



OCA Weekly Update – January 11, 2008

Missed an Update?

Visit <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/weekly-updates/weekly-update.asp> to download archived OCA Weekly Updates as PDF files. They are posted by 5pm on the day of issue.

In Brief:

Provincial Funding Announcement: December 14, 2007

Specific information for producers on the new Ontario Cattle, Hog and Horticulture Payment is available by calling Agricorp at 1-877-838-5144.

A PDF is also attached to this update, which provides some detail.

Changes to Regulation 54 of the Beef Cattle Marketing Act Came into Effect on January 1, 2008

Please note that due to GST reduction from 6% to 5% on January 1, 2008 and changes to regulations of the Beef Cattle Marketing Act (check-off increased to \$3.00/head on January 1, 2008), OCA has developed revised check-off forms which will be applicable to all transactions made on or after January 1, 2008.

- OCA Check-off Deduction Remittance Report for Individuals
- OCA Check-off Deduction Remittance Report for Licensed Dealers

The new check-off forms, as well as more detailed information, are now available at <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/Checkoff2008/index.asp>, as PDF files.

Canadian Cattlemen's Association Monthly Report – February 2008

By Gjenna Vold, CCA Communications Assistant

CCA Working with Government to Address BRM Programs

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) has been working with both federal and provincial government officials to find solutions to address the significant financial hardships facing the cattle and other livestock industries. It developed several options to help ease the situation in the short-term while it worked on long-term solutions. In particular, CCA's goal is to get funds to producers quickly and to address the current business risk management (BRM) programs so that they are more accessible to producers.

The Canadian government has expressed a desire to work within the existing BRM programs rather than create new ones. CCA has analyzed these programs and has determined that they must be changed in order to address the current situation. Meetings between the CCA and the government have been valuable and resulted in some positive changes announced on December 19th.

Ministers of Agriculture from federal, provincial and territorial governments announced on that date that support programs would be available to cattle and hog producers, such as AgriStability, with

interim payments and targeted advances available; AgrilInvest, including the federal \$600 million Kickstart program; and an improved Advanced Payment Program (APP). Cattle and hog producers will receive almost \$1.5 billion in cash payments through existing programs from late 2007 through 2008. Also, through the APP, up to \$1 billion in additional loans will be available to the livestock sector, bringing the total loans available through this program up to \$2.3 billion.

The enhanced APP will benefit producers by allowing them greater access to funding. Prior to this, a producer had to be enrolled in the Canadian Agriculture Income Stability (CAIS) program and have a positive reference margin to be eligible. Now, producers will be eligible even if they have a negative reference margin and can borrow up to 50% of the value of the animals they borrowed against.

However, there are further changes that need to be made to the programs if they are to meet the needs of various segments of the industry. CCA is recommending that any assistance plan be national in scope and be equally accessible to producers across Canada; that programs not be ad hoc in nature and provide both short- and long-term benefits to producers; that they address the needs of all sectors of the cattle industry, regardless of size and structure; and that any programs be designed to minimize the risk of countervail actions by other countries.

To date however, government officials have indicated reluctance towards nearly all of CCA's recommendations, citing financial limitations and affordability. With the exception of the APP, there have been no changes to existing programs.

Inadequate programs put significant sectors of the cattle industry at risk of financial failure and downsizing, dismantling key infrastructure within the cattle and beef value chain and potentially reducing its long-term competitiveness and sustainability. Without leadership of both federal and provincial Ministers, CCA is concerned that a successful outcome will not be achieved.

The government has indicated that its December 19th announcement was the first stage in a national action plan. CCA will continue to work towards a reasonable and effective solution for the industry, both for the short- and long-term.

To view CCA's recommendations on BRM options and to learn more about the AgriStability program, visit the "What's New" section at www.cattle.ca.

Healthy Beef Project Receives Government Funding

The Government of Canada is investing \$305,792 towards bringing Canadian beef enhanced with bioactive lipids to the marketplace. The announcement was made at a press conference on December 14th, by James Bezan, Member of Parliament for Selkirk-Interlake, on behalf of the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

CCA, with the Beef Information Centre and other sectors of the beef industry, will begin developing a strategic business plan for a commercialization pilot project featuring beef containing beneficial fatty acids. These fatty acids, such as Omega 3 and Conjugated Linoleic Acid (CLA), are known to help reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity. This is an essential first step in taking on the challenge of establishing bioactive lipid-enriched beef as a successful food product in Canada, much in the same way egg producers have developed and marketed Omega 3 eggs.

"This is the type of government programming that allows groups like CCA and the Beef Information Centre to work on innovative research projects to help put dollars into the pockets of the Canadian cattle industry and offer additional value to our consumers," said CCA President, Hugh Lynch-Staunton.

The project involves all the key players from the beef industry value chain to ensure the most effective and successful production, processing and marketing biolipid enriched beef onto the consumer's plate.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada funding for this project falls under the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) Science and Innovation Broker Program.

Rule #2 Update

As reported last month, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Rule #2 came into effect on November 19th, allowing for trade of an expanded list of beef and live cattle. To date, the rule has been uninterrupted by legal maneuvers, despite the Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund (R-CALF) continuing its pursuit of an injunction through the US District Court in South Dakota. A hearing

date for an injunction has not yet been set but the judge has indicated that the request for a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) is moot, and is considering bypassing a hearing for a preliminary injunction and moving directly to summary judgment. Also pending is CCA's request for official intervener status in the case which would provide us with the right to submit evidence and pursue an appeal if necessary. CCA expects that some of these matters will become clearer in the coming weeks and we will be able to provide an update in next month's report.

In the meantime, the USDA reports that 13,368 head of live Canadian over-thirty-month (OTM) cattle have been exported to the United States between November 19th and December 15th. Prior to the closure of the US border in 2003, the five year (98-02) monthly average for OTM cattle exports was 26,000 head for the month of November and 22,000 head for the month of December. The opening of the US border to older cattle is beneficial for Canadian cattle producers but the amount of cattle exported relative to the US cow slaughter is minimal. This modest level of trade should demonstrate to the Court that R-CALF's rhetoric regarding a flood of cattle and negative impact on US prices is unfounded.

BSE Update

On December 18th, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) confirmed the diagnosis of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in a 13-year-old beef cow in Alberta. The animal was identified at the farm level by the national surveillance program, which has detected all cases found in Canada. The animal was born before the implementation of Canada's feed ban in 1997 and it falls within the age range of previous cases detected in Canada under the surveillance program.

Canada has an extensive surveillance program in place and the detection of this case proves the system is working. We expect to find a small number of cases over the next 10 years as the level of BSE continues to decline. Canada was recognized by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) as a controlled risk country for the effectiveness of its BSE surveillance, mitigation and eradication measures. This additional case will not affect Canada's risk status. There has been no disruption to trade.

The CFIA is currently conducting a full epidemiological investigation and will release its report upon completion.

Mark Your Calendars for the 2008 CCA Annual General Meeting

CCA's annual general meeting will be held on March 11-14th, in Ottawa, Ontario at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. All members are invited to attend this meeting and learn more about CCA policy and the direction the industry is heading.

On March 12th, the board of directors and VIP reception will be held on Parliament Hill, bringing together Canadian MPs, senators and industry affiliates for an evening of dinner and discussion concerning the current state of the Canadian beef cattle industry.

If you would like more information, please call our Calgary office at (403) 275-8558.

Hardeman Appointed to Agriculture and Food

TORONTO – Today John Tory, Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, announced that Ernie Hardeman, MPP for Oxford was appointed to be the Progressive Conservative Party critic for Agriculture and Food.

"Ernie Hardeman has extensive experience in the agriculture sector and recognizes the government's responsibility to the agricultural community," said Tory. "He will be relentless in pushing the Liberals to provide real, long-term support and not to wait for a crisis to arise as they have done so often in the past four years. He will be a strong voice for the farm community and the agricultural industries at our Caucus table and in the community."

While in government Hardeman served as Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs as well as Associate Minister for Municipal Affairs –Rural. Previous to being elected to provincial parliament Hardeman owned and operated a mobile feed mill.

"I am looking forward to continuing to work with the agriculture community," said Hardeman. "I know that the high dollar has made this a particularly challenging time for many farmers and I will ensure that message is heard strongly in the Ontario Legislature."

Following the 2003 election Hardeman served as critic for Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Over the last two years Hardeman served as critic for Municipal Affairs and Housing where he succeeded in having a resolution passed by the Ontario Legislature that called on the government to expediently complete the municipal review to help municipalities. The resolution was supported by municipalities across Ontario and 150 municipalities passed similar resolutions.

"I recognize the importance of the agriculture and food industry, not only to the province's economy, but to our future," said Hardeman. "I believe that for our province to be strong and prosperous we need to ensure the future of our rural communities and our agriculture industry."

Opportunities through Changes: Growing into the Future

January 30th – February 1st, 2008
Westin Nova Scotian Hotel Halifax, Nova Scotia

Join the Canadian Farm Business Management Council for the Managing Excellence in Agriculture Conference January 30th to February 1st 2008 in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

This conference is a leading edge professional development and networking opportunity for farmers, farm families and their advisors. It involves engaging speakers, interactive workshops and relationship building networking opportunities. This is a learning conference that will leave delegates with a toolbox of farm management ideas and strategies to implement on the farm when they return home.

This year we will be hosting the event at the harbour front Westin Nova Scotian Hotel. Our dinner banquet will take place at the historic Pier 21. With spa services and childcare available onsite, and many other extra-curricular activities available in the area, we have once again strived to make this a family event.

The conference sold out last year – be sure to book your calendar and join us this year! To register, go to www.farmcentre.com Early bird deadline is January 7th, 2008. Final registration deadline is January 25th, 2008.

Traction: Skills to Grow Workshop

Looking for ways to gain more personal and business success? Traction is for farmers and farm couples who may want to take a deeper look at overall their business and personal strengths, strengthen their business communications, learn how to identify new business opportunities, determine their long term family and business goals, and develop a plan to attain those goals.

The two day Traction: Skills to Grow workshop focuses on helping farm families look at:

- How is your farm doing as a business?
- What do you want out of your business?
- What Blocks Performance?
- How to improve your negotiations skills
- Innovation: Ideas that Work
- Taking Stock: Assessing Your Strengths and Skills
- Improving family communications for business and succession planning decisions

Dates and Locations:

Ancaster
January 17-18, 2008

Registration Fee:

\$895 per person – includes two day workshop, hot breakfast, lunch and refreshments, program materials

Traction may be particularly useful for farmers and spouses who are eligible for the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS), including those who are participants in the Canadian Farm Family Options Program. Provided Traction addresses identified learning objectives, farmers and their spouses

may qualify for funding to cover the cost of Traction under the CASS program. For Options Participants, CASS participation will meet your Options Year 2 Renewal Program requirement.

Details about Traction are available on their Web site at www.tractionskills.ca. Information on the CASS Program is available on the website at www.ontario.ca/cass

Culinary Tourism Seminar

Calling all; Food & beverage Owners/Managers, Caterers, Food Producers, *Farmers* and all tourism businesses or individuals with an interest in the Kawartha's Culinary Tourism Development.

Date: Monday, January 28, 2008
Time: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Location: Elmhirst's Resort, 1045 Settler's Line, Keene
Cost: \$25 per person, includes lunch

RSVP by Friday, January 18, 2008 – Registration is limited

For further information contact Lisa Greig, Peterborough & the Kawarthas Tourism at (705) 742-2201
Or Karen Jopling at the phone below or visit the Kawartha Choice Web site at www.kawarthachoice.com

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Canadian Farm Business Management Council Agriwebinar Series

The Canadian Farm Business Management Council is again this year promoting their Agriwebinar series. All sessions are free. In order to view the webinars you must register, but only once for all of them. For more information and to register go to <http://www.agriwebinar.com/>

2007/2008 CFBMC Agriwebinar Schedule - Each Monday at noon EST

January 14
David Hendrick *Hendrick Seeds, ON*
Hendrick Seeds: A Success Story in Value Chain Management with Eastern Ontario Soybean Growers with Eastern Ontario Soybean Growers

January 14
Ted Soudant *Field Gate Organics, ON*
Field Gate Organics: A Value Chain Management Success Story

January 21
André Nault *Les AmiEs de la Terre de l'Estrie*
Les AmiEs de la Terre: A Successful Formula for Local Sourcing

February 4
Roger Samson *Resource Efficient Agricultural Production Canada*

Switch Grass for Bioheat in Canada

February 11

Mélanie Tremblay *MAPAQ*

Does On farm Biogas Production Hold a Future in Québec?

February 18

Don Jonovic *Family Business Management Services, Ohio*

Surviving Family Farming Whitewater

February 25

Mara Jernigan *Fairburn Farm, BC*

Slow Food: Good, Clean and Fair

March 3

Paul Paquin *Institut des nutraceutiques et des aliments fonctionnels, Université Laval*

Dairy Ingredients Issues

Ontario Farm Animal Council E-News: January, 2008

OFAC to celebrate 20th anniversary

OFAC is planning a gala celebration on April 17, 2008 to commemorate the organization's 20th anniversary. To help us mark the occasion, we'd like everyone who's been a part of OFAC's successes over the last two decades, including members, sponsors, former staff and board members to attend.

The evening will feature a banquet, a commemorative presentation related to events and activities of organization over the past two decades and a performance by comedian and singing impressionist Mat Gauthier of Sarnia.

The festivities will be held at Guelph Place, 492 Michener Road in Guelph.

The program will begin with OFAC's annual meeting from 4 to 5 p.m. A reception will follow from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. with the banquet commencing at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to attend all of these activities.

Tickets are available at a cost of \$50 per person. We do expect that this event will sell out so order yours now so you're not disappointed. Tickets can be ordered by calling the OFAC office at 519-837-1326. An on-line order form will also be up on the OFAC website by February 1.

The celebration will be held in conjunction with supporters of OFAC's sister group, AGCare, which is also in its 20th year.

Farmzonwheelz Project Manager Hired

The Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC) is pleased to announce the hiring of Sue McLarty to the position of FarmzOnWheelz Project Manager.

Most recently, McLarty served as general manager of the Fresh Vegetable Growers of Ontario. A resident of Ridgetown, McLarty has also worked as a Rural Community Advisor for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and has held roles with the University of Guelph - Ridgetown Campus and with the Kent Federation of Agriculture.

Over the next three years, McLarty will be tasked with overseeing the development, funding, testing, promotion and delivery of a high tech agricultural exhibit featuring a special event trailer, video and interactive components – all about farming.

This professional exhibit will be tested and built by the Ontario Science Centre, with the goal that components of it can easily be duplicated and built for events and organizations across Canada.

The \$750,000 exhibit will be the first of its kind in Canada. The concept has already received interest and support from agricultural educators and exhibitions across Canada including the Canadian National Exhibition, Calgary Stampede, the Canadian Western Agribition in Regina, the Nova Scotia Agricultural Awareness Committee and the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions.

A program planning team comprised of representatives from industry and sponsors will be in place in the next few weeks and work on the project will begin immediately with a goal of launching the exhibit in the spring of 2009.

Funding for this project has been provided, in part by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Agricultural Adaptation Council. Industry sponsorship has also been committed from the Wallenstein Feed Charitable Foundation, Turkey Farmers of Ontario, Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited, Chicken Farmers of Canada and Ontario Agri Food Education. Other sponsorship opportunities are also available.

Real Farmers with Real Heart Radio Campaign

Over the last few months, you may have heard OFAC's new radio campaign, entitled "Real Farmers with Real Heart" on targeted country music radio stations across Ontario.

A series of minute-long radio clips introduce listeners to Ontario farmers who tell stories about how they care for their animals, 365 days each year.

The six month long campaign also includes 13 media releases that will be distributed to community radio stations and newspapers. These also tell the stories of additional farmers and some of the animal care initiatives they've undertaken on their farms.

Funding for this project is being provided, in part, through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Program. This is a collective outcome partnership with OFAC's sister groups and the Agricultural Adaptation Council in Ontario, the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council, the Saskatchewan Council for Community Development and the Alberta Agriculture and Food Council.

Welcome to the Newest Member of the OFAC Team!

Everyone at OFAC would like to congratulate OFAC Executive Director Crystal Mackay and her husband Kirby Ayles on the safe and happy arrival of their baby boy. Hudson James Mackay Ayles was born on December 4 weighing 7 pounds, 13 ounces. The entire family is doing very well.

Crystal will return to her role at OFAC in June, 2008.

Join the OFAC Team!

OFAC relies on memberships and donations from the farm community. To learn more and to support OFAC's efforts, join our growing membership and sponsorship list!

Visit www.ofac.org; email info@ofac.org or call Kelly Daynard at 519-837-1326.

Oxford Steps to Leadership 2008 – It's Back

Who?

Any community-minded resident of Oxford County. Maximum of 25 participants will be accepted, including up to 5 students age 15-19 years.

Why?

To encourage the personal development of Oxford County residents; to expand the leadership skills of community-minded individuals; and to initiate organizational and community involvement in Oxford County.

Where?

Each session will be in a different location throughout Oxford County. The program will include a 1-day workshop and a 1-day educational bus tour throughout the County.

Monday, January 14th, 2007—6:30 p.m. —10:00 p.m. – *Coldsprings Farms, Thamesford*
"Personality Types & Elements of Teamwork"

A get acquainted night. Meet the other participants and find out about some of the different organizations they are involved in. Discover your personality type by completing the True Colours Personality Assessment.

Monday, January 21st, 2007—7:00 p.m. —10:00 p.m. – *Annandale House, Tillsonburg*
“Communicating Effectively”

On people’s list of fears, it’s number one! Learn tools and techniques to speak effectively in a large or small group setting including tips for thanking and introducing guest speakers. This session will also give you the tools to write an effective media release to communicate with the media.

Saturday, January 26th, 2007—ALL DAY – *Oxford County*
“Do You Know Your Community? Community Awareness Bus Tour”

Find out more about Oxford County and its many assets. Economic, agriculture, agri-business, historical and cultural aspects will be highlighted on this tour.

Monday, February 4th, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. - *Tavistock*
“Asset Mapping”

A planning and goal setting session where you will have a chance to set some realistic goals. Learn more about Oxford County’s diversity—the area, the people and their values and cultures.

Monday, February 11th, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *Norwich Museum, Norwich*

“Team Building & Group Dynamics” - Have fun while getting the job done is the theme for this session. Methods on how to keep groups working in a positive and innovative direction will be addressed.

“Effective Organizations” - Learn ways to make meetings more productive and how you can help create an organization that can make a difference.

Find out how to run your organization smoothly while dealing with community issues.

Saturday, February 23rd, 2007 – 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. “1-Day Workshop” - *Mt. Elgin Community Centre, Mt. Elgin*

“Responsibilities and Liabilities of Directors” - What is your responsibility and liability as a board member? Responsible procedures for organizations and individuals elected to a board will be discussed using case study examples.

“Stress & Time Management and Conflict Resolution” Time management tips that will help you meet your goals successfully and not stress you out! Learn how organizations and individuals can resolve conflicts effectively.

“Marketing & Fundraising for your Organization” - Learn ways to market your organization to create community awareness and build sustainability. Fundraising is often necessary—learn the essential features for any successful activity.

Monday, March 3rd, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *Fusion Youth Centre, Ingersoll*
“Working with the Media”

Print, radio and TV—learn to utilize the press to your advantage. In addition, learn ways to achieve clear writing.

Monday, March 17th, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *County Building, Woodstock*

“Community Issues and the Political Process”

Group discussion on local and organization issues and how to deal with them. What is the process and how do you effectively lobby for change? How do you foster greater involvement in the democratic process to the benefit of individuals and the community?

Monday, March 31st, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *North Blenheim Insurance, Bright*
“Ironing Out Community Issues”

Learn some effective problem solving techniques that will help you formulate an action plan for your community.

Monday, April 7th, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre, Ingersoll*
“The Challenge - Shaping Our Future”

Where will you go from here? Organizations that will be successful in the future need to think creatively and be willing to adapt to change. A motivational speaker will put the program into perspective and challenge participants to strive for excellence. Graduation ceremony will follow.

How?

For more information or to obtain an application form, contact: Brenda West or Patti Arts, Program Co-ordinators, Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (519) 537-6621. brenda.west@ontario.ca or patti.arts@ontario.ca

Cost?

(Including all resource materials)

\$200.00 per participant (Due November 30th, 2007 or \$250.00 after November 30th, 2007)

Student (age 15-19) \$100.00 (Due November 30th, 2007) or \$150.00 (after November 30th, 2007)

Note: If financial constraints are a concern, please contact us.

Participation in Steps to Leadership will:

- Build self-confidence and leadership skills
- Allow you to learn from other local leaders
- Help you and/or your organization become more effective and
- Involve you in the planning of your local community

Don't Sit Back! Get Involved! Registration is limited, so APPLY NOW!

Finding a Future in Beef

Are you under the age of 40, involved in the Ontario beef industry and live in East Central Ontario?

If so, you are invited to an evening workshop that will address the opportunities, challenges and needs of young beef producers

When: Thursday February 7th, 2008
6:30pm to 10:00pm

Where: Scugog Community Centre, 181 Perry Street, Port Perry
Cost: \$20.00, dinner included

Tentative Agenda:

- Dinner and networking opportunity

- A Successful Farm Model: Adapting to Change for Survival, Betty Green, owner of a 1000 cow herd family farm. Betty is also involved with the West Hawk Lake Zoning Initiative and the Quality Starts Here-Verified Beef Production program in Manitoba.
- Planning for the Future: A facilitated discussion on opportunities, challenges and needs of Ontario beef producers, Marilyn Bidgood and Eric Lawlor, OMAFRA

Who should attend?

Anyone involved in the beef industry under the age of 40 who lives in the Simcoe, York, Durham, Northumberland, Peterborough, City of Kawartha Lakes, Hastings, Prince Edward and Lennox and Addington counties. This includes beef farmers, veterinarians, abattoir or processor owners, and auction mart owners.

Why should you attend?

If you would like an opportunity to network with other farmers and individuals involved in the beef industry, then this workshop is for you. Not only will you meet people with similar interests, but through the round table discussions you will discuss your similar needs and challenges. You will also provide input to the facilitators about the types of resources and educational vehicles young farmers need.

This is a pilot workshop that may be extended to other areas in Ontario or may become a province-wide initiative. The ultimate goal is to establish a networking and training resource for the beef industry at a one-stop shop.

To register contact:

Marlene Werry
 Rural Economic Development Officer
 The Regional Municipality of Durham
 Box 623, 605 Rossland Road East, 5th Floor
 Whitby ON L1N 6A3
 Tel: 905-668-4113 Ext.2609
 Fax: 905-666-6228
 Email: marlene.werry@region.durham.on.ca

**University of Guelph Beef Cattle Transportation Study:
 Assistance of Beef Producers Requested**

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is currently assessing how cattle are transported in Canada with intentions of changing the laws and regulations that govern the industry. Changes proposed by CFIA may increase trucking costs for beef producers. In an effort to better understand current transportation conditions for the movement of cattle in Canada, the Ontario Cattlemen's Association is funding a University of Guelph research study to examine how current transportation conditions (space/loading densities and travel time) impact animal welfare, health, and performance for weaned calves and yearlings (500-900 lbs). The objectives of this research are to determine if current procedures for transporting cattle ensure animal welfare and how they impact health and performance after arrival. The ultimate goal of this work is to ensure animal welfare while increasing the demand for Ontario grown beef.

The help of beef producers is needed in this study to collect data on cattle loads that are received at feedlots and to follow their health for approximately 8 weeks after arrival. Surveys have been constructed to collect data from producers and truckers on the same loads of cattle during transit and following arrival. The more information that can be collected on how cattle are transported in Canada will provide CFIA with industry data that will support current trucking regulations without the need for the proposed costly changes. Please consider participating in this research study to provide valuable information on the Ontario Beef industry. If you would like to participate in this benchmark study or desire more information, please contact one of the University of Guelph researchers involved in this study by telephone or e-mail:

Matt Thrower (519- 827-1346 or e-mail mthrower@uoguelph.ca); Ken Bateman (519-824-4120, Ext 5-4006; kbateman@ovc.uoguelph.ca), Ira Mandell (519-824-4120, Ext 5-3337; imandell@uoguelph.ca), Tina Widowski (519-824-4120, Ext 5-2408; twidowsk@uoguelph.ca)

BIC Bits

Distributor Magazines Deliver BIC's Canadian Beef Message

While the Beef Information Centre (BIC) enjoys excellent ongoing relationships with large chain restaurants, it can be a challenge to reach the thousands of independent operators across the country. One of the ways BIC does this is through their quarterly newsletter, Beef up Your Business. Another very effective way to reach operators is through the foodservice distributors who are on the front lines working with independent operators daily.

Distributors (like SYSCO and Gordon Food Service (GFS)) publish magazines that are geared to their customers with a focus on the smaller, independent operator. These magazines feature articles and information on products and topics related to running a restaurant. In addition to feature articles, these magazines also have paid advertising and many vendors with restaurant related products purchase advertising as a way to reach these operators. Because of close relationships with distributors, BIC is able to leverage up to \$25,000 worth of advertising space annually in these publications at no charge. Working closely with each individual publication and their specific needs, BIC provides articles and features on BIC programs, specific technical information on purchasing and preparing beef cuts, food safety and promotional information to restaurant operators. BIC also provides theme articles on how to promote beef for the holidays, for Valentine's Day and for the summer patio months.

"The articles that the BIC provides us for our What Matters publication are invaluable. Each topic has helped us add value to our customers." says Leanne Oliver, associate protein category manager, GFS.

"This is a win-win situation for all," says Rossana Perry, eastern foodservice manager for BIC. "BIC is able to deliver our message to a wide range of restaurant operators at no charge, the distributor gets credible, interesting articles to place in their publication and the operator benefits from the information on the Canadian beef advantage and how beef fits into their operation."

e-Agriculture: Innovation and Opportunities Agri Information and Communications Technology Conference and Tradeshow

Tuesday January 15, 2008
Doubletree International Plaza, Toronto, Ontario

e-Agriculture is a one day conference featuring presentations and expert panels on the best practices for applications in agriculture. This event (www.e-agriculture.ca) will focus on emerging knowledge technology and how the agricultural industry can harness its benefits. "Expect an exciting, informative day and plenty of take-home tools," says Donna Lunn, Dairy Farmer from Elgin County, and Conference Organizer. "Technology is transforming the way we live our lives and how business is conducted. The e-Agriculture conference is a perfect forum to help producers and agri-businesses better understand how to maximize the latest technology and create exciting business opportunities."

It is anticipated that 150 – 200 delegates from Ontario will attend the conference representing agri associations, agri business, producers, government and others interested in agriculture innovations.

There will be an accompanying tradeshow where agriculture technology experts will be on hand to answer questions and give live demonstrations of the latest technology.

Some of the Presenters:

Stephen Joyce

Author of *Teaching an Anthill to Fetch: Developing Collaborative Intelligence @ Work*.

Stephen's professional background stretches across several industries and continents. A graduate in Applied Psychology, Stephen will present ideas on how technology can improve collaboration and create new opportunities.

Laura Bradley

Laura Bradley is a professional engineer with over 18 years in the telecommunications industry. She has over ten years experience with broadband based technologies and many years of experience working with service providers.

Joseph Dales, Sr. Vice President and Co Founder, Farms.com Ltd.

Joe Dales will provide an overview of the fantastic agriculture information resources available online today. He will show some of the most popular websites and provide examples of how farmers are using some of the exciting tools for research, collaboration, education, marketing and business development.

“Don’t miss this great opportunity to network and develop ideas for your operation,” says Donna Lunn. Visit www.e-agriculture.ca to register for the conference and find more information on the presentations, a full agenda and tradeshow exhibitor information.

10th Annual Beef Industry Convention

Jan. 10-12, 2007

London Convention Centre

This year's convention will host the

- Ontario Cattle Feeders Association Annual General Meeting
- Ontario Corn Fed Beef Program Meeting
- Ontario Limousin Association Annual General Meeting
- Ontario Hereford Association Winter Board Meeting

Join us and be a part of more than 25,000 sq. ft. of Trade Show space featuring exhibitors showing off the latest innovations in pharmaceuticals, nutrition, computer software, livestock handling and more.

The Ontario Cattle Feeder’s Association is thrilled to present an incredible line up of speakers for our sessions this year. Thought-leaders and experts from all sectors of the industry will gather here to share their insights and keep you abreast of the very latest changes and challenges of the landscape.

This year will mark a decade of this convention’s existence – with every year we strive with our team to add value to our exhibitors, sponsors and attendees. This year will be another success story – we want you to be a part of it and to help you get where you want to be in 2008!

New this Year:

*Featuring the Ontario Cattlemen’s Association Cow-Calf Committee Program
Implemented by Jack McCoubrey, Bob Gordanier and Kim Sytsma*

“Management Decisions to Improve Calf Health”

- Dr. Janice Berg – Schering Plough Western Technical Services Veterinarian
- “Field and Research Trials on New Scour Vaccine –Jencine ERC”
- Dr. Rob Bell – Pfizer Animal Health Eastern Bovine Sales, Tech Manager
- “Trial Data Supporting Solutions for Cryptosporidiosis and Coccidiosis”
- Dr. Bryan Hicks – Arthur Veterinary Services
- “Challenges and Field Results with Early Age Calf Health Issues”
- Dr. Peter Kotzeff – Chesley Veterinary Management Services
- “Field Treatment and Trials for Cryptosporidiosis and Coccidiosis”
- Cory Van Groningen – Cow-Calf Producer, Fisherville, Ontario
- “Producer Perspective Solving Early Age Calf Health Challenges”

We look forward to seeing you in London on January 10-12, 2008!

**2008 OCA Annual General Meeting
"Meeting Our Challenges"**

February 20 and 21, 2008
Doubletree International Plaza Hotel
655 Dixon Road, Toronto
Reservations: 1-800-222-8733

Call by February 8th and ask for the "Ontario Cattlemen's Association" block of rooms

Agenda Highlights

Wednesday, February 20

****Registration 7:30am - 10am****

Convene 10am

- Election of reps (4) to Board of Directors: Cow Calf / Feedlot / Backgrounder / Eastern Region
- Election of reps to Feedlot and Cow Calf Committees
- Election of Directors to CCA
- Presentation of Environmental Stewardship Award

Guest Speakers:

- Hon. Leona Dombrowsky - Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
(to be confirmed)
- Hon. Gerry Ritz - Minister of Agriculture & Agri-food Canada *(to be confirmed)*

Reports from:

- OCA President and Executive Director
- Ontario Corn Fed Beef program
- Canada Beef Export Federation
- Canadian Cattlemen's Association
- Beef Information Centre
- CCIA
- CanFax (market update / outlook)

7:00pm Annual Banquet
with after-dinner Entertainment by Award-Winning Comedian, Derek Edwards

Thursday, February 21

Convene 9am

- Proposed Amendments to OCA Constitution
- Debate on Resolutions
- Presentation of Pasture Award
- Guest Speaker: Ted Schroeder , Kansas State University *"Meeting Our Challenges through Vertical Coordination"*
- Panel Discussion - *"Meeting Our Challenges"*
 - Participants (confirmed): Mike Buis, producer/OCA Advisory Councillor, Kent County
 - Jim Oehmke, CEO, George Morris Centre

one more participant to be confirmed

Moderator: Dan Ferguson, OCA Verified Beef Production - Quality Starts Here Coordinator

Spousal Program

Wednesday, February 20 - 2:00pm

Presentation by:

Anita Stewart, Author and Culinary Activist - "*The Power of Women in Agriculture*"
sponsored by: Daco Animal Nutrition

Thursday, February 21

Shopping trip to *Square One* shopping centre

Cattlemen's College®

Tuesday, February 19 - 7:00pm
Plaza C - Doubletree International Plaza Hotel, Toronto
Sponsored by: Pfizer Animal Health
in conjunction with the OCA 2008 Annual Meeting

Program:

Stan Jacobs, General Manager, Douglas Lake Ranch, British Columbia: "Herd Protocols and Marketing Cattle in an Ever-Changing Environment"

Dr. Maury Bredahl and Mike von Massow - University of Guelph, Dale Kaliel - Alberta Department of Agriculture and Food: "Benchmarking for Improved Performance"

Gord Colliar, Pfizer Animal Health: "Cowboy Humour"

The Ontario Co-operative Association invites you to a
Co-operative Development Toolkit Workshop.

- Learn more about co-ops
- Connect with local business resources
- Discover why the co-op model works

This workshop will be held Wednesday February 6, 2008 at the W.I.S.H Centre, Chatham from 1 to 4pm. Please see the attached invitation for more information about the workshop. This workshop is FREE. However, we ask that you pre-register to allow us to adequately prepare. To register or if you have questions please call 1.888.745.5521 ext. 31 or reply to this email to indicate your attendance.

Tanya Gracie
Ontario Co-operative Association
tgracie@ontario.coop
1-888-745-5521 ext. 31

BIO AGM

The DoubleTree International Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre
660 Dixon Rd, International Room C
Toronto, Ontario

Willabar Ranch Long Yearling Black Angus Bull Sale

March 18

at the ranch
Claresholm, AB
Contact: (403) 625-2060

Northern Powerpac Bull & Heifer Sale

2 p.m. Saturday, April 12, 2008
Temiskaming Livestock Exchange
New Liskeard, Ontario

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This report prepared with the assistance of Dr. Doug Powell's team at the Universities of Guelph and Kansas State. This service does not allow emails to be sent by responding to this email directly. If you have questions or comments, please contact Lianne Appleby at lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca

A) JAPAN: US beef makes a comeback in Japan

10.jan.08

ABC News Online (Australia) Rural

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/2007/s2135631.htm>

US beef has, according to this story, made some gains against Australia in the lucrative Japanese market, in the first full year of trading since the 2003 mad cow disease outbreak.

US beef exports to Japan rose more than eight-fold in 2007, while Australia's beef exports fell seven per cent.

Australia had record export shipments in 2006.

National Cattlemens Beef Association trade chief Greg Doud was cited as saying the increase is the result of a weak US dollar, Australia's drought, and better US marketing efforts, adding, "We're still only at about 25-percent of where we think we ought to be with Japan, but that's still a strong improvement over 2006."a

B) WASHINGTON: Dairy pays fine to settle tainted milk case

09.jan.08

The Daily News Online

Barbara LaBoe

http://www.tdn.com/articles/2008/01/09/area_news/doc47846e29513cd309971504.txt

The owners of Woodland's Dee Creek Farm have, according to this story, paid their state fine, finally ending the 2005 e-coli outbreak case.

The dairy, owned by Anita and Mike Puckett, sickened 18 people when e-coli contaminated their raw, or unpasteurized, milk in December 2005. Five children were hospitalized, two in critical condition.

While investigating the outbreak the state found several violations, such as not having a dairy license and not properly testing animals for diseases. The dairy was fined \$8,000 for violations.

The Pucketts appealed the fine, stating they didn't need a license because they sold shares of their cows and not the milk directly. The Legislature clarified the law after the case.

The day before the appeals hearing, though, the Pucketts agreed to pay the fine and end the matter.

They stated they still maintained their innocence. State officials, though, said paying the fine admitted guilt.

C) US: Cloned livestock poised to receive FDA clearance

04.jan.08

Wall Street Journal

Jane Zhang, John W. Miller, and Lauren Etter

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB119938649276665241.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

After more than six years of wrestling with the question of whether meat and milk from cloned livestock are safe to eat, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is, according to this story, expected to declare as early as next week that they are.

The FDA had asked producers of cloned livestock not to sell food products from such animals pending its ruling on their safety. It isn't clear whether the FDA will lift this voluntary hold.

The story says that because of the price tag -- cloned cattle cost \$15,000 to \$20,000 per copy -- most of the cloned animals will be used for breeding, and it will be three to five years before consumers see milk and meat from their offspring. Some animal breeders in the U.S. have already been experimenting with cloning animals. ViaGen Inc., the largest animal-cloning company in the nation, has cloned animals, such as a cow named Peggy Sue.

Marguerite Copel, vice president of corporate communications at Dean Foods Co., one of the nation's largest milk producers, which says it won't sell any milk from cloned animals, was quoted as saying, "Most consumers do not find this appealing."

Dean and others in the food industry are also worried that there is no mandatory tracking system in place for products from clones or their progeny. The Food Marketing Institute, which represents food retailers and wholesalers, says its members tend to "strongly believe" that they must be notified if any of their suppliers intend to introduce cloned animals into the food supply.

D) EU eases foot and mouth disease measures in CYPRUS

10.jan.08

Xinhua News Agency (China)

BRUSSELS -- European Union (EU) veterinary experts on Thursday endorsed a decision to ease the foot and mouth disease restrictions in Cyprus.

The story says that the experts from EU member states agreed that the whole of Cyprus could be categorized as a "low risk" zone in light of the fact that there have been no new outbreaks of the disease since early November and proper measures were in place since then.

The decision means that animal movement restrictions will no longer apply and the meat and products of susceptible animals will be allowed to be traded without significant restrictions. However, the export of live animals, semen and embryos from Cyprus will still be banned.

If the disease situation remains favorable, all foot and mouth disease measures for Cyprus are due to expire at the end of January.

E) Calgary study looks at mental and physical health impact of BSE on producers

08.jan.08

The Canadian Press

Bill Graveland

<http://www.canadaeast.com/wellness/article/177306>

CALGARY -- University of Calgary researchers are, according to this story, studying if Canadian beef producers are suffering long-term physical and mental health problems because of the mad cow crisis. Professor Ryan Brook said they hope to find 1,000 farm families who are willing to fill out questionnaires to help measure the human cost of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy scare.

"The premise is that BSE has obviously been devastating to farmers since 2003. There has been a fair amount of research that looks at the economic impacts but little or no research that looks on the health impacts," Brook, a community health expert, was quoted as saying Tuesday, adding "There's a lot of people who think the BSE crisis is now over but farmers are saying it's not."

Brook expects that some farm and ranch families who cashed in life savings back in 2003 and 2004 or took extra jobs to keep their operations afloat have still not recovered even though the beef trade has largely resumed.

He was cited as saying preliminary tests suggest the financial impact of the disease has shaken the confidence of some producers, put a strain on marriages or made it less attractive to pass a cattle operation down to sons and daughters.

The story goes on to say that the Canadian Cattlemen's Association is playing down the long-term impact of BSE on producers.

Rob McNabb, a spokesman for the 90,000-member organization, questioned the need for such a study. "If they're trying to equate their current stress or financial concerns to BSE, there's really no significant connection," McNabb, who is general manager of operations for the association was quoted as saying, adding "And yet I guess we've never fully recovered from the onset of BSE in some of the implications we've had in the industry."

But Brook argues that for many producers the BSE crisis is not over, and the ongoing stress and uncertainty needs to be documented.

Families that agree to fill out the questionnaires will be interviewed again in five years to follow up on the study's initial findings

F) MONTANA: Cattle producers: Japan's 34th BSE case reinforces fact that Canada's risk mitigation measures have serious shortcomings

07.jan.08

From a press release

BILLINGS, Mont. -- Japan recently announced its 34th case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) or mad cow disease, in a 15-year-old beef cow – the oldest case of all the BSE cases in Japan.

Fortunately, because Japan tests every head of cattle for BSE before allowing the beef into the human food chain, none of the products from this animal will harm anyone. However, because BSE has an incubation period of up to eight years, it will be many, many years before Japan completely removes this disease from its cattle herd.

While Japan is doing a much better job testing for BSE than Canada, R-CALF USA remains extremely concerned that policies implemented by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that allow more high-risk Canadian cattle into the United States are putting the U.S. cattle herd and U.S. beef consumers at risk for this incurable and always fatal disease.

"Japan has instituted some of the most stringent mitigation measures of any country – they test every animal that enters the human food chain, they remove the high-risk tissues from animals of all ages and they have a very stringent feed ban, so they have taken some reasonable steps to contain and eradicate this disease," explained R-CALF USA CEO President/Region VI Director Max Thornsberry, a Missouri veterinarian who chairs the group's animal health committee.

"Countries like Japan that started out only detecting a few cases in the first few years continue to find even more cases now that those countries are testing more cattle for BSE," he said. "When applying that knowledge to Canada, we find Canada is following the same track – only detecting a few from the outset, but then the numbers begin to increase."

"However, Canada is not testing near the numbers of cattle that Japan is, and Canada only has a voluntary testing program, which means there's likely numerous cattle in Canada that are going undetected for BSE, and that puts the U.S. cattle industry at risk because currently we are commingling Canadian cattle and beef with U.S. cattle and beef," Thornsberry pointed out.

"It's also critically important for the public to be able to sort through the spin that USDA and Canada use to try to diminish Canada's BSE problem," he continued. "They claim that Canada's most recent case, announced on December 18th, was only Canada's 11th case of BSE, but the facts actually say otherwise. It was Canada's 13th case total, the 12th incident in cattle born in Canada.

"In 1993, one case was imported from Great Britain, and USDA and Canada try to say that the Washington state case discovered in December 2003 was a U.S. case, but that animal actually was imported from Canada," Thornsberry said.

"The two true U.S. cases – one in a Texas cow, and one in an Alabama cow – have been classified as atypical strains of BSE, meaning they were not the same strain that caused the European epidemic and that now has infected the Canadian cattle herd," he emphasized.

G) UK: New technology 80 times more effective at detecting mad-cow disease in the food chain

08.jan.08

Business Weekly (UK)

Ben Fountain

<http://www.businessweekly.co.uk/content/view/31230/242/>

Cambridge based ProMetic Life Sciences says, according to this story, its new technology could improve the sensitivity of tests for mad-cow disease by "as much as 80-fold."

Developed under the auspices of the joint venture the company established in 2002 with the American Red Cross - Pathogen Removal and Diagnostic Technologies Inc - the concentration technology is added to commercially available post mortem diagnostic tests for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

ProMetic's first device using the concentration technology will take the form of a filter that will amplify the "infectious prion signal" by concentrating bovine prions from brain tissue. This stronger signal allows for a more sensitive detection of BSE in cattle and at a younger age, according to ProMetic. Most cattle going to market are less than 24 months old but current BSE diagnostic tests are unlikely to identify the disease at that age.

The story goes on to say that Tests for infectious prions such as BSE are conducted on approximately 13 million out of the 60 million cattle annually in the US, Europe and Japan. The vast majority of these tests are performed in Europe and Japan, with less than 40,000 tests performed in the U.S.

H) U.S. cattlemen to Congress: Fix: USDA's Argentina mess

07.jan.08

From a press release

Exactly one year ago this week, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a little-known and little-publicized proposal to import beef from Argentina, despite that country's repeated problems with foot and mouth disease (FMD).

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA) has made blocking USDA's action one of its top priorities in 2008.

"FMD is the most contagious and deadly disease facing America's ranchers today. An outbreak in the United States would devastate the industry virtually overnight," said Doug Zalesky, USDA's International Trade Committee co-chairman. "It's a mystery why our government would even consider importing that kind of trouble into America."

Under the USDA proposal, beef and cattle imports would be allowed from areas of Argentina that are considered to be FMD free. USCA says enforcing such a plan would be impossible and shipments containing FMD would likely slip through the cracks.

"FMD is an airborne infection; it's not going to stop at an imaginary border erected by USDA," Zalesky explained. "USCA does not believe that Argentina can be trusted to police itself or keep America's best interests at heart. After all, this is a nation that intentionally defaults on U.S. loans and routinely attacks the U.S. within the World Trade Organization (WTO)."

Even after a year of consideration, no final decision has been published by USDA on its proposal, and

USCA is growing impatient with the agency's inaction.

A resolution passed by the USCA board of directors requests that Congress "take whatever steps necessary to block the proposed rule and to protect the domestic herd from foot and mouth disease."

USCA is also calling on all U.S. livestock producers to get involved to defeat USDA's proposal. Other groups are following USCA's lead on the issue. Numerous state cattle organizations have sent letters to Congress and USDA opposing the proposed policy and have passed resolutions against regionalized trade with Argentina.

"We can defeat USDA's proposal if we unify in this effort," noted Zalesky. "I encourage all cattle producers to become engaged in the process of protecting the U.S. herd."

U.S. Cattlemen's Association Policy on Regionalized Beef Trade with Argentina:

Whereas:

Foot and Mouth Disease is considered by the American Veterinary Medical Association to be the most economically devastating of all livestock disease.

Whereas: An outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in the United States could leave independent cattle producers in financial ruins as entire herds would need to be culled and international markets would be closed indefinitely.

Whereas:

APHIS/USDA has proposed to allow beef and cattle imports from regions of Argentina despite Argentina's documented Foot and Mouth Disease problems.

Whereas:

Argentina cannot be trusted to keep infected beef from entering the United States and has shown little concern for rural America by defaulting on loans made by U.S. companies and by opposing U.S. farmers in international trade cases.

Whereas:

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association passed a resolution in July opposing the APHIS/USDA plan because it is unworkable and could create gateways for diseased Brazilian and Argentine beef.

Whereas: APHIS/USDA has yet to rule out regionalized beef trade from Argentina despite an outcry of opposition from America's ranchers.

Now be it resolved:

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association calls on APHIS/USDA to immediately reject the pending regionalized beef trade plan and reaffirm its commitment to protect the domestic herd from Foot and Mouth Disease.

Now be it further resolved:

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association asks the United States Congress to take whatever steps necessary to block the proposed rule and to protect the domestic herd from Foot and Mouth Disease.

I) EU Ambassador accuses U.S. of double standard on beef trade

07.jan.08

Meatingplace.com

Janie Gabbett

<http://www.meatingplace.com/MembersOnly/webNews/details.aspx?item=19557>

The United States has a double standard when it comes to beef trade rules around bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), according to Ambassador John Bruton, Head of the EU Commission Delegation to the United States.

"For example, the EU and the U.S. worked together in 2005 in the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) to forge a global agreement and recognition of the fact that boneless beef, under 30 months of age, does not pose any BSE risk. This very agreement is used to promote U.S. beef exports in Asia, yet, at the start of 2008, EU exports of boneless beef under 30 months to the USA are still blocked — supposedly because of BSE. This is a double standard," Burton said in a news release.

"The EU has yet to receive OIE designation for BSE," USDA Press Secretary Keith Williams told Meatingplace.com when asked to comment on Bruton's charges.

Bruton also voiced concern that the latest semi-annual regulatory agenda for U.S. government agencies did not include specific planned actions to address the concerns of European exporters about the U.S. market.

"We need to make more progress toward equivalence in the meat sector...we need to move more quickly toward risk-based inspections and away from the costly blanket approach," he said, questioning why

USDA inspectors will spend more than 300 days in 2008 between January and September inspecting European meat plants, while EU inspectors will spend only about 30 days in the United States during this period.

Williams says there's a reason for that. "Each of the EU nations has different standards and its own methods. Thus, auditing more than 20 countries' varying food safety systems is quite different than auditing plants within one country's system," he said.

J) BRAZILIAN team headed to Europe to fight beef restrictions

07.jan.08

Meatingplace.com

Arnaldo de Sousa

<http://www.meatingplace.com/MembersOnly/webNews/details.aspx?item=19558>

Brazil is beginning the New Year with a resolution to renegotiate with the European Union following its decision last month to place new restrictions on Brazilian beef imports effective Jan. 31.

A Brazilian delegation is slated to visit Europe on Jan. 14 to resume discussions and has asked that the European Commission present technical information on which it based its restrictions.

"If they can't present us one technical claim, I think Brazil needs to file a formal complaint with the World Trade Organization (WTO)," Antenor Nogueira, president of Permanent Forum of Livestock Cutting, a division of the Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil (CAN), told Meatingplace.com. "The EU needs to respect Brazilian production. Brazil comprises 33 percent of the world's beef trade."

In 2008, the EU will need 800,000 metric tons of imported beef to satisfy the demand of its 27 member countries.

"Ireland and England are pressuring the EU to restrict imports from Brazil because they need to raise their beef prices," Nogueira said. "Their cost of production is very high, so Brazil's absence boosts their prices."

According to Nogueira, Spain, Portugal, Holland and other major beef distributors support Brazil's efforts.

"If Brazil can't export its beef due to technical rules, which country is prepared to supply 800,000 tons overnight? Europe won't have enough beef in such a short time. Internal prices for consumers will explode," said Nogueira, who will go to Europe with government and industry representatives.

Several other Brazilian missions to Europe and to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) for negotiations aimed at eliminating the restrictions are planned for the latter half of January.

Supply in check

But in Brazil, meatpackers are having difficulty finding cattle ready for export to Europe because Brazil's Central-West region, the country's largest cattle production region, hasn't received enough rain to develop enough grass to sufficiently feed livestock.

"Brazilian meatpackers are saying they can't find animals ready for export to Europe in the beginning of the year. Meanwhile, domestic processors are paying more per head, and they are a powerful competitor right now," Fabiano Tito Rosa, analyst for Brazilian consultancy Scot Consultoria, told Meatingplace.com. According to Rosa, Brazil would need 8 million bulls in its herd in order to meet European demand, but the current count is nowhere near that level.

K) PROMED: Anthrax, bovine – AUSTRALIA (03): (New South Wales)

03.jan.08

<http://www.promedmail.org>

Date: Thu, 3 Jan 2008

From: Peter Black

Anthrax in the Upper Hunter Valley Region in NSW, Australia

Summary

During December 2007, anthrax was confirmed on 9 farms in the Scone district located within the Upper Hunter River Valley catchment. The New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) has instituted quarantine measures, incineration of carcasses, and vaccination on affected and neighbouring farms. Surveillance has been intensified in the district to detect any other cases.

Background

Anthrax is an acute infectious bacterial disease affecting many species of domestic and wild animals, and

humans. It is a notifiable disease in New South Wales. Outbreaks of the disease tend to be confined to a recognised anthrax "belt" which runs through the centre of New South Wales and into Victoria. However, the Hunter Valley is not located in the anthrax "belt" and investigations are continuing into the likely source of the disease. Flooding in the Hunter River catchment did occur in June 2007 and more recent rain the week before the deaths may have moved or exposed spores from an unknown cattle grave (as the moderator suggested in the 26 Dec 2007 posting). Determining the source of anthrax outbreaks can be very difficult.

Anthrax occurrence is best described as unpredictable, although there do appear to be some trends. The disease is sometimes associated with close grazing of paddocks, especially stubble paddocks, but can also occur in lush pastures as occurred in this case. It seems to occur more frequently during summer and autumn, but is also seen following particularly wet conditions. This unpredictability means that owners of livestock and veterinarians in NSW are advised to always consider anthrax when sudden deaths occur in grazing stock.

NSW has an excellent network of veterinarians and laboratories for confirming the presence of diseases such as anthrax.

Incidents in the Scone district

To date, anthrax has been confirmed on 9 farms. All affected and neighbouring farms have been quarantined and vaccinated. Vaccinated farms will remain under movement restrictions for at least 42 days post vaccination. Rapid tracing of animals and animal products from affected farms has been assisted by the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS). No movements have occurred from the affected farms in the 20 days before the 1st anthrax death on each farm. Carcasses (not just confirmed cases) on affected farms have been disposed of by burning.

More generally, a small number of cases of anthrax (4 to 6 per annum) are expected in the so-called anthrax "belt" in New South Wales, Australia. These will continue to be managed in accordance with policy using quarantine, vaccination, and appropriate carcass disposal.

For background information on anthrax in NSW see the NSW website at

--

Peter Black, Principal Research Scientist
Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer
Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
GPO Box 858
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia

[We greatly appreciate this authoritative communication from Canberra.

It is such contacts that make ProMED-mail stand out from other reporting systems.

Their link has a simple map of the "Anthrax Belt" in NSW. Spore viability in soil depends on soil characteristics. The best survival is in alkaline soils with high calcium and organic matter contents, that is, mollic or chernozem soils. Below a soil pH of 6.1 the spores do not survive and disappear in 14-18 months. If the Scone soils are lower than 6.1 pH other explanations than surfacing spores may be in order.

The WHO Guidelines recommendation for quarantine is 21 days, not 42; ditto OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health). In my experience quarantine should be kept as short as possible as long periods inhibit reporting suspect cases. Obviously in extraordinary epidemics, as in 2006 in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, blanket area quarantine is in order. But I can quote place after place where long quarantines carry a high cost for a number of following years. Texas with a lot of experience with this disease and from past mistakes now has a 14 day quarantine; they are still paying for their 3+ month quarantine in the early 1970s by vets being ordered by their older rancher clients in some areas to not submit samples to the state diagnostic laboratory.

Failure to obey the order results in losing him and his neighbours as clients. As a result they diagnose on the basis of a necropsy with the real risk to the person doing the necropsy and from the subsequent soil contamination in the area. There is a parallel situation in Northern Mexico where diagnosis depends on stained blood smears.

Lastly, the Argentines have had some success with an alternative method of carcass disposal as trees are markedly absent in their enzootic areas and therefore carcass burning is essentially impossible on site. Instead they soak the carcass and surrounding immediate area with 5-10 percent formaldehyde to decontaminate the area and discourage scavengers; then they cover the carcass with a heavy-duty

tarpauline and securely peg it down. Over 240-260 days the carcass decomposes. They then burn off the tarpauline and the remaining bones and grease using 5 L of diesel. For details go to, "Elimination of the carcasses of animals that have died from anthrax."

A problem with this method is that foxes will sometimes not be put off by the formalin and will burrow into the carcass. - Mod MHJ]

L) VIETNAM: Foot-and-mouth breaks out in Center

04.jan.08

VietNam Net

Ha Vy

<http://english.vietnamnet.vn/social/2008/01/762364/>

Appearing one week ago in Son Linh and Son Lam communes, foot-and-mouth disease has, according to this story, attacked 50 cows and stags.

Nguyen Quang Tho, Head of the Agriculture Division of Huong Son District was cited as saying the first two ill cows were discovered on December 23. By December 26, 31 cows and two stags were reported ill. The number is now up to 50.

Local authorities have taken measures to control the disease, including vaccinating 1,500 cattle, decontaminating cow and stag cages and setting up quarantine stations to prevent the transport of infected animals to other areas.

M) IRELAND: 5,000 calves at risk on Limerick farms

03.jan.08

Limerick Leader

<http://www.limerickleader.ie/farm-leader/5000-calves-at-risk-on.3638792.jp>

OVER 5,000 calves born on Limerick's 4,000 dairy and suckler farms in 2008 could, according to this story, die before they reach six months of age unless rigid precautions are taken against the ravages of calf scour, a veterinary expert has warned.

Maureen Prendergast, veterinary specialist with Schering Plough Animal Health, was cited as saying the Department of Agriculture's Cattle Movement Monitoring System (CMMS) report for 2006 shows that nationally 83,000 calves died between birth and six months old.

She was cited as saying scour was the biggest threat to the life of a calf, accounting for well over half of all deaths. Extreme cases of scour infection have been known to result in the death of up to 30 per cent of calves in a herd.

N) ONTARIO: Growing pains for organic milk producers; dairy farmers of Ontario want to increase supply

03.jan.08

The Sun Times

JIM ALGIE

<http://www.owensoundsuntimes.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=841049&auth=JIM+ALGIE>

Ted Zettel worries that plans to boost the supply of organic milk could go too far too fast.

This story says that Dairy Farmers of Ontario, the province's milk marketing board, is to take over managing the province's organic milk pool in February. It plans to boost what is already a more than 20 per cent premium paid to farmers for organic milk - a move Zettel fears will force up retail prices and stall demand.

Organic producers now receive about 88 cents per litre while conventional milk suppliers receive 70 cents a litre. Dairy Farmers of Ontario has announced a six per cent increase in the organic premium over five years beginning with a two per cent raise on Feb. 1.

Zettel, who farms in central Bruce County, was a founding member in 1989 of Ontarbio Co-operative, based in Durham.

The story goes on to say in the early 1990s Zettel and other organic dairy farmers approached the Ontario milk board about having a distinct organic milk pool. At the time, their product was a fringe commodity, providing only a tiny fraction of the milk supply. The board agreed to an organic pool in 1995

but left it up to the producers to organize and administer the details.

To qualify for organic certification farmers must, among other things, not use synthetic fertilizers or pesticides in their feed or growth hormones or antibiotics in their livestock.

Zettel and his colleagues have seen sales of their product take off and now DFO has decided it will take over organic pool administration starting next month. DFO officials say they want to ensure fair treatment of producers and processors as the supply expands.

There are currently about 55 organic milk producers producing about 15 million litres annually. But that's expected to double within two years as what was once a fringe market becomes more and more mainstream.

Neilson Dairy, for instance, has developed President's Choice organic dairy products for the George Weston Ltd.-owned supermarket chains.

"The retail market is still very strong although we're a really, really small percentage of the total market," Zettel was quoted as saying. Even with its growth - Agriculture Canada data shows the organic supply in Ontario increased more than 150 per cent between 2000 and 2006 - Zettel estimates organic milk production at about one per cent of total Canadian milk volume.

O) EU cattle virus rules questioned

04.jan.08

The Scotsman

Dan Buglass

<http://business.scotsman.com/fooddrinkagriculture/EU-cattle-virus-rules-questioned.3640384.jp>

BLUETONGUE disease is, according to this story, the plague that every farmer in Scotland hopes will be contained south of the Border. Towards the end of last week Richard Lochhead, the cabinet secretary for rural affairs was quoted as saying "Over the last three weeks, three consignments of animals transported to the UK from restricted zones in Europe have tested positive for the virus – the most recent one involving 35 cattle from Germany to a farm near Kirkcudbright.

"While it is fortunate that the virus was picked up by our strict post-import testing protocols, it highlights some serious questions about the robustness and the relevance of current EU regulations... but the industry must have confidence in the rules governing the management of this virus."

However, the economic reality is not quite as simple as it may appear to those not directly in the front line. Rowland Kershaw-Dalby is now semi-retired near Castle Douglas where he runs a suckler herd. Prior to his move north he was a substantial milk producer in England.

Kershaw-Dalby was quoted as saying "The south-west of Scotland has the highest dairy herd average in the EU and many of those businesses are being expanded. The people involved have invested large sums of money in buildings and machinery and suddenly find they are short of accessible dairy cattle. We cannot blame them for sourcing cattle where they can."

Kershaw-Dalby was further quoted as saying "Economics will demand that trade in livestock continues and it will have to be regulated. But farmers should always remember that the customer is right. If you are buying livestock from any source, check the health status before doing the deal. Get them tested before any movement at the vendor's expense and make sure the signature is that of a suitably qualified and approved EU vet."

P) UK: Breakthrough on foot and mouth field tests?

04.jan.08

Farmers Weekly Interactive

Jonathon Rees

<http://www.fwi.co.uk/Articles/2008/01/04/108875/breakthrough-on-foot-and-mouth-field-tests.html>

Researchers at the Institute for Animal Health (IAH), Pirbright, are, according to this story, close to a breakthrough which could stop outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease turning into unnecessary and costly slaughter.

The story goes on to say that Government policy in 2001 was to slaughter cattle within 24 hours of a vet diagnosis based on symptoms. Samples sent to the IAH's Pirbright Lab, Surrey, for confirmation took an average of a day to arrive, which meant animals were usually dead before their tests came back.

But F&M was not found at about 23% of premises classified as infected and where a cull was

implemented. "What was learned from 2001 is there is an urgent need for a fast and reliable diagnostic technique which could be used on farms by non-specialists," Juliet Dukes, a molecular biologist and senior research scientist at Pirbright was quoted as saying.

IAH aims to fill the gap by developing field tests that could support clinical diagnosis without waiting for laboratory results.

The story goes on to say that field testing has many challenges. F&M is a virus which mutates rapidly. Devices need to be sensitive enough to detect tiny traces of the virus during the earliest stages of infection, or risk the dramatic consequences of a false negative result.

Equipment also needs to be cheap enough to be disposed of after each test, otherwise time-consuming sterilisation is required between farm visits.

A number of methods are at the prototype stage. One detects the protein coat of the virus using a lateral flow device similar to a home pregnancy test. A coloured band can form rapidly when the virus is present in reasonable quantity. This technology is robust and cheap to manufacture, but not sensitive enough to confirm unequivocally that F&M virus is not present.

Dr Dukes is now part of a team developing a technique called Loop Mediated Isothermal Amplification (LAMP) for F&M detection in the field.

Q) Ethanol agenda fuels beef industry woes

Fri, January 11, 2008

By HANK DANISZEWSKI, SUN MEDIA

Surging demand for ethanol fuel is greening Southwestern Ontario's corn belt, but clobbering its beef industry.

Some producers in the region, the buckle of Ontario's beef belt, say they're losing at least \$300 for every steer sold.

That's partly because rapid growth in fuel ethanol plants in the U.S. and Canada is vacuuming up corn, a key ingredient in that product, driving corn to near-record prices.

Falling beef prices and a strong Canadian dollar -- it takes the profit edge off exports-- are also delivering heavy blows to the industry.

Some of the hundreds of feedlot operators meeting at an industry convention in London say their industry's outlook is even grimmer than in the mad cow crisis of 2003.

"There's no way to survive. There hasn't been profit in the cattle business since 2001" said Bob Brander, a vice-president with the Ontario Cattle Feeders' Association.

Dozens of ethanol plants are being built in the U.S., to decrease its reliance on foreign oil, and other plants have recently opened in Ontario.

Corn prices have soared with that trend, trading yesterday at \$4.90 a bushel on the Chicago futures market.

In Ontario, at the elevator, corn is selling for about \$4.10 a bushel compared to an average \$2.70 a bushel in 2005.

"If it wasn't for government subsidies, that (ethanol) industry wouldn't work," said Ron Bennett, who operates a 6,000-head cattle feedlot lot near Wingham. "It's been strongly driven by a political agenda." Bennett said he's losing at least \$300 on each steer sold, partly because of near-record corn prices to feed his cattle.

The fortunes of Ontario's feedlot operators are closely tied to corn. Since 2001 they've promoted "corn-fed cattle" to consumers because they produce more flavourful beef.

Bennett expects his three-generation family business will pull through because it's so large and well-established. But bankers will likely pull the plug on some operations, he said.

He said beef prices have fallen by 33 per cent in the last five months because there's a lot of beef and pork being produced in Ontario, and more being imported.

The market, he said, is controlled by a small number of processors and retailers in Ontario who buy up all that meat.

At the same time, feed and energy prices have risen and the loonie has been driven up by speculation in commodities, including corn.

"There's a lot of people out there who have never seen a steer who are playing with my future right now," he said.

Most livestock producers grow grain but feed most of that to their herds.

Corn byproducts produced by ethanol plants were supposed to provide farmers with cheap cattle feed. But Bennett said even prices for that feed have risen with the surge in corn. Beef remains an important Ontario industry, especially in high-producing Huron, Bruce and Middlesex counties.

About 200 farmers will sit down for their annual banquet at the London convention tonight, each representing an operation worth at least \$500,000 to \$1 million, Bennett said. Some are worth \$10 million to \$20 million.

"It's not just farming. There's a lot of equity sitting down at those tables," he said. "We hope to get some recognition for what we do."



Got News?

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