INCREASE TO THE CANADIAN BEEF CATTLE CHECK-OFF

Canadian beef producers continue to support research, market development and promotion for Canadian beef and cattle through the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off.

To achieve the objectives of the National Beef Strategy, the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off increased from $1 to $2.50 per head on April 1, 2018. This increase will ensure support of the industry’s long-term vision of a dynamic and profitable Canadian industry with sustainable beef demand, competitiveness, productivity and connectivity.

This increase was supported by Alberta’s beef producers in every zone at the Alberta Beef Producers 2015 Fall Meetings. The increase to the national check-off, along with the $2 provincial check-off, will bring your total check-off per head to $4.50.

The Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off delivers measurable value to Canadian beef producers, bringing $14 in benefits for every $1 producers invest through research, market development and promotion initiatives across the country.

The Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off funds the following areas:

**Beef Cattle Research Council**

The National Beef Strategy is about setting the Canadian beef industry up to be more profitable, to grow, and to continue to produce some of the world’s finest beef. The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) works on all the Strategy’s pillars – Productivity, Beef Demand, Connectivity and Competitiveness.

Increased research funding from the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off will enable:

- Continued investment in priority research programming
- Strategic investment in priority areas research capacity
- Research surveillance networks
- Domestic and international research liaison
- National/regional producer network extension support
- Ongoing delivery of the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program

**Canada Beef**

The National Beef Strategy is about positioning the Canadian beef industry for greater profitability, growth and continued production of a high-quality beef product of choice in the world. It is under the Demand Pillar of the National Beef Strategy where Canada Beef operates and brings value to producers.

Canada Beef will leverage dollars from the increase of the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off to strengthen existing programs and build strong demand into the future by:

- Capturing high growth market segments
- Expanding programs with retail and foodservice partners with regional and national reach
- Protecting and growing Canadian beef in export markets
- Doubling the business generated by the Canadian Beef Centre of Excellence

**Issues Management**

The purpose of the National Beef Strategy is to position the Canadian beef industry for greater profitability, growth and continued production of a high-quality beef product of choice in the world. Demand for high quality protein is expected to continue to grow in most developing nations. The majority of market access once impacted by BSE is now normalized, and significant new trade agreements are coming into effect, providing new opportunities for Canada’s beef industry to seize upon.

The goals of the Issues Management program are:

- To increase public confidence, and enhance the credibility, reputation, and trust in the Canadian beef industry, thereby increasing overall demand for beef in Canada and long-term sustainability for beef producers; and
- To develop stronger relationships and connectivity among industry partners and organizations to manage issues more efficiently and effectively.
YOUR RETURN ON INVESTMENT

For the past four years, Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) has tried our best to discuss with producers the need for increased producer funding to keep our industry competitive, and we have asked grassroots producers at our fall meetings whether they support increased industry funding. This year, we are seeing the implementation of the direction we received from producers at nearly all of our 2015 fall meetings. An increase in the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off, often called the national check-off, from $1 to $2.50 per head came into effect in Alberta on April 1, 2018. ABP has also submitted a formal request to the Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council to conduct a plebiscite of cattle and beef producers on the matter of making the $2 per head provincial service charge non-refundable after eight years of a refundable service charge.

The first page of this newsletter features an article on the increase in the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off. The article explains the need for the check-off increase to achieve the objectives of the National Beef Strategy and notes that the check-off provides $14 in benefits to producers for every $1 that producers invest. The article also includes information from Canada Beef, the Beef Cattle Research Council, and the Issues Management team about how the check-off will be invested and the benefits provided for producers by the investments in research, market development, promotion, and issues management.

Ever since the $2 provincial service charge was made refundable in 2010, we have heard from grassroots producers that we should be pursuing a return to a non-refundable service charge. The 2009 decision to make the service charge refundable was not made by producers and we heard from many producers that the approximately $2.4 million taken in refunds each year could provide greater benefits for more producers if it was invested in broad industry initiatives. After amendments to the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act and reaching an agreement with the Alberta Cattlemen’s Association (ACFA), ABP hopes to give producers the right to make this decision in a plebiscite this fall.

While we have heard producer support for the national check-off increase and a non-refundable provincial service charge, we also hear producers ask two reasonable questions. How are we going to invest the money that will come from the national check-off increase and the retained refund revenue, and what benefits will producers and the industry derive from these investments? Producers quite appropriately want to know what their return on investment (ROI) will be from the additional check-off payments. These are legitimate questions and ABP will be devoting a great deal of effort toward answering them this year, beginning with this newsletter.

The article on the first page addresses the ROI from the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off increase so my article will focus on the ROI from the provincial service charge. Even with the significant loss of revenue from service charge refunds, ABP has been able to be a strong and effective voice for the cattle and beef producers in Alberta. We continue to work on the government relations, policy, research, production, communications, market development, animal health and welfare, and environmental issues that can affect the sustainability and competitiveness of cattle and beef producers.

Close to 40 percent of our budget supports the critically important trade advocacy and national policy work of the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association that has brought our industry huge benefits on mCOOL, CPTPP, NAFTA, and CETA. Our work at ABP has focused on producers retaining access to the land and water resources of this province, addressing consumer perceptions about beef, continued on page 7
INDUSTRY FUNDING MATTERS: THE CASE FOR RESEARCH

What is research?
Research is defined by dictionary.com as “the diligent systematic investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories, applications, etc.” In the context of the beef industry, this means finding or refining management practices, technologies, and innovations to improve profits and competitiveness, inform policy and regulation, and strengthen public confidence.

What effect does research have at the farm level?
When research projects are first initiated it can sometimes be difficult to gauge the effect at the farm level. Often, this is part of the reason for doing research in the first place. If questions already had answers, we wouldn’t need to do more research.

Think about how vaccination and herd health programs have evolved over the years, the contribution of reproductive technologies (ultrasound pregnancy checking, A.I., embryo transfer), new varieties of forage crops like alfalfa, hybrid bromegrass, or saffoin, low heat unit corn allowing it to grow in areas where it was previously impossible – all of these things and more were the result of years of research.

As the value chain is all connected, research that benefits one sector has trickle down benefits to the others. Research into beef quality and food safety primarily benefits the packs and retailers, but product improvements means they can pay more for cattle with those desired product attributes. Improved efficiency and health at the feedlot level means feedlots can afford to pay a little more for calves at the auction market. If scientific information is not available when policy makers are looking to reform or create regulations, there is a greater chance that these regulations may add unnecessary costs or negatively affect competitiveness.

The bottom line is that research improves your bottom line.

Why is research so expensive?
A large part of research budgets is comprised of the personnel working on the projects. Good people need to be compensated appropriately for their work, or they will find another career. Large animal research is also relatively more expensive due to the initial purchase price of the animals and the time it takes to gather enough data to draw justifiable conclusions. For example, one year of grazing data is generally not enough for a strong conclusion due to environmental impacts from year to year. If you are following the effects of a specific treatment from one generation of cattle to the next, this takes significantly longer than it would with mice, as cattle have a longer generation interval and fewer offspring each pregnancy. Specialized laboratory equipment and training to effectively run that equipment is also an added cost.

When can I see results?
Research is a long-term proposition. Investments made today drive opportunities that will carry the industry forward in subsequent years. Even though immediate results may not be seen, the benefits are realized as innovations mature. Remember, Rome wasn’t built in a day. The foundational research needs to be solid and promising before we can look at adapting those results for on-farm use, and that adaptation needs to be evaluated for benefits and practicality before it will be adopted.

How can research strengthen public trust?
While demonstrating shared values is a proven method of building trust, we also need valid data to back up our statements and positions. This provides credibility and belief that what we say is true and validated by the current state of knowledge.

What is the return on investment in research?
An independent study evaluating the economic benefits from the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off shows that for every producer dollar invested, an additional $27.50 in benefits. This high rate of return was historically underfunded and that applied research tools are directly available to producers.

Why does industry investment in research matter?
Government budgets are tight. Governments are increasingly looking towards industry to determine whether certain avenues of research are viewed as valuable and worthwhile by the end users. This also applies to maintaining research capacity and key infrastructure. We can demonstrate our support of various research programs through investing check-off dollars. Often this results in a higher level of total investment than we would be able to create on our own. Leveraging government or other funding sources means that our limited industry dollars stretch further. ABP research investments on individual projects have historically averaged about a 5:1 leverage ($5 from other sources for each ABP dollar invested), and in certain areas we have reached a 20:1 leverage ratio ($20 from other sources for each ABP dollar invested).

If industry is not willing to invest in ourselves, why should governments or other funders invest in us?
MARKETING SUMMER 2018

We have been working hard over that last couple months to finalize our venues for the upcoming 2018 summer campaign. We have negotiated contracts and plan to attend:

- Calgary Stampede – ABP will have a major presence in Cattle Trail as well as the eight super screen locations in the park, and our Alberta Beef commercial will play in the Nutrien Western Event Centre.
- Edmonton Northlands – ABP will have exposure with the following events:
  - Thoroughbred Racing, including Canadian Derby
  - The 28th Annual Commonwealth Agriculture Conference
  - K-Days
  - Farmfair International
  - BeefTech keynote sponsor
  - Farmfair International Reception – Alberta Beef menu sponsor
  - Edmonton EXPO Centre video exposure on location screens throughout summer events
  - Big Valley Jamboree, Camrose – Country music festival that attracts more than 90,000 patrons over four days.
  - Country Thunder, Calgary – Country music festival that attracts more than 60,000 patrons over three days.
  - Christmas in November – A culinary experience hosting 1,700 plus audience in Jasper. At the time of writing this column we are working to partner with a celebrity chef to represent Alberta Beef at the event.

We are also looking at a major summer event in Medicine Hat, as well as a folk festival in Grande Prairie.

All the major events in the campaign will include a 30 second video. Our first video called Kitchen was played throughout the summer of 2017. We will be releasing Cheese, our second video, and the two will be in rotation at our upcoming events. The Kitchen video can be found on AllfortheBeef.ca and once Cheese has debuted, it will be available there as well. Depending on the event other assets will also be included. Social media will be utilized as we make our way from one event to the next to keep the conversations going.

We will continue to support many other sponsorship opportunities that come our way. These requests can range from silent auction items to financial and in-kind support.

One particularly rewarding sponsorship was working with Dr. Sangita Sharma and Cargill to provide a beef meal for two of Edmonton’s shelters for the less fortunate. That was followed by a partnership with Elanco and Cargill to do the same in Calgary. We are in the process of arranging future opportunities and ABP is excited to work with the groups involved to provide beef meals in 2018.

As I mentioned in January, the ABP Marketing and Education department is also responsible for Beef in the Classroom (BITC) which takes place in Calgary and area and around Edmonton, reaching grades eight through 12. The program currently doesn’t allow us to reach out to schools across the province due mostly to manpower and other costs associated with the program. We have decided that it would be prudent to update the BITC program at this time. Our plan is to have new materials available for the fall 2018 school year. The first phase of the education revamp will focus on the course Foods 2100. All materials needed will be provided to the teachers who wish to embrace the resources.

Phase two, which is planned for 2019, will include revamping the kindergarten to grade six resources. We have discussed a phase three which would target science courses in either junior or senior high schools and would revolve around sustainability and responsible beef production. As Alberta Education rolls out new curriculum over the next few years, we will have a better opportunity to determine where we best fit in.
At a fall producer meeting last year there was a discussion about the potential for Alberta Beef in the Chinese market. What about the existing competitors already servicing the market, and Canada’s ability to compete at all levels, including our grading system?

Food standards and consumer expectations change as consumers change. This is an ongoing process and it should be on producer’s minds that cattle production will differ in the future. We expect our own products to progress with improvements in farm equipment, crop seed, and farm management. Beef genetics continue to improve, and technology is driving the industry.

The Chinese market is the world’s second largest with a population of 1.4 billion people compared to global population projections at 7.55 billion. GDP continues to increase gaining 6.9 percent last year compared to Canada’s annual 1.7 percent.

The Chinese economic expansion includes increases in personal product purchases, such as more meat and fish. Another area of expansion is technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems using social media to understand purchasing trends and build consumer decision making profiles. Online data from millions of people can be used to create algorithms or formulas to understand purchasing decisions and to help individuals make choices.

Improved computer systems in the beef sector’s EPDs Biometric Open Language Tools (BOLT) process runs genetic algorithms in 24 minutes, compared to 24 hours in previous versions, to help breeders make on-going genetic selection choices for livestock.

The AI market in agriculture was evaluated at being worth about $US 432 million in 2016 and projected at $US 2.6 billion by 2025. This includes precision farming, livestock monitoring, use of drones and agriculture robots such as self-driving tractors, crop harvesting, spraying and crop weeding. Even now, farmers in New Zealand and Ireland are using drones for herding livestock in rough terrain.

JBS Foods in New Zealand and Australia use x-rays and CT scans connected to AI driven robot rotary knives to determine optimal carcass meat cuts, and sorts cuts for weighing, packaging and shipping. This is all done at normal line speeds. Computerized algorithms continuously upgrade their information and make process changes steadily improving the system efficiencies.

Chinese markets are looking for more protein foods with some being produced at home and some being imported. China presently is the fourth largest beef producer in the world with about 11 percent of global production. This compares to the U.S. at 20 percent, Brazil at 16 percent, and Canada under two percent.

China imports 500,000 tonnes of beef per year with about 27 percent from Uruguay, 11 percent from

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## Exclusive Offers for Alberta Beef Producers

### From UFA's Preferred Partners

**Visit any UFA Farm & Ranch Supply store for savings this season.**

**APRIL 1 TO JUNE 30, 2018**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Product Description</th>
<th>Discount Details</th>
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| Stockmans Mix & Cattlemans Mix Forage Seed 25kg | $15 OFF* Stockmans 482980 Reg. $256.50 SALE $241.50  
Cattlemans 483024 Reg. $248.00 SALE $233.00 |
| Priefert Calf Table                  | $200 OFF* 1107108 Reg. $1,799.00, SALE $1,599.99 |
| GardStar Insecticide Ear Tag 25pk    | $2.00 OFF* 53532 Reg. $28.99, SALE $26.99 |

*In-stock quantities. No rain checks. Check online or ask in-store for availability. Discounts apply to regular-priced merchandise only. Salespersons please enter promo code ABP2018. © 2018 UFA Co-operative Ltd. All rights reserved. All other products are registered trademarks of their respective companies.
RETURN ON INVESTMENT
continued from page 2

building public trust, and maintaining a competitive regulatory framework in which producers can operate. Not all of our work produces direct and immediate financial benefits for producers, but it is important for the long term economic viability of their operations.

While the loss of service charge revenue through refunds has not hurt our ability to be effective advocates for producers, it has greatly reduced our ability to make large investments in research and market development initiatives that would generate substantial returns for producers. If the service charge is made non-refundable, it is our intention to commit most of the retained refund revenue to the Alberta Beef Industry Development Fund (ABIDF), a fund that would support research and technology transfer, market development, education, and industry collaboration activities in Alberta. We have been working with ACFA on the terms of reference for the ABIDF and we believe this fund will foster a new era of collaboration and cooperation between key industry partners. We will work together to make strategic investments of producer check-off dollars that will create a substantial ROI for producers, and make the Alberta beef industry more competitive, profitable, and sustainable. 

You can have a more
SECURE FINANCIAL FUTURE

What would you do if an injury or sickness prevented you from working?
How would you pay your bills?

Ranchers and farmers from across Canada have put their trust in La Capitale to provide affordable insurance solutions to protect their business. Our customized income replacement plans provide first day benefits and are paid to you in full, regardless of any other benefits you receive.

With La Capitale your income is protected:

- 24 hours a day
- 7 days a week
- On or off the job
- Anywhere in North America

To find out more about our individual income protection, including our Return of Premium, contact us at 780 438-2420 and we'll come see you at your convenience.

TECHNOLOGY DRIVING THE BEEF SECTOR
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Brazil and nine percent from Argentina. Australia and New Zealand have Free Trade Agreements and supply about 48 percent. Chinese consumers would rather cuts like beef brisket than fattier, marbled cuts, although recently there has been some increase in value cut purchases. China also bans beef produced with synthetic hormone growth promotants and beta-agonists.

As recently as 2016, China has developed a $31 million beef cloning centre in northern China using imported beef livestock. Starting at 100,000 clones per year, they’re planning to expand to one million. This process uses AI algorithms to make cloning selection decisions.

As their local meat industry expands they’re involving more technologies such as PACC (Palatability Assurance Critical Control Points), online-detection systems, automatic grading and active packaging. Each is an AI controlled process using data management programming.

Food scientists also continue to look for substitute products made with plant proteins that proximate current existing foods. AI technology helps determine flavours, textures and colours that potential customers would like to have as part of their diets. People in China are changing, tastes are changing, and more food choices are available at competitive prices.

The Canadian beef value chain will need to realize the technology at hand. Investment and employment in agriculture over the next few years will probably be focused on technology, so producers will need to be on board with advancements to progress their industry.
ATTENTION YOUNG GUNS:
BEEF AND THE ENVIRONMENT
CONTEST SUBMISSIONS DUE JUNE 1

Are you between the ages of eight and 21, and involved in Beef 4-H, junior cattle shows or beef production? This is your opportunity to win one of three prizes in the ABP Young Guns Contest. This year we want to know what connects you to the land in Alberta where we produce the best beef in the world! We want to hear about beef production and the environment – the land, water and air, conservation and stewardship. An entry may be submitted as an essay, video, advertisement, presentation, blog post, press release or any other form of communication.

Be creative. Three prizes available:

1st Place - $1,000
2nd Place - $500
3rd Place - $250

Send your entry form, available on the albertabeef.org homepage, and contest submission to:

Katelyn Laverdure
Communications Manager
Alberta Beef Producers
165, 6815 8 Street NE
Calgary, AB T2E 7H7
E-mail: katelynl@albertabeef.org

We must receive your entry by midnight, June 1, 2018 to be eligible to win. The winners will be determined by a panel of judges at the Alberta Beef Producers Semi Annual Meeting in June and will be contacted by June 22, 2018.

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ABP ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD
CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) is seeking nominations for the 2019 Environmental Stewardship Award (ESA).

The ESA recognizes cattle producers whose natural resource stewardship practices contribute to the environment and enhance productivity and profitability.

We are asking producers to take this opportunity to share the unique environmental practices employed on their operation and to present the positive story about cattle producers’ contribution to the environment.

Nomination forms are available on the ABP website at albertabeef.org/page/environment, from the ABP office or from your local delegate.

All cattle producers are encouraged to either enter or nominate another producer who is taking strides towards sound environmental production practices.

A team of judges made up of ABP delegates, the 2018 ESA winner and an industry associate will review the submissions and tour the nominated ranching operations. Each applicant will be scored on predetermined criteria unique to the practices they implement in their business.

The winner will receive a commemorative gate sign, a video highlighting their ranching operation and a paid trip to the ABP Annual General Meeting in Calgary, where the award will be presented at a formal banquet. The competition is open to all cattle producers. Deadline for nominations is July 15, 2018 and the winner will be announced December 2018.