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The 2014 Virginia Cattle Industry Convention began that day near Harrisonburg, VA and later that afternoon in our annual business meeting. This one will be unique as you get to participate in implementing a by-law change. Specifically the approval and addition of a Policy & Industry Advocacy side for VCA. Similarly to the current marketing structure, the state will be divided into Districts. The difference being that these districts will have no deference to marketing participation, but instead solely to cattle unions. This will create equal representation across the state for all producer members of VCA to work for the greater good of the cattle business without reservation or prejudice. The cattle business is multi-faceted and there are things that range from impending legislation and issues advocacy to encouraging allied industry partnerships and youth development that we can all work for and benefit from.

On Thursday March 27, 2014 there will be a business meeting beginning at 4:15 PM to explain and discuss the growth of our Association through this change. There will be a vote to ratify the change followed by individual regional caucuses whereby members will immediately get down to the business of implementing the change. Governance of the new Policy & Industry Advocacy piece will be administered by a Board comprised of elected Directors from each of the cattle census-based Districts in the state. This election of Directors will happen that day. The most exciting thing about this will not only be the change allowing us to improve our service to the collective Virginia cattle industry but also that we will be beginning that change with more than just a formality but actual work. Talk will become action the evening of March 27th at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds. As members of VCA we encourage you to come for the 2014 Virginia Cattle Industry Convention for as much or as little of your schedule will allow. I especially ask that each of you able to come that evening for our business meeting do so and participate in a new and democratic process that will truly make us a cattle industry service as well as cattle marketing Association. There is a copy of the proposed by-law addition on the web at vacattlemen.org. Take a look, he prepared and come on March 27th to begin the new VCA.

I’ve spent a lot of editorial real estate the last few months explaining and advocating for the by-law changes that will expand the capabilities of our Association. There are a lot of other great things happening here as well. A collective voice is a powerful tool and that was recounted by the NCBA staff on several occasions as victories and setbacks were reviewed among issues important to cattle producers in 2013. The Farm Bill was certainly among these. We won a victory in Virginia with the inclusion of increased cost share funding for conservation programs but also a setback with Congress’ refusal to eliminate Country of Origin Labeling. This will cost Virginia cattle producers millions as our Canadian feeder cattle trade diminishes, however there is still work to be done to improve this situation over time. Beyond the legislative front there is a Virginia girl in a Kansas college that won a national scholarship and industry enthusiasm. Working for the collective good can be challenging and rewarding as seen this past year on the national level. Join us March 27th to validate our ability to do just that from Daleville.
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- KCF Bennett Revolution V6
- KCF Bennett Revolution 4R
- KCF Bennett Revolution 481
- SHF York 19H Y02

**Gelbvieh Sires:**
- KCF Bennett Revolution X51
- Hyline On Target 936
- KCF Bennett Southside
- KCF Bennett Revolution V6
- GAR New Design 450
- GAR Progress
- GAR Confidence 0100
- Rito 9M25

**Balancer Sires:**
- KCF Bennett U271
- KCF Bennett T297
- KCF Bennett U271
- KCF Bennett T297
- MSU TCF Revolution 4R
- HH Advance 8050U
- KJ HVH 33N
- KJ HVH 33N

Balancer Sale Bulls Average:
- TH +152
- CM +32
- BW +0.2
- WW +50
- YW +104
- $C +81.00
- $B +85.30

Polled Hereford Sale Bulls Average:
- TH +103
- CM +32
- BW +0.2
- WW +40
- YW +90
- $C +81.00
- $B +85.30

Gelbvieh Sale Bulls Average:
- TH +111
- CM +27
- BW +0.1
- WW +79
- $C +81.00
- $B +85.30

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CattleFax Outlook: Better Weather & Higher Prices In 2014

"I think we have to step back a little bit and put 2014 in perspective and say this is one for the ages. We're going to a new and higher trading range," says that long-time CattleFax analyst Kevin Good set the stage for his projections about the cattle market this year and next. Suffice it to say, nobody was complaining when the annual CattleFax Outlook session at the Cattle Industry Convention, this week in Nashville, disappointed and cattlemen headed out to begin their volunteer work for the beef industry. Clearly, Good says, a tight cattle supply situation is what is driving the market right now. And that tight supply will get tighter. "We're in the process of expanding the U.S. beef cow herd," he says. Cow slaughter was down 10% the second half of 2013, and his expectation is it will drop by about 500,000 head every year for 2014 and again in 2015.

The other component of the female side is the heifer, he says. Last year, the number of heifers as a percentage of slaughtered was 36%. The January Cattle on Feed report showed heifers as a percentage of beef numbers was 32%. That's lowest it's been in a decade. Good says. Meanwhile, USDA's Cattle Inventory report showed heifers kept for replacement were up 90,000 head on 2014 kicked into high gear. "We think, by the first of 2015 it will be up a quarter-million head or more," he said. Cattlemen. That means from the CattleFax weatherman's male cattle means the flames of a rut will heat up in the fall. The average age in this herd is 4.13 years old. CattleFax prices will average about $135/ cwt. in 2014. But there's a volatile and rollercoaster ride on other side of that. That means 2014 looking at a high somewhere in the upper $140s or even bumping $150 again. "But it also suggests some down times," he said. He told $126 at some point for a summer low, he says. Steer prices will average in the upper $130s this year, he says. "That's about a 13-14% increase year over year." But we could very easily see feeder cattle trade in the mid to upper $130s higher, he adds. "So there's quite a bit of potential there, especially if the corn crop comes through."

Likewise, calf values are headed higher, he says, and will average $193 for the year. Green grass will keep calf prices at or above $2 into March and April, he predicts, below-price seasonally trend lower throughout the second half of the year. But again, if corn values are moving lower throughout the year that will limit to support calf values the second half of the year better than normal. And that's actually what you see in a bull market, and we think we're in that process today. Utility cows will probably be up 15% this year over last year, he says, as the market tries to pull them out of the breeding herd and into the grinding mix. And prices for bred heifers will be up an average of 20%, he predicts, although that will depend a great deal on local labor and pasture conditions. That the bottom line is values are going to increase substantially.

Good says. Clearly, how quickly and to what extent better retention takes hold depends on Mother Nature. And the outlook there is good as well. "El Niño is coming," says CattleFax southernman Art Douglas, professor emeritus at Creighton University. "I think this is a real positive thing we've got going here." Looking at the record past, he says 2008-19 was an El Niño year. "As you went through the year of 2010, you had a lot of moisture from the western U.S. into the Midwest," he explains, before the wheels fell off in 2011 and 2012. He says that pattern will repeat itself this year. This drought cycle of developing in the Southwest in 2010, spreading into the Southern Plains in 2011, the Midwest in 2012 and moving back to the West Coast is about ready to repeat itself." That means for 2013, growing conditions in the Midwest will be nearly ideal, with plenty of rain, warm temperatures in the spring to allow for early fallwork and germination, then a cooler July and August as the crop pollinates and ears fill. Drought areas in the West, particularly California and Oregon in the West Coast, will see some relief this spring. he predicts, along with increased moisture into the Midwest and Plains. For summer, he generally predicts adequate moisture for much of the cattle and corn-producing regions of the country. The only concerns might be below-normal precipitation forecast for the Ohio Valley," he says. So while the long-term drought may not be over, cattlemen will see a repeat of the weather cycle that brought so much grace to various parts of the country the last 2-3 years, Mother Nature might provide at least a breather in 2014. For many cattlemen, especially in the Southern Plains and the West, it can’t come soon enough.
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EPDs as of 2/17/2014
For cattlemen and women, investing in the future and ensuring the next generation has the skills and knowledge to lead the industry is of paramount importance. We’re proud to have partnered with the CME Group in this effort for what will be our 25th year through the CME Beef Industry Scholarship.

The CME Beef Industry Scholarship was introduced in 1989 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Live Cattle futures contract on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. The scholarship recognizes and encourages talented students who will one day be industry leaders. This year marks the 25th year for presentation of these scholarships and the 50th anniversary of the Live Cattle futures contract.

In honor of this milestone, the CME Group awarded 25 scholarships of $1,000 to outstanding students who are pursuing careers in the beef industry. Elizabeth Nixon, of Rapidan, VA, was a winner of one of these scholarships. Elizabeth is the daughter of Tom and Kim Nixon and grew up on Glenmary Farm LLC, her family’s beef cattle, poultry and crop production farm. She currently attends Butler Community College where she excels both as a student and a member of their nationally known livestock judging team. She also worked for the Virginia Beef Industry Council and the Virginia Cattlemen’s Association this past summer as an intern utilizing her communication skills by producing several short videos featuring beef producers and how the Checkoff has benefited them.

“This scholarship program is an investment in the future of our industry and its future leaders,” said Scott George, NCBA president. “We are proud to have this lasting partnership with CME Group and to offer $25,000 this year for these students to advance their careers in the beef industry.”

CME Group Managing Director of Agricultural Commodities & Alternative Investments Tim Andriesen expressed the importance of risk management to the beef industry, which was the subject of the applicants’ essays this year. According to Andriesen, the beef scholarship also enables talented young people committed to the beef industry to pursue their careers.

“Over the last 25 years, this scholarship program has enabled us to invest in the next generation of beef industry leaders,” said Andriesen. “NCBA remains a critical partner in advancing risk management education to future beef industry leaders.”

Each applicant must have demonstrated a commitment to a career in the beef industry through classes, internships or life experiences, as well as have written an essay describing a risk confronting the beef industry with their solution to managing that risk.
Cattle Numbers Must Increase To Maintain Infrastructure

“...The beef cowherd must expand in the next 1-4 years,” says Randy Blach, CattleFax CEO. “If it doesn’t, don’t kid yourself; we’ll have a smaller industry and move beef from the center of the plate to more of a specialty item.” So goes the other side of receiving high prices because of historically snug cattle numbers. During the CattleFax Outlook seminar in Nashville, Kevin Good, CattleFax senior markets analyst, explained the nation’s beef cowherd decreased 2.3 million head between 2010 and 2013.

“The Jan. 1 cattle inventory for all cattle as well as beef cows can be the lowest from which the industry rebuilds over the next several years,” says Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist, in his weekly comments. “However, the industry is quite vulnerable to drought conditions that could re-immerse the spring and postpone herd expansion once again. Market signals for expansion are strong and growing, and the industry is poised to respond. We know what we want to do; we just don’t know what Mother Nature is going to let us do.”

Paul points out, based on USDA’s Cattle report, five of the 10 largest beef-cow states increased cow inventory last year, while five lost inventory. “The largest decrease in cow numbers occurred in Texas, followed by South Dakota, Montana, Kentucky and Nebraska.” Peel notes, “Beef cow numbers increased in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas and North Dakota. Oh no, there was a slight increase in beef cow numbers in the top 10 beef cow states.” Peel also explains that the inventory of beef replacement heifers was up 1.7%, a touch smaller than expectations. But he says the number of beef replacement heifers, as a percentage of the beef cowherd, at 18.8%, is the largest in more than 20 years, including the last cyclical expansion in the early 1990s.

“Any increase in beef cow numbers is expected to remain modest for at least three reasons,” says Chris Hurt, Purdue University, Extension agricultural economist, in his recent market analysis. “The cost to retain heifers is very high; cow-calf producers had a long period of narrow margins, and they want a longer period of strong margins to build their confidence to take on the market uncertain-ties; drought/dryness still covers substantial areas of brood cow production areas.”

As precipitation returns to more normal levels for the 2014 growing season, CattleFax predicts farmers in the U.S. should grow adequate corn crop to build the carry-over supply. The improved corn supplies should assist lower corn input costs over the next 12-24 months, says CattleFax grain market analyst Mike Murphy. “The lower input cost will have a direct correlation to improved feeder cattle and calf values in 2014; and with continued help from Mother Nature, we will be in better shape with regard to hay supply and prices moving forward,” Murphy says.

These bulls sell March 15th!

Saturday March 15, 2014, 1pm
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BW = 0 WW = 90 YW = 115 BW + 14 SF + 65 SB + 109

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BW = 1.0 WW = 67 YW = 113 SB = 30 SF 57

GVF Candid 3022
BW = 1.1 WW = 75 YW = 124 SW = 47 SF + 65 SB + 102

GVF Candid 3098
BW = 1.2 WW = 73 YW = 118 SW = 51 SF + 81 SB + 103

GVF Candid 3069
BW = 1.3 WW = 72 YW = 108 SW = 51 SF + 61 SB + 105

GVF Forward 3076
BW = 1.3 WW = 72 YW = 128 SW = 66 SF + 72 SB + 94
2014 Spring Bull and Female Sale

Saturday • APRIL 5, 2014 • 5 p.m. • Ewing, VA

Lawson Donna 1106

sire: N Bar Emulation EXT
dam: Coleman Donna 714
BW I+1.1; WW I+50; YW I+87; MILK I+25; CW I+47; $F +24.07

Selling half interest in a direct daughter
of the $290,000 valued and top selling
tomato of the 2011 National Finals Sale
selling half interest to ZWT Farms.

Lawson Donna 1106 sells due September 17, 2014
to the record-setting EXAR Denver 2002B.

Lawson Donna 2394

sire: Boyd New Day 6635

dam: Coleman Alliance Donna 972
BW I+1.9; WW I+47; YW I+83; MILK I+24; $W +34.50

Lawson Donna 2394 sells due to Sitz Top Gain.

Lawson Lady Z1447

sire: SAV Pioneer 7301

dam: Coleman Donna 975
BW I+2.2; WW I+96; YW I+103; MILK I+35; CW I+41; $F +30.79

Coleman Donna 1106 sells to Ten X, along with her natural calf, Lawsons Donna
A439, sired by Final Answer.

Abigale Z364 sells bred to SAV Registry 2831. Due October 17, 2014.

Her dam, Donna 962 is a full sister to Angus Alliance Winchester 975.

sire: Sitz Upward 307R

dam: Coleman Donna 975
BW I+2.2; WW I+56; YW I+103; MILK I+35; $W +34.75

Coleman Donna 1106 sells due to Boyd Pioneer 252T.

sire: Burt Redinger 865

dam: Coleman Donna 975
BW I+2.2; WW I+96; YW I+103; MILK I+35; CW I+41; MB I+0.20

Coleman Donna 1106 sells due to Ten X, along with her natural calf, Lawsons Donna
A439, sired by Final Answer. Three granddaughters also
sell out of Coleman Donna 975, sired by Final Answer,
Pioneer and Coleman Donna 9H.
2014 Southwest Bull Test Sale

Scott P. Greiner
Extension Animal Scientist, Beef, Virginia Tech

An open house will be hosted at the Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association’s Southwest Virginia Bull Test on Sunday afternoon, March 16th from 3:00 to 4:00 PM. Cattle producers and others interested are invited to attend. The Southwest Bull Test Station is located at Hillside Farm, owned and operated by Tim Surphlis of Dublin, Virginia. The station is located just outside Dublin. From Dublin, travel south on Route 11 just over two miles, and turn right on Thornspring Road/Rt. 543 (Cougar Express convenience store on corner). Proceed on Thornspring Road a little over a mile and the facility is on the left.

Approximately 142 bulls will sell at the Virginia BCIA Southwest Bull Test Sale on Saturday, March 22, 12:00 noon at the Danny Umberger sale facility, just outside Wytheville. These bulls include 47 fall-born semen bulls and 75 spring-born junior bulls. Breeds include 87 Angus, 4 Charolais, 8 Gelbvieh & Gelbvieh Balancers, 8 Polled Angus, 4 Charolais, 8 Gelbvieh & Charolais Balancers, 8 Simmental & Gelbvieh Balancers, 8 Polled Simmental & Southpoll, 70 Simmental & SimAngus. Only bulls which meet stringent BCIA criteria for calving ease and fertility will be offered. The BCIA-certified breed Heifer Sale will be held in conjunction with the bull sale. A select group of approximately 40 fall-calving bred heifers from leading producers will be offered immediately following the bulls. All heifers will be certified through the Virginia Premium Assured Heifer program, which verifies health, genetics, and management procedures. Service sires for the heifers will feature highly proven AI sires selected for calving ease and performance.

For complete details and progress reports visit the Virginia BCIA website: http://www.bcia.apsc.vt.edu or phone 540-231-2257. Video clips of the bulls and an online catalog will also be posted.

Management Of Young Beef Bulls

Scott P. Greiner
Extension Animal Scientist, Beef, Virginia Tech

Management Prior to the Breeding Season

Most newly purchased yearling bulls have recently completed a performance evaluation, which provided a relatively high plane of nutrition through the yearling phase. Ideally, after completion of this evaluation, the energy level of the diet will be reduced and/or intakes limited to prevent excessive fat deposition with the goal of having a body condition score of 5 at turn-out. This will give the bull adequate reserves of energy for one during the breeding season. Yearling bulls can be expected to lose 100 pounds or more during the course of the breeding season.

Acquiring a new yearling bull at least 60 to 90 prior to the breeding season is critical from several aspects. First, the bull has ample time for the new bull to get adjusted to the feed and environment of his new home, as well as an opportunity for several new bulls to be conditioned for a period of adequate exercise, in combination with a proper nutritional program, is essential to “harden” these bulls up prior to the breeding season. A facility for the newly acquired bull that allows for ample exercise will help create bulls that are physically fit for the breeding season. The nutrition of the bull will be dependent on body condition. Yearling bulls are still growing and developing, and should be targeted to gain 2.0 to 2.5 pounds per day from a year of age through the breeding season. Bulls weighing approximately 1200 pounds will consume 25 to 30 pounds of dry matter per day. This intake may contain a high quality pasture plus 120 lbs corn, grass-legate hay plus 20 lbs corn, or 40 lbs steam-lage plus the protein supplement. Provide adequate clean water and a complete mineral free-choice.

Prior to the breeding season, all bulls should receive breeding soundness exams (BSE) to assure soundness and fertility. Because a variety of factors may affect bull fertility, it may be advisable to test new young bulls before the breeding season even if it has only been a few months since the pre-sale BSE. Just as importantly, all bulls need to have a BSE annually prior to the breeding season, not just at yearling.

Management During the Breeding Season

The breeding season should be kept to a maximum of 40 days for young bulls. This will prevent overuse of the bull, severe weight loss and reduced libido. Seven weight loss may impair future Continued on Page 11
Its bull buying season! From a genetic standpoint, sire selection is the most important decision a cattle producer makes. Essentially all genetic improvement in commercial herds is the direct result of sire selection. Consider the fact that 87.5% of the genetics of an individual calf were inherited from three sires in that calf’s pedigree (50% from the sire, 25% from the dam’s sire, and 12.5% from the dam’s maternal grandsire). This fact alone emphasizes the importance of proper sire selection, and the impact that each sire has on economically relevant traits. For herds with small numbers of cows and in single-sire herds, the importance of an individual sire is even further exaggerated as one sire alone accounts for a large proportion of the genetics represented in each calf crop. Relative to other production and management decisions, sire selection is an infrequent occurrence for many cow-calf producers. However, these decisions have long-term impact relative to the productivity and profitability of the cow-calf enterprise.

Successful sire selection starts with having a game plan prior to bull buying season. From a genetic standpoint, sire selection is the most important decision a cattle producer makes. Essentially all genetic improvement in commercial herds is the direct result of sire selection. Consider the fact that 87.5% of the genetics of an individual calf were inherited from three sires in that calf’s pedigree (50% from the sire, 25% from the dam’s sire, and 12.5% from the dam’s maternal grandsire). This fact alone emphasizes the importance of proper sire selection, and the impact that each sire has on economically relevant traits. For herds with small numbers of cows and in single-sire herds, the importance of an individual sire is even further exaggerated as one sire alone accounts for a large proportion of the genetics represented in each calf crop. Relative to other production and management decisions, sire selection is an infrequent occurrence for many cow-calf producers. However, these decisions have long-term impact relative to the productivity and profitability of the cow-calf enterprise.

Successful sire selection starts with having a game plan prior to bull buying season.

All bulls should be observed closely to monitor their breeding behavior and libido to ensure they are servicing and settling cows. Additionally, observe the cow herd to monitor their estrous cycles. Many females coming back into heat may be the result of an infertile or subfertile bull. All bulls should be monitored for injury or lameness that may compromise their breeding capability.

Young Beef Bulls

Sire Selection – Job #1

Scott P. Greiner, Ph.D.
Extension Animal Scientist,
Virginia Tech

In It's bull buying season! From a genetic standpoint, sire selection is the most important decision a cattle producer makes. Essentially all genetic improvement in commercial herds is the direct result of sire selection. Consider the fact that 87.5% of the genetics of an individual calf were inherited from three sires in that calf’s pedigree. This fact alone emphasizes the importance of proper sire selection, and the impact that each sire has on economically relevant traits. For herds with small numbers of cows and in single-sire herds, the importance of an individual sire is even further exaggerated: one sire alone accounts for a large proportion of the genetics represented in each calf crop. Relative to other production and management decisions, sire selection is an infrequent occurrence for many cow-calf producers. However, these decisions have long-term impact relative to the productivity and profitability of the cow-calf enterprise.

Young Beef Bulls

Continued from Page 10

growth and development of the young bull, and reduce his lifetime usefulness. When practical, supplementing young bulls with grain during the breeding season will reduce excessive weight loss. In single-sire situations, young bulls can normally be expected to breed a number of females approximately equal to their age in months. Using this rule of thumb, a newly purchased bull that is 18 months of age could be placed with 18 cows or heifers. Bulls used together in multiple-sire breeding pastures should be of similar age and size. Young bulls cannot compete with older bulls in the same breeding pasture. A common practice is to rotate bulls among different breeding pastures every 21 to 28 days. This practice decreases the breeding pressure on a single bull. Some producers use older bulls early in the breeding season, and then replace them with young bulls. The appropriate bull to female ratio will vary from one operation to the next based on bull age, condition, fertility, and libido, as well as size of the breeding pasture, available forage supply, length of the breeding season and number of bulls with a group of cows.

All bulls should be observed closely to monitor their breeding behavior and libido to ensure they are servicing and settling cows. Additionally, observe the cows to monitor their estrous cycles. Many females coming back into heat may be the result of an infertile or subfertile bull. All bulls should be monitored for injury or lameness that may compromise their breeding capability.

Management After the Breeding Season

Young bulls require a relatively high plane of nutrition following the breeding season to replenish body condition and meet demands for continued growth. Young bulls should be maintained in a separate lot from mature bulls, so these additional nutritional requirements can be provided. Body condition and projected mature size of the bull will determine his nutrient requirements during the 9 months following the breeding season. Bulls should be kept away from cows in an isolated facility, or pasture after the breeding season. In the winter months, provide cover from extreme weather that may cause frostbite to the scrotum resulting in decreased fertility.

Continued on Page 19

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Open House at the Test Station
Wednesday, March 16, 2014 1:00 – 4:00 PM
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And, Angus females have proven that consistent, reliable maternal genetics can be accompanied by improved carcass merit. That’s opened the door to value-based marketing opportunities for producers who’ve embraced the quality revolution.

Want proof?

Consumer demand for Certified Angus Beef® has grown by nearly 80% since 2004, and a growing worldwide middle class is driving demand for quality.
See the difference with 100 to 150 days of parasite control in one convenient dose.¹

LONGRANGE® (eprinomectin) is the first extended-release injection that gives you 100 to 150 days of parasite control in a single treatment.¹²

LONGRANGE takes out even tough-to-kill worms.³ Unique THERAPHASE™ Technology allows LONGRANGE to work for an extended period and then quickly leaves the animal’s system. The short amount of time at sub-therapeutic concentrations helps ensure LONGRANGE doesn’t select for resistance any more than current dewormers, making it an effective and responsible choice.⁴⁵

See the difference in your herd’s performance this season. Talk to your veterinarian about 100 to 150 days of parasite control in a single dose with prescription LONGRANGE.¹²

Available in 500 mL, 250 mL and 50 mL bottles. Administer subcutaneously at 1 mL/110 lbs.

¹ Dependent upon parasite species, as referenced in FOI summary and LONGRANGE product label.

² LONGRANGE product label.


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IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION: Do not treat within 48 days of slaughter. Not for use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older, including dry dairy cows, or in veal calves. Post-injection site damage (e.g., granulomas, necrosis) can occur. These reactions have disappeared without treatment.

For more information, visit theLONGRANGElook.com

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The IRS And Business Plans

John Alan Cohen, Attorney at Law

In recent years the IRS has ruled that a written business plan is important evidence tending to prove that you are operating in a business-like manner. The Tax Court has said that in hobby loss cases you should have “some type of plan” for the venture. This applies whether you are involved in raising, show breeding, other farming activities, cobra car rebuilding, antique collecting, boat or aircraft chartering, and other areas traditionally under IRS scrutiny. The IRS takes the view that a written business plan demonstrates your businesslike concern for the success of the venture. People engaged in a hobby do not have business plans. One of the most important things that distinguishes a business from a hobby is the existence of a written business plan.

There are numerous resources, some good and others not, to assist you in drawing up a business plan. It is advisable to have a business plan drafted by a professional, and the fee will depend on the complexity of the facts involved. Keep in mind that a business plan is one of the best forms of evidence to show your true intentions. The IRS Audit Technique Guide asks revenue agents to ask for a business plan in livestock and livestock audits, and the absence of a plan is direct evidence that the taxpayer is not operating in a business-like manner. In audits, most individuals are caught off guard when asked whether they have a business plan. Some will say that their activity is very basic, that they know what they are doing, and that they don’t “need” a business plan. What is a business plan? The business plan narrates what your business is all about, what kind of activity this can further bolster the businesslike nature of the operation, although you will still need to spend time developing the figures. Most people project operating losses for the startup phase of the activity, which can be from three to seven years or longer, depending on the particular activity.

Preparing your business plan now: don’t wait to get audited. It is too late to muster up a plan once you are audited. The IRS wants to see business records that are maintained in the ordinary course of your activity, not those that you might prepare once you have been notified of an audit. Ideally, your business plan should be completed by the time you are audited. If you are audited and you don’t have an existing business plan you should still prepare one, and admit that you have prepared it to connect with your audit. That is better than nothing. You can estimate how much time you spent in your head, and you thought it would be best at this time to reduce it to writing so that it can be clear how you intended that the activity can be engaged in for profit.

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Following the Atlas blizzard that covered so much of South Dakota this past October, many cattle ranchers found themselves in desperate need of help. The blizzard came unexpectedly while many cattle were still out on summer pasture, killing twenty to thirty thousand head across the state. The aftermath of the storm left some ranchers with losses of 60 to 90% of their cow herds.

When word of the losses reached the ears of some producers in the Shenandoah Valley, the Rockingham Feeder Cattle Association started a campaign to collect both bred- and open-heifers to send to their aid. On Thursday, February 6, forty bred heifers from up and down the Valley were sent to western South Dakota; ultimately reaching the hands of several cattlemen who faced high losses from the storm. For more information on where those bred heifers ended up, you can check out the ‘Heifers for South Dakota’ Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/pledgeheifer.

Currently, there is still a need for open heifers - the goal of the association is to complete a full load by the middle of March, for an end of March sendoff. We are looking for top quality heifers that recipients can turn out for a June breeding season. For more information on how you can donate a heifer or offer financial aid to the cause, contact Matthew Sponaugle, Augusta County Extension Agent, at (540) 245-5750 or msponaugle@vt.edu.
Sire Selection

Continued from Page 11

to the bull buying season in order to formulate a job description for the new herd sire. In other words, a genetic improvement standpoint the responsibilities and qualifications for the new herd sire need to be determined. The key to this process is records and an assessment of the current status of the herd genetically, and identification of those traits for which selection pressure in the next generation. This selection pressure may increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of genetic merit in the herd depending on the current level of performance for each of the relevant traits.

The first step in this process is to examine herd goal. Herd goals serve as the foundation for sire selection and provide guidance as to traits with the most economic importance. Defining the production and marketing system, along with management strategies and environment are key factors. Secondly, determine herd strengths and weaknesses. Basic records are necessary to identify herd strengths and weaknesses. Performance parameters such as calving percentage, weaning percentage, weaning weight, carcass merit, breeding cost, feed usage, etc. are necessary to serve as the basis for assessing areas of strength and those needing attention. Thirdly, establish selection priorities. Core selection is always important and defining an optimum EPD range as a benchmark is compatible with this strategy.

Defining the optimum EPD range or benchmark, however, can be challenging. Knowledge of the EPD value of former and current sires in the herd can provide valuable insight and assistance in this matter. Associating EPD values on current/former sires with the performance of their progeny can be useful to establish a benchmark from which to select future sires. In the previous example, where enhanced weaning weights was a goal, it would be advantageous to know the SW EPD value of current sires. Accordingly, we could set future WW EPD goal higher in comparison. Similar examples can be applied to calving ease, milk, and carcass traits. The basic premise is that defining where we are headed genetically is much easier if we can characterize where we have been.

Breeding percentile rankings are additional tools that can assist with EPD selection and benchmarking. It is useful to Continued on Page 23

### Percentile Rankings for Angus and Purebred Simmental Bulls (Spring 2014)

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<th>Percentile Rank</th>
<th>EPD Value</th>
<th>CE</th>
<th>YW</th>
<th>Milk</th>
<th>MB</th>
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<th>YW</th>
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</tbody>
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Southwest Virginia Angus Association

2014 Upcoming Events

**Southwest Virginia Angus Association Annual Meeting**...........March 29, 2014
Riverfront Café, Chilhowie, VA

Social: 6 pm - 7 pm
Dinner: 7 pm
Annual Meeting to Follow Dinner

**“Double Header” Sale**.........................................................Apr 19, 2014
Washington Co. Fairgrounds, Abingdon, Virginia

SVWA Spring Bull Test (50 Bulls) and Female Sale
VQA Bulls Will Sell in This Sale

**“More For Your Money” Sale**...............................................Oct 18, 2014
Wytheville, Virginia

60 lots, Mostly Cow/Calf Pairs

**“Southwest Virginia’s Finest Angus” Sale**............................Dec 6, 2014
Washington Co. Fairgrounds, Abingdon, Virginia

SVWA Fall Bull Test and Female Sale
VQA Bulls Will Sell in This Sale

For information about **Southwest Virginia Angus Association**
Sponsored sales, contact Sale Coordinator:
George T. Johnstone Jr. ...........................................(276) 228-8496 or (276) 620-4901

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Obituary

Betty Jo Olson

MIDDLEBROOK — Betty Jo Hamilton Olson, beloved wife of Robert “Bob” Olson, gained her eternal rest Jan. 27, 2014. She was born in Staunton January 12, 1959. In addition to her husband to whom she was united in marriage on Aug. 31, 2008, she is survived by her step son, Kenneth Olson, her sister and brother-in-law, Lee Ann and Thomas Heizer, her mother and father-in-law Judith and Kenneth Olson, her niece Sarah Heizer and nephew Andrew Heizer, and in-laws. She was preceded in death by her parents, Joel and Nellie Root Hamilton.

Betty Jo was proud to be a lifelong farmer and a lifelong resident of Middlebrook. Together with her father, she farmed the family’s century farm, Brookside, just west of Middlebrook. Betty Jo graduated from Riverheads High School in 1977 where she was active in numerous clubs and activities and was an all-star basketball player. She attended Bridgewater College for two years, playing collegiate volleyball while there. She graduated summa cum laude from Mary Baldwin College in 1981 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications.

Her career off the farm included employment as a public relations specialist with King’s Daughters’ Hospital. Eventually she returned to farming full time where, together with her father, she raised sheep and cattle, participating in the farm operations from the ground up including learning how to shear sheep. She also trained a team of Icelandic draft horses. At the age of 16 she founded a monthly newspaper, Augusta Country, dedicated to bringing “Friendly News for Friendly People.” As publisher, editor, and writer, she did much to document the rural heritage of Augusta County and its surrounding communities. Her dry wit and creative writing about the experiences in rural Virginia brought a smile to many faces. Her farming exploits are detailed in her column, “Down on the Farm,” were widely read.

Deeply principled and community-minded, she worked hard to help those in the community who were less fortunate and stood up for those without a voice. A lifelong member of Bethel Presbyterian Church, she served on many committees and missionary outreaches, sang in the choir, edited the church newsletter and was, for many years, one of the session. She also involved with the Salvation Church of the Brethren disaster relief and made several trips to post-Katrina New Orleans to help rebuild houses there. She was active in the agricultural community and deeply involved in the future of the family farm. Over the years she served on the boards of the Augusta County Farm Bureau to whom she was involved in the Ag in the Classroom Program and the Virginia Beef Cattlemen’s Association. She designed and produced the award-winning book, Virginia’s Cattle Story.

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Betty Jo was active in 4-H and in 1973 was a member of the Virginia 4-H Meat Identification Team that represented the state in the national competition. She was also a long-time youth leader and active with the annual 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show and Sale, coordinating the show’s publicity, photography, and award presentations. In 2003, the show was dedicated to her as “an individual who worked tirelessly to promote the show.”

Betty Jo leaves behind many family and friends across all spectrums of the community for whom she made a difference. Among both the two-legged and four-legged creatures of this earth, she will be sorely missed.
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### Sire Selection

**Continued from Page 19**

Understanding where a particular bull ranks within a breed for traits of interest. This ranking provides documentation as to the genetic merit of the bull compared to others within the breed. Percentile rankings are readily available in sire summaries published by breed associations. With this information, bulls can be specifically evaluated as to where their percent of genetic merit lies in comparison to others within the breed. Percentile rankings are readily available in sire summaries published by breed associations. With this information, bulls can be specifically evaluated as to where their genetic merit lies in comparison to others within the breed. Percentile rankings are readily available in sire summaries published by breed associations. With this information, bulls can be specifically evaluated as to where their genetic merit lies in comparison to others within the breed.

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**March Beef Herd Management Advisor**

Scott P. Greiner & Mark A. McCann
Extension Beef Specialists, Virginia Tech
sgreiner@vt.edu, mccann@vt.edu

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### Spring Calving Herds (January-March)

**General**
- Calving season is in full swing. Check cows frequently during calving season—optimal interval is to observe calving females every four hours (heifers more frequently if possible).
- Identify calves promptly at birth. Record birth weight, calving ease score, teat/udder score, and mothering ability of cow.
- Monitor young calves for scours. Prevent scours by keeping calving area clean and well drained. Moving 2-3 day old pairs out of calving area to separate pasture (reduce commingling of newborn calves with older calves) help reduce exposure to scours.

**Nutrition and Forages**
- Replace free-choice minerals with a high magnesium mineral to prevent grass tetany. Monitor intake to insure cows are consuming the recommended amount. No other source of salt or minerals should be available.
- Evaluate growth of yearling heifers with goal of reaching 60-65% of mature weight by breeding. Depending on forage quality, supplementation maybe needed to meet weight gain target.
- Feed high-quality hay to minimize supplementation and cow weight loss.
- Although pasture growth is beginning and nutrient content of new growth is high, cows cannot consume enough to meet their nutritional needs. Restricting cows to smaller hay feeding areas will allow new pasture growth to get a faster start.
- Fertilize hay areas with K and P according to soil test recommendations.

Continued on Page 24
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Herd Health
Consult with veterinarian on pre-weaning vaccination protocol for calf crop. Monitor calves closely for health issues, particularly respiratory disease.

Genetics
Make plans for remaining spring bull sales. Closely examine herd genetic goals and selection criteria for both AI and natural service sires.

Herd Advisor
Herd health
- Observe new calves for signs of scours and pneumonia, have treatment supplies on hand.
- Consult with your veterinarian concerning pre-breeding vaccination schedule for cow herd and yearling heifers. Plan early to allow 30-day vaccination window prior to breeding season.

Reproduction
- Plan AI and synchronization program to be used during breeding season. Order supplies and semen.
- Schedule and conduct breeding soundness exams on herd sires, including annual vaccination. Do so prior to spring bull sales to allow time to source replacements as necessary.

Genetics
- Closely examine herd genetic goals and selection criteria for both AI and natural service sires. Establish herd strengths and weaknesses from genetic standpoint, and benchmark EPD criteria accordingly. Make plans for spring bull-buying season.
- Schedule and collect remaining yestern/performing data (weight, height, scrotal, ultrasound) in weaner steers.

Fall Calving Herds (September-November)
General
- Pull bulls to maintain a 60-90 day calving season. Monitor body condition and soundness of bulls.
- Schedule and conduct pregnancy diagnosis with veterinarian 45-60 days following breeding season. Make plans to pregnancy check heifers as soon as possible after bull removal. This will allow options in marketing open heifers.
- Evaluate potential options for marketing of calf crop, including time of weaning, and backgrounding strategy.

Nutrition and Forages
- Begin creep feeding or creep grazing calves if desired.
- Cows are entering latter portion of lactation, above average to good quality hay should meet nutritional requirements.
- Although pasture growth is beginning, hay should be continued to be offered until consumption declines significantly.
- Reserve high quality hay and a pasture area for calves post-weaning.
- Nitrogen hay areas with K and P according to soil test recommendations. Add nitrogen at the rate of 40-70lbs/acre.

Herds strengths and weaknesses from genetic standpoint, and benchmark EPD criteria accordingly.
- Collect 205-day weights on calf crop at appropriate time (AHIR age range 120-280 days), along with cow weights, hip heights and body condition scores (cow mature size data taken within 45 days of calf weaning).
Use Timing To Guide Pasture Weed Control

Matt Brosher, Virginia Cooperative Extension–Augusta County

As an Extension agent and former commercial applicator, I have come to realize that success- ful pasture and hay weed control is just as much of a matter when you spray as it is what you spray. For those of you who have wanted to do a better job of weed control this year, I urge you to learn the proper application timing for each of the various weed life cycles and to be prepared–spray season is approaching fast.

Winter annual weeds such as mustard, chickweed, hebbi, and an- nual buttercup will be some of the first ones to rear their ugly heads this spring. Typically pasture or hayfields will turn vibrant colors seemingly overnight as these weeds bloom in late-March or April. By then it is too late to have any real effect on weed production of fall, deadlines. If you have one of these fields, rest assured that you have a robust weedbank on hand and that the problem will return next year. Next time, use a full application to catch winter annual weeds when they are in the seedling/rostette stage. They are easily killed with a number of broadleaf herbicides when under 4 or 6 inches tall. In a pasture situation, consider looking into a product containing amiron-rid if your winter annual weed pressure is especially high. Like winter annuals, biennials are also best controlled when用药前, and are very dynamic stages for these weeds. Biennials overwinter as a rosette (seedling or rosette stage) and bolt in the spring to produce flowers and seeds. This spring is perhaps the best time to spray weeds because they are very mobile at this stage and bolt in the flower and fruit stage. Biennials overwinter as a rosette and bolt in the spring to produce flowers and seeds. This spring is perhaps the best time to spray weeds because they are very mobile at this stage.

By late winter annuals and bi- ennials, summer annual weeds such as ragweed, cocklebur, and Jimmerson can also be killed with relative ease if sprayed in the weeding stage under 4 or 5 inches tall. Any larger, and herbicide efficacy goes down as plants begin to harden-off. The problem with summer annual weed control is that, typically, we are busy with other things around mid-May to mid-June, that pasture or hay weed control gets put on the back burner. One way to cope with this problem in a pasture situation is to apply an early application of one of the Pyridine herbicides with residual activity (e.g., Grazon, Forefront, Sumitrol), to control germinating, summer-annual seedlings.

Remember that there are two basic types of weeds. Perennials overwinter as a rosette (seedling or rosette stage) and bolt in the spring to produce flowers and seeds. This spring is perhaps the best time to spray weeds because they are very mobile at this stage. Biennials overwinter as a rosette (seedling or rosette stage) and bolt in the spring to produce flowers and seeds. This spring is perhaps the best time to spray weeds because they are very mobile at this stage.

Perennials in hay and pasture seem to be the greatest weed in our most farms have, and it is for good reason. Perennial weeds such as dogbane, milkweed, wing- stem, horsetail, docks, plantain, and pokeweed come back every year from a variety of vegetative structures. This can be done in the form of a taproot, fleshy spreading stem (a rosette), or a below-ground spreading stem (cicinna). These perennial structures are also a point of energy storage for the plant. The plant pulls sugar and herbicide mixture so strong when spot spraying- folks make the herbicide mixture so strong that pasture or hay weed control gets put on the back burner. One way to cope with this problem in a pasture situation is to apply an early application of one of the Pyridine herbicides with residual activity (e.g., Grazon, Forefront, Sumitrol) to control germinating, summer-annual seedlings.

Really, this is only feasible if you are applying a March or April application targeting these weeds, as well as seedling activity is limited in length and is not as effective as it is on emergent seedlings. If you can detect problems with summer annuals you need to be watching for them soon after the major flushes of weeds emerge. This requires some scouting, as well as a knowledge of disease and climate. Weeds are not meant to be an endorsement of any company or product. My experience is that these recommendations have worked for hay and pasture. The Pyridine family is a giant in this market and is usu- ally strong on perennials due to greater mobility within the plant, as well as extended root uptake of soil-mobile chemicals. When dealing specifically with woody perennial weeds, it is best to select a product containing chemi- cal persistence of herbicides in the Pyridine family (e.g., Grazon, Forefront). Be sure to read la- bels and seek assistance when selecting an herbicide for hay. In a pasture setting, the Pyridine family is often an effective herbicide for hay. Weeds are not meant to be an endorsement of any company or product. My experience is that these recommendations have worked for hay and pasture. The Pyridine family is a giant in this market and is usu-"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Name</th>
<th>Best Herbicide Timing</th>
<th>Best Herbicide</th>
<th>Other Herbicide</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dewberry</td>
<td>Blackberry</td>
<td>Broadleaf dock</td>
<td>Spiny pigweed</td>
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<td>Burdock</td>
<td>Arcticum minus</td>
<td>Rumex crispus</td>
<td>Seedling or rosette stage</td>
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<td>Spiny dock</td>
<td>Curly dock</td>
<td>Rumex obtusifolius</td>
<td>Late-spring or fall</td>
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<td>Cocklebur</td>
<td>Coneflower</td>
<td>Lespedeza cuneata</td>
<td>Early bud stage</td>
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<td>Blackberries</td>
<td>Plantain</td>
<td>Symphoricarpos orbiculatus</td>
<td>Pre bloom &amp; early fruit drop</td>
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<td>Buckhorn Plantain</td>
<td>Yucca fi lamentosa</td>
<td>Robinia pseudoacacia</td>
<td>Late-spring and early-summer; fall</td>
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<td>Buckbrush, Plantain</td>
<td>Osage orange, Hedge Apple</td>
<td>Gleditsia triacanthos</td>
<td>Late-spring through summer; fall</td>
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<td>Canada Thistle</td>
<td>Musk thistle</td>
<td>Carduus acanthoides</td>
<td>Early-bud stage (June-August)</td>
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<td>Musk thistle</td>
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<td>Biennial thistles</td>
<td>Sumac</td>
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<td>Yucca fi lanceolata</td>
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<td>Elaeagnus umbellate</td>
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<td>Yucca fi filamentosa</td>
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<td>Silene alba</td>
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<td>Yucca fi filaments</td>
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<td>Asclepias syriaca</td>
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<td>Yucca fi leaves</td>
<td>Autumn olive</td>
<td>Silene alba</td>
<td>Fall</td>
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To create a Chaparral liquid premix:
- Mix 0.5 oz of Cimarron Plus.
- Add 5 oz of water to create a gallon of spray. Be sure to mix the solution thoroughly before each use! One quart of premix should make about 40 gallons of spray.

To create a metsulfuron liquid premix:
- Mix 0.5 oz of metsulfuron.
- Add 5 oz of water to create a gallon of spray. Be sure to mix the solution thoroughly before each use! One quart of premix should make about 40 gallons of spray.

When working with dry herbicides that have extremely low use-rates, it is helpful to create a premixed liquid solution. Save the solution and withdraw the specified amount as required. Be sure to keep a label with the container and mix well before use.
While living and teaching in Blacksburg, VA, Chip and Debbie Snead were both drawn to the beauty and rural environment of neighboring Craig County. After purchasing a small piece of property and settling into a remote farmhouse, they wanted to start raising cattle. Both pursued new jobs, Chip as County Administrator and Debbie with VA Cooperative Extension, but most importantly as owners of Mountain Branch Farm.

Their dream of owning cattle started in the summer of 1973 with the purchase of three steer calves from the open market, and seven Angus heifers from a neighbor in 1974. Chip says with the help of kind and more experienced neighbors (Zane Jones and Cecil Smith), and excellent advice from VA Coop Extension and VA Cattlemen’s Association, the race was on in the cattle business. The Snead’s began to purchase pure breed bulls from the Bennett family at Knoll Crest Farm, and Richard McClung at Wehrmann Angus. They also started saving their best quality heifers each season, and the herd began to grow. The fall calving, cow/calf operation currently has 140 mature cows, 25 breeding heifers and 7 bulls.

As older farmers began to age and family farms went out of business, Chip and Debbie purchased additional properties in the County and rent three farms, in order to help provide more grazing and hay production. The other trait that helps with production is Craig’s fertile Sinking Creek Valley, or as Debbie mentioned in her article about the VCAF history book, “the mountain areas – where grazing and stocking raising is extensive and profitable.” They have also tried to invest in renovating old farm buildings, good quality equipment and fencing, and efficient watering systems and conservation practices. Their farm manager, Russell Tucker is invaluable in helping to make sure the farm runs efficiently.

Chip says they have tried not to get discouraged with the challenging situations faced by all producers – rising operating costs, cattle health and safety issues, and other uncontrollable factors that occur, and feel the opportunities far exceed the challenges. He has appreciated learning from Extension Agents and Specialists (particularly Carter Fleming and the Elden), vets (from Dr. Bibb to Dr. Jason Wall), Reggie Reynolds, and James and Paul Bennett. Debbie and Chip both agree that working with these professionals, fellow VCA and VBIC members, and certainly the cattle, has truly enhanced their farming experience and blessed their lives.
A Bull Purchase Is More Than Just Buying Genetics

Wes Ishmael, Cattle Economics

On one hand, bulls are worth exactly what someone is willing to pay for them, no more and no less. On the other hand, considering their contribution to a herd's genetics, they're priceless. "For the average calf, the sire and the maternal grandsire are projected to have contributed three-fourths of the calf's genes," explains Kris Ringwall, North Dakota State University Extension livestock specialist. "Although somewhat challenging to do all the math, on average, if one goes back an additional generation, 87.5% of the genes within the calf crop are potentially accounted for by the last three sets of bulls that the producer bought." Even before considering the historic genetic contribution or specific gene individual producers are trying to introduce or dilute within breeds, economics say some bulls are worth a whole lot more than others.

A couple of years ago, Troy Marshall, a seedstock producer at Burlington, CO, who's also a REEP contributing editor, offered an example based on a bull-siring 100 calves. He figured, conservatively, three more calves could be achieved from a bull in the top 10% of the breed for calving ease. He figured a bull in the top 20% of the breed for carcass weight would...

Continued on Page 33
Exports of U.S. beef closed 2013 by eclipsing the $6 billion mark for the first time, setting a new annual value record. At the same time, pork exports declined below 2012’s record highs while lamb sales rose in value on lower volumes according to statistics released by the USDA and compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), contractor to the Beef Checkoff program.

Beef exports continued their surge in December, surpassing yeat-over-year totals by nearly 13 percent in volume and 20 percent in value led by growth in sales to Japan, Mexico, Hong Kong and Central/South America. Totals for 2013 were up 3 percent in volume to 2.58 pounds and 12 percent in value ($6.157 billion) – breaking the 2012 value record.

“2013 presented a new set of challenges,” said USMEF President and CEO Philip Seng. “Last year, the closure of the Russian market to U.S. red meat products and our continued absence from the dynamic beef market in the People’s republic of China stand out. And there were challenges in other markets, ranging from Indonesia to Saudi Arabia. The industry is focused on these challenges and USMEF is targeting the markets where we have the best chance of succeeding and creating a positive return for American producers and exporters.”

The new milestone for U.S. beef export value also meant new records for the average export value per head: an annual record of $244.96 per head of slaughter, up $28.23 from 2012 and a new monthly record in December at $279.16, up $36.52 from December 2012.

U.S. Beef Exports Close 2013 With Record Value
Has The U.S. Become A Ground Beef Nation?

Butt Rutherford, BEEF

The U.S. is becoming a ground beef nation, according to a Rabobank economist. And that, he says, is meant for the U.S. beef industry to take a serious look at whether or not it needs to tweak its production systems to more efficiently meet this consumer demand. Don Close, vice president, food & agribusiness research & advisory, animal protein for Rabobank, was noodling around in the numbers a while back and overlaid the price of 85% and 90% lean trimmings on the comprehensive cutout. “Historically, these lean beef trimmings on the comprehensive cutout are sold at a discount to the overall cutout. “Over the last 5-6 years, there’s been a pretty clear inversion of those numbers a while back and overlaid the price of 85% and 90% lean trimmings on the comprehensive cutout,” he says. “That’s not a grass-fed product – it’s a different management approach, a different production model, Rabobank says, but it’s more than just leaning towards a different price relationship. Close’s research suggests that close to one-third and one-half of the animals should be raised for the Choice and Prime market, respectively. That’s not a grass-fed production model, he says. That’s a different forage fed to achieve a different grading percentage, he says. That’s not a grass-fed production model, he says. That’s a different management approach. Close’s research suggests that close to one-third and one-half of the animals should be raised for the Choice and Prime market. That’s a different management approach for the Choice and Prime market, he says. That’s not a grass-fed production model, he says. That’s a different management approach. The U.S. is becoming a ground beef nation, according to a Rabobank economist. And that, he says, is meant for the U.S. beef industry to take a serious look at whether or not it needs to tweak its production systems to more efficiently meet this consumer demand. Don Close, vice president, food & agribusiness research & advisory, animal protein for Rabobank, was noodling around in the numbers a while back and overlaid the price of 85% and 90% lean trimmings on the comprehensive cutout. “Historically, these lean beef trimmings on the comprehensive cutout are sold at a discount to the overall cutout. “Over the last 5-6 years, there’s been a pretty clear inversion of those numbers a while back and overlaid the price of 85% and 90% lean trimmings on the comprehensive cutout,” he says. “That’s not a grass-fed product – it’s a different management approach, a different production model, Rabobank says, but it’s more than just leaning towards a different price relationship. Close’s research suggests that close to one-third and one-half of the animals should be raised for the Choice and Prime market. That’s not a grass-fed production model, he says. That’s a different management approach. The U.S. is becoming a ground beef nation, according to a Rabobank economist. And that, he says, is meant for the U.S. beef industry to take a serious look at whether or not it needs to tweak its production systems to more efficiently meet this consumer demand. Don Close, vice president, food & agribusiness research & advisory, animal protein for Rabobank, was noodling around in the numbers a while back and overlaid the price of 85% and 90% lean trimmings on the comprehensive cutout. “Historically, these lean beef trimmings on the comprehensive cutout are sold at a discount to the overall cutout. “Over the last 5-6 years, there’s been a pretty clear inversion of those numbers a while back and overlaid the price of 85% and 90% lean trimmings on the comprehensive cutout,” he says. “That’s not a grass-fed product – it’s a different management approach, a different production model, Rabobank says, but it’s more than just leaning towards a different price relationship. Close’s research suggests that close to one-third and one-half of the animals should be raised for the Choice and Prime market. That’s not a grass-fed production model, he says. That’s a different management approach.
Philip O'Connor
(Reuters) - The only thing more surprising than American Kaitlyn Farrington winning halfpipe gold at the Sochi Olympics on Wednesday is the story of how her early career was funded - by selling the family's livestock.

Snowboarders like Shaun White can command millions of dollars in endorsements, but the woman from Sunny Valley, Idaho had to make do with more modest means when she set out on the path to Olympic gold.

As her status as a snowboarder grew, the only way for her family to fund her burgeoning career was to sell off the cattle on their ranch, one at a time.

"When I started competing in bigger events, my dad had to sell his cows just to get me to those bigger events across the country," the 24-year-old told a news conference.

"I think the cattle sales were Wednesday, so before I'd go to school, I'd help my dad load a cow up into the trailer, maybe two, and he'd take them to the cattle sale and auction them off.

"My parents have been backing me from day one, and I'm sure they do not miss those cows today."

A surprise winner ahead of Australia's defending champion Torah Bright and compatriot Kelly Clark, the 2010 gold medalist, Farrington told reporters that her background as a cowgirl helped her become an Olympic champion.

Farrington had to overcome both rounds of qualifying before reaching the final, but that was by no means the first obstacle she had faced in her career.

She suffered several knee injuries in her teenage years, and finished the 2011-12 season with her wrist in a protective cast following a fracture.

A year later, she broke her thumb so badly in a training run fall in Quebec that she required surgery to insert pins. She was back riding the following day.

"Growing up on a ranch made me the person I am today," she said. "It definitely made me a tough girl. As my parents have been saying this whole journey, 'just cowgirl up.' That's kind of what I've gotta do."

Farrington showed plenty of frontier spirit in the halfpipe final as well.

"Today I fought to get in finals, I did all three rounds, so to come out on top, I couldn't believe it," she said.

"After my second run I had to sit there and watch all the other girls come down. Once I knew I was on a podium spot, I was so happy about that."

(Editing by Toby Davis)
produce calves worth $30/head more than a breed-average bull. “There are a lot of other traits like feed efficiency that also become significant. But ignoring all of them and assuming nothing more than the easily quantified traits, and assuming that all 100 calves are marketed, the value of the above-average bull compared to the average of a particular breed is over $7,500,” Marshall says. Again, that was using prices two years ago. And, yes, that’s hindsight tallying. There’s no guarantee which genetics a bull inherits from his parents, but genomics offer more accuracy to the genetic evaluation of young bulls than ever. Rather than bull prices getting too high, Marshall says, “In reality, when you try to put economic parameters to EPDs with today’s prices and feed costs, the better argument is that there should be more price spread on bulls than there actually is. As is the case with the commercial marketplace, it appears the higher-priced bulls are actually undervalued, while the lower-priced animals are overweight.” One question that’s worth asking prospective bull providers is this: “Who are your 10 best customers, and how are they using your genetics to achieve their goals?” That sounds simple enough. Over the years, though, I’ve been amazed by the number of folks who struggle to come up with an answer. Instead of customers, these folks have buyers who they hope to see on sale day again next year.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are seedstock producers who can rattle off a long list of customers and tell you as much about customers’ herds and calves as the customers themselves. They know their customers’ goals, herd performance and how their genetics can help that customer achieve specific goals. They are partners in the success of their customers’ operations. Looking around last fall — and I suspect it will be obvious this winter and spring — there seems to be a growing price gap between bulls based on the value of seedstock suppliers themselves.

Service is part of it. This includes such things as free delivery, no-fault breeding season guarantee, low-cost extended warranty, herd consultation, guaranteed bids for calves or some other kind of marketing assistance. More than anything, though, commercial producers seem to be placing more value on trust. Visit with longtime customers of the most successful seedstock producers and you hear comments like: “I trust them to keep me out of a jam.” “They know what we’re trying to accomplish in our herd, so they know which are the best bulls to help us achieve our goals.” Considering the current and future equity at risk in the U.S. beef industry, it makes little sense to settle for less than that kind of relationship.

Bull Genetics

Continued from Page 29
Make your plans to attend the 2014 Virginia Cattle Industry Convention – March 27 - 30, 2014

Our Trade Show will feature dozens of exhibitors and vendors showcasing goods ranging from clothing to chutes to vaccinations to trailers. Support our vendors and make some great Trade Show deals and purchases.

Lunch will be available each day of the Convention courtesy of the Virginia Agricultural Extension Agents Association featuring great beef.

We are proud to offer an Educational Program featuring nationally renowned guest speakers.

Dr. Bob Holsworth is an expert in all things political in Virginia and nationally. He will offer his unique insight in a discussion of the 2014 General Assembly and Congress moving into the spring and during an election year.

Dr. Darrel Peel of Oklahoma State University will offer a current cattle industry situation and outlook talk. Dr. Peel is one of the most widely sought after economist in the country and an excellent presenter. Don’t miss these experts!

Thursday, March 27
9 AM – Noon VA Beef Industry Council Board Meeting Expo Hall
10:00 AM Trade Show Opens Fairgrounds
11:00 AM Educational Program
1:00 PM 2014 Legislative Update – Dr. Bob Holsworth Fairgrounds
3:00 PM 2014 Industry Outlook – Dr. Darrel Peel Expo Hall
4:15 PM VCA Membership Meeting Expo Hall
5:30 PM Visit Trade Show Fairgrounds
6:30 PM Beer & BBQ Supper Expo Hall
7:00 PM Industry Awards & Recognition Expo Hall

Friday, March 28
9:00 AM VA Beef Ambassador Contest Farm Museum
9:00 AM Trade Show Opens Fairgrounds
10:00 AM Youth Livestock Quality Training Expo Hall
10:00 AM Cattlemens’ Workshop Expo Hall
11:00 AM Lunch Beef Shack
12:45 PM Youth Chute Side Training New Barn
2:00 PM Youth Livestock Quality Training Exam Expo Hall
2:00 PM Youth Cattle Working Contest New Barn
3:00 PM VA Assured Bred Heifer Sale Sale Ring
4:00 PM VA Angus Association Gift Sale Sale Ring
6:00 PM Move in Youth Cattle Show Barns
7:00 – 8:00 PM Youth Cattle Weigh-In/Check-In

Saturday, March 29
7:00 AM – 10 AM Youth Cattle Arrival Show Barns
9:00 AM Trade Show Opens Fairgrounds
9:00 AM Youth Fitting Contest TBD
11:00 AM Youth Sales Contest TBD
2:30 PM Youth Beef Showmanship Both Show Rings
4:30 PM Youth Hereford Show Ring B
4:30 PM Youth Shorthorn Show Ring A
5:30 PM Youth Simmental Show Ring B
5:30 PM Youth Red Angus Show Ring A
6:30 PM Youth All Other Breeds Show Ring B
6:30 PM Youth Braunvieh Show Ring A
6:00 PM VBIC Meal/Cornhole Tournament Show Rings

Sunday, March 30
8:30 AM Youth Commercial Heifer Show Ring B
9:00 AM Youth Steer Show Ring A
10:00 AM Youth Angus Show Ring B

Call VCA at 540-982-1009
The VCA Membership Meeting is important for members to attend as we hope to formally adopt new organizational by-laws and elect Policy Board representatives from regions across the state.

The Beer & BBQ Social followed by an Awards Program is open to everyone at the Convention. We are proud to have the support of Bayer and Virginia Eagle Distributing for beer and brisket BBQ in a casual atmosphere. This Convention is an industry event and we are honored to recognize outstanding producers as well as the retirement of Frank Graves.

Friday will have great programs geared towards Youth and Cattlewomen. There will hands on and classroom style educational workshops on topics ranging from cattle handling to trailering. Contact Extension for more information on youth events and VCA for the Cattlewomen’s Workshop.

Cattle producers will have the opportunity to purchase quality breeding cattle at the VA Cattlemen’s Assured Bred Heifer and the VA Angus Association Gift Sales. There will be quality registered and commercial stock sold. The Bred Heifer sale will be done via video with all heifers sold directly off the farm. Visit www.vaangus.org and www.cowbuyer.com for more information on the Angus and Bred Heifer sales respectively.

The Commonwealth Classic promises to be one of the largest youth cattle shows in Virginia this year. A weekend full of young people and both commercial and seed stock cattle alike will certainly showcase both the finest young people and cattle around. This year the Virginia Beef Industry Council is also proud to offer a celebration of the youth beef business in Virginia by hosting a Barn Party for all youth exhibitors and their families.

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3) Create a platform to deliver modern technology.

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   b) Fly control (Altosid, Clarify)
   c) Reduce feed toxicity (CTC, Tasco)
   d) Better hoof health (Zinpro & Biotin)

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- Hand crafted daily, in 1 & 2 ton batches.
- Made fresh locally – Staunton, VA
- Delivery available
Burt Rutherford, BEEF

When Bob McCan, incoming president of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, was just a kid, one of his yearly highlights was helping his father and grandfather ship cattle from the railroad pens behind the small town of McFaddin. Nobody then could possibly imagine how much the industry would change in the 50 years hence. In fact, with a few exceptions, things were pretty much the same since McCan’s great-great-grandfather bought the South Texas ranch in 1877 with money made from financing the storied trail drives north to Kansas. But even in young Bob McCan’s time, the exceptions forecasted changes to come; the cattle were a Hereford-Brahman cross known as the Victoria Braford — the result of a planned, systematic crossbreeding system his grandfather put in place when planned crossbreeding was not a ranch-house word.

“I feel pretty fortunate to get just a little of that history, being a part of it when I was a child,” McCan said. “It was pretty spectacular for me to be able to see that and then watch where we’ve progressed.”

He’s seen change happen in his operation and McFaddin Enterprises now includes two family-owned ranches and a third leased operation. The combined acreage supports 3,000-5,000 Braford cows, depending on Mother Nature. And he’s seen changes happen in the industry: from the handwritten tally sheets of railcar counts to the computers and smartphones that are his constant companions today. It’s the juxtaposition of that change and challenge, history and the future that provides the base from which this fifth-generation cow-calf producer will lead the industry in 2014 as NCBA president.

An advocate for advocacy

Beef industry advocacy is not new to McCan. Both his great-uncle and grandfather served as president of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, and as did his father, who was also active in the organization. “Our family has been active in advocacy groups for cattlemen for a long time,” he said. “So I grew up in that environment.” That early exposure to those who understand the important role that associations play in ranch life left an imprint. “Those guys, the leaders of our industry, they were my icons, my idols; they were my mentors,” he says. “So it just naturally sent me in the direction of preparing myself to be part of the advocacy for our industry, to give back to our industry.”

It was through the leadership ranks of TSCRA that McCan spent many years honing his leadership skills. Those skills will be crucial in the coming year as NCBA works to better represent all participants and all segments of the beef industry, said Matt Brockman, executive director of the National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock. Brockman said: “If the industry is ready to come together and truly address critical issues, Bob is a man who can get the sides together and find common ground.”

All for one and one for all

One challenge where McCan sees a lot of opportunity is a growing acknowledgment among producers regarding the importance of industry unity. Industry

Continued on Page 40

Bob McCan Named President Of NCBA

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Don’t Just Buy a Bull…. Invest in a Program

Buy or lease a Roseda Black Angus bull and become a partner in an innovative branded beef program. Roseda Farm will purchase your Roseda sired calves at competitive prices plus a premium based on your level of management and record keeping. Bulls start at $2000 with bull leases at $1000/season. For information contact:

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Support for the beef checkoff, at 76 percent, is the highest recorded in the past 21 years, according to a recent survey of 1,225 beef and dairy producers nationwide. The random survey conducted by the independent firm Aspen Media & Market Research in late December 2013 and early January 2014 found an overwhelming majority of beef and dairy producers continue to say their beef checkoff has value for them in many ways:

- Eight out of 10 producers say the beef checkoff has helped to contribute to a positive trend in beef demand.
- 71 percent of producers say the beef checkoff contributes to the profitability of their operations.
- 77 percent say the checkoff is there for them in a crisis.
- 79 percent say the checkoff represents their interests.
- Two in three beef producers believe the checkoff is well managed.

"Despite being challenged by drought, critics of the checkoff and groups who would like to see us go out of business," says Producer Communications Working Group (PCWG) Chair Jeanne Harland, "beef and dairy producers continue to see more in their Beef Checkoff Program than just paying for a few ads or a few promotions. I’m one of the eight out of 10 who believe the checkoff has helped to contribute to a positive trend in beef demand."

The beef checkoff has, for nearly 28 years, served the beef industry with programs producers want and that is why we use the checkoff as representing our interests," according to the survey,” says Harland.

One of the key priorities of the working group which Harland chairs is to increase the understanding of how the checkoff works and how it benefits them and their role as stakeholders,” she notes. It’s an increasingly competitive world and for beef producers to continue to succeed we have to continue to work together through the beef checkoff,” she says.

An important role of the Beef Checkoff is to educate the consumer about beef. It is especially important to educate youth which are tomorrow’s consumers and they need to know why beef is important in their diet. The VBIC partners with Family and Consumer Science teachers to provide materials made available to them by the Beef Checkoff at no charge. Basics About Beef is an example of the materials that are provided and it covers beef labels, nutrition and beef cookery methods. In addition to the classroom materials, VBIC also offers to visit classrooms and speak to students about beef. Students receive a positive message not only about beef, but about beef production as well. The students enjoy the cooking tips and especially enjoy sampling grilled steak.

VBIC also provides funding for the purchase of beef for schools that enter the statewide ProStart Culinary competition held annually in March. The 2014 contest is at the University of Mary Washington and provides an excellent forum to educate and showcase beef to our future foodservice workforce and future beef consumers.
Spring, Agriculture And History, They’re All Related

Salers owned by John Mitchell of Falling Springs Farm graze in the beautiful landscape of Bath County.

21st is recognized as National Agriculture Day and honor this day is that the day brings the relief and joy but just to know that the 21st of very cold and windy weather, all relate to after a couple months of cold; when it’s summer the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold. “It was from Charles Dickens is quite appropriate for the month. “It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold; when it’s summer in the light and winter in the shade”. These are words we can all relate to after a couple months of very cold and windy weather, but just to know that the 21st brings the official “early spring” conveys a bit relief and joy. 

Another reason to observe and honor this day is that the 21st is recognized as National Agriculture Day. Established 41 years ago, the Agricultural Council of America created the day to recognize the impact that agriculture greatly enhances the quality of life for our families and is a primary contributor to our personal and professional lives. In Virginia, we know that agriculture greatly enhances the quality of life for our families and is a primary contributor to the state’s economy.

In 1877 the Virginia General Assembly passed a bill creating the state’s first Department of Agriculture. The History of Agriculture, Mining and Manufacturing began operation. Later that year the first annual report was published assessing the state’s agricultural contributions. The report documented just over a half million head of cattle in the state and praised the grass country of the Valley of Virginia, and the mountain areas as places where “grazing and stock-raising (is) extensive and profitable”. Virginia agriculture was a whole facing a crisis in the last half of the 19th century, but it was the cattle industry, with the help of the railroad, that helped the state’s economic standing. Traditionally the state had been one of the leading wheat producing regions in the nation, but it was increasingly difficult to keep up with the Midwest’s production. More and more farmers were trying grazing and buy as a way to make a profit. 

From 1877 to 1878 shipments of cattle products, such as live cattle, fresh and salted beef, butter, cheese, condensed milk, preserved meats, hides, leather, and tallow increased nationally by almost $50 million. Virginia farmers recognized the new market as did the railroads, which began constructing livestock holding pens all up and down their lines. A new era in marketing had begun in earnest for Virginia farmers.

Continue down the tracks of this exciting book to discover how farmers created such a success story that the beef and dairy industries carved out a significant and continuing position in Virginia’s multifaceted agricultural history. The History of Virginia’s Cattle Industry.
organizations have come through a difficult and divisive time, he said, “But I think people are realizing that unity is extremely, extremely important for this industry right now.”

Young producers
Another part of McCain’s passion for the industry is the need to help young producers get started in the industry, and get them involved in industry organizations early on. That will benefit the industry in many ways, he said. NCBA already has been to the challenge. “We have a Young Producers’ Council, we have the Masters of Beef Advocacy program, we have the Young Cattlemen’s Conference trip and a lot of different activities for our younger members,” he said.

“I think that’s going to help us develop a good core group of young leaders who are going to be able to transmit the messages about our industry better than some of the old guard can.” That’s important, he said, because he views young producers as the most important group within the industry - for several reasons. “We’ve got a lot of producers in their 20s, 30s and 40s, and they’re very capable folks. And I think they have a very good feel for what needs to be done as far as changes to improve the industry,” he said. “They are the key influencers we have in the industry, and we’ve got to make sure they are part of everything we do.”

The industry going forward
One thing McCain is sure about, as he peers into the industry’s future, is that activist groups will only become more strident, more sophisticated and more outspoken. How, he wonders, will producers find the resources to respond?

“There are so many things coming at us so fast, not only from activist groups but with changing consumer sentiment,” he said. “We desperately need additional resources to combat a lot of things that are coming...”

Those additional resources can come from several places. One is the industry’s ability to squeeze every bit of good from every checkoff dollar. There, both NCBA and the Cattlemen’s Beef Board have made some hard and difficult decisions. NCBA leaders responded by reducing staff and asking the organization to operate more tightly and efficiently. It was a hard decision, he says, but adds that he thinks “it was the responsible thing for NCBA to do.” But belt-tightening only gets you so far. “We’re committed to enhancing the checkoff,” he says of NCBA’s leadership team. “Going forward, I just don’t see how we’re going to be able to do the things we need to do to promote our product, and do the research and innovation we need without additional resources,” he said.

NCBA President
Continued from Page 87
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The photo submitted with this article is on the cover of the book and is in honor of our Editorial Board Chairman, John Mitchell. The Salers are owned by Mr. Mitchell of Falling Springs Farm in Bath County Virginia, and the photo was taken by Martin Macqueen, Hot Springs, Virginia.

THE VIRGINIA CATTLEMAN: MARCH 2014–PAGE 41
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California Ranchers Miss Beef Rally As Drought Cuts Herds

Elizabeth Campbell, Bloomberg

Record-high U.S. beef prices offer little comfort to California rancher Kevin Kester, whose family has been raising cattle since 1867. He’s just trying to avoid losing his titled state’s worst drought ever. The dry spellulled on Kansas in 2012, 520,000 acres near Paso Robles, 175 miles north of Los Angeles, forcing him to sell 20 percent of his cows to avoid extra hay-feeding costs. He hasn’t added young cattle at a time of year when he usually buys several thousand. Without rain in the next 60 to 90 days, Kester said he’ll sell all his cows. “Purchasing hay is unsustainable financially,” Kester, 56, said on Feb. 6 at an industry conference in Nashville, Tennessee. “If the state isn’t selling milk or cattle, they don’t have any other options. Unfortunately, there will be less than half of them that end up going out of business permanently.”

The drought is forcing California ranchers, who raise 2 percent of nation’s beef, to cut their herds. As researcher CattleFax says some producers elsewhere in the U.S. are starting to expand as prices head to a record. Average cattle and beef prices that surged last year to $1.675 a pound, touched $1.432 a pound on Jan. 22, climbed 4.3 percent this year and are at $1.35 a pound this year, up 7 percent, and spot prices for a 750-pound steer to reach slaughter weight of about $1.380 pounds.

Only 21 percent of the contiguous U.S. is in “severe drought,” or about half what it was a year ago, drought monitor data show. Production of corn, the main ingredient in cattle feed, has increased 48 percent from an all-time high in August 2012. Lower feed costs helped return cow-calf producers to profitability, and some may earn a record $300-a-head this year, said Randy Blach, the chief executive officer of Centennial, Colorado-based CattleFax. The cash price of fed cattle may average $1.35 a pound this year, up 7 percent, and spot prices for a 750-pound steer may jump 13 percent from an average of $3.675 a pound, CattleFax predicted. Moving out on profits at a time of record prices is “extremely frustrating” for California’s cattle producers, said Kester, the Paso Robles rancher. What U.S. ranchers are hit with drought, their costs can easily rise by $200 to $300 a head, CattleFax’s Black said. The one “silver lining” is that cattle producers forced to sell are getting high prices, said Tammy McElroy, a second-generation rancher in Gridley, California, who has fewer than 100 head of breeding cows. McElroy, 51, said her father faced a similar challenge during the drought of 1977, when she was a freshman in high school. “I remember my father Continued on Page 49
New Law Could Factor In Opening Of Ethanol Plant

A bill that could grant the new owners of the ethanol plant, Vireol Bio-Industries LLC, millions in state funding annually, has made its way halfway through the Virginia General Assembly. This comes shortly after company officials stated in December 2013 that a public announcement on whether to open the plant would come in January. Ged Russell, technical director for Vireol, said he expected the facility to be operational sometime in 2014.

If enacted, House Bill 1025 would cancel the expiration of the Bio-Peaks Production Incentive Grant Program, which for a limited time, subsidized the production of advanced and non-advanced biofuels. The bill passed Virginia's House of Delegates with a 77-20 vote, with Delegate Christopher Peace, R-Hanover, abstaining. Delegate Rosalyn Dance, D-Petersburg, who co-patroned the legislation with Delegate Riley Ingram, R-Hopewell, said that if passed, the bill would support the legislation with Delegate McIntire.

Earlier in 2013, after purchasing the plant, Vireol had plans to dismantle the facility for use by its plant in Grimsby, England. But Russell said a change in plans led to the project update, “the ABE [Appomattox Bio Energy] plant was designed to use barley as the feedstock in the expectation that this would obtain advanced biofuels status and therefore significant incentives. The ethanol plant was initially built on the gamble that Osage Bio Energy may have been heavily dependent on national financial incentives.

Ingram previously mentioned a bill to implement the program in 2011. The legislation was passed, and would have benefited the plant’s former owner, the now-defunct Osage Bio Energy LLC, but wasn’t used because the plant never opened. Funding was slated to come from Virginia’s General Fund. The plant was scheduled to open in 2010 but was listed for sale in May 2010. The grants were too little too late, since the success of Osage Bio Energy may have been heavily dependent on national financial incentives.

The ethanol plant was initially built on the gamble that Osage Bio Energy would profit from farmers receiving subsidies on barley. A project update published in January, outlined the Grimsby project by Future Capital Partners, Vireol’s investor, and detailed the downside of the assumption. According to the project update, “the ABE [Appomattox Bio Energy] plant was designed to use barley as the feedstock in the expectation that this would obtain advanced biofuels status and therefore significant incentives.”

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Ethanol Plants

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Ingram said that Smith wouldn't provide the incentive for any biofuels produced in 2016 and after that are made from corn. Russell said that the company intends to use corn in the beginning stages of production because it’s the easiest crop to process, and eventually move to other grains such as barley. He added that there were some advantages to using barley and that ethanol plant is optimized for the crop. Barry has the advantage of being grown in the winter. It has positive impacts on the environment, such as a 50 percent reduction in greenhouse emissions. Barry crops also have the ability to prevent run off into the Chesapeake Bay.

These advantages weren’t lost on lawmakers. Ingram said that the bill would allow farmers to more fully utilize their fields. Since corn is a summer crop, many corn farmers have empty fields come winter. The legislation could give farmers the chance to profit from a winter crop that would be in demand by Vinol. The bill has support from the biofuels industry. Dennis Sulick, general manager of Virginia Biofuels/Alternative LLC, spoke for the legislation before the House subcommittee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources.

Vinol isn’t just in talks with the state to sweeten the deal of keeping the plant in Virginia. Hopewell City Manager Mark Haley said that he hoped to see the plant stay with the city. Hopewell is currently considering participating in a state matching grant specifically allocated to agriculture and forestry value-added or processing projects.

The Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund allocates a maximum of $200,000 to state funds that must be matched by a locality in either funds or kind services.

The city is looking at the Governor’s Opportunity Fund, which also calls for local matches. Under Osage, the plant was expected to generate $2.1 million in annual tax revenue.

But Haley said that he hoped that potential tax revenue that could be generated from the plant would make the financial effort fruitful.

He said that he is still hoping for the best for the plant’s future. “Anything good is worth waiting for,” he said.
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was hiring a good accountant. I had money. The best return on capital is money and where I had wasted it. I wanted to see what I had done to make money and were more concerned with life than the rest of us. Depreciation on a want instead of a need should be taxed as a luxury. I bought my first piece of equipment for a tax write off at the end of 2012. The return on that forty thousand dollar tax write off has never exceeded ten thousand dollars annually. What would the mortgage payments be on the 150 acres I lease of which only two thirds is open land? The best bet is to fence, especially around hay fields on leased land. Then building corrals to work the value added cattle, bred heifers and VQA cows. I have learned how to build temporary ones on leased land out of heavy corrals and walk through gates stabilized with steel post and strapping bands. Then there is poultry litter, whether for feed or fertilizer. With the recent price of soybeans, dry broiler litter was worth over $25 per ton, not counting the minerals it contains for feed while fertilizer litter was pushing $100 per ton when phosphate was over $1000 per ton. This was a better return than Ralgro implants. The last piece of equipment I bought is 18 years old and still the most costly item on the farm. The next best return is fencing, especially around hay fields. What would the mortgage payments be on the 1500 acres I lease of which only two thirds is open land? The best bet is to fence, especially around hay fields on leased land. Then building corrals to work the value added cattle, bred heifers and VQA cows. I have learned how to build temporary ones on leased land out of heavy corrals and walk through gates stabilized with steel post and strapping bands. Then there is poultry litter, whether for feed or fertilizer. With the recent price of soybeans, dry broiler litter was worth over $25 per ton, not counting the minerals it contains for feed while fertilizer litter was pushing $100 per ton when phosphate was over $1000 per ton. This allows nothing for the organic matter or the residual value of the litter. I’m not going to cover the benefits of aeration and vaccinations, our tagging, and controlled breeding. If you’re not doing these things, you’re just kidding behind the fence to make people think you work for a living.

Then there is the line for depreciation on schedule F that is the profit killer. Soon after we were married my wife and I took a trip to the Amish country in Lancaster, PA. It didn’t take me long to realize that fancy equipment wasn’t necessary to make a living off the farm and they seem to have more money and were more contented with life than the rest of us. I’m married with only 29,000 miles that was auctioned off on E bay. Grandma always told me to never buy a “pig in a poke” but it was everything they advertised. All three of them together cost less than a new one but the bulls were scuffling last month and did $800 damage to the only one big enough to pull the gooseneck.
Virginia Charolais Association

Our Charolais Association’s annual membership meeting will be held at the Virginia Continental Convention. Please note that the Convention will be in March instead of February this year. Also, the new location is at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds in Harrisonburg, VA. The meeting is set for March 29, 2014 at 1:00pm and will be held at the Emergency Services building which is located directly across from the outdoor restroom building and adjacent to the cattle barns. All active, in-state members can have a vote and a voice in our association.

As for our spring sale, the new Expo date is not a good date for the VA Charolais breed this year. At this time there is no spring sale sponsored by our association.

There is a report on the Drovers Cattle Network website dated Feb 13, 2014. The headline is “More Pounds. More Money.” It stated that recent research documents Charolais and Charolais-influenced genetics lead all major beef breeds compared for both weaning and yearling weights. “More pounds. More money. Simple Math.” You may log onto the AICA website and click the “Business Side of Beef” link to access more information.

For those who might be interested our West Virginia Charolais Association neighbors are having their annual West Virginia Expo sale on April 12, 2014. The West Virginia Expo will be at Jackson’s Mill, West Virginia which is near Weston, West Virginia. If you would like additional information, please contact Bill Thompson at 909-984-1567 or MountainMeadows@HighlandComputers.com.

All members of the Virginia Charolais Association are entitled to join all the sales we sponsor.

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Kaitlin Smith – Vice President
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Deidre Harmon – Secretary
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Virginia Tech
Dept of Animal & Poultry Science
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540-357-7263

We would like to invite anyone interested in becoming a member of our association to call one of the officers listed above.
Ruff’s Bull
Continued from Page 47

inputs that give a return to his investment can be used for a tax write-off the same as equipment. After 25 years my Daddy's disc-mower conditioner died. I can't financially justify a new one when I can buy one thousand 5 by 6 miles of hay, or buy 25 trailer loads of poultry litter, or build 25 miles of two strand high tensile fence, material cost, with that much capital and still write it off as expense. How many more calves could I produce with any of these justifiable inputs? That new mower conditioner will not add a single calf but will tempt me to make hay to justify my investment. To make a living off of the farm we have to manage our inputs that give a return to his investment. To make a living off of the farm we have to manage our inputs that give a return to his investment.

Now I’m going to brag. I bought that used tractor to re-claim my fields with great joy that my employees, grazing main cows, made me while I was building fertility fences, and a big enough hand to lower the cost of production. The average of all the animals I sold in 2012, bred heifers, VQA steers, and calves was $380 per head. The expenses before labor and depreciation seem $350 per head for a difference of $5. I also sold 22 acres of corn for $1400 per acre with half of that being expense. For the last 10 years since I took over the financing of the farm I have averaged enough net income on the 1041 form to equal the value of a new Corvette. I had the one left over to live on while improving nearly a thousand acres of pasture land with fencing, fertility, and seed control, mostly owned by other folks. There was an article about Mark Ruff, no kin, in the February issue of the Progressive Farmer about stewardship of the land he rents from 15 landlords. I have only been asked to leave one farm but he invited me back after he saw the farm going backwards. If you take care of the soil it will take care of you. John Deere could care less about your return on the investment. All they are interested in is that monthly payment. Like the Ohio Bull, my landlords appreciate the extra things I do for them.

I have always thought selling cattle was like Kenny Rogers’ song, The Gambler. ‘I’ve got to know when to hold and know when to fold.” I like to print off the results of the Lynchburg Market every week to study which weights and grades bring the most money per animal, net price per pound. My cows only produce one calf per year and I’m not going to fold and sell them one Monday or 2% four weigh bulls or heifers and let the professional gambler, the backgrounder, take all of my profit from the other 364 days’ work. These are the two largest pens of graded calves sold every Monday. Over the years I have doubled the price of a heifer by keeping her from flooring to selling her as a two year old bred one without having to share her with Uncle Sam. In selling VQA steers, our marketing group has only lost money on one load out of 26 after substituting feed cost and vet supplies. The check for the load of 95 was over $200. What would they have been worth at four weight buying bulls last September? This immense want in our pocket instead of an order buyer or a backgrounder.

One thing I’m not getting a good return on is these modern high carcass value, low birth weight Angus bulls. When I was buying 100 lb birth weight bulls from Dwight Hough that every one was afraid of, the calves would grow. I started writing those articles because I disagreed with Dr. Bill Reesor’s push for crossbreeding. I never bought I would see so many white heads in my herd. Today, the more I pay for an Angus Bull the lighter the per pound weight of his calves and the heavier they are. The Angus folks better wake up. These calm black baldie calves have a butt on them and are reaching the scales down like the black cows used to. I’m also trying some half-bred Simmental bulls to get my pay weights back where the first Angus bull with a HHF brand had them twenty years ago.

After studying my tax returns I realized that I get when I am by producing a superior product, marketing it to the best of my ability, and grazing on farms the winter as possible. I’m blessed that I have never had the new paint disease; I despise to make hay, and I have had some good pasture cover for years.

California Ranchers
Continued from Page 41

sitting at my kitchen table, with hair all over his hands, and desti- nated because he had to make an important decision. Multiday said those eyes filled with tears during an interview at a cattle convention in Nashville, “I ended up selling half of our cow herd. That’s going to have to be an option for us unles we get some relief.”

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Continued from Page 41

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I have always thought selling cattle was like Kenny Rogers’ song, The Gambler. ‘I’ve got to know when to hold and know when to fold.” I like to print off the results of the Lynchburg Market every week to study which weights and grades bring the most money per animal, net price per pound. My cows only produce one calf per year and I’m not going to fold and sell them one Monday or 2% four weigh bulls or heifers and let the professional gambler, the backgrounder, take all of my profit from the other 364 days’ work. These are the two largest pens of graded calves sold every Monday. Over the years I have doubled the price of a heifer by keeping her from flooring to selling her as a two year old bred one without having to share her with Uncle Sam. In selling VQA steers, our marketing group has only lost money on one load out of 26 after substituting feed cost and vet supplies. The check for the load of 95 was over $200. What would they have been worth at four weight buying bulls last September? This immense want in our pocket instead of an order buyer or a backgrounder.

One thing I’m not getting a good return on is these modern high carcass value, low birth weight Angus bulls. When I was buying 100 lb birth weight bulls from Dwight Hough that every one was afraid of, the calves would grow. I started writing those articles because I disagreed with Dr. Bill Reesor’s push for crossbreeding. I never bought I would see so many white heads in my herd. Today, the more I pay for an Angus Bull the lighter the per pound weight of his calves and the heavier they are. The Angus folks better wake up. These calm black baldie calves have a butt on them and are reaching the scales down like the black cows used to. I’m also trying some half-bred Simmental bulls to get my pay weights back where the first Angus bull with a HHF brand had them twenty years ago.

After studying my tax returns I realized that I get when I am by producing a superior product, marketing it to the best of my ability, and grazing on farms the winter as possible. I’m blessed that I have never had the new paint disease; I despise to make hay, and I have had some good pasture cover for years.
**Beef Stomach Could Be The Gold For U.S. Beef In China**

Burt Rutherford, *BEEF Magazine*

Chinese government officials can commiserate. After all, the U.S. had the same problem about 100 years past. Back in 1919, at the close of World War I, a popular song asked “How Ya Gonna Keep ‘Em Down On the Farm After They’ve Seen Parem?” For the central controlers in China, it’s just a matter of geography. Indeed, China is a study in two worlds, says Brett Stuart with CattleFax. Speaking during the Cattlemen’s College at the Cattle Industry Convention this week in Nashville, Stuart said China has a problem.

That is, how are they going to keep them down of the farm after they’ve seen Shanghai, or any number of other million+ people cities that increasingly dot the landscape? China desperately wants to produce all its own food, to be 100% self-sustainable in feeding its 1.3 billion or so people. The trouble is, that is increasingly looking like an impossible goal, he says. China is long on people, and growing shorter on resources like water. So to continue any semblance of social stability, the government lever pushers have to keep farmers farming, urban denizens working, and everyone eating. To accomplish that, China will have to become an even bigger player in the global ag market. What does that mean for U.S. beef producers, given China’s longstanding and largely successful efforts to keep U.S. beef out? Maybe, someday, things will change. And when they do, maybe U.S. beef producers will have to change how we look at China’s potential.

Per capita, the Chinese only consume 12 lbs. of beef. And not all of that is whole-muscle cuts, which is what we tend to automatically envision when we (U.S. beef producers) talk about beef exports. As Stuart points out, we send a lot of beef stomach (omasum) into Hong Kong at $3.50/lb. Figuring that backwards, he says it generates about $30/head in value for U.S. fed cattle. “Food is essential. Food is behind most of the politics in China today,” he says. It’s a very diverse market, he adds, and their historical 100% self-sufficiency rates are not sustainable.

So as the China dynamic plays itself out, let’s look at its potential from a different perspective. We don’t necessarily have to send them Choice, whole-muscle product. Let’s build beef consumption in China one beef stomach at a time.

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**Job Openings**

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is seeking to fill two Livestock Marketing positions. One in the Central Virginia/Southside region, and one in the Shenandoah Valley-Harrisonburg region. Apply online at jobs.agencies.virginia.gov or go to vdacs.virginia.gov/employmentopportunities for more information.
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