

Take a Chance:

The NSCA is holding a fundraising lottery. Tickets are \$10 each and available from any of our Board members. With only 1200 tickets printed, odds of winning are very good. First prize is a Travel Voucher valued at \$3,500 OR \$3,000 in cash. There are two early bird prizes of a \$200 gift certificate for Atlantic Tender Classic Beef. Congratulations to Steven Lyons, Glenwood, NS, winner of the first Early Bird draw. The second draw will be held on November 21st and our Grand Prize will be drawn on February 22nd, 2003. Get your tickets now!

Thank You:

The Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association would like to express sincere appreciation to Frank Berkklaar, Keith Manning and the rest of the staff of the Maritime Cattle Market for their continued support to us on so many levels. Our hats are off to you all!

Mark Your Calendars:

The Annual General Meeting of the NSCA will be held at the Howard Johnson hotel in Truro, on February 15th, 2003.

Directors Profile

To following are current directors of the Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association:

- *Charles MacKenzie (President) - Antigonish / 863-5602
- *Phil Franey (Vice-President) - Western Annapolis Valley / 538-7156
- *Boyd Crouse - South Shore / 634-3468
- *Arnold LeBlanc - Cumberland / 667-9383
- Mike Horsnell - Western Annapolis Valley
- Larry Weatherby - Central
- Kevin MacNeil - Cape Breton/Richmond
- Jim Bremner - Hants
- Larry Ward - Central
- Ron Wells - Cumberland
- David Oulton - Hants
- Percy McQuinn - South West Nova
- George Smith - Pictou
- Bill Scott (alternate) - Pictou
- Tony Zeuthoff (Dairy Representative)

*Members of the Executive Committee

Contact Information

Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association
P.O. Box 1474, Truro, NS B2N 5V2
phone 902-893-7455 fax 902-893-3397
ruth.kaiser@ns.sympatico.ca

South Carolina Tour

In mid-July 88 livestock producers from South Carolina visited the Maritimes. On July 13th they were taken on a tour through parts of Hants County where they viewed various agricultural operations including Avon Valley Greenhouses, the Davison Orchard, Sainte Famille Winery, the Oulton Farm, Mason's Apples and Howard Dill's Giant Pumpkins. Most of these operations have beef production. Finally, the group was welcomed by Jim and Frances Bremner and two of their daughters, Robin and Alyson, for a time of socializing and refreshment at the Bremner farm. Jim is the NSCA director who organized the tour for the U.S. visitors. According to Jim, his family do tours like this fairly regularly and they really enjoy it. "This was a wonderful group" he reports, "They had a great sense of humour and they shared the same interests, problems and successes as our own producers." The NSCA would like to thank Jim for acting as a beef industry ambassador on our behalf.

NSCA Industry Awareness

The new NSCA industry awareness display was featured at Exhibitions across the province this summer and fall. NSCA Office Manager Ruth Kaiser notes that at one point all ten copies of the display were in active circulation! "Producers are always keen to tell the public about their industry" says Mrs. Kaiser. "They jumped at the chance to use the new display boards and the other resource material like consumer brochures and draw prizes." Boyd Crouse of the South Shore Cattlemen's Association reported that the display worked well to get people's attention and allow producers to speak with them. Bill Scott of Pictou County set up the display at the Maritime Fall Fair. "It's not only consumers going through those barns - lots of beef producers do too" reports Mr. Scott. "It's a great place to talk to producers about the work of the NSCA and to get their suggestions and feedback on what we are doing on their behalf." The NSCA would like to thank all the producers who took the time to set up and staff these displays.



The NSCA industry awareness display set up at the Maritime Fall Fair.



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.



N.S.C.A. Action

Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association

NOVEMBER ISSUE 2002

We've Been Busy!

It's one year into the Nova Scotia Cattlemen's Association Strategic Action Plan - A good time to look at what's been done and what's still on the "to do" list. The areas of focus in the plan were organizational structure & funding, communications and market development.

Organizational improvements have included:

- Strengthening the mandate of the Executive committee to allow for quicker decision making,
- Setting up committees to develop action plans on check-off system improvements and cow-calf production systems,
- Securing funding for implementing the Strategic Plan as well as strengthening future funding and member support for the organization, and
- Developing an industry partners program to foster project specific funding opportunities.

Communications efforts have resulted in:

- Four issues of this newsletter,
- A website ready to launch in November 2002,
- Improved government relations, resulting in

- four major presentations on behalf of the industry,
- Increased coverage of the beef industry in agricultural media, and
- Production and extensive use of the NSCA industry awareness display.

Market Development activities were dominated by issues around the Atlantic Tender Beef Classic brand. Outcomes included:

- Strong representation on the Atlantic Branded Beef Management board,
- Focus of the packing plant issue as a regional issue,
- Inclusion of all three provinces as feasibility study partners,
- Commitment from all partners to development of a future grid pricing structure that works for all brand participants, and
- Recognition that both the feedlot and cow-calf sectors must be an integral part of the ATBC brand's future.

So we've done a lot, but as always, there's more to be done. We need to find the best check-off system for this province. We know what won't work, but have yet to determine exactly what will. We need to continue to develop and nurture positive relationships with media, government, other producer groups and, most importantly, our own members.

The packing plant ride has just begun and we need to continue to be part of the search for solutions that allow us to not only protect, but also grow, our industry. The only way the NSCA can do any of this is with producer support - your membership, your check-off, your ideas and your criticisms. Please participate.



Charles MacKenzie,
N.S.C.A. President



Cruelty to Animals Legislation

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) has asked cattle producers to contact their Member of Parliament and the Minister of Justice to let their views be known on the contentious "Cruelty to Animals" legislation, Bill C-15B. With the Prime Minister's decision to adjourn the current session of Parliament, the Government has the option of letting this Bill die on the Order Paper. This is an opportunity for the Government to re-write the Bill so it meets the Government's goals without inadvertently playing into the hands of animal rights activists. Animal rights activists are on record as saying if Bill C-15B passes, they'll use it to launch test cases against farmers and ranchers using legitimate animal husbandry practices.

Livestock producers care about their animals and share the desire to increase penalties for those who are deliberately cruel. But Bill C-15B goes beyond that. "It threatens our ability to provide a secure food supply to Canadians. With all the pressure currently facing livestock producers, we certainly don't need the added threat of harassing lawsuits," says CCA Manager of Environmental Affairs Peggy Strankman. Cattle producers and others who care about farming, ranching, angling, hunting and medical research are urged to write their Member of Parliament and Minister of Justice on this issue. Further information and a sample letter are available on the CCA website at www.cattle.ca or by calling provincial cattle associations.

Field Tour of Kevin Veinotte's Farm

Kevin Veinotte conducted a guided tour of his farm on the evening of August 8th. 25 local producers as well as Sean Firth, Ruminant Animal Specialist and Bill Thomas, Forage Crop Specialist, of A.D.I. attended. Mr. Veinotte pointed out many facets of his mixed farm operation in Cookville, Lunenburg County. Breeding programs, pasture species, feeding strategies, fertilization programs, flexible fencing and watering systems were all discussed. Producers directed questions to Mr. Veinotte and the specialists as the evening tour moved from various farm locations. The Veinotte farm is stressing animal productivity through forage production with minimal grain inputs, moving toward finishing cattle to market weight on a forage only diet. Thanks go to Kevin, Sean and Bill for their efforts in organizing and hosting a very successful tour.



What is different about the new plant being planned for the Maritimes?



So many people outside the Maritimes are asking – How can you build a plant? Why are you building a plant? Why do you think a small plant will work? What's different that can make a small plant successful?

Here's what producers are saying...

"We have no option. I cannot stay in the feedlot business with the costs of long haul trucking and shrink and all the associated problems such as low dress weights and dark cutters."

"Producers will really own 50% of the plant. We will share the profits and get a flow of information back. This will allow us to understand and improve the performance of our cattle and we also we will see the costs of processing."

"The retailer is investing in 50% of the plant and retail will take 50% of the cuts. This means that a retail sales force is eliminated. While we were co-operating in a small way before, with more co-ordination we save costs."

"The brand is already established and there is more consumer demand for this locally produced product than the brand can supply. That is a good position to be in. Research tells us that Atlantic consumers want to buy locally produced product. This branded beef is an award-winning product and we can do more to develop it. While the larger plants are marketing globally there is a niche for a small-specialized plant to service the local consumers. It is happening in other industries like the airlines."

"We are working to get a new price grid that in the long-term truly reflects the carcass value. The ideal situation is an equitable pricing grid structure that will allow for growth throughout the chain."

"Signed supply and purchase agreements with producers will be the norm and a critical factor to success. If the new plant did not have a continuous supply it wouldn't be efficient. We have to keep the plant going five days of the week, every week. That's the only way the beef will be able to compete with the beef in our market coming from the super plants."

"Co-op Atlantic is signing purchase agreements and that is a key in the long-term success of the plant."

"There will be even more focus on consistently high quality beef. A consumer focus is critical in light of the increased market dominance of other competitive proteins. We also compete with beef from larger more efficient beef plants. Being smaller, we can make changes easier. Keeping an eye on what the end consumer is buying and needs is important to remain competitive and profitable."

"We're co-operating more and more. From the beginning it has been a Maritime initiative. There has been unbelievably support from the entire industry and governments of all three provinces. While it may take longer, the decisions worked out are better and this gives a greater chance of future success."

By Joan Perrin, Brand Manager, Atlantic Branded Beef Management Inc.



Send us information on your beef industry activities for a future issue!

The Importance of Iron in the diet

The Beef Information Centre (BIC) recognizes the ongoing need to educate Canadians about the importance of iron rich foods and that beef is an excellent source of iron. BIC has collaborated with nutrition experts and a national Advisory Committee that includes the Ottawa-based National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) to create three new iron resources geared towards women, children and teenaged girls.



"The fact that many Canadians, especially infants, toddlers, female adolescents and adult women are at risk for iron deficiency, prompted our team of registered dietitians to develop a series of Iron Matters nutrition resources, for consumers and health professionals," says Lisa Mina, BIC's Nutrition Communications Manager. The pamphlets provide easy-to-use information on iron's function in the body, the effects of a lack of iron in the diet, new Canadian iron recommendations, and practical tips for easy ways to include iron-rich foods every day.

The pamphlets have been distributed to thousands of dietitians and physicians across Canada, to share with their patients. As well, a new 8-page reference guide for health professionals entitled "Iron For All Ages – Iron For Health", has been created. The reference covers topics such as: iron function and deficiency, groups at risk for iron deficiency, new iron recommendations, and iron-rich food choices.

Nova Scotians who wish to access the new iron resources may do so by visiting the "Nutrition and Health" section of BIC's website at www.beefinfo.org or by calling the toll free line at 1-888-248-BEEF.



By Janet Bryson, Beef Information Centre

