Our August Photo Cover Page Contest Winner. Photo Taken By: Kate Hussman at Kean Cattle.
Opportunities

By: Jason Carter

When I was a kid I often heard the term “dog days of summer” used to describe the hot and humid August days where an abundance of farm time was spent in the tobacco fields. I can remember standing between rows of dark tobacco in sweat soaked long sleeve shirts under denim overalls covered in a film of tobacco gum thick enough for the bibs to walk away on their own. Jerry Clower had a story about getting new Dungarees and how about the time they finally became comfortable. Jerry Clower had a story about getting new Dungarees and how about the time they finally became comfortable.

The “dog days of summer” in the Virginia cattle business means the start of another fall run of feeder cattle. August is prime time for many of our traditional feeder friends in the North to think about filling bank and feeding barns again for the winter with graded calves. The Virginia Quality Assured feeder cattle program has not only met this demand but profoundly altered the way many producers and feeders alike between Pennsylvania and Virginia trade cattle. “Purple tag or gold tag” cattle, as they are sometimes referred to, have become synonymous with health and performance for many feeders who often equate profitability with percent Choice and not treating sickness. Many Virginia VQA cattle are sold on the Monday night Tel O Auction sales and each year more and more head west. However, many feed bunks belonging to feeders in the north and northwest become filled with Virginia cattle starting in August and we are proud of that history and relationship.

The Virginia Cattle Industry field day in July was a great success and attracted hundreds of cattle producers to McCormick Farm in a beautiful setting for a day of fellowship. I am humbled and appreciative of the many vendors and exhibitors who invested in our field day as well as the special guests we honored that day. Please see the articles on our award winners inside these pages. NCBA President, and Kansas native, Tracy Brunner was enamored with the beauty of a state whose excellent reputation feeder cattle he knew well. A great deal of thanks goes to David Fiske and the McCormick Farm staff along with Virginia Tech College of Agriculture for the support they offer Virginia Cattlemen’s Association. Among the highlights of the day for me also was recognizing Steve Hopkins for his invaluable service as President of Virginia Cattlemen’s Association for the past two years. Under Steve’s leadership our Association has experienced tremendous growth in operation, membership and services to the industry. The Executive Committee of VCA receives far less praise than they deserve for their work and the issues they discuss. I look forward to the coming year with Gene Copenhaver as President along with the experience and enthusiasm embodied by that group.

The silly season of election year politics has found a new gear of insanity in the 2016 Presidential race. It’s difficult to imagine that Thomas Jefferson envisioned these candidates we have – much less a government where the judicial branch holds power conceded by Executive and Legislative Branches mired in bickering, and a disenfranchised tax paying and working class citizenry overcome by those expecting more pay for less work, entitlements to endless social programs, aversion to consequences, and informed mostly by Facebook and late night comedians rather than unbiased journalism and pragmatic debate.

In our world today the value of a producer centric association is more important than ever. There are many local cattlemen’s groups and state breed association members of Virginia Cattlemen’s Association and each of them have selfless representatives to determine the best interests for Virginia’s cattle producers through consensus driven participation in the Council/Board/Committees of VCA. Our marketing programs and policy positions benefit our industry because the commitment of the selfless representatives to membership, volunteering their time and encouraging the growth of peers in our business. The acknowledgement of indifference, and the willingness to move past it, make VCA and NCBA vessels for collaboration, mentorship, opportunities and wisdom that benefit us all.
If you’re buying a utility tractor, have you thought through the true costs of ownership?

Choosing what kind of tractor to buy can be confusing and stressful. Lots of brands offer claims of greater productivity, higher efficiency, and so on. And it’s all too easy to get caught up in the hype — and then be lured by low-ball pricing and huge discounts. But the true purchase cost of any tractor is often buried deep within the operator’s manual. And this surprise may end up costing you thousands.

What’s hiding in the fine print

One brand of utility tractor in the 75 to 125 hp class has routine maintenance requirements that would have you replacing up to 27 parts every two years. This includes oil, air, and fuel filters plus all sorts of hoses, cables, and lines. The costs really add up.

Now, compare the John Deere 5M Series. A simple oil change is the only routine maintenance you’ll need to perform during the first two years of ownership.

We design our tractors with built-in durability — with components and parts designed to last and last. Need a little proof?

Our 5Ms feature durable steel brake lines — unlike the less-costly and fatigue-prone rubber hoses found on other tractor makes.

Then consider our abrasion resistant braided wire hoses used in our steering system and rear hitch — they are simply stronger, and longer lasting than the conventional hoses used by some other manufacturers.

So when you’re ready to buy your next tractor, be sure to ask one vital question: “What will it cost to maintain — year-after-year?” The answer might surprise you.

Then, talk to your John Deere dealer. See how a new 5M delivers one of the lowest costs of ownership of any utility tractor in its class. It’s a question you won’t regret asking.

JohnDeere.com/5Family
June 24, 2016

State Graded Feeder Steers, Medium and Large 1

400-500 lbs 124.00-154.00, mostly 141.25-154.00, average 144.38
500-600 lbs 125.00-148.50, mostly 139.00-148.50, average 142.38
600-700 lbs 114.00-143.00, mostly 127.00-143.00, average 128.36
700-800 lbs 111.00-135.00, mostly 119.50-135.00, average 124.98

State Graded Feeder Heifers, Medium and Large 1

400-500 lbs 107.00-139.50, mostly 127.00-139.50, average 129.21
500-600 lbs 113.50-128.00, average 122.31
600-700 lbs 108.00-125.50, average 116.72
700-800 lbs 104.00-121.00, average 111.63

Slaughter Cows

Boning, 800-1200 lbs, 60.00-79.00, average 71.09

Breakers, 1200-1600 lbs, 65.00-81.50, average 74.60

July 1, 2016

State Graded Feeder Steers, Medium and Large 1

400-500 lbs 117.00-150.00, mostly 139.50-150.00, average 144.20
500-600 lbs 124.00-145.00, mostly 135.50-145.00, average 141.06
600-700 lbs 115.00-139.00, mostly 128.00-

VIRGINIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION
Sponsored Graded Sales Schedule
Check our Website at www.vacattlemen.org for updates
CONTACT LIVESTOCK MARKETS OR VCA STAFF FOR QUESTIONS
VCA 540-992-1009  BUTCH FOSTER 423-360-0434  TROY LAWSON 540-430-0042
AUGUST 2016

Tel-O-Auction 8/1/16  6:00 PM  FEEDERS  Buckingham Cattlemen's Asso.  540-992-1009
Radiant  8/2/16  10:30 AM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattle Company  540-622-4889
Front Royal  8/2/16  7:30 PM  FEEDERS  Virginia Livestock LLC  540-622-7752
Tel-O-Auction 8/5/16  6:00 PM  FEEDERS  Central VA Cattlemen's Asso.  540-992-1009
Tel-O-Auction 8/8/16  6:00 PM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattlemen's Association  540-992-1009
Radiant  8/9/16  10:30 AM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattle Company  540-622-7752
Dublin  8/10/16  7:30 PM  FEEDERS  Pulaski Livestock Market  540-674-5311
Harrisonburg  8/11/16  7:00 PM  FEEDERS  Rockingham Livestock Sales  540-490-9050
Tel-O-Auction 8/15/16  6:00 PM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattlemen's Association  540-992-1009
Radiant  8/16/16  10:30 AM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattle Company  540-622-4889
Wytheville  8/16/16  7:00 PM  FEEDERS  Wytheville Livestock Exchange  276-223-0003
Front Royal  8/16/16  7:30 PM  FEEDERS  Virginia Livestock LLC  540-622-7752
Tel-O-Auction 8/22/16  6:00 PM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattlemen's Association  540-992-1009
Radiant  8/23/16  10:30 AM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattle Company  540-622-4889
Tel-O-Auction 8/29/16  6:00 PM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattlemen's Association  540-992-1009
Radiant  8/30/16  10:30 AM  FEEDERS  Virginia Cattle Company  540-622-4889
Cattle production ranks No. 1 in U.S. cash receipts

Cattle production is one of the most important industries in the U.S., accounting for $78.2 billion in cash receipts during 2015. This represents 21% of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Economic Research Service’s (ERS) forecasted total cash receipts of $377 billion from agricultural commodities in 2015. Corn was the second largest cash receipt, forecasted at $47.2 billion in 2015. According to the USDA’s “Overview of the U.S. Cattle Industry,” released June 24, modern beef production in the U.S. is a highly specialized system that spans from cow-calf operations that typically graze pastureland to cattle feedlots focusing on finishing cattle on grain for slaughter.

In 2015, the beef industry saw the first increase in cattle and calves production since 2011, producing 41.5 billion pounds, a 3% increase from 2014. Total cattle and calves inventory as of January 1, 2016 was 92.0 million head, also 3% above the previous year. It is also largest number of cattle and calves since 2011, USDA added. The report provided an official periodic review of changes in the U.S. cattle industry and its impact on cattle supplies and disposition, as well as provided an in-depth look at the U.S. imports, exports, cattle life cycle, and weather conditions. The 2015 gross income from cattle and calves for the U.S. totaled $78.8 billion, a 4% decline from the 2014 record of $82.1 billion. All cattle and calf marketings during 2015 totaled 52.4 billion pounds, down 1% from 2014. This was combined with the market year average price received for cattle greater than or equal to 500 pounds, which decreased $5 per hundredweight (cwt) from $152 per cwt in 2014 to $147 per cwt in 2015. At 52.4 billion pounds the all cattle and calf marketings were the lowest since 1992, while gross income was second largest on record.

Cattle production in 2015 was 41.5 billion pounds, a 3% increase from the 40.2 billion pounds produced in 2014. The U.S. cattle inventory officially began a new cycle in 2015, according to the report. A cattle cycle is a period of time in which the number of beef cattle in the nation is alternately expanded and reduced for several consecutive years in response to perceived changes in profitability of beef production. The cattle cycle is measured from trough to trough. The last cycle spanned from 2004 to 2014, with 3 years of growth followed by a 7-year liquidation. The longest cycle since 1928 began in 1990 and ended in 2004; which saw 6 years of growth and 8 years of decreasing inventory. Interestingly, USDA noted that the first five cattle cycles, beginning in 1928, saw more years of increases than decreases in inventory. However, during the last three cattle cycles, beginning in 1979, there have been more years of decreases than there have been years that increased.

USDA pointed out that the last eight cattle cycles have been an average of 11.8 years, with the shortest cycle being 10 years. When USDA began counting cattle in the United States in 1867, there were only 28.6 million head, the lowest on record. The U.S. all cattle and calves inventory peaked in 1975 with 132 million head. Just two years into the current cattle cycle, USDA said there has been a 4% increase, the largest increase in the first 2 years of a cattle cycle since the 1958 cycle. This increase is also larger than the total increase from the last cattle cycle which saw a 2% increase in the 3 years of growth, USDA added. Looking at the last three cattle cycles; the largest increase was 8% during the 1990 to 2004 cattle cycle. The five cattle cycles prior to 1980 had an average increase of 26%.

Headquartered in Augusta Georgia, FPL Food, LLC, is one of the largest privately owned, vertically integrated processors of fresh beef products and value-added meat selections in the United States. FPL Food has recently become approved for the Georgia Grown, Fresh from Florida and the Certified Angus Beef® brand programs. Producers throughout the southeast can take advantage of our multiple marketing programs:

- By shipping your cows and bulls directly from your farm to our facility.
- Taking advantage of our Fed Cattle Program by keeping our southeastern raised cattle in the local market to be fed, harvested and merchandised to consumers across our region.
- By shipping cattle for our feed program, which consists of a traditional commodity feed program where USDA Choice and CAB graded cattle is the target.
  - Fed cattle can be forward contracted and/or purchased direct.
  - Cattle will be purchased on a quality and yield grade system.

In addition, we are also involved with the Verified Premium Plus Dairy Beef Program, offering premiums to those who qualify for the program. Cows and bulls can be purchased direct from your farm or delivered to our facility.

If you are interested in supplying cattle for any of these programs please contact Brad Chandler at 706-910-9397 or via email at brad.chandler@fplfood.com.

“Low and slow” is a backyard buzz phrase this summer as more and more people are migrating to smoking rather than grilling. This shift, along with a move toward ceramic barbecues instead of traditional models, is among the summer trends identified by Belmont Meats, a North American foodservice industry leader based in Toronto, Ont. “Low and slow – low temperatures and longer cooking times – is really gaining in popularity,” said chef Curtis Dool, Belmont’s culinary expert. “Cooking in the backyard is one of the great joys of summer, and we’re seeing a growing willingness to spend more time getting it just right.”

Barbecues have become very sophisticated, with fuels ranging from natural gas to propane to manufactured charcoal briquettes, natural all-wood charcoal and various types of split-wood pieces like chunks and chips. Consumers have also evolved and now use their barbecues to make a much wider range of products, from traditional burgers and steaks to whole pork shoulders and even pizza, vegetables and desserts. Here are other foodservice trends Belmont is seeing as the summer gets underway:

Burgers are boss. According to recent statistics, 42% of consumers eat burgers at least once a week. Consumers eat an average of 3.7 burgers per month – even more than pizza, which consumers eat an average of 3.2 times a month. “Burgers may be forever popular, but what is in the burgers is changing, with more blending of pork and beef. The pork is lower cost and helps to provide moisture and give a different bite to the burger,” Dool explained. He noted that what people are putting on their burgers is also new: “Unique and gourmet condiments are trending, such as fancy combinations of mustard, banana ketchup and kimchi, as well as spicy options such as sriracha and ghost peppers.”

Bacon is big. Bacon-wrapped fillets have been a standard for years and have evolved to lower-cost bacon-wrapped sirloin and other cuts. “The popularity of carnival food has raised new interest in all things wrapped in bacon – from burgers and wieners to meat loaf, sausages and chicken tenders,” Dool said.

Different steaks. With beef prices rising steadily since 2011, less-common cuts of steak have become popular. More people are buying the terres major – or shoulder tender – which is similar in tenderness to beef sirloin, or the flat iron steak, another cut known for its tenderness, soft texture and generous marbling.

Part-time carnivores. A new category of consumer has emerged called the Flexetarian. These are people who opt not eat any meat for two or three days every week, creating growing demand for veggie burgers that contain vegetables, ancient grains and beans or pulses.
Brexit vote impact uncertain for U.S. beef

Wes Ishmael, BEEF Magazine

Immediate fallout from Great Britain’s closely contested vote to exit the European Union (EU)—global financial markets plummeting amid currency realignment—underscore the concerns that prompted the vote. Those concerns include things like waning economic and cultural sovereignty and the fact that a single decision made by one country in one part of the world could create such chaos for everyone else.

It’s too simple to think of it as anti-globalization, per se. The EU began in 1993 with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, but threads of its history stretch back to soon after World War II. Pacts and organizations that preceded the EU were primarily trade and economic agreements—collaborations to develop and share energy resources, agreements to reduce import tariffs between member countries and what not. Somewhere along the way, all of that morphed into a federation government regulating the economic, social and foreign policies of member countries. In simple terms, it would be like NAFTA partners—the U.S., Canada and Mexico—allowing a committee to decide what they could and couldn’t do as nations in other matters besides how they trade with one another.

Aside from added uncertainty, the most immediate impact affecting U.S. beef is the stronger dollar, making it more expensive for international customers to import beef from the U.S. “The U.S. dollar strengthened, not only against the British pound, but also against most other currencies,” explains Derrell Peel, Extension livestock marketing specialist at Oklahoma State University, in his weekly market comments. “The Japanese yen also strengthened sharply as global markets turned to the safe havens of the dollar and the yen.”

It is likely that a good deal of the uncertainty surrounding the U.K. departure from the European Union will subside, on whether this is a temporary or longer-term situation and how long the very recent changes in exchange rates and interest rates persist.” Abbott points out that a strong dollar makes U.S. exports more expensive to the rest of the world and that a widely held belief in the agricultural industry is that trade and a weak dollar are good

Southwest Cattlemen’s Classic

MULTI BREED SELECTION
November 19, 2016
12:00 PM NOON

(Lunch served: starting at 11:00 AM)
Location: Former Umberger Sale Facility, Wytheville, VA

Selling 100 Lots.
50 Breeding age Bulls (All Bulls Sale BSE Tested and SEMEN Tested, Ready to go to Work.)
50 Females - Open Heifers, Bred Heifers and Cow Calf Pairs

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Amazing Grazing for CCC August, 2016

By: Carolina Cattle Connection

August is time to prepare fields for stockpiling or winter annual planting. Planning ahead is always a difficult thing when you have dozens of tasks and problems staring you in the face and not enough time to do it all. One key to successful forage system management is, despite the crush of things that need attention, taking some time for planning and strategic management. You need to make time for those management tasks that don’t necessarily have to be done today but that will have great benefit several months down the road. August is a key time to be planning for stockpiling forage (either in fescue or bermudagrass-based systems) or for planting winter annual forages. Spending time now thinking through what you need to purchase, and how daily management will impact your ultimate forage yields is critical if you want to optimize your opportunity for winter and early spring grazing.

Stockpiled Fescue. In fescue-based systems nearly all producers should be planning to stockpile part of their acreage for use during the winter. Stockpiling is simply accumulating forage growth and deferring grazing from when the forage is “ready to graze” (about 6-8 weeks of regrowth) until much later when it is needed. In the autumn this works especially well for tall fescue as it is the most resilient of our forages to weather and maintains its quality well into winter. In North Carolina we have been researching fescue stockpiling systems for many years, and it is a practice that I would never want to do without on my home farm in Southern Virginia.

Research has shown that an application of 50 to 75 lbs of nitrogen per acre to pastures from mid-August to mid-September will yield about 3000 lbs of forage per acre, and provide about 100 cow grazing days per acre during the winter grazing season. This potential yield assumes that pastures are clipped or grazed and then rested during the month of August, and that grazing is deferred until December or later. Of course, the yield will also be dependent on timely rainfall, but doing everything right including getting fertilizer out on time and given the grass a rest will help make use of the rain when it does come. If you continuously graze pastures it is critical to note that cattle must be removed from these pastures about a month before fertilization if you want to get a successful stockpiling.

The best fields to stockpile will be mostly tall fescue (other grasses and especially clover decay more rapidly than fescue), and fertility status (including pH) should be adequate to support good forage growth. Source of nitrogen is often discussed, and the least expensive source (30% liquid urea/ammonium nitrate or UAN) may not be the best choice for autumn applications. The reason for this is not well understood but it has been speculated that burning of the green leaves can set the plants back for several weeks which can make a big difference in the amount of forage accumulated. Urea is another inexpensive source of N that might not be the best choice either. Urea can be hydrolyzed on the surface of the soil in hot dry weather resulting in the loss of nitrogen as ammonia gas. A good rain immediately following fertilization can reduce the problem of burn with UAN and the volatilization from Urea, so if you use those sources they should be applied right before a rain if at all possible.

The nitrogen source of choice for stockpiling in the past has been ammonium nitrate, but because of public safety concerns it is no longer widely available to farmers. In its place, several companies have developed a formula of granular 34% N that is a mix of ammonium sulfate and urea treated with a urease inhibitor. This product spreads like ammonium nitrate and also provides sulfur that can be hydrolyzed on the surface of the soil in hot dry weather resulting in the loss of nitrogen as ammonia gas. A good rain immediately following fertilization can reduce the problem of burn with UAN and the volatilization from Urea, so if you use those sources they should be applied right before a rain if at all possible.

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From Page 8 - Brexit

Continued on Page 10
Nitrogen response in tall fescue

A project aimed at predicting the nitrogen response in tall fescue is underway. For the conservative level of 50 lbs per acre is my recommendation so that if there is a lot of residual nitrogen in the system there will still be a response with additional yield.

As stated earlier the process should start with clipping or grazing in August followed by at least 2 weeks of rest before the nitrogen application. Pastures that have been grazed short during summer (to less than 3 inches) should be rested for 4 weeks prior to the nitrogen application. The nitrogen fertilization should occur in mid-August in the most northern and mountainous parts of Virginia, and in the mountains of North and South Carolina. In the Piedmont, application of nitrogen should occur near September 1 and in the Coastal Plain regions it should be in mid-September. This will allow for at least 60 days of good growth before cool weather slows the forage accumulation.

Once forage is accumulated, you should wait until December or later to graze. This is sometimes a stumbling point for producers that may be out of grass before then, but if you will change your thinking about this, autumn is actually not a bad time to do some hay feeding before going to the stockpiled grazing at a later date. At home in the southern Piedmont of Virginia, we generally save most of our stockpile for after the holidays when things really get hectic in my schedule. So, we fertilize September 1, then accumulate forage until just before Christmas (Dec 20) and try to have forage to graze through the end of February. We rotationally graze pastures not targeted to stockpiling during the autumn, and will start unrolling some hay when those pastures are mostly utilized. This makes for a short 30 to 45-day winter hay feeding period during March in a normal year, with no late winter hay feeding in a good year!

Strip-grazing is a critical management tool for getting the most out of stockpiled forage. Giving cattle strips with no more than 3 days of forage available will stretch grass by preventing the damage and decay of the forage cattle don’t yet need. Also, the systematic management of the cows with frequent movement calms them down, makes them easy to check and count, and just in general makes them easier to deal with.

As you get started with strip-grazing you will find that it is actually quite an easy process, but you do need to have an eye for animal behavior and residual forage amount to get the best results. In our research we have typically targeted an 85% utilization of the available forage (down to a 2 inch stubble height), and that is very efficient and works great for cows, but we have always thought it might limit the performance of growing animals. Recently we published a three year study that showed that by giving a more liberal forage allowance than we usually provide (about 25% more available grazing) reduced the animal grazing days we got out of the pasture, but improved the gains on replacement heifers by about 0.25 pound per head per day.

In that same study we also found that providing a protein tub to the heifers would improve their performance by a similar amount as the extra forage allocation, and that the combination of the two were additive such that supplemented heifers that were given extra grass and a protein tub gained about 0.50 lbs per head per day more which can make a real difference to a developing heifer. We will write an article with the details of that study in a future edition so you can use the information once you get into the winter grazing season.

Bermudagrass can also be stockpiled for autumn grazing, so in systems with a bermudagrass base plan on fertilizing with 50 lb/acre of nitrogen in late August after a grazing or hay cutting, and allow the forage to accumulate for about 6 weeks. Then, instead...
2016-2017 Calendar of Events

Sept. NOVA Field Day, TBA
Sept. 23- Oct. 2 Virginia State Fair, Doswell, VA
October 15 Whitestone Brand of Quality Sale, Aldie, VA
October 22 Northern VA Fall Female Classic, Woodside Farm South, New Market, VA
October 22 SWVAA More for Your Money Sale, Wytheville, VA
October 28 Virginia Tech 22nd Annual Hokie Harvest Sale, Blacksburg, VA
October 29 Buchanan Cattle Enterprises Open House, Aldie, VA
October 29 Lazy Acres Angus Customer Appreciation & Open House, Rocky Mount, VA
October 29 Quaker Hill Fall Bull and Female Sale, Louisa, VA
November 1 Buchanan Cattle Enterprises Online Sale
November 4 Woodside Farm Sale, Berryville, VA
November 5 MC Livestock Bull Sale, Greenville, VA
November 5-7 American Angus National Convention, Indianapolis, IN
November 12 Holly Hill Farm Bull & Female Sale, Mt. Sidney, VA
November 12 Mystic Hill 38th Fall Bull and Female Sale, Culpeper, VA
Nov. 12-18 North American Livestock Exposition, Louisville, KY
November 19 Ginger Hill Angus, Culpeper, VA
November 19 Miller Farm LLC & Gustin Bull and Female Sale, Harrisonburg, VA
November 19 Shelton Angus/Dogwood/Locust Level Fall Bull Sale, Gretna, VA
November 26 Edgewood Angus Bull and Female Sale, West Point, VA
November 26 Edgewood Angus Bull and Female Sale, West Point, VA

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Last Friday in November

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VA MEAT YOU NEEDS!!
of taking a last hay cut, strip-graze the pastures as described for stockpiled fescue. These pastures will deteriorate rapidly once freezing temperatures arrive, but it can provide good grazing for cows through about the middle of November. It is critical in bermudagrass systems to remove the old summer growth through grazing or cutting of hay as that old material will be of very low nutritive value once autumn grazing begins.

Winter Annuals. Many producers, whether they have fescue-based systems in the Mountains or Piedmont, or bermudagrass-based systems in the Coastal Plain, are using winter annuals as part of their system. This practice can give you substantial early spring grazing, some autumn and winter grazing, and will improve forage quality for classes of animals needing a higher level of nutrition. In fescue-based systems it also can give you an opportunity to get animals with high nutritional requirements off fescue toxins which will lead to increased growth rates, improved heifer development, and improved heifer breeding rates. Whatever your system, if you are planting winter annuals it is time to start planning for that including: 1) doing maintenance on your drill or reserving the community drill, 2) ordering your seed, 3) soil testing and getting fertility right, and 4) managing pastures so they are ready for seed drilling. Oftentimes a real problem is that producers plan on using a community drill (either a private rental unit owned by another farmer or a cattlemens’ association, or publicly owned one from Soil and Water Conservation Districts or other governmental agency) but find that when they need it so does everybody else! Getting your name on the waiting list early is critical, and if you have not done that yet, today is probably a good time to pick up the phone and get that drill lined up! Also, sometimes the seed supply is tight, so it is a good idea to estimate how many acres you will seed and get the seed ordered early. There are new varieties and blends of winter forages released nearly every year, so doing some homework on this and asking your local advisors for a recommendation is time well spent. Remember the basics of winter annual forage growth as you make your decision on what to plant. Rye is earliest winter annual grass with good potential for late Autumn and winter grazing but with an early finish in the spring. Oats and Triticale are intermediate with potential for both winter and early spring grazing. Ryegrass has little potential for winter grazing but will provide a lot of grazing once weather warms right through late spring. A mix of Rye and Ryegrass, Triticale and Ryegrass, or Oats and Ryegrass have been popular and will provide the longest potential grazing season. Don’t forget about the potential for winter annual legumes! Crimson clover is the most popular winter annual legume, but hairy vetch, winter pea, arrowleaf clover, and ball clover all have potential to improve these systems in mixtures with grass. If you are in a bermudagrass-based systems that utilizes some form of animal waste (and thus have good levels of fertility) including that winter annual legume in your system can help you take advantage of those soil nutrients by providing about 100 lbs of fixed nitrogen to the system. We have had good luck with all those winter annual legumes. Our complex winter mix “Ray’s Crazy Mix” that uses a combination of grasses, winter annual legumes and brassicas is really popular and provides benefits both to the grazing animals but also to the soil. Winter annuals can be established by conventional tillage or by no-till drilling. Conventional tillage produces earlier growth and more potential autumn grazing compared to no-till drilling. However potential for erosion, the extra field work, and the fact that much of the land is usually in perennial grass species, results in most producers using a no-till drill. Before no-till seeding the pastures should be grazed short, or excess forage should be removed as hay. Having a lot of surface residue is very detrimental to the seedlings, resulting in poor stands or just very slow growing seedlings, so managing to minimize surface residue can be important. Again, efficient use of winter annuals requires good grazing management. Just turning cattle out onto stands of winter annuals when they are 4 inches long is time well spent. Remember the basics of winter annuals when they are 4 inches long is time well spent. Remember the basics of winter annuals when they are 4 inches long is time well spent. Remember the basics of winter annuals when they are 4 inches long is time well spent. Remember the basics of winter annuals when they are 4 inches long is time well spent. Remember the basics of winter annuals when they are 4 inches long is time well spent. Remember the basics of winter annuals when they are 4 inches long is time well spent. 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From Page 11 - Amazing Grazing

tall and then leaving them all winter will not provide much benefit until mid-spring and then the economics are questionable due to the reduced yields. You should wait to graze these annuals until they are at least 8 inches tall, and then only graze them lightly leaving 4 inches of stubble when the animals are removed. If you do that then there should be a benefit to using the winter annual system. There are many good systems for using these forages without completely grazing them into the ground. One of the best strategies is to keep cattle up on hay and to allow them to graze the winter annual for a short time (4 hrs) three days a week. This will make a little go a long way, and will provide enough supplemental nutrients to eliminate the need for a protein tub or other protein supplement that often is needing with hay that is below the cow’s protein requirement.

It is hard to think about winter in August, but I encourage you to do it. It will help the rest of the hot weather to pass and if you thoughtfully approach the topic of winter grazing it can help you reduce your hay feeding season, reduce your supplement purchases, and thereby reduce the cost of producing beef in pasture-based systems.
A DIRT ROAD DIARY - Ace's New Clothes

By Steve Lucas

Ace never was much for fashion. For him, dressing up meant putting on a clean white t-shirt under his baggy bib overalls. I thought I heard his characteristic laugh one evening at the Cattlemen's Cafe, and searched the crowd for him. Another chortle directed my eyes to the back of a man dressed in a finely tailored denim shirt with gold stitching and tight black jeans tucked into high heeled black peacock leather boots. I picked up my coffee cup, walked over to the counter and tapped the laughing stranger on the shoulder.

"Fella," I said, "I don't guess you know old Ace Manerson do you? I could have sworn you were him from your laugh."

He turned around. "Why, I sure do know him," he responded. "Don't you recognize me? It's me, Ace!"

I spun him around on the stool, whistling softly through my teeth. "Ace, it is you!" I responded. "What in the world happened? You look like you stepped out of an ad in "Cowboy Life" magazine. Where are your bibs? You can't cowboy dressed like that."

"These clothes," my friend answered, "are the latest in PPC, that's personal protective clothing. Take this shirt, for example. It is fire proof to 925 degrees, shock resistant to 10,000 volts, and water resistant to 15 feet."

"Well, I guess that'd work if you were trying to chase electric eels out of a stock tank with a flame thrower, " I muttered. Ace ignored my comment and continued his monologue to the amazement of the crowd. "This shirt and these pants are reinforced with anti ballistic fibers that make them nearly bullet proof and resistant to tears from barb wire, nails, and sharp edges on loading chutes. Finally, these boots are rated to minus 50 degrees, have a steel toe you can drive a D-8 over."

"It's quite a change Ace," I said. "Why?"

"Dolly got tired of taking me to the emergency room every week," he said. "The insurance company said we had to do something. Dolly got me a whole wardrobe of PPC, and threw away my overalls. It's workin' great," he continued. "I haven't had an injury in almost three weeks. Makes me feel like Superman, you know, shoot bullets at my chest, leap buildings, that kind of thing."

"You need to be careful, anyway," I warned.

"Yeah, yeah, I know," Ace replied as he continued to sing the praises of his PPC socks to the crowd.

I saw Dolly a few weeks later. "Did I hear Ace had a little scrap with a mama cow?" I asked.

"Yes," she sighed. "He was ear tagging a heifer with his back to the cow. She picked him up and tossed him into the new barb wire fence down on the highway."

"Was he hurt? How did his new clothes do?"

"No, the doctor said the shirt and pants did their job," she re-

Continued on Page 15.
How the Beef Checkoff Uses Market Data to Understand and Drive Demand

Rick Husted, NCBA and Courtney Kalous, Cattlemen’s Beef Board

The beef checkoff has long used market data and sound analysis to understand beef demand, set industry priorities and measure progress and performance over time. Building on this rich history of ongoing insight into key demand drivers and their corresponding values, the beef checkoff’s Evaluation Advisory Committee recently commissioned two of the country’s top agricultural economists, from Kansas State University, to create a new and actionable beef demand index.

This index will focus on specific cuts, with special attention to ground beef to inform checkoff programs and the beef industry about how best to increase overall beef demand in foodservice and retail channels.

Background

Considering past demand-driving efforts, this particular project is a logical evolution in the beef checkoff’s continued effort to understand and capitalize on specific areas of opportunity. Simply put, this rigorous approach is intended to help identify how cut-specific beef demand can fluctuate, given changes in beef prices, thus informing channel partners about how to maximize the value to consumers of their respective beef offerings. Key criteria for this and prior work is to ensure consistent and focused support of the goals and objectives of the Beef Industry Long Range Plan.

While this newly commissioned study is just getting underway – with expected completion in early 2017 – past efforts have included:

Discussion

Following is a summary of past demand-driving analytical efforts and how these outcomes helped shape priorities across checkoff-funded programs.

Beef Demand: Recent Determinants and Future Drivers (2013) – The principal objectives of this project were to provide an assessment of major domestic beef-demand determinants and identify key demand drivers that would shape future demand for beef. Emphasis was placed on assessing factors that affect beef demand and that the beef industry could actually influence, thus providing a clearer path to prioritization and efficient allocation of checkoff resources.

It is important to note the outcomes directly influenced Continued on Page 18.
plied. “The problem was they wouldn’t rip so Ace was stuck on the fence like a fly on truck grill. When he didn’t come in for lunch, I went out to look for him. I had to call the rescue squad, but the only thing that got hurt was his pride.

“How’s that?” I asked.

“They couldn’t cut the anti-ballistic material, so they unbuttoned his shirt and pants and tried to slide him out of his clothes. The jeans were too tight to slide over the boots, and they didn’t want to try to pull his boots off and hurt something else. They had to cut the boots off with an angle grinder. So he was out there in his boxers, hanging by his boots with his pants down around his ankles with rubberneckers driving by wondering what was going on.”

“I reckon he’s back to wearing his bibs again,” I guessed.

“No,” Dolly replied. “Ace said you can’t let one little bump in the road get you off track. I even offered to buy him a couple of new bibs and tee-shirts. He said ‘No, I started out, I’ll see it through.’

“Good for Ace,” I responded. “Just goes to show you can’t judge a cowboy by the clothes he’s wearing.”
From Page 14. - Beef Checkoff

the advent of new checkoff committees and working groups, formed to focus on these areas of opportunity. It also is important to note that the analytical approach was rigorous and required a variety of data inputs, including a number of preference studies, as well as consumer and industry expert surveys. A summary of these beef demand drivers is as follows:

- Food Safety – This can be viewed as a table stake for beef. If our products aren’t safe, consumers will look elsewhere for their protein.
- Price – Beef price is directly tied to consumption and speaks to the importance of making sure consumers understand the relative value they receive for the price they pay.
- Health and Nutrition – Consumers consistently identify health and nutrition concerns as reasons they consider eating less beef.
- Product Quality – Product quality encompasses a variety of factors, including taste, color, consistency, juiciness, and ease of preparation; all factors that consumers consider when choosing beef.
- Social and Sustainability Aspects – Though found to be slightly lower in importance, these aspects of demand cannot be ignored, and the authors of this study strongly urge the industry to remain vigilant in this area as well. This advice has proven somewhat prophetic over the last several years, as the millennial generation increasingly pays attention to these attributes.

An Economic Analysis of the Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion and Research Board Demand-Enhancing Program (2014) – Following the outcome and application of the demand determinant study outlined above, the beef checkoff’s Evaluation Advisory Committee embarked on an effort to more fully understand the ultimate value that checkoff programs contribute to the beef industry. In other words, what is the dollar value of the return that beef producers are getting for their checkoff investments? Again, employing the expertise of top industry analysts, the study reviewed historical investments in the checkoff and a variety of checkoff-program outcomes to achieve this objective.

The analysis required the development of an equilibrium displacement model, which essentially measured the return on beef-checkoff investments for a number of checkoff programs and, ultimately, an overall estimated return on investment for the years 2006 – 2013. The nine checkoff programs evaluated in the study included: Beef advertising, Public relations, Beef safety research, Channel marketing, Industry information, New product development, Nutritional research, Product enhancement research and Foreign market development. This independent evaluation of the economic effectiveness of beef checkoff programs was clear and quantifiable. The beef checkoff, on average, has returned a total of just over $11 for each $1 invested for the period 2006 – 2013. The statistical results indicated that all eight demand-enhancing domestic activities funded by the beef checkoff have a positive and statistically significant impact on increasing per capita beef demand. Put another way, had there been no checkoff funded domestic marketing or research activities over this eight year period, domestic beef demand would have been considerably lower than it actually was.

Results for the checkoff’s foreign-marketing efforts were similar. The statistical outcomes clearly indicate that U.S. foreign-market development programs had the effect of increasing market share of U.S. beef exports globally. The study calculated the return on investment for seven key markets: Japan, Russia, Taiwan, European Union, South Korea, Mexico and China/Hong

Continued on Page 19.
Great Crowd at the Cattlemen’s Field Day.

From Page 18 - Beef Checkoff

Kong. While some markets have performed better than others, all markets performed well.

Conclusion
Producers’ ongoing investments in the Beef Checkoff Program highlight the need to monitor the performance and value of programs continually and to communicate the outcomes effectively. The anticipated outcome of the current study and past studies ensure that checkoff dollars are being allocated efficiently and continue to provide focused direction for a positive return on checkoff investments.

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Stop worrying about GMOs

Henry Miller, Op-Ed written for the Los Angeles Times

Editor’s Note: You will notice a statement about raw manure in this article that some may feel insinuates that application of manure as fertilizer is a poor food safety practice. Remember that most livestock manure intended for agronomic use undergoes a “heating” process in storage that kills harmful Salmonella and e. Coli bacteria. This differentiation left unexplained is a classic red herring tactic example, though not the intention in this article, of journalism that is utilized to sway the reader with incomplete information.

Karma can be so cruel. Just think how many times anti-GMO activists have protested against the imaginary risks of food that has been genetically modified. Now, a favorite snack of those same protesters, the sacred granola bar, has been found to pose an actual health risk. Anti-genetic engineering campaigns are among the activities bankrolled by organizations such as the Clif Bar Family Foundation, which uses the considerable profits it receives from selling “healthy” and “natural” snack foods to denigrate the products of modern farming and extol supposedly superior organic alternatives. Like Clif Bars.

The truth is that paying the “organic tax” — the price premium associated with organic products — makes you no healthier. Recalls of organic foods amounted to 7% of all food units recalled in 2015, even though organic farms account for only about 1% of agricultural acreage. In early June, several types of Clif Bars were recalled from stores because they contained organic sunflower kernels potentially contaminated with a bacterium called listeria. Food poisoning from this nasty bug kills hundreds of Americans every year.

Fortunately, the problem was detected before anyone was sickened by the Clif Bars or other affected organic snacks that were made by Kashi and Bear Naked, both subsidiaries of Kellogg. These products all contained seeds from SunOpta, which describes itself as a “leading global company focused on organic, nongenetically modified (‘non-GMO’) and specialty foods.” A similar sort of karmic revenge struck Chipotle Mexican Grill last year. The fast-food restaurant chain had sought to gain market share with ads that vilified conventional agriculture and boldly proclaimed their move toward “no GMO” ingredients. But the company proved more adept at marketing than safe food preparation, and about 60 customers in 20 states were sickened by norovirus or bacteria (E. coli and salmonella). Twenty were hospitalized.

The superior safety and environmental benefits of food made from genetically engineered plants have been proven over decades. Many genetically engineered crops resist insects and contamination... Continued on Page 23.
Virginia Juniors Attend Eastern Regional Classic

Six juniors from Virginia attended the ASA Eastern Regional Classic in Cookeville, Tennessee June 15-18. Each exhibitor competed in contests including Sales Talk, Livestock Judging, Cattlemen’s Quiz, and Public Speaking in addition to Showmanship and the Cattle Show. Hunter Watkins and Kristin Seay placed second and tenth, respectively, in the senior division Cattlemen’s Quiz and Krista Barb placed eighth in senior division Public Speaking. In the Cattle Show, Krista Barb won grand champion purebred cow/calf pair and was a class winner with her percentage heifer calf. Kristin Seay placed third in her class and was eighth overall bred & owned percentage heifer. Congratulations to all the Virginia juniors for their hard work.
Our next sale, the 16th Fall Herd Improvement Sale, at Virginia Tech November 5, 2016 @ 1pm

It is not too early to be thinking about consignments for our fall sale. The purebred Charolais you consign should be a quality that will promote your herd and the Charolais breed. This sale has been considered a female sale, but a consigner may now consign one breeding aged bull per each female lot that they consign. Our sales manager again this year is Dennis Adams of Outfront Cattle Service. If you do not receive an invite from Mr. Adams to enter cattle in our sale, please feel free to contact him at 979-229-4472 or email outfrontcattle@gmail.com. If you want Dennis Adams to screen for your consignments, you are encouraged to contact him soon. You may 540-968-1987 or mountainmeadows@highlandcomputers.com

Data from the Spring 2012 Across-Breed EPD Genetic Trends presented at the Beef Improvement Federation documents Charolais and Charolais-influenced genetics lead all major breeds compared for both weaning and yearling weights. In fact, Charolais cattle were proven to excel at adding more pounds at weaning and yearling.

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**Do What Works**
From Page 20 - GMOs

with dangerous fungal toxins such as mycotoxins. And unlike new crop varieties modified with less precise, less predictable techniques that are permitted in organic agriculture, genetically engineered crops have all been exhaustively tested and are subject to government regulation. Organic farming practices reject many modern technological farming advances as if there were some sort of golden age of agriculture when primitive techniques produced better results. That notion is complete nonsense.

A 2012 report by researchers at Stanford University’s Center for Health Policy analyzed data from 237 studies to determine whether organic foods are safer or healthier than nonorganic foods. They concluded that fruits and vegetables that met the criteria for “organic” were on average no more nutritious than their far cheaper conventional counterparts, nor were those foods less likely to be contaminated by bacteria such as E. coli or salmonella.

“Why on Earth would anyone think that using raw manure as a fertilizer -- in essence spreading feces on food plants -- produces healthier food? Some of the potential problems with organic produce seem like a matter of common sense. Why on Earth would anyone think that using raw manure as a fertilizer — in essence spreading feces on food plants — produces healthier food for the dining table? (It’s allowed, but the FDA requires certain intervals between the application of raw manure and harvesting.) And the widely held belief — which the organic industry promotes — that organic growers don’t use pesticides is simply untrue.

Although modern pesticides are prohibited, according to data from USDA, there is extensive cheating. Moreover, many of the primitive pesticides permitted to organic farmers pose significant dangers.

As evolutionary biologist Christie Wilcox explained in a 2012 Scientific American article: “Organic pesticides pose the same health risks as nonorganic ones.” For example, neem oil, a bug killer, is considered “natural” because the substance is found in the seeds of a tree, but “natural” doesn’t mean safe. The stuff is known to cause seizures and comas in humans if consumed in large doses, and it kills bumblebees at very low concentrations. Modern science has designed far better pesticides than neem oil that are safer, more targeted and much more effective at significantly lower concentrations. Modern pesticide seed treatments, for example, mean that crops can sometimes be grown with little, if any, need for spraying plants.

Despite the overwhelming scientific evidence in favor of the safety of modern agriculture, Clif Bar isn’t backing down. The company’s website contains anti-genetic engineering propaganda: “GMOs are simply the latest Band-Aid on a broken system — a faulty tool in the conventional, chemically dependent farming system.”

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PM - Shenandoah Classic Open Hereford Show
“At the Rockingham County Fairgrounds”

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16
Eastern States Jackpot Show - Open show for all breeds!
“At the Rockingham County Fairgrounds”

And Don’t Forget:

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11
Virginia Hereford Association Annual Meeting
“Location to be Determined

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12
Virginia Hereford Association Mid-Atlantic Fall Bonanza Sale
“At the Rockingham County Fairgrounds”

www.virginiaherefords.org

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www.virginiaherefords.org
Bar – C Farm Are Producers of Year

Bar-C Farm, owned and operated by Paul and Max Campbell, located in the Green Valley Section of Russell County. They are well known throughout the area for well-managed grass and “big calves.” Their efforts to improve beef (on-farm production, public perception of the industry, and community service) easily qualified them for the “Producer of the Year” Award. Upon completing high school in 1954, Paul Campbell immediately returned to the farm to assume a managerial role. Plans of attending Virginia Tech and studying accounting were altered by his father’s declining health. Although he was not able to pursue a formal career in accounting, he became a successful “farm accountant” and utilized resources from “VPI” often.

Paul was an early participant in Virginia Tech’s Rapid Adjustment Record Keeping Program. After participation and record analysis, agent recommended “dairy farming” of which Paul “respectfully declined.” He continued to improve the beef operation and experimented with various industry segments. With abundant corn silage, Paul finished cattle for several years. As times changed, he sold heavy feeders to producers in PA (with the help of Glenn Elsea). Stocker and poundage cattle have also been integrated into the production system. As these systems have evolved through the years, cows and calves continued to be “fixtures” at Bar-C.

Paul discontinued the corn silage operation in the early 1970’s as focus shifted from corn to grass. Hay production evolved from the square bale to the “Hawk-Bilt” round bale. Paul was a “stockpiling pioneer” as nitrogen was applied to fields around bales of hay left in the field. Max joined the farming operation in 1990 after completing the Ag Technology Program at Virginia Tech. Around this time there was much discussion about stockpiling grass. Max was intrigued by this “new concept” as his family had been doing it for years!

Upon his return to the farm, Max and Paul traveled to Alabama to participate in a conference hosted by “Grazing Pioneer” - Dr. Gordon Hazard. Bar-C implemented their first grazing system around this time. They have continued to improve their systems with the addition of water and more paddock fencing. Working with Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Campbell’s have hosted numerous pasture walks and grazing field days to share their experiences and expertise of grazing and stockpiling forage. Concentrating more on the cow/calf operation, the Campbell’s develop their own replacement females. Utilizing artificial insemination since 1989, they have developed cows that perform on grass. Constantly searching for the right genetic combinations, Bar-C Farm is a regular customer at the Virginia BCIA Performance Tested Bull Sale in Wytheville, the Southwest Virginia Angus Sales, and the Abingdon Feeder Cattle Association’s Bull Sales. The Campbell’s utilize the Virginia Cattlemen’s Tel-O-Auction to market load-lots of steers and heifers. Members of the Abingdon Feeder Cattle Association, they frequently sell animals through the VQA Program. They have participated in the Virginia Retained Ownership Program to learn more about the carcass merit of their animals and now regularly feed at Circle Five Feedlot in Nebraska. Bar-C has maintained an “open door” policy in assisting with 4-H youth development. Max and Paul have hosted the Stockman’s and Cattle Working Teams innumerable times as they have prepared for competitions. They are active in their church and have served in various leadership and advisory roles to the cattlemen’s associations and Southern States Cooperative. Paul has also served as a Director for the Clinch Valley Soil and Water Conservation District.

From Page 23 - GMOs

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From Page 23 - GMOs

resources to perpetuating the myth that 19th century farming methods make food healthier and better for the environment because it has to persuade consumers to spend on average an extra 50%, or more, for its products. Better to be guided by the facts instead of fears promulgated by self-interested food activists.

Henry I. Miller, a physician and molecular biologist, is a fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution. He was the founding director of the Office of Biotechnology at the FDA.

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Beef Council Update

Enhancing consumer preference for beef & sustaining Virginia families.

Checkoff Experience Leaves Huge Impact on Influencers

The national beef checkoff, through its Northeast Beef Promotion Initiative (NEBPI), and in partnership with the Pennsylvania Beef Council, South Dakota Beef Industry Council and Virginia Beef Industry Council, hosted the region’s first BEEFMersion culinary experience for local chefs and foodservice marketing associates on May 4 in Washington, D.C. Participants represented a broad range of professionals in the foodservice industry. Attendees experienced three diverse and trendy restaurants and sampled three beef dishes at each venue throughout the afternoon, while the checkoff’s Executive Chef Dave Zino lead the group through various brainstorming activities to encourage group idea sharing. The objective of the experience was to stimulate fresh thinking, generate new trend-forward beef menu ideas and on-trend beef culinary concepts as well as new recipe inspirations that would appeal to the Millennial generation. Participants were also provided with the opportunity to taste-test a variety of beef choices available in marketplace today and have their beef production-related questions answered firsthand from a regional cattle farmer.

Jay Quander, Director of Food & Beverages at the George Washington’s Mount Vernon Inn located in Mount Vernon, Va., commented after the event, “This was a great opportunity to see other venues and what they are doing with beef as well as network with one another as chefs. It was certainly a day well-spent and we hope there is another one.”

The BEEFMersion event really sparked an interest in Jay to learn more about where the beef he serves comes from. An interest that lead, he and fellow Chef Ryan Wallen, from Virginia to Nebraska.

The Nebraska Beef Council hosted its annual Beef Experience Tour on June 7th and 8th for a group of 24 influencers from across the country. The tour attendees included chefs, foodservice professionals, dietitians and culinary instructors. The educational tour is offered to help attendees better understand the beef production process and how the various segments of the beef community work together to raise quality beef products.

“We have the unique opportunity to showcase the entire beef production system right here in Nebraska,” said Adam Wegner, Director of Marketing for the Nebraska Beef Council. “We know that transparency is important and we want to show these influencers how beef is raised from start to finish.”

We knew that Jay would be a great asset to the Virginia Beef Council because of his ability and desire to share his experience with others.

“We can’t take every person out on a farm tour, but we can share the beef community’s story with folks who are in contact with consumers every day,” Wegner said. “The more informed people are about food production; the better consumers they will be.”

The tour began with a visit to Cargill Meat Solutions in Schuyler. The group witnessed the harvest process and carcass breakdown resulting in boxed beef ready for shipment. The group went on to Columbus for lunch and a panel discussion with local veterinarians to learn about animal care, the Beef Quality Assurance program and the practices used today to treat sick cattle. From there the attendees experienced the Nebraska Sandhills at Wagonhammer Ranch near Bartlett and Glaser Farms, an organic grass-finished beef operation near Spalding.

The second day included a stop at J&S Feedlot near Howells where the attendees were able to see a large scale feeding operation and learn about the various feed sources used to raise high quality beef. The group concluded their visit at Brune Farms outside of Dodge where they learned about crop production and the importance of grain to area cattle feeders.

“Every farm has a beautiful story to tell including the relationships we have with one another,” said Joan Ruskamp, owner of J&S Feedlot along with her husband, Steve. “When the consumer has the chance to hear that story directly from us, we are able to build a relationship based on trust not fear.”

“What an amazing trip!!!!” Quander said. “I have a better understanding of grass fed versus grain fed cattle and the entire cycle. I now know that at some point all cattle consume grass. I saw the importance of antibiotics for the animals when they are sick. You simply cannot let the animal suffer. There are many misconceptions on this with consumers. I was in awe at the attention to detail with regards to each animal. “Joe” consumer most likely thinks the rancher could care less about the almighty dollar, however, we found these folks to be very concerned and caring for the animals. Also, it’s a crazy cycle how commodity prices fluctuate and effect the market, and how the availability of beef impacts commodity prices. The most important take away, for me, was how INCREDIBLY hard the farmers/ranchers/cattlemen work. They are truly dedicated and committed to what they do.”

The 24 chefs, foodservice professionals, dietitians and culinary instructors from across the country that attended the Nebraska Beef tour. Jay Quander, VA pictured top row left, third person in.

What does this translate for the check-off dollar?

In a society where consumers are multiple generations removed from the farm their image of farming falls somewhere between two extremes. Some think it has been frozen in time to the picturesque farm couple portrayed in Grant Woods’ American Gothic. Or, thanks to those like Chipotle, they have heard of some version of ‘factory farming’ and envision robot farmers harvesting crops, milking cows, and feeding livestock with little or no human intervention, all owned by large, faceless corporations that only care about the almighty dollar.

Working with influencers is an increasing priority for us. We are continuing our outreach by getting many of our resources in the hands of dieticians, Family and Consumer Science agents and teachers, fitness professionals, bloggers and many others. These groups have a huge impact on consumer preference and we want to make sure they understand the many great benefits that beef has to offer as we do. Exposing these influencers to experiences such as the BEEFMersion event and farm tours is key to helping them understand production practices and relay that to the many consumers they interact with daily. Their trust translates into consumer trust.
Beal is 2016 Industry Service Award Winner

On Friday July 8, 2016 at the Virginia Cattle Industry Field Day, Dr. Bill Beal was recognized as the recipient of the 2016 Virginia Cattlemen’s Association Industry Service Award for extensive contributions to academia, as well as the greater Virginia and national beef cattle business. W.E. “Bill” Beal is a Michigan native who earned degrees from Michigan State University, the University of Wyoming and Cornell University before joining Virginia Tech in 1979, where he has contributed greatly to research in improving cattle’s reproductive efficiency. Most of Beal’s work has centered on methods for controlling estrus and ovulation in cattle, as well as using ultrasound as a tool to monitor reproductive function, early pregnancy diagnosis and fetal sexing.

Cattle producers across the world can thank this emeritus professor and renowned reproductive physiologist for his work in bovine reproduction. His diligence in investigating methods for controlling estrus and ovulation in cattle provided the industry with higher conception rates and tighter estrus synchronization in their herds.

While receiving his advanced degrees, Beal studied the effects of gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH), as well as induced parturition in cattle. He subsequently helped develop estrus synchronization programs for cattle using various progesterone and GnRH sources. Today, many cattle producers use a combination of GnRH, prostaglandin F2-alpha CIDR or MGA in their breeding programs to closely synchronize a group of cattle in heat for better efficiency of time during breeding season. Beal was instrumental in the use of ultrasound to evaluate ovarian function, as well as early pregnancy diagnosis and fetal sexing.

In addition to his research, Beal provided leadership to the undergraduate advising program in animal and poultry sciences, having served as a coordinating counselor and career advisor. He served on numerous doctoral committees and served as major advisor to many doctoral and master’s degree students. Beal also has received national recognition for excellence in undergraduate teaching from the American Society of Animal Science as well as receiving numerous teaching and advising awards at Virginia Tech, most notably the W.E. Wine Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching and the University Award for Excellence in Career Advising. In 2003, Beal received the National Award for Outstanding Teaching from the American Society of Animal Science (ASAS). In 2007, he was awarded the Sporn Award for Outstanding Teaching of Introductory Courses at Virginia Tech. Beal was the Chair of the Virginia Tech Academy of Teaching Excellence. During his career, he has authored or co-authored four chapters in books, 35 proceedings papers and 60 refereed scientific articles, and he has presented 52 published abstracts. His expertise is in estrus synchronization, embryo transfer and the use of ultrasound technology.

In September 2010 he was conferred the “professor emeritus” title by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors. The title of emeritus may be conferred on retired professors and associate professors, administrative officers, librarians, and exceptional staff members who are specially recommended to the board of visitors by Virginia Tech President Charles W. Steger. Nominated individuals who are approved by the board of visitors receive an emeritus certificate from the university.

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By: A.L. Eller, Jr.

Four outstanding Virginia livestock industry leaders will be inducted into the Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame on Saturday September 24, 2016 in Blacksburg. The induction ceremony will take place at 10:00 AM at the Virginia Tech Alphin-Stuart Livestock Arena on Plantation Road.

Those to be honored were nominated by related livestock industry associations. They are as follows:

• Dwight E. Houff of Mt. Sidney, Virginia, nominated by the Virginia Cattlemen’s Association.
• Richard G. Saake of Blacksburg, Virginia, nominated by the Virginia State Dairymen’s Association.
• Robert W. Manly of Waverly, Virginia, Nominated by the Virginia Pork Council.
• Max J. Tapparo (Posthumously) of Lynchburg, Virginia, nominated by the Virginia Horse Council.

A portrait of each inductee will be hung and permanently displayed in the Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame gallery in the Alphin-Stuary Arena.

The ceremony is open to the public. Refreshments and a light lunch will be served at the conclusion of the induction event. For additional information, contact A.L. Eller, Jr. 540-951-2109, aeller@vt.edu.

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