

February 2006

The President's Message

By Darlene Sanford

It was a news report that no beef producer wanted to hear "Confirmed case of BSE in a Canadian cow". Words to make your heart skip a beat. The fallout has pretty much settled down by now and although this news probably won't speed up the rulemaking process to allow breeding and commercial cattle to enter the United States, there doesn't appear to have been much change in export markets. The fact that this case was found and that no part of this animal entered the food or feed chain confirms that Canada's system of safe guards to target and eliminate BSE works.

Meanwhile, on the legal front R-Calf has gone to court again with a motion for a permanent injunction against live Canadian cattle and beef imports. Several US and Canadian groups have come forward with amicus information for the court. Information which discounts R-Calf's claims that opening the US border to Canadian cattle would increase the number of cattle entering the US (imports are lower than historical figures), US prices have increased instead of decreased, and more US export markets have reopened. Tyson's announcement to restructure and close two of its processing facilities leaving 1650 employees without work all go against R-Calf's vision that normalized trade in North American beef would be detrimental to the US beef industry. Judge Cebull has no timeframe in which to decide if he will; accept these briefs, rule without further hearings, hold more hearings, or indefinitely refrain from making a decision. As it becomes apparent to more groups on the southern side of the border that this closure has hurt the US industry they are slowly coming on side to support efforts to fully reopen beef trade. Progress seems painfully slow but with another growing season just around the corner and Canada's recent change of leadership the only things we can be sure of are that spring will follow winter and the situation will change, hopefully for the better.

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Contact Information

P.E.I. Cattlemen's Association	cattlemen@eastlink.ca	(902) 368-2229
CCAssociation Daily Update	www.info-cca.ca	OR 1-866-463-6222
Maritime Cattle Market Report.	www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/marketing/wmreport/feeder.htm	
Canfax Boxed Beef Report	http://www.canfax.ca	
OCA Daily Market Report	http://cattle.guelph.on.ca/markets/railreport.html	
Alberta Daily Market Report	http://www.albertabeef.org	
CFIA (transportation emergencies)	www.inspection.gc.ca	OR 1-877-814-2342

Director Biography: Darlene Sanford, President



Darlene Sanford is currently the President of the PEI Cattlemen's Association. She and her father run a feedlot operation in Mont Carmell, a small rural community that can be found 20 minutes west of Summerside in Prince County. She is married to Mitchell Sanford and they have two children, Marina and Brenton.

Darlene has served on the board in some capacity for the past five years. She has served on various committees within the organization such as Beef Information Centre, Farm Income Improvement Committee, and the Maritime Beef Council. She has also represented her community on the ?? SDBA/SBAC Development Corporation. Last year Darlene was awarded the *Women in Agriculture Award* presented annually by the PEI Women's Institute.

She has witnessed many changes in the industry in the last ten years the greatest of which is the move of the industry toward sustainability. "We are not there yet," she says because she feels there is still much work to be done. One thing that she has learned and would like to pass on to others is "to get used to change; it is the only constant."

Darlene likes to spend her free time with her family and enjoys downhill skiing and riding her motorcycle.

Fine-tuning Canada's beef on-farm food safety program



As more and more consumers worldwide become interested in how the food they buy is produced, food safety programs based on internationally recognized principles such as the Verified Beef Production (VBP) program have taken on new importance. The benefits and opportunities of becoming a registered VBP participant are growing at all levels of the food value chain in Canada and throughout the world," says VBP national manager Terry Grajczyk. "Producers throughout the country are realizing this and coming to workshops to learn more about how to participate." This growth has meant new developments to the VBP program.

PROGRAM STREAMLINING

Making the VBP program requirements as clear and user-friendly as possible is always a priority, says Grajczyk. The producer-led Management Committee that oversees VBP developments in Canada recently supported adjustments to remove redundancy and increase clarity. "That information will ultimately be of value to the program nationally and to Provincial Delivery Agents (PDAs), those who are on the front lines of delivering the program," says Grajczyk. "It's part of an internal process where there is continual improvement and a focus on food safety."

STRONG YEAR AHEAD

New confidence in the beef industry will drive the program in 2006, says Grajczyk, and developments such as these will help increase that confidence. "We are well-positioned for growth," The Verified Beef Production (VBP) program is growing across Canada. "Most Provincial Delivery Agents (PDAs) report increasing interest in the program, often citing the demands of 'branded beef' companies as a major factor in getting producers to the workshops," says VBP national manager Terry Grajczyk. VBP programs in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Manitoba are among those that experienced growth throughout 2005. Here's a snapshot of developments in all three, as well as a general overview of VBP throughout Canada.

Beef Information Sessions

The PEI Cattlemen's Association and the PEI Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture will be hosting two information meetings that will provide producers with valuable information on a variety of topics. The meetings will be held on **Tuesday March 7th** at the Farm Centre in Charlottetown and , **Wednesday March 8th** at Slemon Park in Summerside.

**PLEASE pre-register by calling the
PEICA office at 368-2229 or Les Halliday at 569-7639 before March 2.**

Agenda

9:30 Registration

10:00 am Ron DeHaan, Acting Manager of Sustainable Agricultural Resources:

Ron will give an overview of the revamped Sustainable Resource Conservation Project now known as the Canada PEI Agriculture Stewardship Program, and changes that will benefit producers.

10:45 am Dr. Roger Thomson of Wyeth Animal Health:

Dr. Thomson will speak to producers about the benefits of hormone implants and various vaccination protocols. Dr Thomson is from Kingcardon, Ont and has had extensive experience dealing with producers from the cow-calf clubs of the Bruce Peninsula.

12:00 -1:00pm Lunch (sponsored by Wyeth Animal Health)

1:00 pm Diane Huestis, Farm Safety Specialist

Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Workers Compensation Board:

Diane will speak on the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the draft Farm Safety Code of Practice that will come into effect on January 1, 2007

2:00 pm Bruce Andrews, Procurement Officer of Atlantic Beef Products Inc.

Bruce will speak to producers about RFID tagging, traceability, and the possibility of adding a Natural Beef product line at the plant.

Pasture Soil Sampling and Nutrient Management Project Workshop

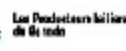
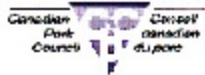
Farm Centre, Room 106, Feb. 28, 2006.

Agenda

- 10:00-10:30 **The value of Nutrient Management Planning**
Gordon Fairchild, P.Ag Soils Specialist, Eastern Canada Soil and Water Conservation Centre
- 10:30-11:00 **Producer experience with pasture management**
Gerry Richard, producer, Miscouche, PEI
- 11:00-11:45 **The connection between beef nutrition, improving animal production efficiency, and reducing cattle methane GHG emissions**
Gordon Fairchild, P.Ag. Soils Specialist, Eastern Canada Soil and Water Conservation Centre
- 11:45 -1:00 **LIGHT LUNCH PROVIDED AT FARM CENTRE**
- 1:00-2:00 **Summary of results from the pasture soil test and nutrient management project demo sites**
Shauna Mellish, P.Ag. Nutrient Management Coordinator Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Aquaculture
- 2:00-2:30 **Questions and Discussion**

Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Program for Canadian Agriculture

Programme d'atténuation des gaz à effet de serre pour l'agriculture canadienne



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

P.E.I. Slaughter House Regulations Amended

On December 3, 2005 the Public Health Act Slaughter House Regulations were amended. These amendments were in response to changes in the federal Health of Animals Regulations which now prohibit the transport of healthy animals that are unable to walk.

The recent changes in the provincial regulations allow, under strict control, including veterinary supervision and inspection, the on farm slaughter of three categories of animals:

1. Acutely injured but otherwise healthy animals;
2. Escaped animals, and
3. Animals that are too dangerous to transport.

The animal owner must provide certain information to assist in the assessment and tracking of the animal. To facilitate this process a Special Circumstances Slaughter Report has been provided to the veterinary clinics and must accompany the animal from the farm to the slaughter house. In order for the animal to be permitted entry into the slaughter house the identification number (i.e., CCIA tag number) must be provided. As well, the animal must be free of veterinary drug residual. Unless every condition of the Report is met, the animal will not be permitted entry into the slaughter house.

A maximum two hour time frame is permitted from the time of slaughter until the animal is completely processed at the slaughter house. It is important for the animal owner to coordinate with the veterinarian conducting the on farm inspection and the local slaughter house operator to ensure the efficient use of everyone's time to accomplish this deadline.

The animal owner is responsible for all costs associated with the on farm veterinary inspection, carcass inspection and any antibiotic residual testing the veterinarian deems necessary. Actual laboratory costs cannot be confirmed due to varying transportation costs across the province. The Department of Health will make every effort to access competitive prices for antibiotic residual testing and transportation costs.

Providing a safe food supply is essential to the protection of public health. Extensive consultation was held with a number of provincial regulatory authorities, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, public health officials, veterinarians and industry in considering these changes. Should you have any questions regarding the Slaughter House Regulation amendments you can call Environmental Health at 368-4970 (or toll free number 1-800-958-6400). Should you have questions regarding the transportation of animals you should contact your local veterinarian or the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at 566-7290

BIC Campaign promotes hamburgers as a healthy fast food choice

By: Janet Bryson,

Communications Manager Atlantic Region

The Beef Information Center (BIC) recently developed a media campaign designed to change Canadians perception of the hamburger. BIC addressed the misconception that fast food burgers equal junk food and ultimately obesity. The campaign promoted burgers as a nutritious and convenient choice at fast food and was done in both English and French, reaching over 7,000,000 Canadians through radio and television interviews.

The current rise in obesity is often blamed on fast food. In the campaign, BIC highlighted a recent national survey, in which nine out of ten Canadians thought there was a link between fast food and obesity. But the facts show that there is no basis for believing in this connection. According to the same survey, Canadians only eat fast food three times a month and only 2.4 times a month when eating out with their families.

Two to three meals per month cannot be blamed for the rise in obesity rates over the past 30 years," says Laura Pasut, dietitian and campaign spokesperson. "Many factors, including a sedentary lifestyle, a high intake of energy-dense foods and genetics, contribute to an increase in weight gain."

The campaign also set burgers apart by focusing on the excellent nutritional qualities of beef compared calorie for calorie with other choices on a fast food menu. Pasut compared a medium fries, a large soft drink and a burger. "The fries contain twice as much fat as the hamburger and very few vitamins and minerals," says Pasut. Practically all the calories in the soft drink come from sugar. The meat in the burger is an excellent source of protein, zinc, vitamin B12 and a good source of ready-to-use iron. With the bun, the burger also provides many additional B vitamins. That makes the hamburger a superior nutrient dense choice. Or in other words, it is better nutritional value for your calories."

BIC also developed a handy hamburger shaped resource – "Eat out, Eat healthy it's easy" – distributed through the February edition of Canadian Living.

RFID TAGS

RFID tags were developed to help aid the Canadian cattle industry continue to meet and exceed domestic and international requirements for animals health and food safety through an efficient trace back and age verification process. These tags are small and use radio frequency to transfer information on the animal such as ID number, weight and treatments the animal received. This transfer must be done with the help of RFID tag readers that are available as permanently fixed panel readers or portable hand-held models. Information collected on the readers is then transferred to a computer software program, where additional information may be attached to each animal's record.

These tags are frequently discussed in producer circles these days, as the implementation deadline approaches. As of September 1, 2006, cattle will no longer be allowed to leave their herd of origin without a CCIA approved RFID tag.

At a recent presentation by Kane Veterinary Supplies Ltd., held at the Farm Centre in Charlottetown, various components of RFID technology were presented. Both portable hand-held, and fixed panel readers were on display as well and scale heads that not only record the animal's weight, but allow producers to input additional information, such as treatment, on that particular animal, while it is in the scale. They also discussed the software program that is necessary to complete the system, and the two different types of tags that are currently approved and available.

The different types of tags are the HDX (half duplex) and the FDX(full duplex) tags. The FDX tags have a reading range between 6-18 inches. This means the tag reader must be positioned within this range in order to read the radio frequency being transmitted and collect the ID number of that animal. The HDX technology extends the read range 36- 40 inches. The obvious benefit of these tags is the reading range. Producers can collect the tag information without restraining the animal by simply letting the animal pass through a gate with stationary panel readers attached.

As with all new technology there will be a transition period. Producers will have to develop a system that works for them. In many parts of the country, truckers and plants are already equipped with panel readers that record cattle as they are transferred. This process is coming to PEI, and the PEICA has already been informed that ABP will be using panel readers at their entry gates to collect cattle ID numbers from the cattle as they arrive. For this reason we strongly encourage all producers to use the HDX tags on their cattle. Although you may not be reading the tags yourself it is comprehensible that someone who handles that animal at some point throughout its life will, and the

HDX tags are the ones that will prove to be the most user friendly.

If you have any questions on the RFID tags we urge you to contact the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency at 1-877-909-BEEF (2333) or their website at www.canadaid.ca One additional word of caution. You must purchase the proper tag applicator . Using other tag applicators can damage the tag button and the tags will fall out.

Farmers get a chance to tell their story

During the first two weeks in May every farm in Canada will receive a Census of Agriculture questionnaire. On May 16, farmers across the country will help create an up-to-date picture of agriculture in Canada by completing and returning their census questionnaire.

The farmer of the 21st century works in an industry that is becoming more and more complex. Farmers wear many hats to operate a successful business: accountant, mechanic, carpenter, heavy equipment operator, and environmentalist. In addition to farming, an operator may also work off the farm. In short, farmers are busy people working in a dynamic and challenging industry.

The profile of Canada's farmers is different than the general working population. Census information tells us that farm operators have a higher median age than the comparable labour force population of self-employed workers — 49 and 44 respectively. Moreover, the group of farmers under 35 years old poised to fill their boots is shrinking rapidly, representing only 12% of all farmers. Nearly 20% of self-employed workers in the general labour force are under 35. In the entire labour force, 40% of all workers are less than 35 years old.

Then there's technology: Advances in irrigation systems, breeding, biotechnology, disease control and soil conservation have made the farm more productive and efficient than ever before. Yet farmers in Canada are always looking for new opportunities because prices for most traditional farm commodities are in a long-term decline and, as analysis of census data indicates, many farmers are struggling to make a profit. New crops or new uses for existing crops may offer interesting new markets for many farmers. The biotechnology industry is just one of the exciting areas that is seeing many interesting developments for agriculture — corn to make into ethanol for gasoline and canola to make diesel fuel more engine-friendly, are just two examples.

Agriculture is continually changing. The Census of Agriculture provides information on the many sides of this vital industry — from crop area to manure management to farm-related injuries. The data "snapshot" captured by the Census of Agriculture every five years highlights trends and new developments in agriculture. Although farms have been decreasing in number overall, down almost 11% since 1996, farms have been getting

bigger. The average farm in 2001 was 676 acres, compared with 608 acres in 1996. Those with gross receipts of \$250,000 or more accounted for 13.8% of all farms in 2001, compared with 9.4% in 1996 (at 2000 prices). The 2006 Census of Agriculture will give us more information on how, or if, this is changing.

The farm industry, as a whole, benefits from census data in many ways. For example, agricultural producer groups are guided by data from the census when informing their membership about industry trends and developments; putting operators' viewpoints before legislators and the Canadian public; and defending their interests in international trade negotiations. Governments use them to make decisions about crop insurance, agricultural credit policies, transportation, market services and international trade. Census information also helps other businesses market their products and services to farm operators and is a valuable tool when making production and investment decisions.

Information gathered by the census is so important, Statistics Canada is legally required to conduct a census every five years. By the same law, Statistics Canada is required to protect the information provided on census of agriculture forms — privacy is a fundamental component of the census.

On May 16, 2006, tell *your* story by counting yourself in as part of Canada's farm community!

Scales

The PEI Cattlemen's Association recently acquired a set of portable scales from the PEI Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture. These scales have been completely revamped and are ready for use. If you would like to borrow them, you must fill out a waiver form prior to pickup. This can be done by fax. Scales must be returned to a predesignated drop-off site. If you would like to borrow them, please call Rinnie Bradley at the PEICA office at 368-2229.

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY TRAINING 2006

For further information on agricultural training, degree and diploma courses, scholarships, and careers, contact::

P.E.I. AGRICULTURE SECTOR COUNCIL

420 University Avenue, Farm Centre, Suite 201
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7Z5
892-1091, 1-866-892-1091, agrihrdc@eastlink.ca

Upcoming Events Calendar



Beef Information Sessions

March 7, Farm Centre, Charlottetown

March 8, Slemmon Park Summerside

See page 3 for more details

Maritime Marketing Caravan

March 15 - 16 - 2006

Together we sell better. Memramcook Center,
Memramcook, NB

Phone 1-888-232-3262

Farmers Taking Charge:

March 16-17

To improve farm income
and mitigate greenhouse gases.

Howard Johnson Brunswick Plaza, Moncton, NB
Contact: Sussanah Banks (506) 473-7833

PEI ADAPT AGM &

National Issues and Opportunities Meeting

Mar 13, 2006 - Mar 14, 2006

Confederation Centre, Charlottetown

Contact: Phil Ferraro, (902) 368-2005

Angus Bull and Heifer Silent Auction Sale

JEM Farms, Earnscliffe

March 18, 2006, 1:30 pm

Contact Joanne Mutch: 651-2379

PEI Easter Beef Show and Sale

Mar 23 - 24, 2006

Charlottetown Civic Centre

Contact: Jane Palmer 675-4351

Worth-A-Bit Angus Open House

March 27, 2006, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

N. Tryon

Contact Tim Dixon: 437-2275

Maritime Beef Cattle Test Station

33rd Annual Breeding stock Sale

April 1, 2006

Nappan Sale Barn, N.S.

Contact Bernadette: 661-2855