattle pasture. I would ride with my grandfather on the tractor and tag along with my father as he fed the cattle. I wanted to be just like my older sister and show cattle. I became the cattle heat checker and calving watch before I knew what these things were, as I would just sit and watch the cattle and report what I saw to my parents.

At age 5, I started showing lambs. At the age of 6, I showed my first heifer, and by the age of 8, I had exhibited at my first Junior National Hereford Expo. Showing cattle has opened doors for me to learn more about the cattle and agriculture industry and helped me develop leadership and public speaking skills.

I am involved with 4-H, the N.C. Junior Hereford Association, and the National Junior Hereford Association. I participate in these organizations' livestock judging, public speaking, and leadership opportunities. My cattle have succeeded in the show ring nationally, and I have placed in the top in showmanship nationally. I have been a state winner in livestock judging and public speaking contests. I have served as vice president of the Western District 4-H and as president of the N.C. Junior Hereford Association. I plan to run for the National Junior Hereford Association Board of Directors this summer.

Today, I am involved in the daily operations of our family farm. I am solely responsible for the care, maintenance, and training of the show cattle. I help manage and make decisions for our 75 head registered Hereford cattle herd. Our herd is managed quite intensively, as we utilize artificial insemination and embryo transfer extensively, and I assist daily with all aspects. Additionally, I am involved with the daily operations of our row crop and blackberry farming operations. I can do whatever needs to be done that day, whether it's baling hay or helping coordinate our migrant labor employees.

At N.C. State University, I am majoring in animal science and biochemistry. I love science and exploring how subjects like chemistry and biology relate to everyday farm activities. After completing my undergraduate studies, I plan to attend veterinary, graduate, or law school. Regardless of my choice, I will utilize my knowledge to help promote agriculture. As a veterinarian, I will work to support large animal producers. In graduate school, I will conduct research to gain more knowledge that can help farmers. If I attend law school, I plan to work in ag law, providing a needed farmer's perspective. I also plan to return home and continue our

family farm and its legacy. I have built a quality herd of Hereford cattle that I plan to continue and pass on to my children someday. To know me is to see today's agriculture, and I plan to spend my life positively impacting the industry that made me.

It is an honor to be selected to receive the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship. This scholarship will enable me to focus on my studies at college, return home on weekends to help on the farm, and incur less student debt. I am grateful for this financial help and will do all I can to support the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation upon graduation.

MYLEE PONDER

First off, I would like to express my sincerest thanks to you and the entire N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation for selecting me to be a recipient of the 2025-2026 scholarship. I am Mylee Ponder, a graduate of North Buncombe High School. I was born and raised in Western North Carolina and plan to stay for the next two years in college.

Over the past four years, I have been introduced to and immersed in the world of agriculture. I am what most would call a "non traditional ag student." Through my involvement in FFA on the chapter and regional level, goat showing, various internships, and my job at a local feed and seed store, I have seen a fraction of the agriculture industry pie. I've shown Boer goats for the past three years at over 35 shows from South Carolina to the N.C. State Fair. Last spring I was allowed the opportunity to intern at the Western North Carolina Farmers Market, where I was able to study many crops and producers here locally in Western North Carolina. My job at a local feed store has allowed me to see ag marketing skills as labels on a feed bag, ag business skills from my boss, and the day-to-day life of farmers who are most of the customers I work the front desk for. Through these experiences, my eyes have been opened to the world around me in many ways. I've understood that agriculture is far more than what meets the eye. It's what makes our world go round.

I'm still unsure of what career I want to pursue; however, my interest and love is agriculture. I plan to be a part of the next generation of agriculturalists whether that be in an office organizing events, or in the field doing lab work. I am beyond grateful for the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation and am thankful to have a small part in it. I am excited about what this next year holds!

EMMA RAYNOR

My name is Emma Raynor. I'm from Deep Run, North Carolina. I am the daughter of Deral and Kelly Raynor, and I've grown up surrounded by agriculture, livestock, and a community that values hard work and tradition. From a young age, I found my passion in the livestock industry through 4-H and FFA, where I was actively involved in showing livestock and building a strong foundation in animal agriculture.

In addition to showing cattle, I participated in livestock judging and skillathon competitions. These experiences deepened my

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understanding of animal science and livestock evaluation while also sharpening my communication and decision making skills. These contests taught me to think critically, work as part of a team, and advocate for agriculture. They also connected me with peers and mentors who shared my enthusiasm for livestock and helped guide my future path.

My passion for the livestock industry grew stronger during my time showing livestock. This experience taught me the intricacies of herd health, pasture management, and the business side of livestock production. It also reinforced my commitment to advocate for agriculture and ensure that producers have a voice in the policy decisions that affect their livelihoods. This passion has inspired me to pursue a career in agricultural law, where I can work to protect the interests of farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.

Looking ahead, I plan to attend law school and pursue a career in agricultural law. My goal is to advocate for farmers, ranchers, and rural communities — ensuring they have the resources and representation they need to thrive. I want to be a voice for the people who feed and fuel our country, and I believe that combining my agricultural background with a legal education is the best way I can serve them.

Receiving the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship is a tremendous honor. It means so much to know that the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation and the N.C. Cattlemen's Association believe in my goals and want to support students like me who are passionate about agriculture. This scholarship is helping me take the next step toward my future, and I am truly grateful for the investment they've made in me and in the future of our industry.

CAROLINE SCARLETT

The cattle industry has made a huge difference in my life since I was little. I grew up on Scarlett Farms, where we raise Angus cows. My grandpa first started the family tradition of raising livestock, and that tradition has been carried on by my dad while he raised me. We sell beef as well as high quality heifers, cows, and bulls.

I have also been a part of the N.C. Junior Angus Association for as long as I can remember. Because I am involved in the NCJAA, in 2014 at the Eastern Regional Junior Angus Show, I showed my first cow at eight years old. My love for showing grew from there. My family and I began picking heifers from our herd for my brother and me to show. We joined the Farm Credit Circuit later that year with two heifers that we raised. Every weekend in the fall from then on has been filled with countless county shows. We also attend larger shows like the N.C. State Fair and Eastern Regionals each year.

I attend N.C. State University and major in chemical engineering with a minor in agricultural business management. The N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship will greatly help in paying for college. I am so thankful for all those who raised the money for this scholarship. I hope to give back to the cattle industry with the education I will gain at N.C. State University. I would especially love to impact the future generation of cow showmen.

ABIGAIL SHAEFFER

Over the years, showing cattle at the N.C. State Fair and various local shows has been a passion of mine. I have grown a great respect for the cattle industry, and I am blessed for the opportunities the Granville County beef producers have given me. Our local cattlemen have allowed me to work with their cattle because I do not live on a farm. As the vice president of the South Granville FFA, I helped initiate the pilot program between the Butner Beef Cattle Field Lab and the South Granville High School FFA. This allows others to gain education on the cattle industry and to have the wonderful experience of showing cattle just like me. Along with me showing cattle, both of my parents have worked with beef cattle at N.C. State University for over 20 years. Aside from the cattle industry, I have been involved in 4-H for 14 years total. I have been showing chickens at the Four County Pullet Chain Show for 14 years and showing turkeys at the N.C. State Fair for eight years. Showing livestock has taught me responsibility, problem solving skills, perseverance, networking, and confidence that will lead me in my East Carolina University academics and future career as a dentist. My experience with cattle has instilled a passion in me to one day have a small farm of my own to raise my family.

Ever since I was little, and even now, I have always wanted to become a dentist or even an orthodontist. I love having and seeing others with a beautiful smile. I will be transferring to East Carolina University with an associate's degree after being dual enrolled at both Granville Early College High School and Vance Granville Community College. I am hoping to earn my bachelor's degree in biology and have all my prerequisites for dental school in two years. After receiving my B.S. degree, I hope to be accepted into dental school, which will be an additional four years of schooling, where I will one day start my dream job earning a substantial wage. In order to achieve these goals, I will need to focus and work hard on my academic career and possibly do internships/shadowing to further my knowledge of dental practices. This will keep me ahead of others, boosting my chances of getting into dental school.

Some goals I have as a potential dental practitioner in a rural community will be to make my business affordable to meet the needs of others and also create a work environment that enhances teamwork, growth opportunities, and a work-life balance for my employees. I want to effectively lead and manage others to help individuals meet their full potential. As the owner of the practice, I plan to do community outreach within the local schools by providing toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental hygiene education, and more. I will encourage my employees to have community involvement, open and honest communication, a great work ethic, and maintain professionalism while still having fun in the office. In order to achieve these goals, I will most likely need to start off working for someone else so I can pay off my student loans and get on my feet. There will most definitely be some ups and downs when I start to grow my business, but I will need to stay strong to achieve my goals.

I believe this scholarship will help me reach the goal of becoming a dentist, which will allow me to serve the rural community by

boosting self confidence in my patients through a beautiful smile. As you well know, smiling is contagious and gives off a positive vibe. The scholarship will take away some of the expenses that I may have, such as housing, tuition, books, etc. Although I will be graduating high school with an associate's degree, I still have six more years of college to become a dentist. As someone who comes from a household that is only able to support me with minimal expenses, receiving this scholarship helps to alleviate the financial burdens of higher education. It gives me the chance to focus more on my studies and future goals instead of worrying about finances.

ELLIE SHUPING

Hello, everyone. I would like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Ellie Shuping. I am a graduate of Patton High School in Morganton. I am a 2025-2026 recipient of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship. I am deeply grateful for this scholarship and what it will mean for my educational pursuits.

I grew up showing and raising sheep and cattle. I have always had my roots planted in agriculture, and I knew it was where I wanted my roots to go even more profoundly as I further my education at N.C. State University in the spring of 2026. I plan to get my bachelor's degree in poultry science and agricultural marketing.

Over the past four years, I have been branching out my farming knowledge. I have given presentations on show cattle and commercial cattle for homeschool and public school children. My family and I started a "you-pick" flower patch and pumpkin patch at our farm, along with opening a mercantile where we sell our beef, eggs, and other farmhouse decor, as well as Riverbend Creamery milk and Ashe County cheese. These roots that I have planted ever so deeply continue to help me grow, and being part of such a strong industry has helped me in ways I could never have even imagined.

Two years ago, I joined the N.C. Junior Angus Association and assumed the roles of reporter and Western District director. This year, I am the secretary and North Carolina Princess. Being a part of this association and board has led me to places I never thought I would go. Last summer, I went to LEAD in Baton Rouge, La., with the National Junior Angus Association, and saying it was the most amazing experience is an understatement. I left Louisiana with more friends and connections than I had ever dreamt of.

This past April, I went to Raising the Bar in Lincoln, Nebraska. This trip, I met only a handful of new people, but it was still an incredible experience with people who have become my lifelong best friends. The cattle industry has been a constant presence throughout my highs and lows, bringing me to some of my highest and lowest points. But by being a part of something so substantial, I have been able to get through it all.

EMMALINE STACH

My interest in agriculture first began sophomore year when I joined the Future Farmers of America organization at my high school. Although I did not grow up on a farm, I have had various connections to agriculture through my family, such as my aunt owning a beef cattle farm, an additional aunt working for the USDA, as well as my father's career in landscape architecture. As I returned

to my roots in agriculture, I took hold of the many opportunities that FFA gave me. The opportunity of working with livestock has been one of my favorite aspects throughout my participation in FFA. From helping feed bottle calves to kid goats to showing goats, and additionally working and handling cattle as my team has prepared for the WNC Cattle Handling competition two years in a row. All of these experiences, including competitions, events, and officer positions at both the chapter and regional level, have played a vital role in shaping my future pursuits.

My professional aspiration is to become an agriculture education teacher because of the impact that my agriculture teacher made on my life. He inspired me through his passion for sharing his love of agriculture with his students and helping each of us cultivate our individual aspirations in and out of the classroom. Attaining a degree in agricultural education will allow me to make the same positive difference in the lives of other students that he made in mine. I hope to help my future students to grow while teaching them new things about the agriculture and cattle industry. Through hands-on and classroom activities, I intend to help students grow in their understanding of agriculture and overcome the misconceptions of agriculture that persist today. Through interactive agriculture teaching and student experiences through organizations such as the FFA or 4-H, they will learn and understand skills that are vital for any job they pursue. Agricultural educators not only teach about agriculture, food science, and natural resources but also teach important life skills.

Although only a senior in high school, I recognize the important role that scholarships can play in one's education moving forward. Attending the N.C. State University has been a life goal of mine. As the youngest of five children from a single income family, scholarships are very beneficial to my ability to enroll. Through the help of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation, I was able to fulfill this goal this past fall when I arrived at N.C. State University as an incoming freshman. This scholarship will allow me to receive a degree in a place where I am best suited to advance in my education and pursue my aspirations of becoming an agriculture educator. I will use this scholarship along with others to continue my strong record of academic achievement and demonstrated leadership, and in so doing, represent the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation well.

OLIVIA STEGALL

My name is Olivia Stegall, and I am proud to be a recipient of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship. My love for agriculture started on my family's dairy farm and row cropping operation. I always loved helping around the farm, and I still do today. From working cattle on my grandpa's beef cattle operation, working in the greenhouse at school, or working at my internship with Ridgeview Land and Cattle.

In high school, I joined FFA and began a supervised agricultural experience project (SAE project) in agricultural communications. It started off with brochures I put out at my county agriculture center, and then I created my own website. My website, The Turquoise Tractor,

NCCF Update *continued from the previous page*

contains articles on agricultural issues, digital resources, podcast episodes, and even a digital copy of the magazine I created. One of my articles was previously featured in *The Carolina Cattle Connection*, also! This project has allowed me to learn networking skills, researching, validity, and ultimately, what I want to do as a career.

I attend N.C. State University, majoring in agricultural education. With this degree, I will be able to be an agricultural teacher. I am beyond excited to advocate for such an important industry every day throughout my career. The hands-on curriculum and real world application are vital to keep students engaged. Equipping students with the means to pursue careers in agriculture is extremely important in our growing economy and world today.

The N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship is an amazing opportunity for students in agriculture, and I am extremely grateful to have been accepted as one of the recipients. It is a full circle moment, as I remember researching and writing about this scholarship being offered in an article. The article was then published in *The Carolina Cattle Connection*, so it is crazy that I am now a recipient. This scholarship will allow me to put less financial strain on myself in college and focus on my education. I plan to still work in college and save for my future. This scholarship also will allow me to save more toward my future. The staff at NCCF have been so great throughout this whole process, from networking with a representative when I first started writing articles to being helpful and kind throughout the scholarship process. I am so excited for my future supported by the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation — thank you!

RACHAL THOMASON

I am currently pursuing an agriculture degree at the University of Mount Olive. I am majoring in veterinary bioscience and minoring in chemistry, biology, and agribusiness. However, my agricultural roots sprouted at an early age. I grew up on a family farm, showing livestock and being involved in the 4-H organization. Growing up on a family farm really instilled many strong personal skills that I am beyond thankful for. I grew up around livestock — specifically cattle, sheep, and poultry. By growing up knee deep in agriculture, it showed me my true passion.

I have found my passion for livestock animals and aim to become a livestock veterinarian in the future. I knew from an early age that I wanted to pursue a career in veterinarian medicine when one of my show animals did not make it to be able to fulfill his full lifetime. The veterinarian came out and performed a necropsy right there in the backyard and told me exactly what had happened. The feeling of knowing and the feeling that the veterinarian gave me left a profound impact on shaping who I am. I knew from that moment on that I too wanted to help people and make them feel the same way that I did when the veterinarian told me the exact thing that had happened.

Growing up with deep roots in agriculture, I knew it was my calling to continue to grow in agriculture and help shape the next generation that engages in agriculture. With my aspirations to

become a livestock veterinarian, I am very appreciative of being one of this year's recipients of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship. This scholarship will help me in the funding process of my educational journey. But the true meaning of this scholarship goes further than financial support. This scholarship is a very honorable scholarship that recognizes my hard work and passion for livestock. The younger me that spent days and nights in the barn would be grinning ear to ear if only she knew that I had accomplished this goal.

Also, while growing up it was instilled in me that education is particularly important, and it would take me anywhere I wanted it to. Therefore, I have always taken my education seriously, trying to do my best and put my best foot forward in all my educational endeavors. Although, early in my education, I thrived on trying to soak up any and everything I could learn. When I entered high school, the same principal still applied. Except this time, I was trying to learn everything that would help me gain useful knowledge of various veterinary medicine information while also focusing on being a well rounded student. Now, in college, everything remains. I am soaking in and absorbing all the information, skills, and wisdom I can.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who played a part in my life thus far. Thank you to everyone who told me that I can do it and that if I set my mind to it, I can accomplish it. I would also like to thank anyone who was in the decision making process of deciding the recipients of this honorable scholarship. It means a lot to me to be awarded this scholarship; I greatly appreciate it.

KINSLEY TYSON

I am from a small rural town in North Carolina. I live on property that was once owned and farmed by my great-great-great grandparents. Some of my first memories are of me and my great grandfather walking through the pastures and looking at the cows. I still recall him telling me stories of his childhood and how he used to walk the fields with his father and grandfather. I grew up with daily chores that included feeding and taking care of the cows, goats, and chickens. To me, agriculture means traditions and heritage. I want to continue to take care of the land and livestock as my ancestors did. I hope to walk the same fields one day with my grandchildren and tell them all about our history.

In my community there is a lack of veterinary clinics that serve large animals. In many cases, local farmers use their own knowledge to care for their animals. In my own experience, we have self treated livestock rather than reach out to a veterinarian. Many times, the cost of a veterinarian is more than the value of the livestock. Due to this, many farmers do what they can for the animal and use personal knowledge and experience to treat it accordingly. Sometimes the treatment works, and other times it does not.

For as long as I can remember, I have wanted to become a veterinarian. I love working with our animals. I have learned a lot through hands-on activities while working with the livestock

on my grandparents' small farm. My long term goal is to open a veterinarian clinic in my community that will serve both small and large animals. I hope to build meaningful relationships with local farmers so that they will not hesitate to reach out when the need arises. I feel that communication is a key factor. I want the local farmers to contact me with questions and concerns. I hope to one day be an asset to my community and be able to give back.

I am sincerely honored to be selected as a recipient of the 2025-2026 N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship. Thanks to this generous contribution, I am able to pursue my degree in animal science with a veterinary concentration at N.C. State University. I am truly grateful for this opportunity and hope to one day help others as the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation has helped me.

HANNAH VANHOY

My name is Hannah Vanhoy, and I am a senior at N.C. State University studying ag business management with minors in animal science and agricultural entrepreneurship.

Coming from a commercial cow/calf operation in Western North Carolina, I have always had a passion for agriculture and the beef industry. I have shown beef heifers for over ten years and have had success on a state and national level. Being heavily involved in both the agriculture and beef industries has shaped me into the hardworking and diligent individual I am today, who has big plans. As I begin to transition from showing livestock to focusing more on the family farm, I am excited to look at cattle through more of a production focused lens. With valuable genetics at home, I look forward to creating high quality registered replacement heifers and hope to be a contributing member of North Carolina's healthy beef industry.

I am very excited about my senior year at N.C. State University and continuing to explore my interests and career goals. I was fortunate to get a summer internship with ABS Global in Wisconsin, working in the bull barns, learning so much about reproduction, collection, animal health, genetic progress, and countless other topics that beef producers think about every day. This opportunity would not have been possible without the foundation built from my involvement in agriculture as a youth in North Carolina. I am excited to bring what I learn back to my own operation. Although I have not decided on what to pursue after graduating in May, I hope to work in the agriculture industry and continue bettering my animals at home.

I am so grateful to the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation for helping me achieve academic success at N.C. State University and continue to investigate future career interests. Your gifts motivate me to continue to work hard to achieve my goals and give back to the industries that made me who I am today. *velit, cum l*

SHAYENN VOTAW

My name is Shayenn Votaw, and I am honored to be a recipient of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship. As a student at N.C. State University majoring in biological and agricultural engineering technology with a minor in animal science, I am passionate about improving livestock systems through innovative technology and sustainable practices.

My journey with the N.C. Cattlemen's Association began when I served as a beef ambassador. In this role, I had the privilege of advocating for beef producers and educating the public on the importance of the cattle industry. Through social media engagement and in-person events, I learned to communicate effectively about agriculture and connected with many dedicated farmers, professionals, and fellow advocates who inspired me.

This scholarship means so much to me. It not only provides financial support for my education but also encourages me to continue pursuing my goals within the cattle industry. I aim to apply my education and experience to contribute meaningful, research driven solutions that enhance animal welfare and production efficiency across the industry.

I am sincerely grateful to the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation for supporting students like me. Your investment is helping shape the future of agriculture, and I am excited to be part of that future.

BEN WILSON

When I was a little boy, I told everyone that I wanted to be a farmer when I grew up because I liked going out on the farm and driving the tractors with my dad and grandpa. My interest in cattle and agriculture quickly became something bigger as I grew older, but my love has been there since a young age. Growing up, I was surrounded by many virtues of the agricultural world, with my family owning and operating a small trucking business and poultry farm. Going to work with my family made me fall in love with what they did. I learned the ins and outs of the poultry industry at a very young age, and with the trucking business, I got to see first hand how products go from the farm to the table. My love for agriculture extends beyond poultry and trucks, as I fell in love with the beef cattle industry at a young age when I helped my grandpa on his farm.

Being on the farm with my grandpa has taught me many life lessons that I can carry with me anywhere I go in life. Staying in the beef cattle industry takes trust, patience, and a hard work ethic; even if you have all those things, you may still question if you are going to make it. The market for beef cattle can be so volatile, making it hard on a farmer's financial situation when entering a new season. I quickly learned that my grandpa was not spending time out on the farm to become a millionaire but because he was doing what he loves. When I began to look at the cattle industry through the same lens he did, I shared the same happiness that my grandpa had when he was out on the farm working with his herd.

My love for cattle is what led me to apply for this scholarship after my dad shared it with me and encouraged me to apply since he is a long tenured member of the N.C. Cattlemen's Association. The organization has always been such a big part of my family, not only for what it does in the cattle industry but also for *The Carolina Cattle Connection*. Every month when we received our copy in the mail, I always looked forward to picking it up and skimming through all the cool pictures. Then at supertime my dad would share what felt like an hour long joke with us from the magazine. *The Carolina*

NCCF Update *continued from the previous page*

Cattle Connection really sharpened my knowledge of cattle and gave me a sense of humor for a long winded joke. When I was chosen for this scholarship, I was truly honored that I was selected to represent the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation. Being a recipient will hopefully allow me to make many lasting connections that will help me as I continue my journey in the cattle and agriculture industries. This scholarship will also be a great help to my college education, as it will cover part of the costly expenses to attend a four year university.

I am attending N.C. State University, pursuing a bachelor's degree in agricultural business management. This degree will give me many opportunities, not just in the cattle industry, but also in the entire agriculture industry. While I am at N.C. State University, I hope to take advantage of the hands-on learning experiences they offer by doing work on the beef or dairy educational farm. I hope to use the principles I learn to eventually have my own herd of beef cattle. Before I take the dive into the beef cattle industry, I would like to make a name for myself in the business side of agriculture. I am interested in the management, sales, and finance side of the industry. I am very grateful for the opportunity that the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation has given me, and I am excited to see what my future holds.

AVA WOOD

I've been surrounded by cattle and farming my whole life. As a sixth generation farmer from Johnston County, agriculture isn't just a job or a hobby — it's a big part of who I am. From a young age, I was lucky enough to show Angus cattle at livestock shows all across the country. Those experiences taught me about hard work, responsibility, and how important family and community are in this industry.

Now, I'm studying ag business management at N.C. State University because I want to help farms like ours not only survive but thrive. Farming is changing fast, and I believe combining traditional farming values with good business sense is the key to success. I'm also working as an intern with our family's commercial hog and cattle operation, managing inventory for our online store, communicating with vendors, and helping plan events at our on-farm wedding venue. This internship has really opened my eyes to how agritourism and diversification can be great opportunities for farmers, especially as our rural communities grow and change.

Receiving the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation scholarship means a lot to me. It's a big help with school expenses, but even more, it shows me that the cattle industry supports the next generation. That encouragement motivates me to keep working hard and learning all I can. I'm grateful to the Foundation and their board of directors for believing in students like me. I look forward to using what I learn to help grow and improve our family farm and give back to the agriculture community that has given me so much.

ALLYSON McCARTY

Hello! I am grateful for the opportunity to write this feature and be a recipient of the 2025-2026 N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation

Graduate Student Travel Award! Growing up in a small farm town located in the San Joaquin Valley of California gave me a unique perspective on agricultural production. Within a 250 mile radius, over 300 agricultural commodities are grown, with the largest commodities being dairy, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and cattle and calves. I am grateful to have grown up in an agricultural capital. However, I was not raised in an agricultural household. My first agricultural experience began with a 4-H hog for my local county fair. After discovering a passion for livestock, the next few years my family and I traveled to livestock shows around California and into neighboring states to show both hogs and cattle competitively. After my show career ended, I decided to continue with school and became a first generation college student.

I completed an associate degree from College of the Sequoias in Tulare, Calif., and a bachelor's from California State University, Fresno. During my undergrad, I spent some time trying to find where I fit into the industry by joining clubs such as Young Cattlemen's and the Meat Science Club, participating on the Academic Quadrathlon team and Meat Science Quiz Bowl team, and working internships in multiple meat packing plants. Throughout all my experiences, I found myself most interested in livestock reproduction — specifically in beef cattle. Eager to continue my education, I began looking at master's programs away from home to experience the cattle industry somewhere new. So, in December 2023, I finished my finals at Fresno State, and by the next week, I had moved across the country and was living at the Butner Beef Research Station working on my master's project. My research is focused on alleviating early pregnancy loss in beef cattle through the supplementation of fatty acids. While working on my master's, I have also been able to assist my advisor, Dr. Felipe Silva, with cattle extension events across North Carolina. I enjoy any opportunity to interact with producers to learn more about their operations and how to best implement practical solutions to make their operations more efficient. Another aspect of my program that I enjoy is presenting my research at local, regional, and national events. Sharing research is a vital part of any program and opens the door for constructive feedback, new ideas, and establishing new connections. Traveling to conferences also gives me a new perspective on the cattle industry in places visited, including Alberta, Canada, Texas, and Florida. However, these opportunities often come with a cost, and receiving an N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation travel award allows for me to continue sharing my research, experience new places and continue receiving feedback.

After completion of my masters, I plan to return to California to pursue a career as a bovine embryologist or work in the field cattle reproductive research. I will be returning home with a deeper understanding of cattle reproduction and the cattle industry as a whole. I will always be thankful for the lessons and opportunities I have received during my time at N.C. State University and appreciative of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation for allowing me to pursue additional activities.



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\$185* - 6 Ads Annually
\$160* - 12 Ads Annually
**per month*

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X
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Boehringer Ingelheim

NEWS

Build Smarter Deworming Plans with Diagnostics. Incorporating diagnostics into deworming plans gives cattle producers a clearer handle on parasite pressure and product performance. It helps confirm when treatment is needed, when it isn't, and when a protocol might need adjusting.

For operations like Leaning Oak Ranch in Okemah, Okla., that clarity has become a key advantage. And it starts with putting real numbers behind decision making.

Turning data into decisions – Diagnostics provide a straightforward view of the parasite burden in your herd. A fecal

egg count reduction test (FECRT) is the most reliable method for measuring deworming efficacy.

“We had a group that didn't look right, and I assumed it was a worm issue,” shared Buck Rich, owner of Leaning Oak Ranch. “But the fecal tests came back clean and confirmed our LONGRANGE [*eprinomectin*] was working the way it should. Running diagnostics saved us from reworking the cows unnecessarily.”

The results also highlighted the economic value of testing.

“From an economic standpoint, that would have been wasted money on more dewormer and wouldn't have helped our problem,” Rich continued. “Diagnostics are an important tool and can definitely help get you on the right path more quickly.”

Rich works closely with his herd veterinarian, Tyler Thomas, DVM, owner and operator of Prague Veterinary Clinic in Prague, Oklahoma.

“It's very easy to check fecals, and it's a valuable tool,” said Dr. Thomas. “The data lets us know where a deworming program sits and if we need to take action or not.”

How to implement diagnostics – Routine FECRTs establish a baseline on product performance, and track resistance over time. Even a few well placed tests each year can support better decisions. Testing before spring turnout, during grazing or at weaning are all good options.

“Without diagnostics, it's easy to point the finger at the product,” explained Jody Wade, DVM, Boehringer Ingelheim. “But if you're not testing, you might be treating the wrong issue or not seeing the whole picture.”

To conduct the test, two manure samples are needed from the same animal – one collected before or at the time of treatment and another collected after a specified period following treatment. The timing of the second sample depends on the product used, as each medication requires a different interval after treatment to assess its effect.

When running diagnostics, Dr. Wade emphasizes the importance of working with trusted laboratories.

“Samples should be collected per rectum, stored properly, and processed by reliable labs,” he added. “Your veterinarian can help ensure everything is handled correctly, so the results are meaningful.”

An egg reduction of 95 percent or more indicates the dewormer performed well. When results fall short, it may signal that parasites are surviving treatment. In these situations, a herd veterinarian may recommend adjusting the timing, incorporating combination treatment, modifying the grazing rotation, or reevaluating which cattle receive treatment. The goal is always a plan rooted in evidence – not assumption.

Diagnostics in a sustainable deworming plan – A sustainable deworming plan includes diagnostics and three other proven parasite management tools: combination treatment, pasture management, and refugia.

“We want our deworming practices to be sustainable, and the four pillars are about helping producers get the most from the tools we already have,” said Dr. Wade. “Diagnostics are where it all begins.”

For Dr. Thomas, diagnostic results shape how he builds treatment plans for Leaning Oak Ranch and other operations.

“You don't know where to go until you know where you're at,” he asserted. “Diagnostics tell us if treatment is even necessary and whether what we've done is working.”

Reviewing deworming protocols with your veterinarian at



“As a fellow cattleman, I encourage you to take five minutes of your time to speak with Donna Byrum. She introduced me to a program I knew nothing about, and within six months she was on my doorstep with a check. The PRF program has been a blessing amid the changing climate and different extremes that all our farming operations have experienced.”

~ Joey Carter

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least once a year is an essential step in maintaining herd health and productivity. Learn more about diagnostics and sustainable deworming at DewormingLegends.com.

Boehringer Ingelheim Secures Emergency Use Authorization for IVOMEC (ivermectin) 1% Injection to Help Protect Cattle Against New World Screwworm. Boehringer Ingelheim recently announced that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the use of IVOMEC (*ivermectin*) 1% Injection for the prevention of infestations caused by New World Screwworm (NWS) in cattle.

“Under the EUA, IVOMEC (*ivermectin*) 1% Injection is authorized for the prevention of infestations caused by NWS (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) larvae (myiasis) when administered within 24 hours of birth, at the time of castration, or at the appearance of a wound in cattle,

except for female dairy cattle producing milk for human consumption and calves that will be processed for veal. Based on available scientific evidence, the FDA determined that there is no adequate, approved, and available alternative to the product for the prevention of NWS in certain cattle at these critical intervention points.¹ This is the first EUA for any over-the-counter drug for the prevention of infestations caused by NWS in cattle,¹ providing timely access to a preventive tool should an NWS incursion occur in the United States.

“Protecting the health and well being of livestock is at the core of our mission,” said Steve Boren, Vice President, U.S. Livestock, Boehringer Ingelheim. “Emergency Use Authorization for IVOMEC (*ivermectin*) 1% Injection provides cattle producers and veterinarians with an important preventive tool against New World Screwworm. We appreciate the proactive approach of the FDA and USDA in response to this emerging animal health threat and remain dedicated to supporting veterinarians, producers, and government as we work together to protect cattle herds.”

NWS is a parasitic fly whose larvae feed on the living tissue of warm blooded animals, causing serious tissue damage and potentially fatal infestations.² Although NWS is not currently present in the U.S., recent cases have been confirmed in livestock in northern Mexico, including in Tamaulipas, a border state adjacent to Texas.³ More information about NWS and the unified federal response is available at screwworm.gov.

“Having worked in regions where New World screwworm is endemic, I’ve seen firsthand that effective readiness depends on access to preventive tools and strong producer education,” said Dr. Gustavo Sabatini, Global Technical Manager for Ruminant Parasiticides at Boehringer Ingelheim, who recently testified before the Texas House Agriculture and Livestock Committee on NWS preparedness alongside federal and state animal health officials and industry groups. “Screwworm strikes cattle when they are most vulnerable, including at birth, and demands more labor intensive management on the ground. That’s why prevention is essential – not only to protect animal health –x but also to safeguard the food supply and the livelihoods of cattle producers.”

For more information, please visit www.fda.gov/media/190967/download?attachment.

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About Boehringer Ingelheim. Boehringer Ingelheim provides innovation for preventing and treating diseases in animals. The company offers a wide range of vaccines, parasite control products, and medicines for pets, horses, and livestock to veterinarians, animal owners, farmers, and governments. As a leader in animal health, Boehringer Ingelheim values that the health of humans and animals is deeply connected and strives to make a difference for people, animals, and society. Learn more at www.bi-animalhealth.com.

N.C. Cattle Receipts, Trends, and Prices for the Month of JANUARY 2026

Cattle Receipts: 13,193 • Previous Month: 9,314
Feeder supply - 19% steers • 43% heifers • 38% bulls

SLAUGHTER CLASSES		
	Avg. Wt.	Price
Cows - % Lean		
Breaker	1,544	\$156.04
Boner	1,335	\$159.36
Lean	1,083	\$137.90
Bulls - Yield Grade 1-2	1,631	\$186.63

FEEDER CLASSES			
FEEDER STEERS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	421	466.83	\$1,965.35
450-500	472	448.37	\$2,116.31
500-550	523	402.48	\$2,104.97
550-600	573	391.42	\$2,242.84
600-650	622	366.69	\$2,280.81
650-700	672	350.52	\$2,355.49
FEEDER BULLS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	422	444.33	\$1,875.07
450-500	472	414.23	\$1,955.17
500-550	523	386.89	\$2,023.43
550-600	572	367.30	\$2,100.96
600-650	624	346.59	\$2,162.72
650-700	670	328.23	\$2,199.14
FEEDER HEIFERS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	422	404.71	\$1,707.881
450-500	473	378.39	\$1,789.78
500-550	520	358.18	\$1,862.54
550-600	571	350.63	\$2,002.10
600-650	622	324.42	\$2,017.89
650-700	669	315.47	\$2,110.49

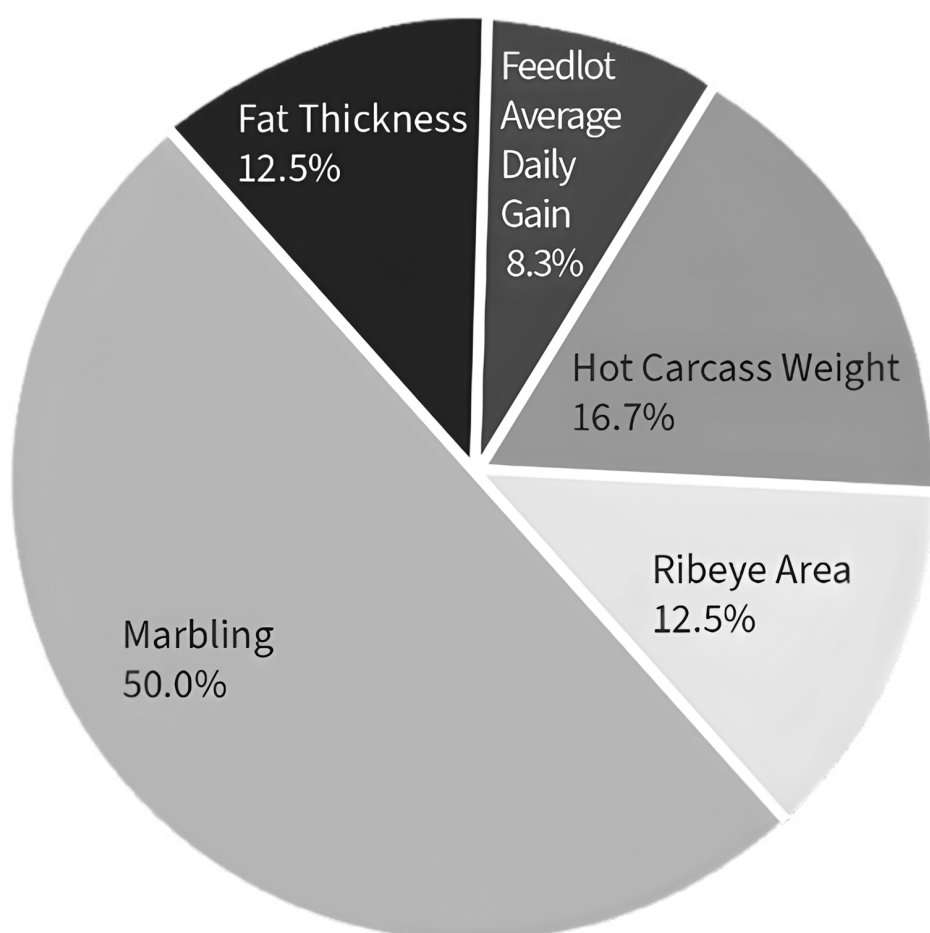
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Neogen Introduces Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check for Commercial Wagyu Cattle. At the forefront of cattle genetic advancement, the Neogen genomics division has launched Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check, the market's first complete feedlot and carcass test for commercial Wagyu cattle. Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check is a genomic selection tool designed for Wagyu influenced cattle to improve resource utilization, profitability, and resilience in high value commercial Wagyu beef programs.

"Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check is a clear example of how advanced genomics can be translated into practical, profit driven decision making for the cattle supply chain," says Victor Pedrosa, Ph.D., Director of Technical Genomics and Innovation with Neogen. "Built on a large and rigorously curated reference population, the tool delivers robust genomic predictions for key feedlot and carcass traits."

Precision Genetics to Boost Performance and Premiums – Because Wagyu cattle naturally grow more slowly than other *Bos taurus* breeds due to their emphasis on intramuscular fat deposition, understanding the genetic component of key feedlot and carcass traits helps producers make more precise selection and management decisions. These insights help identify lower performing animals that can be shifted into alternative feeding programs, reducing unnecessary feed and management costs. Conversely, cattle with



stronger feedlot growth potential will finish more efficiently than their contemporaries, ultimately lowering feed expenses. To build on this even further, cattle with superior carcass potential help capture greater grid premiums at harvest. This reinforces the qualities that make Wagyu so valuable and enhances the consistency of high value Wagyu products, enhancing trust in the marketplace.

Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check is powered by the Australian Wagyu Association's (AWA) extensive global database, informed by breeder contributions from over 40 countries.

"The global Wagyu population, now numbering hundreds of thousands, traces back to around 200 founding individuals, meaning that the commercial genetics that have expanded worldwide share strong connections. Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check uses these genetic foundations, along with carcass data from different Wagyu crossbred types, ranging from pure Wagyu to Taurine X, Indicus X, and Holstein X," says Dr. Matt McDonagh, Chief Executive Officer with AWA.

The test reports genetic predictions for five traits on a 1–10 scale:

- Feedlot average daily gain
- Hot carcass weight
- Fat thickness
- Ribeye area
- Marbling

Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check Index Adds Value – "Beyond individual trait accuracy, Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check differentiates itself by integrating these predictions into a composite index that reflects expected commercial value under real production conditions," shares Dr. Pedrosa.

The Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check Index predicts the overall commercial value ranking of each animal in a typical Wagyu long fed feedlot finishing program based on its genetic merit for key profitability traits. Reporting from 0 (low) to 100 (high), the index ranks cattle based on their estimated profitability, with the information driven by the respective animal's genetic merit across all five individual traits. The Igenity Wagyu Feeder Check is backed by this diverse reference set, which includes 17,301 animals, composed of purebred Wagyu (20 percent), Wagyu×Angus (60 percent), Wagyu×*Bos indicus* (15 percent), and 5 percent Wagyu×non-Angus *Bos taurus* animals.

The Igenity genomics portfolio has a longstanding history of delivering trusted tools and actionable genetic insights for the cattle industry. Igenity Beef, the flagship product of this portfolio, was the first genomic profile designed specifically for crossbred commercial cattle.

To learn more, contact your Neogen representative or visit [neogen.com](https://www.neogen.com).

About Neogen Livestock. Neogen Corporation is committed to fueling a brighter future for global food security through the advancement of human and animal well being. Harnessing the power of science and technology, Neogen has developed comprehensive solutions spanning the food safety, livestock, and pet health and wellness markets. A world leader in these fields, Neogen has a presence in over 140 countries with a dedicated network of scientists and technical experts focused on delivering optimized products and technology for its customers.



Beef Promotion and Research Program PRIVATE TREATY SALES CHECKOFF INVESTMENT FORM

Information is required by (7 CFR 1260.201). Failure to report can result in a fine.
Information is held confidential (7 CFR 1260.203).

Today's Date: _____

Seller's Name: _____

Buyer's Name: _____

Address: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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Seller's Signature: _____

Buyer's Signature: _____

Both the seller & the buyer are responsible for making sure that the \$1.50 per head assessment is collected and remitted to the Beef Promotion & Research Board.

Total Number of Cattle Sold: _____ x \$1.50 Per Head = \$ _____

Date of Sale: _____

Person remitting assessment form:

Seller

Buyer

* State of Origin of Cattle: _____

* If cattle purchased came from another state within the last 30 days, indicate from which state the cattle were purchased.

Send Report and Remittance to:
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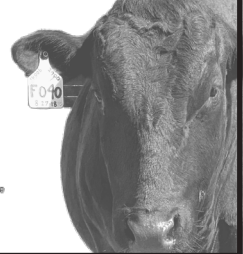
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Upcoming Events

ANGUS

- Mar. 7 — Gibbs Farms “Where Phenotype Meets Performance” Spring Sale, Ranburne, Ala.
- Mar. 14 — March Madness Replacement Female & Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.
- Mar. 20 — 53rd S.C. Angus Association Annual Meeting & Banquet, Clemson, S.C.
- Mar. 21 — 53rd Annual Carolina Angus Futurity, Clemson, S.C.
- Mar. 28 — CEGO Enterprises 3rd Annual Open House • Field Day
• Private Treaty Bull Sale, Cerro Gordo, N.C.
- Mar. 28 — G&E Virginia Premium Assured Heifer Sale, Gretna, Va.
- Mar. 28 — 47th Annual Southwest Virginia Performance Tested Bull Sale & BCIA Influenced VA Premium Assured Plus Bred Heifer Sale, Wytheville, Va.
- Apr. 4 — Grassy Valley Angus 33rd Annual Production Sale, Greeneville, Tenn.
- Apr. 4 — McDonald Farms 23rd Annual ‘Pick of the Pen’ Bull Sale, Blacksburg, Va.
- Apr. 11 — Knoll Crest Farm Spring Bull & Heifer Sale, Red House, Va.
- Apr. 11 — Southern Synergy 19th Annual Angus Female Production Sale, Wadley, Ga.
- Apr. 16 — Virginia Expo Angus Sale, Harrisonburg, Va.
- Apr. 25 — NCAA 42nd Annual Spring Fever Sale, Union Grove, N.C.
- Sep. 26 — Biltmore Fall Production Sale, Asheville, N.C.
- Oct. 17 — Fred Smith Company Ranch Extra Effort Sale, Clayton, N.C.
- Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.

CHAROLAIS

- Mar. 21 — Red Hills Farms “More Than a Bull XXI” Sale, Lafayette, Tenn.
- Mar. 28 — 47th Annual Southwest Virginia Performance Tested Bull Sale & BCIA Influenced VA Premium Assured Plus Bred Heifer Sale, Wytheville, Va.
- Apr. 16 — Virginia Expo Charolais Sale, Harrisonburg, Va.

CHIANINA

- Mar. 28 — CEGO Enterprises 3rd Annual Open House • Field Day
• Private Treaty Bull Sale, Cerro Gordo, N.C.

GELBIEH

- Mar. 28 — 47th Annual Southwest Virginia Performance Tested Bull Sale & BCIA Influenced VA Premium Assured Plus Bred Heifer Sale, Wytheville, Va.
- Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.

HEREFORD

- Mar. 14 — March Madness Replacement Female & Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.
- Mar. 27 — N.C. Hereford Banquet & Annual Meeting, Statesville, N.C.
- Mar. 28 — 58th Annual N.C. Hereford Classic Sale, Union Grove, N.C.
- Mar. 28 — 47th Annual Southwest Virginia Performance Tested Bull Sale & BCIA Influenced VA Premium Assured Plus Bred Heifer Sale, Wytheville, Va.
- Apr. 11 — Knoll Crest Farm Spring Bull & Heifer Sale, Red House, Va.
- Apr. 16 — Virginia Expo Hereford Sale, Harrisonburg, Va.
- May 2 — Whitestone Farm 33rd Annual Pasture Performance Tested Angus Bull & Female Sale, Aldie, Va.

MAINE ANJOU

- Mar. 28 — CEGO Enterprises 3rd Annual Open House • Field Day
• Private Treaty Bull Sale, Cerro Gordo, N.C.

RED ANGUS

- Mar. 14 — March Madness Replacement Female & Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.
- Mar. 21 — Red Hills Farms “More Than a Bull XXI” Sale, Lafayette, Tenn.

SANTA GERTRUDIS

- Mar. 14 — March Madness Replacement Female & Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.
- May 9 — Santa Gertrudis Breeders of the Carolinas Sale, Monroe, N.C.

SIMMENTAL

- Mar. 7 — Gibbs Farms “Where Phenotype Meets Performance” Spring Sale, Ranburne, Ala.
- Mar. 14 — March Madness Replacement Female & Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.
- Mar. 21 — Red Hills Farms “More Than a Bull XXI” Sale, Lafayette, Tenn.
- Mar. 28 — 47th Annual Southwest Virginia Performance Tested Bull Sale & BCIA Influenced VA Premium Assured Plus Bred Heifer Sale, Wytheville, Va.
- Apr. 4 — Grassy Valley Angus 33rd Annual Production Sale, Greeneville, Tenn.
- Apr. 4 — McDonald Farms 23rd Annual ‘Pick of the Pen’ Bull Sale, Blacksburg, Va.
- Apr. 16 — Virginia Expo Simmental Sale, Harrisonburg, Va.
- Oct. 17 — Fred Smith Company Ranch Extra Effort Sale, Clayton, N.C.
- Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.

WAGYU

- Nov. 7 — Wilders Wagyu StayWILD’26 Production Sale, Turkey, N.C.

OTHER EVENTS

- Mar. 11 — Cow Camp 103: Back to the Basics, Meeting 2, Louisburg, N.C.
- Mar. 12 — Freezer Beef Panel Discussion & Family Night, Gaffney, S.C.
- Mar. 19 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Mar. 19-21 — 34th Annual IH Collectors Wnter Worldwide Convention, Clemmons, N.C.
- Mar. 27 — Let’s Talk Dairy, Pendleton, S.C.
- Mar. 30-Apr. 1 — 2026 Joint Southern Pasture & Crop Improvement Conference and Region In-Service Training, Aiken, S.C.
- Apr. 1 — 2026 Edisto REC Forages Field Day, Blackville, S.C.
- Apr. 15-18 — Virginia Beef Expo, Harrisonburg, Va.
- Apr. 1 — 2026 Wolfpack Roundup Sale, Raleigh, N.C.
- Jun. 18 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.1
- Aug. 13 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Sep. 24 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Nov. 12 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.

LIVESTOCK MARKET SALES

- Mar. 2 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
- Mar. 2 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
- Mar. 3 — Mid-Atlantic Cattle Sales Video Auction, via macsvideo.com
- Mar. 4 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ and Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Mar. 4 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Mar. 9 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
- Mar. 9 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
- Mar. 11 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ and Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Mar. 11 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Mar. 12 — Elite Livestock Marketing Group Video Auction, via live-ag.com
- Mar. 16 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
- Mar. 16 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
- Mar. 17 — Mid-Atlantic Cattle Sales Video Auction, via macsvideo.com
- Mar. 18 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ and Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Mar. 28 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Mar. 23 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
- Mar. 23 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
- Mar. 25 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ and Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Mar. 25 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.

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