



# NEWSLETTER



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND  
CATTLE PRODUCERS

By *Brian Morrison*

## Chairman's Message

As we head into the winter months we look forward to implementing some of the action items of the Maritime Beef Council's (MBC) Strategy. The first Beef Feedlot School took place in September and was well attended. Another strategy of the MBC is to establish a risk management program for producers in this region. The MBC is currently involved in a study that will explore the feasibility of offering a program similar to the Western Livestock Price Insurance Program (WLPIP) to Maritime producers. While the WLPIP may not prove to be the solution for producers in the region, we are committed to establishing a risk management program to ensure our producers are competitive with their counterparts from Quebec and Ontario.

The Certified Island Beef (CIB) brand continues to grow and we are pleased to see new feedlots and cow/calf producers signing up. CIB is sold in the Greater Toronto Area as well as in Sobeys stores in PEI. CIB producers receive a premium for their animals; CIB Cow/Calf producers are paid when they submit their completed CIB Cow/Calf Manifests, CIB Feedlots are paid if their animals meet the brand specs. I encourage producers to contact Jena Nicholson at the office if you are interested in the CIB brand.

I invite all producers to register for the Maritime Beef Conference, scheduled for March 16/17, 2018 at Delta Beausejour in Moncton. You won't want to miss the guest speaker for this year's event; Temple Grandin.

Finally; I would like to remind all producers to send in their levies. Without levies we cannot continue to offer the programs and services currently available.

My term as the Chair of the PEICP ends at the AGM in April, so I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my fellow Board members and staff that I have had the privilege of working with over the past several years. They continuously work diligently on your behalf. And to my fellow producers; I want to thank you for your support over the years. I encourage you to stay informed by participating in the PEICP meetings, reading emails and consider joining the Board. The beef industry needs all of you to ensure it remains viable in the years to come. On behalf of myself and the Board I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

### Contact Information

- PEI Cattle Producers [cattlemen@eastlink.ca](mailto:cattlemen@eastlink.ca) (902) 368-2229
- CCA Daily Update [www.cattle.ca](http://www.cattle.ca) 1-866-463-6222
- Maritime Cattle Market Report [www.atlanticstockyards.com](http://www.atlanticstockyards.com)
- Canfax Boxed Beef Report [www.canfax.ca](http://www.canfax.ca)
- OCA Market Report [www.cattle.guelph.on.ca](http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca)
- Alberta Daily Market Report [www.albertabeef.org](http://www.albertabeef.org)
- CFIA Transportation Emergencies [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca) 1-877-814-2342
- Dr Les Halliday [ljhalliday@gov.pe.ca](mailto:ljhalliday@gov.pe.ca) 569-7639 or 314-0827
- Agriculture Information Officer 1-866-PEIFARM (743-3276)

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Agriculture and  
Fisheries

[www.gov.pe.ca/af/agweb/index.php3](http://www.gov.pe.ca/af/agweb/index.php3)

# Age Verification Program

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Producers wanting to access premium markets for their cattle must Age Verify (AV) their animals. This is the association of the animal's birthdate to its CCIA button tag number. The PEI Certified Island Beef brand for example; requires all animals to be Age Verified. Why you ask? It is to ensure the animals are traceable and youthful when they are processed, and it also allows the brand to access most export markets where only beef from cattle under thirty months of age is accepted. Age Verification is the most reliable way to ensure the age of the animal. The other method of aging an animal is *dentition*. This is the evaluation of the animal's teeth, but it's unreliable as the variability in the teeth of animals of the same age can be too broad.

To help Island cattle producers Age Verify their animals, the PEICP offers a *Third Party Age Verification* service. To verify the age of your herd, complete the verification forms available on the PEICP website under the *Programs* tab and send them along with birth dates to the PEICP. There is no cost to the producer for this service and we encourage all cow/calf producers to take advantage of this.

The need to be able to Age Verify animals is greater now than ever before. Markets are requiring animals to be Age Verified but we expect that some markets may soon require animals to be breed verified or source verified as well. Don't wait for this to happen, start Age Verifying your animals NOW!

**Age Verification Hint!** Since we have begun Age Verifying for producers we have come across a significant number of operations that have multiple accounts with the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) This account number is attributed to you when you *purchase* you CCIA tags. In some instances, we have found producers to have three or more accounts, i.e. one in their name, one in the father's, one in the farm name. This creates issues when we go to Age Verify for you. So, record you CCIA Account number and make sure you use it regardless of where you purchase your tags. This will help to ensure that we are able to AV all you calves without incident.

And don't forget; you CANNOT Age Verify an animal using a tag that was purchased in someone else's name! Age Verification must be done by the cow/calf producer.

## Cattle Producer Levy

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The PEI Cattle Producer Levy increase was implemented in May of 2017. This brings the cost of the levy to \$6.00. It is payable on every sale of an animal whether its from the bob calves to drover, cow/calf to backgrounder, cow/calf to feedlot or feedlot to slaughter. HST is payable on all levies.

We want to remind producers that without your levies we cannot maintain operations. Levies cover costs like rent, wages, marketing, promotions, coordination of the Beef Development Fund, coordination of the Certified Island Beef Brand as well as representation at national on the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Canada Beef Inc, and other organizations such as the Maritime Beef Council.

Many of the projects that we participate in require some industry funding or "skin in the game." Without levies we could not participate in these projects. Some of these include PEI Burger Love, Maritime Beef Conference, 4-H support, A study of the Western Livestock Insurance Program and its Adaptability to the Maritime Region, Beef Feedlot School, to name a few. More importantly, levies allow us to represent you. In November the Maritime region will be sending representatives to Ottawa for a Fly-In. This is an opportunity for Maritime representatives to meet with a dozen or more MP's from our region throughout the day. These meetings are very important as they keep our MP's informed about the state of the industry. For example, the latest fly-in also provided an opportunity to meet with Minister MacAulay and some of his senior staff to promote the MBC Strategy.

Please do your part to make sure levies are deducted when you sell your cattle and that the person who purchased them is going to remit them. The *Levy Deduction Remittance Forms for Buyers* can be found on the PEICP website under the Levies tab.

It is important to note that you can remit levies on cattle purchased in NS or NB to the PEICP using the same form. We will make sure they are forwarded on your behalf.

The Board of the PEICP would like to thank all producers for their part in collecting and remitting beef levies to help build a stronger beef industry.

## Upcoming Meetings

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### Fall District Meetings

Dec 6<sup>th</sup> Kensington Potato Services Building at 7pm

Dec 7<sup>th</sup> PEI Farm Center at 7pm

Maritime Beef Conference March 16, 17 2018 at Delta Beausejour in Moncton, NB.

# Certified Island Beef

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Certified Island Beef has been growing steadily this past year and we would like to thank everyone for their cooperation and loyalty to the brand and we would also like to welcome all new producers to the brand. The PEICP has spent the summer and fall months completing the CIB audit and we thank producers who have reached out to schedule their audits.

We want to provide a friendly reminder that all producers that you must complete an on-farm audit to ensure to CFIA that producers are meeting brand claims. For this reason, we are not able to accept animals into the brand unless both the cow/calf and the feedlot producer have their on-farm audit.

The on-farm audit consists of our CIB coordinator, Jena Nicholson, who will meet with the producer on their farm and discuss the brand criteria. The audit itself is a brief but intensive procedure that will require Jena to look at cattle, barns, feed and feed tags as necessary. She will require information on dehorning, castration and weaning practices. You can schedule your audit by contacting Jena at the PEICP office.

We currently sell CIB into Sobeys stores across PEI, as well as distributors in Quebec and Ontario. We are confident that that will continue. ABP is actively working on the development of a new market for CIB in the US. You may have also heard about the potential to market CIB into China, however; there are still some barriers that must be overcome before we can access the Chinese market.

As we take steps to balance our supply and demand, we currently see ourselves oversupplied on some weeks. While every effort is being made to sell all CIB finished cattle that are available, we occasionally may have to prorate CIB numbers.

Some of the challenges in managing the supply are based on the quality of the cattle that are available. For example, when prices

dropped over the summer we saw extra animals being shipped to catch the higher prices. Many of these animals did not meet the CIB grade criteria. This resulted in a significant decline in the percent of animals meeting the specs for CIB. Other loads included cattle that were not accepted into the brand because they were OTMs or they did not come from approved cow/calf operations. This further reduces the percentage of eligible animals. ABP tries its best to forecast these variables to reach its demand number, however; occasionally it may result in prorating.

When you arrange to ship cattle to ABP, please make sure you are clear on whether they are taking CIB animals or not. Premiums will only be paid if this has been clarified beforehand. The CIB Committee is currently only paying on cattle that meet the weight specs of 700-950 lbs.

We trust that you will make your processing decisions well in advance so that you may be able to put off your cattle for a week or two until CIB animals are needed.

While completing the CIB audits, Jena has noticed that there is a lack of communication between cow calf producers and their feedlot. If you are acquiring new cattle for the brand, we strongly encourage feedlot producers to direct their cow calf to the PEICP to learn more about CIB and to book their audit.

Please note that the brand will no longer pay cow/calf producers based on meeting minimum grade requirements at ABP. A \$10.00 calf premium will only be paid on animals listed on signed *Cow Calf Manifests*. We have updated the *Cow Calf Manifest* which can be found on the PEICP website under CIB Brand. It is the responsibility of the cow calf producer to ensure that their *Cow Calf Manifest* is filled out properly before directing it to the PEICP.

## Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+)

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The Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program, known in Canada for on-farm food safety, has been helping producers meet industry standards for food safety for over a decade. The program includes robust standards and third party auditing processes, yet remains a practical, cost-effective and relevant program. Consumers are demanding more transparent, accountable, and sustainable beef production. Because of the consumer drive, the PEI Cattle Producers have been encouraging producers to obtain their VBP+ training and have provided the updated material as it becomes available.

The three new modules have been added to the VBP+ program as they play a large role within the beef industry. The first module VBP+ program animal care module helps producers validate practices by meeting the National Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle in their production systems.

The second module is Environmental Stewardship module is based on common sense to grasp the importance of caring for the health, biodiversity and productivity of the environment beef cattle producers rely on for their viability. Part of the process, is to assess many aspects related to sound environmental stewardship: grazing management, pasture/rangeland management, protecting soil and water resources, rotational grazing, riparian area practices, wildlife habitat, manure storage and use, invasive weed control, species at risk wintering grounds, mentoring farm help and safe working conditions.

The third module is Biosecurity and it is an important module for all Canadian beef cattle producers to be educated on as it strives to protect cattle from disease. Learning how to keep disease from entering the farm is critical not only for animal health but also to enhance productivity and viability of the beef cattle operation.

As you may or may not be aware, a pilot project involving VBP+, Cargill and BIXS was launched at the Canadian Beef Industry Conference in August called the Canadian Beef Sustainability Acceleration Pilot (CBSA). The CBSA pilot aims to build industry momentum for

## Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) continued

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beef sustainability in Canada. The pilot will set up the infrastructure needed by Cargill and along the entire supply chain to implement a commercially viable sustainable beef supply chain. This will help strengthen trust among consumers in the Canadian beef industry. The pilot is an important early step in building this supply chain. Three Cargill customers, including McDonald's Canada, Loblaw Companies Limited, and Cara Foods, are participating in the pilot.

In the CBSA pilot, Cargill will track cattle through a fully-audited sustainable supply chain (via BIXS). Financial credits will be awarded quarterly to all operations (ranches, backgrounders, feedlots and the packer) that deliver cattle from a fully-audited sustainable supply chain. This means that in order for cattle from your operation to be eligible, not only do you have to be verified, but so does every other operation the cattle move through (including the packing plant). Currently, Cargill's High River plant is the only verified plant but that may change based on demand.

The pilot will run for a minimum of a year starting Oct 2017, with the first credit payments going out at the start of 2018 and then continuing quarterly.

## MBC Growth Strategy

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The Maritime Beef Council has been working on a strategy for the Maritime beef industry for the past couple of years. The decision to develop a new strategy resulted from the on-going challenges the industry was facing. For every challenge there is an opportunity. Improvements could be made to increase production efficiencies and management principals. Arable land, not currently in production, could provide forages and pastureland. Niche markets could be implemented through the region's only federal slaughter facility(ABP). And true value creation could come from the willingness to work together as a region.

The ultimate ten-year goal of the strategy is to increase the breeding herd by 20k head. This goal is further broken down to ensure 10k feeders go to feedlots shipping to Atlantic Beef Products and 10k head gain access to central Canada for various programs.

There are significant underutilised assets in the region such as Auction Marts, Atlantic Beef Products, the Nappan Bull Test Station, the Nappan Research facility, pasture lands, forage lands and interested new entrants. The strategy will ensure these assets are used to their full potential.

The Maritime beef industry does not have access to a Risk Management Program, however; work is currently being carried out to explore best options.

To meet the expansion objectives of the strategy, we recognise that it will not likely occur unless producers have access to infrastructure funding for housing, feed and feed storage expansion. Funding shortfalls have been identified and efforts are underway to see if resources can be found.

Short term goals of the strategy include: 1) hiring a coordinator; someone whose responsibility it is to ensure the objectives of the strategy are being pursued; 2)implementing cow/calf clubs across the region, with the objective of raising calves that will bring a premium from the market; 3)creating education and awareness programs such as the Maritime Beef School, with curriculum targeted for the cow/calf and the feedlot sectors; 4)establishing an Ultrasound Program that will provide producers and those testing genetics the ability to evaluate body condition score and reproductive measure with the use of ultrasound testing. Producers will be able to access information and training through provincial and regional workshops including the Maritime Beef Conference and the Nappan Summer Grazing and Forage Workshop.

Industry growth will not be achieved by merely retaining heifers. New entrants and those willing to expand will contribute to the goals of increasing production by 2000 breeding females /year/10 years, by retaining 800 heifers/year as well as purchasing 1200 bred cows/year. In terms of growth the following increased production spaces will be needed:

- i. Cow/Calf – 45,000 current, 20,000 growth over 10 years
- ii. Backgrounding – 6,000 additional spaces will be required
- iii. Feedlot - 9,100 current, 10,000 growth (for ABP)– 4,000 additional spaces will be required

This article highlights the objectives of the MBC Industry Growth Strategy but only touches on the full scope of activities that have been identified to help grow the beef industry in the region. Other areas such as marketing and research are being explored. Some activities of the strategy have already started; many more will be implemented in the coming months. Please stay tuned.

### 1) Agronomy

- a) Enhanced Grazing Systems
  - i. Energizers
  - ii. Electric fencing & hardware
  - iii. Remote watering systems
- b) 4R Nutrient Management Strategy
  - i. Plan developed with a Certified Nutrient Management Professional
- c) Pasture Management Planning
  - i. Pasture Management Plan developed with a P. Ag
- d) Innovative Forage Technology
  - i. Wide swath & Conditioning equipment
  - ii. Row Merging Equipment
  - iii. Moisture Monitoring Equipment
  - iv. Inoculant Application Systems

### 2) Herd Growth

- a) Remote Pasture Handling
  - i. Mobile handling systems
  - ii. Crowding Tubs
  - iii. Chutes
  - iv. Next Extending Head Gates
- b) Safe Animal Handling
  - i. Mobile handling systems
  - ii. Crowding Tubs
  - iii. Squeeze Chutes
  - iv. Next Extending Head Gates
  - v. Scales/Scale heads
  - vi. Calf Catcher
- c) Animal Health and Welfare Infrastructure Upgrades
  - i. Infrastructure Improvements for Brands Approved by PCA

### 3) Marketing and Promotion

- a) Federal Processing Improvement Program
  - i. Infrastructure Upgrades to meet CETA, Asian Market Requirements

- b) Provincial Processing Improvement Program
  - i. Infrastructure Improvements to Meet Regulatory Requirements
  - ii. Infrastructure Improvements to Increase Market Penetration
- c) International Trade Certification Transition Program
  - i. CFIA Certification to Meet Trade Regulatory Requirements

**4) Traceability Implementation**

- a) Industry Traceability Coordination and Education
  - i. Maritime traceability Coordination
  - ii. Stakeholder Education/Training

**5) Traceability Technology Program**

- a) Readers (hardware/Software)
- b) Software

**6) Farm Management**

- a) Electronic Farm Modernization Program
- b) Cost of Production Model Development
- c) Industry Financial Benchmarking Program
- d) Coordinated Marketing Club Pilot Project
- e) Price Insurance

## Francis Farm Receives TESA by Gina Teel

David and Brett Francis of the *David Francis Farm* were the proud recipients of the Canadian Cattlemen’s Environmental Stewardship Award handed out during the Awards Dinner of the Canadian Beef Industry Conference in Calgary Alberta in August ,2017.

Already known for harsh and dramatic winter storms that can deliver high winds and heavy snowfall, PEI can experience unpredictable and extreme weather events year-round, which appears to be the new norm in the Atlantic provinces in general. With PEI’s extremely sandy soils hugely susceptible to wind and water erosion, farming here demands soil conservation and sustainable agriculture practices. Along with high risk weather events, environmental regulations on the island are increasingly restrictive and challenging for producers to meet. More than ever, land stewardship is a must on the island for a farm to be viable for the long-term.

It is fitting, then, that the David Francis Farm of Lady Fane is the PEI Cattle Producers Association nomination for the 2017 The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA). The designated Century Farm with roots stretching back to 1844 is focused on the future. The farm utilizes modern technology to ensure healthy soils thus a sustainable farm for generations to come while also meeting and in some instances exceeding strict environmental regulations.



Owners David and Vicki Francis have been farming for 36 years, along with their five children. Recently, their son, Brett, joined the potato and beef operation. Together, representing the sixth and seventh generation of farmers on this land, father and son work toward continual improvement of the farm’s recognized land stewardship practices. In 2017, the David Francis Farm received the Gilbert R. Clements Award, a provincial award presented annually to a farm that is economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible in the production and/or marketing of high quality food from a sustainable system. In 2014, the farm received the PEI Soil and Crop Improvement Association Soil Conservationist of the year Award – Cash Crop Division, which recognizes practices that conserve or protect soil and water resources.

These awards acknowledge decades of land stewardship efforts and investments. In 1991 the farm became one of the first operations in PEI to install an integrated soil conservation system including grassed waterways, terraces and berms. These systems help to filter run-off and allow production to occur on gradually sloped land. All measures reduce soil erosion and help safeguard the health of the adjacent streams and wetlands and reduce erosion potential and damage to farmland caused by sudden rain events and high-risk weather events.

The farm has implemented a specialized rotational crop system, growing barley, oats, corn and hay, to maintain productive soils. They’ve implemented a rotational grazing system, which has netted positive results in weight gain and herd health for their 80 cow-calf beef operation, comprised of purebred Charolais and commercial cattle. Composted manure is applied to a portion of land each year, improving organic matter which in turn greatly improves the water-holding capacity and nutrient levels in soils. To help mitigate wind and water erosion of topsoil, the farm protects post-harvest bare potato fields with cover crops or bale busting hay.

David and Brett are active participants in PEI’s Environmental Farm Plan and Alternative Land Use Services program and advocates of sustainable agriculture practices, sharing their knowledge with other island farms and the public.

The David Francis Farm has the added distinction of being the first nominee from the Atlantic region to vie for the CCA’s national TESA award, demonstrating that environmental stewardship is inherent in beef production across this country no matter regional differences in soil, water and climate conditions.

## **Agriculture Livestock Enhancement Program - Beef 2017 / 2018**

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The Livestock Development program supports innovations in the use of genetics to produce seedstock, feeder calves and finished cattle for branding initiatives. Cost effective feeding strategies are important attributes of sustainable beef production. Branding programs require that animals under thirty months of age be adequately finished and meet the required grade and carcass weight. Efficient handling (race/pen/chute) and weighing systems allow safe animal handling to collect production and traceability data.

**Beef producers in good standing with the PEI Cattle Producers Inc. are eligible for funding assistance if they have:  
Currently registered with the PEICP, attended a VBP course, a valid Premise ID, paid their Deadstock Coverage**

### **What funding assistance is available?**

#### **A. Genetic Innovations**

##### **Seed stock evaluation- bulls: \$50 - \$600**

- Consignors of test station bulls will be eligible for \$600 for each animal to encourage evaluation of seedstock for residual feed intake (RFI),
- Bulls and heifers on home test will be eligible for a \$50 incentive to identify genetic potential using DNA evaluation or ultrasound and an extra \$100 for full bull breeding soundness exams which includes semen testing.
- Mature bulls will be eligible for a \$100 incentive for a full breeding soundness exam.

##### **Purebred heifers (replacement or purchase) \$200-\$250:**

- for a heifer confirmed pregnant to calve in the 2017/18 fiscal year, registered in the name of the applicant and have at least three production or carcass EPD's above breed average.
- Heifers with above average genetic evaluation scores for marbling or ribeye size or tenderness will be eligible for an extra \$50 incentive.

##### **Premium Sires \$200-\$650**

- Purchased **purebred bulls** will be eligible for an incentive:
- \$200 for bulls that are physically and structurally sound for breeding (vet checked), have an adjusted yearling weight of 950 lbs and registered (proof of ownership/purchase) in the name of the applicant. Bulls must have at least three production or carcass EPD's above breed average.
- Additional incentives for bulls with: above average DNA evaluation for marbling or ribeye size or tenderness; bulls that have completed an ultrasound test; evaluated bulls with a negative RFI (higher efficiency)

##### **Purchased F1 Hybrid bulls will be eligible for an incentive of \$150-\$550:**

- \$150 for bulls that are physically and structurally sound (vet checked), have an adjusted yearling weight of 950 lbs
- Additional incentive for: Evaluated bulls with at least average DNA evaluation scores for marbling or ribeye size or tenderness will be eligible for an extra \$100; Bulls that meet the required criteria under an ultrasound test
- Evaluated bulls with a negative RFI (higher efficiency)

#### **B. Feed Efficiency**

- Incentive of \$50/herd for documented (birth certificates) source and Age-Verification
- Vitamin E assistance of \$8/hd for each finished animal which qualifies for PEI branding incentives (payable once per year).
- Funding \$10/double bolus mineral and /or 75% of cost of injectable trace mineral
- Funding 50% of livestock scales and to a maximum of \$2500
- Funding 50% of livestock handling systems to a maximum of \$3500
- Applications can be found following the link in the PEICP's website/ Programs tab/ Agriculture Livestock Enhancement Program - Beef

**A Friendly Reminder; All applications must be completed by February 28, 2018.**