

And The Winner Is...

Congratulations to Gordon Jorgensen of Pugwash, the grand prize winner of \$3,000 in our lottery. Winners of \$200 in Atlantic Tender Classic Beef were Stephen Lyons, Glenwood, Donald A. MacLellan, Antigonish and Bill Messervey, Westville. The NSCA board would like to thank all who bought tickets for this lottery, as well as those who took the time to sell tickets. Fund-raising is necessary to ensure the continued financial viability of the organization.

Thank You

The NSCA would like to thank all those individual producers and businesses who have collected and/or remitted check-off funds to the association. Your efforts support the important work done on behalf of your industry both provincially and nationally.

N.S.C.A. Board of Directors

To follow is the newly elected board of directors of the Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association for 2003/04:

*Charles MacKenzie (President) - Antigonish / 863-5602
* Jim Bremner (Vice-President) - Hants / 798-8037
*Boyd Crouse - South Shore / 634-3468
*Arnold LeBlanc - Cumberland / 667-9383

Mike Horsnell - Western Annapolis Valley
Larry Weatherby - Central
Kevin MacNeil - Cape Breton/Richmond
Phil Franey - Western Annapolis
Larry Ward - Central
Ron Wells - Cumberland
David Oulton - Hants
Percy McQuinn - South West Nova
George Smith - Pictou
Bill Scott - Pictou
David VanZutphen - Dairy Representative

*Members of the Executive Committee

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Good news for Nova Scotia producers!

The Atlantic Beef Producers Co-operative Ltd. has received permission from the N.S. Securities Commission to be excluded from further financial prospectus in NS. The 10-page offering memorandum that was submitted by the Co-operatives lawyers was accepted. That means we do not have to have a lawyer prepare further documents which would have taken considerable time and expense. (This type of work is often a 40-page submission by a lawyer.) The bottom line is that the shares of the Co-operative may now be legally offered for sale to producers in Nova Scotia.

These legal formalities have taken some time. Meanwhile, work is also continuing to get all the finances in place from other funding partners before asking producers to buy "hook" shares. We also want to line up and have signed purchase contracts with both foodservice and retail partners before asking producers to buy hooks that would allow them to ship cattle to the plant. Each of these companies have to look at how the beef fits into their marketing and merchandising plan.

Meanwhile, producers are still signing Membership Waiting forms, estimating the number of cattle they will commit to the plant and paying the \$100 for their membership in the co-operative. This form can be obtained from Joan Perrin at (902) 838-8441 or by calling Arnold LeBlanc at (902) 667-9383.

Arnold LeBlanc has done presentations on the co-operative to Cumberland County Cattlemen, at the Nova Scotia Cattlemen's AGM and at the Nappan Research Station meeting. John Colwill presented the co-operative plan to producers in the Annapolis Valley and Pictou/Antigonish Counties. Estimated cattle numbers have been higher than expected. We are optimistic the plant will move forward.

By interim board members Charlie MacKenzie and Arnold LeBlanc

Call To Action

continued from page 3

to us unless we know how many animals have been checked off going to the Island. NSCA, along with our New Brunswick counterparts, are working with PEICA to find a permanent solution to this problem. In the meantime, if you have been paying that \$2.00 check-off to PEI producers we ask you to call the NSCA office and give us the total number so that we can request the money back from PEICA. We do not need any other information and you will not be asked to provide sales data – just the number of calves. This will let us get the check-off you have already paid back from PEICA and also ensure that you get credit for supporting your industry and association.



The NSCA is pleased to acknowledge the funding support of the N.S. Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Agri-futures Program in the production of this newsletter.



March Issue 2003

Apathy doesn't kill, but it doesn't cure either!

In the last issue of this newsletter, two important documents were circulated to over 1800 beef industry participants (mostly producers) in Nova Scotia. Members and potential members of the NSCA were asked to provide their input into what the direction and activities of their industry organization should be in the immediate future by filling in and returning a questionnaire, and to consider joining or encouraging someone else to join the NSCA. Many producers and other industry stakeholders congratulated us on going to the producers for input – on being open and willing to take both kudos and criticisms in order to better represent the interests of the industry. So what was the response? Were producers overwhelmingly positive, or negative, in their input? Simply put, the answer is neither.

The response was overwhelmingly "underwhelming" – in fact, virtually non-existent.

So, what do we take from that? Those who feel the association does not represent their views will say it shows we are on the wrong track. But when people feel strongly that someone is doing something wrong (especially in their name), the response is usually strong as well. Likewise, if people are strongly supportive of what is being done, they often will act to say so. More likely the low response rate was because producers have become apathetic – willing to sit back and let things happen – perhaps believing that they are powerless to change anything. Nothing could be further from the truth! Only through strong producer representation through strong organizations can change truly be possible, but it is definitely possible!!!

So today we ask you to think about a strong, vital industry that you admire. Now think about why they are strong and vital – do they have a united voice with which to get their messages out? Do they represent themselves through a proactive, dynamic organization that makes decision makers sit up and listen to them? Or are they sitting back waiting for good things to "just happen"? If the answers are yes, yes and no, please think again about active participation in your own producer association. Dig out that questionnaire from the last newsletter issue (or call the NSCA office for another copy), fill it in and send it to us – then you can sit back with the knowledge and satisfaction that at least your voice has been heard, and listened to. Don't let apathy be the value by which your industry is measured!

Nova Scotia Check-Off Committee Report

The Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association formed a check-off committee in the fall of 2002. This committee was struck as a direct result of the NSCA business and strategic planning process in early 2002. One of the three strategic directions the NSCA decided on was a process to stabilize long-term funding through the implementation of a fair and evenly applied mandatory check-off system.

The committee consists of three NSCA directors and a resource/information officer. The committee has met approximately nine times since the fall. The process has been one of learning and planning and has involved NSCA legal counsel (Merrick Holm), the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the national agency (Canadian Beef Cattle Research, Market Development and Promotion Agency), the provincial government (NSDAF) and the other regional provincial cattlemen's associations (PEI and NB).

The committee decided early in its mandate that it needed to fulfill the provincial associations strategic goal and attempt to comply with the needs of the national agency to implement national mandatory check-off. It was decided that the two issues could not and should not be addressed independently of each other. The committee decided on a 3-phase approach. The 3-phases consisted of: 1-Examination of existing acts and legislation provincially and federally for suitability to accomplish an enforceable check-off system, 2- Once deficiencies had been discovered, map the route necessary to effect the implementation of a provincial check-off system and enable the province to comply with the national agency, and 3- Implement the process. Phase 1 is complete, the committee has almost completed phase 2.

Results of Phase 1 are as follows:

1. The current provincial Agriculture and Marketing Act (AMA) under which the NSCA exists is not able to empower the NSCA to levy and collect from NS cattle producers. The act contains no

power of enforcement and does not provide basic definitions of transactions or indeed whom the levy should be collected from.

2. The power to levy on interprovincial (between provinces) transactions is not provided for in the AMA and cannot be. Interprovincial cattle movement can only be levied under a national scheme after federal-provincial and province to province agreements have been signed. These are being worked on.

3. Intraprovincial transactions (within provinces) are the sole purview of the province and must fall under provincial legislation. The Natural Products Marketing Act contains the necessary power to enable the NSCA to effectively and fairly implement a provincial levy; however, the NSCA does not currently reside under the powers of this act. This concept is currently being explored.

4. The necessary infrastructure to track and monitor a transaction is not currently in place. A levy cannot be collected unless some method of tracking when cattle are sold and where and by whom is implemented. This system exists in other provinces but does not exist in Nova Scotia.

5. The integrity of the national check-off system is in question unless a workable, simple solution to the preceding issues can be found.

The check-off committee is currently working diligently to provide solutions to these issues.

*Dave Oulton, Jim Bremner, Mike Horsnell
NSCA Check-Off Committee*

Check-Off Contributors

Blair Zinc – Zinc Farms
O. H. Armstrong Ltd.
Lonnie Grimm
Bruce Turner
Victor Troop
Richard Hatt & Son
W. G. Oulton & Sons
William Hewey
Annapolis County Federation
Cattle Sales
Hub Packers
Maritime Cattle Market
Neil MacKinnon
Boyd Crouse
Antigonish Abattoir
Meadow Hill Farm
(Milton Palmer)
Percy McQuinn
Keith Kinsman

A.P. Franey Farms
James MacKay
Lunenburg/Queens Federation
of Agriculture Cattle Sale
Mattie Farms
Better Beef
Hawks Hill Farm
Charles MacKenzie
Bruce Tarr
Louis O. Frank
Wells Brothers
Falmouth Village Farm
Robert McLean
Kevin Veinotte
Richard B. Allen
Mosher Farms
Birchill Farms
Brookside Abattoir
Little Dan-D-Farms

If your name is not on this list or if you did not sell cattle through one of these agents, your check-off was not received by the Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association.

Beef - Part of a healthy eating plan



The Beef Information Centre (BIC) is making it easy to use nutrition knowledge everyday in the preparation of quick and healthy meals. BIC has created a new

booklet "Beef Recipes for balanced living," that highlights lean beef as part of a nutritious and health eating plan.

All the recipes in the booklet feature beef cuts that meet the Heart and Stroke Foundation's criteria for their "Health Check' Program". The "Health Check' Program" helps Canadians make healthy food choices based on Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

The Beef Information Centre was also the proud meal sponsor of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia's Affair of the Heart Luncheon, held February 11th 2003 in Halifax, in support of the association's research and health promotion programs. Over 800 business, trade, industry, media and community professionals attended the luncheon and were treated to a scrumptious heart healthy menu including Beef Striploin Roast with Wild Mushrooms.

Free copies of "Beef Recipes for balanced living," will be available during March Nutrition Month in major grocery stores across Canada and can be ordered by calling toll free 1-888-248-2333 or from the B.I.C. website at: www.beefinfo.org.

*Janet Bryson, Communications Manager Atlantic Region
Beef Information Centre*

Country of Origin Labelling Update



U.S. cattle producers are becoming increasingly concerned about the impact on their industry of mandatory Country of Origin Labelling (COL), set to come into effect in that country in fall 2004. That's the news brought

back from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Annual Meeting by a delegation of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA). Canada's concern with mandatory COL is that U.S. retailers may stop carrying imported products altogether to cut their labelling and tracking costs. U.S. cattle producers are concerned about the tracking requirements they're going to be forced to put in place and the records they'll have to keep for two years to prove that their beef is a product of the U.S. At their

annual meeting the NCBA membership passed the following resolutions: Be it resolved that NCBA will:

- Encourage congressional hearings to investigate the impact of COOL
- Ask USDA to hold field hearings to increase awareness of COOL
- Develop educational & information strategies to inform producers about COOL
- Work with State groups to communicate the message.

NCBA supports voluntary Country of Origin Labelling, a position that is not opposed by CCA. CCA worked with the Canadian Government to prepare Canada's official comments on the interim voluntary guidelines for Country of Origin Labelling that are currently in place. Those comments were submitted by the Canadian Embassy on January 17. They can be read on the CCA website at www.cattle.ca.



In 2002 the PEI Cattlemen's Association implemented a new check-off system. Feedlot operators are charged \$4.00 on each animal sold for slaughter. In turn, when they buy those animals, they charge the cow-calf producers \$2.00. Therefore, each producer is paying the same amount. However, since many calves are sold from NS into PEI, NS producers are paying that initial \$2.00 to the PEI feedlots and the money is not coming back to the NSCA as it should.

PEICA have no record of the sale, and therefore cannot remit it back

continued on page 4