

PARAMOUNT

Elevate to a more valuable female.



Registered dietitian wants beef on her side

By Kylene Scott

Diana Rodgers, a registered dietitian, real food nutritionist and sustainability advocate who lives near Boston, Massachusetts, spoke at the recent Kansas Livestock Association Convention in Wichita, Kansas.

Rodgers spent 18 years living on a working farm, and now runs a clinical nutrition practice and hosts the Sustainable Dish podcast. Her most recent work is helping shift the focus away from the anti-meat narrative. In the 10 countries she's been in this year, she's seen the idea of carbon tunnel vision being played out throughout the world. She recently returned from Egypt and was astounded what she encountered.

"(I was the) only dietitian that was pushing for inclusion of animal source foods," she said. "It's amazing to see the nutrient deficiencies worldwide and just line that up with the nutrients that are available in meat, not plants, and yet you have all these people who are uneducated in livestock and in nutrition, saying that we need to eat less meat for healthier people and a healthier planet."



Diana Rodgers (Journal photo by Kylene Scott.)

Rodgers said cattle are unfairly vilified nutritionally, environmentally and ethically. She's finding her way to push back.

"My main goal is to shift young women, young urban women," Rodgers said. "These are the ones who are the reducers."

She defines reducers as those who want people to reduce their consumption of animal proteins.

"The good news is the average lifespan of a vegan—the average length of time is only three and a half months," she said. "And then they're going to become sick or have some other reason why they're going to start eating meat again and then they're going to be your biggest advocate."

Adults are allowed to do some "funky things" with their own nutrition, but Rodgers said no mother wants to jeopardize the health of her child.

"If we can get to them and let them know that kids absolutely need the nutrients in beef for cognitive development," she said. "They cannot get B12 from plant source foods and in vitro deficiency can cause permanent brain damage in children. Really, really serious stuff."

According to Rodgers, in order to get the right amount of iron into a kid they'd have to eat 10 bowls of spinach as opposed to a small piece of meat. Policy makers worldwide have "carbon tunnel vision" and people over focus on just carbon emissions and nothing else.

"They're not looking at water cycle, soil health, biodiversity, eco toxicity, workers' rights," she said. "People will say 'Oh, all the workers in the slaughterhouses-that's why I'm not eating meat.' But it's like what about the children that are picking your tomatoes in Florida? So much more human rights abuses happen in the produce industry than meat industry."

Unfortunately programs like meatless Monday or vegan Fridays in places like New York City public schools are not only taking meat off the plate for at-risk kids, but homeless ones as well.

Making decisions on what's healthy enough for school children to eat, and proclaiming meat is bad just doesn't sit well with her.

Rodgers is concerned about nutrient deficiencies across the country and worldwide, along with the influence certain "scientific" studies have on influencers and others in the health industry.

"No research has shown a direct cause between red meat and disease," she said. "Meat is also not just protein,

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Commissioner details animal health efforts

By Kylene Scott

Justin Smith, animal health commissioner for the Kansas Department of Agriculture updated attendees about the work the animal health division has been doing at the Animal Health & ID committee meeting at the recent Kansas Livestock Association Convention held in Wichita, Kansas.

Smith said animal health wise 2022 has been "pretty quiet" so far. Trichomoniasis is something that always gets attention, and this year was no different.

"Again, it's one of those diseases, unless it's on your place probably doesn't impact you a whole lot," Smith said. "But obviously if you have it, it's a huge impact for those operations."

In Kansas there were three counties that had positive trichomoniasis cases. Last year there were three bigger ranches that had a large number of cows spread out over a large area that ended up with positive cases. Smith advised to not let your guard down on trichomoniasis just because of negative tests.

High pathogenic avian influenza

Smith also discussed highly pathogenic avian influenza and the impact it can have in the agriculture industry. As of the end of November, HPAI has been the largest foreign animal disease outbreak in the world.

"Today we've surpassed the number of birds last week that had been affected. We're up to 52.5 million birds that have been affected by this disease," he said. "That doesn't count all the wildlife out there right now that are truly seeing the impact of this virus."

In years prior, avian influenza has caused a loss in the commercial flocks much like it has done in 2022, but this time around the wild bird population is taking a huge hit as well. Same with the backyard flocks.

"Iowa leads the nation, but a lot of that is because they've had three now over 5 million-head layer facilities come up positive. They had 15 million birds die in all three facilities."

Smith said with the facilities under quarantine for avian influenza, it's troubling. But the bright spot is the



Justin Smith. (Journal photo by Kylene Scott.)

control zones have been released while the facilities are still locked down.

"We've been able to release the control zone which is important in the state because then that allows us—we can show we're free of it," Smith said. "And then countries can start to trade with us. We've had country's start to embargo a lot of our poultry products and frankly those are your pet foods."

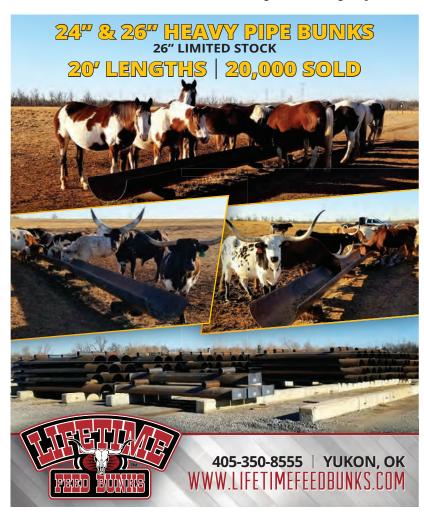
The pet food industry has been impacted the most and whenever there is a positive control zone countries shut the U.S. off for trade. Smith does expect the cases to increase because of wild bird migrations.

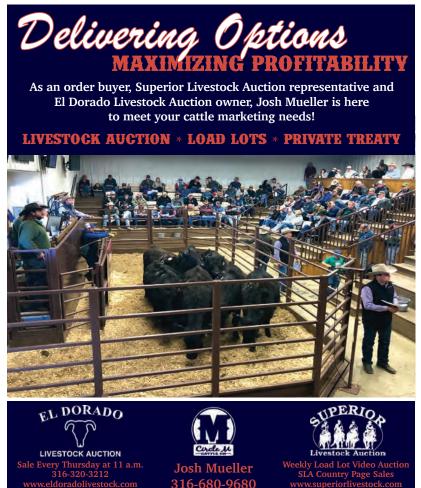
Traceability

As foreign animal disease outbreaks happen more often, traceability becomes even more important. As well the number of animals moving in and out of the state, both legally and illegally, has been increasing. Smith said the animal numbers they track are those who come into the state on a certificate of veterinary inspection, or CVI. Animal movement numbers are much higher than what they have recorded simply because in some instances paperwork isn't necessary for transport across state lines.

Part of traceability is tagging animals. KDA has a number of official ID tags available to producers through its no-cost RFID program. In 2020 KDA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture collaborated to provide ear tags at no cost to accredited veterinarians.

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Animal health

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Smith said they've slowly been working through 287,000 tags, and there is some uncertainty as to how far into the future this program will be available. To receive these free tags, reach out to your private veterinarian for placing the order.

KDA is also working to move to electronic CVI certificates and documentation. There's an app available—some cost and others don't provide the necessary information. Smith said they've been working on an app and partnered with some other states on it.

"This one is a is a CVI system that's going to be offered for free to the states (who) have built it with some money that was available to them," Smith said. "It's going to be offered for free. Can be laptop based or it gets through mobile systems as well. So there's both components there."

Smith is pleased at the app, which has been out the last six months, that Kansas has the most veterinarians in the nation using it.

Biosecurity planning

Smith said Kansas leads the nation in leveraging biosecurity planning and development. The plans are operational specific and when there's a disease event that's going to impact the industry, personnel are ahead of the game. KDA has templates available.

"There is a national template that was built through all the industries and that's what they're based off of," he said. "They're operational specific to how you do some of the things, but the information is required in the processes of development is nationally accepted and that goes a long way."

These documents, exercises and trainings help when there is a disease within Kansas or another state, and tracing of the animals is needed.

Disease investigations

KDA is involved in a number of foreign animal disease investigations every year, and Smith said it's their goal to get the data and information collected and "get out of your way."

"I think this is probably one of



our more important things we do," he said. "And our goal is to make sure that it doesn't impact anybody. And if it does impact you as far as saying, 'Hey, don't move anything.' That is the shortest amount of time that we can make it happen."

Smith has confidence in the folks at KDA simply because they continue to have discussions about the what-ifs and host a foreign animal disease exercise every fall.

When battling an outbreak, Smith wants to be the point of the spear and not the one getting speared. Smith's predecessors helped get the

planning and trainings going, and now it's starting to pay off.

"This has put us in there because we have the ability to practice this every year about what our response looks like in a foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in the state of Kansas," he said. "There's not another state in the nation that does this on an annual basis."

For more information about the KDA and the animal health operations visit agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/division-of-animal-health.

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Rodgers

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not just micronutrients, but it's the most satiating of the macronutrients—means that it fills you up."

Many parts of the world have little to no access to supplements or the variety of plants required for a plant-based diet.

"Beef wins. And just four ounces of beef is 100% of your B12," she said.

According to Rodgers, 57% of the calories on the U.S. plate are ultra-processed. As a dietician, she'd rather people get rid of more of the ultra-processed food than meat.

Ultra-processed foods tend to win if meat is vilified. They're also the ones behind companies like Beyond Meat and Impossible foods and making a lot of money for taking something and turning it into a protein product.

Rodgers is pushing for global food justice and that all people deserve access to meat.

"Just because you have access to your Whole Foods Market and your goji berries and all the perfect supplements that you can take to make a perfect vegan diet doesn't mean you get to impose that on other people that don't want to," she said.

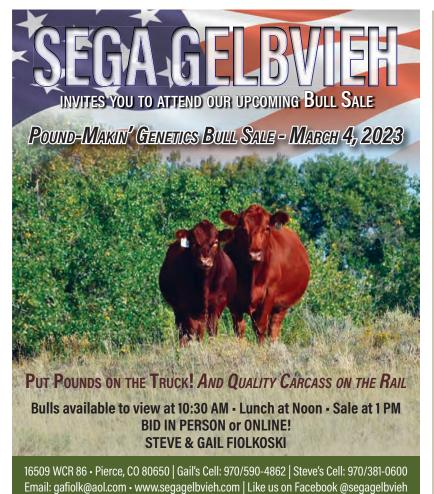
She believes it is unethical to be telling people to eat vegan.

"Meat is uniquely nutritious. There are nutrients in meat that are difficult or impossible to find in plants and they are critical for cognitive development," Rodgers said. "Fake meats don't contribute to food sovereignty and force restriction of cultural and moral imperative."

A vegan diet is a privilege that many people don't have.

"I don't really care if someone personally wants to be vegan, that's fine. I do have a little bit of a problem if they want to feed their kids that way because I do believe that children should have access to meat," she said. "That's why I think that they need to have the choice of whether or not to eat meat at schools. And they definitely should not be telling other people that they have to not eat meat because they don't like how it was raised or they don't understand."

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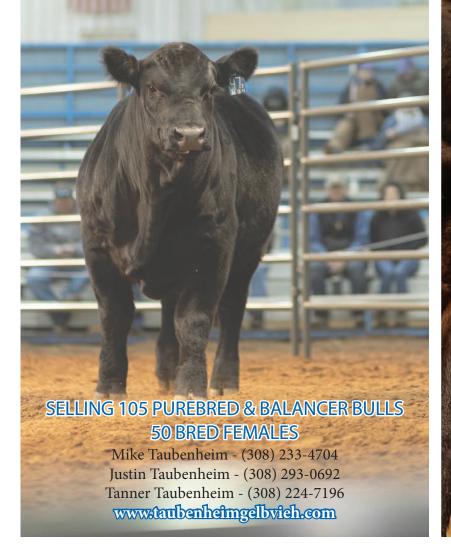
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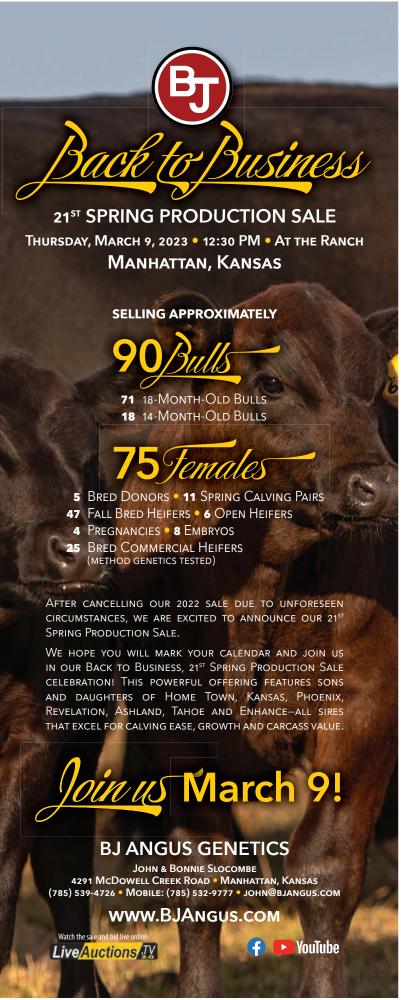


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Calcium boluses: Pick your product wisely

Look for the correct types and amounts of calcium in a bolus

After calving, cows experience a steep spike in calcium demand. Milk, including colostrum, is rich in calcium, and cows need to quickly shift their priorities to adjust for this sudden calcium outflow.

Most second- and greater-lactation cows cannot meet this new calcium demand, which may trigger clinical hypocalcemia, commonly known as milk fever, or more commonly subclinical hypocalcemia.

"Luckily, there are a number of bolus products available to help cows maintain calcium levels after calving," said Dr. Curt Vlietstra, DVM, Boehringer Ingelheim. "But it's important to pay attention to what type and the amount of calcium we're giving a cow." He said these differences can greatly affect that cow's comfort and performance.

Look closely at the ingredient list

"Calcium chloride is going to be the one that's quickly available," explained Vlietstra. "It's absorbed right out of the rumen, instead of having to go into the intestines to provide benefits. Calcium sulfate—the other form of calcium—we think of it more as the slower-acting one. Really, what that does is keep the cow's pH low, so that she can provide some additional calcium from her body."

You may see the words "acidogenic calcium salts" on the ingredient list—that simply means it is a form of calcium that lowers pH. Calcium carbonate is a much cheaper calcium option, but Vlietstra warns that it actually raises a cow's pH. Raising the pH counteracts what you're trying to do long term.

"There's research out there that shows if you supplement a cow with a form of calcium that raises her pH, over time, her blood calcium levels will actually be lower than a cow that received no calcium," Vlietstra continued. "It's important to give calcium. But then, beyond that, it's also about getting enough of the right forms of calcium without it being too much."

In addition to looking for the right forms of calcium, look at the amounts. A bolus doesn't need fillers, he said. The fast-acting calcium chloride should be about two-thirds of the bolus, and the longer-lasting calcium sulfate should be the other third.

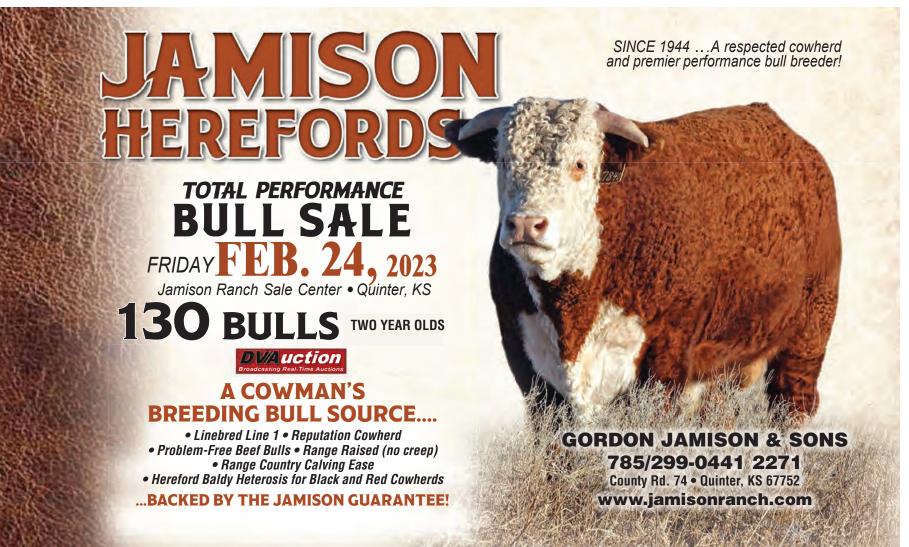
Prioritize comfort at freshening

"It's also important to look for a bolus with a fat coating to ensure the cow's comfort when dosing," Vlietstra said. An effective coating provides both lubrication while the cow is swallowing the bolus and protection. "While calcium chloride and calcium sulfate are excellent for supplementing calcium levels, they can irritate the cow's throat and stomach if not protected with a fat coating.

"It's not physically possible for a cow to ingest enough calcium in the first day after she calves," he added. "That's why we need to follow up with another bolus 12 hours later."

By reading the ingredient labels for calcium supplements, producers give their cows a better chance to live up to their lactation potential.





Beef producers: 'Get your house in order' in 2023

By Linda Geist

University of Missouri Extension

Beef producers should approach 2023 with cautious optimism—matched with resolutions of good management and investment in infrastructure, says University of Missouri Extension agriculture business specialist Wesley Tucker.

Optimistically, beef continues to be in favor with U.S. consumers, and export demand remains solid, says Tucker. However, risks of persistent drought, global trade issues, high input costs and concerns of inflation and recession all have the potential to take a bite out of profits.

For the past eight years, meat production has continued a steady growth of more supply, but, thankfully, strong demand from consumers pushed prices higher. Tucker says meat supply growth will slow and actually go down, leading to even higher prices on the horizon in 2023.

This will be the fourth consecutive year of fewer beef cows in production. Missouri lost 6% of its cow numbers

from January 2021 to January 2022, according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. U.S. numbers mirror declines in other countries.

Drought, high feed and input costs, and lingering supply chain issues will likely push this number even lower in 2023.

The 2022 drought put a bull's-eye on southwestern Missouri, the state's biggest cattle-producing region. Hay and forage supplies dwindled, pushing up prices for feed inputs.

Drought pushed already falling hay production numbers even lower. In the past 20 years, producers have devoted fewer acres to hay and more to crops. Other factors—such as supply chain slaughter capacity problems and even global issues like the Russian-Ukraine conflict and higher diesel prices—can unexpectedly affect the producer's bottom line.

During most droughts, the price of feed goes up, but prices go back to normal when conditions improve. However, input costs—equipment, diesel, fertilizer and labor—likely

won't go down anytime soon simply because the drought goes away. "If your operation is highly dependent on these inputs, profit margins may evaporate quickly despite higher receipts," Tucker says.

"Now is the time to get your house in order," he says. Tucker gives these tips to combat changing markets.

- Consider herd management practices. Is early weaning an option to reduce feed needs? Practices such as pregnancy checks, sorting into groups based on nutritional need and strategic culling will reap big dividends this winter.
- Compare hay feeders. Research by former MU Extension beef specialist Justin Sexten showed nearly double the waste with open and poly feeder rings compared to sheeted rings. Modified cone rings had far less waste.
- Invest in soil tests. Soil tests help producers spend their fertilizer dollars where they will get the greatest return. Carefully evaluate whether it makes better finan-

- cial sense to fertilize and invest in improved forages or buy supplemental feed.
- Good grass means green bucks. Consider who earns the most consuming your grass—cows or their calves? Keeping a few less cows and grazing their calves longer in times of high grain prices can reap nice rewards. "We've all heard the saying, 'Grass sells better wrapped in calf hide than cowhide or, especially, a bale of hay," Tucker says. Flexible stocking rates gives producers more options in unstable markets.
- Manage cow numbers. Put wheels under poor performers. Less is more when there is less to go around. Avoid overstocking, which limits options, especially during tighter markets.

Tucker, MU Extension beef specialist Eric Bailey and MU Extension dairy specialist Stacey Hamilton discuss ways to manage cattle during uncertain times in a series of videos at mizzou.us/ForageLivestockHour.



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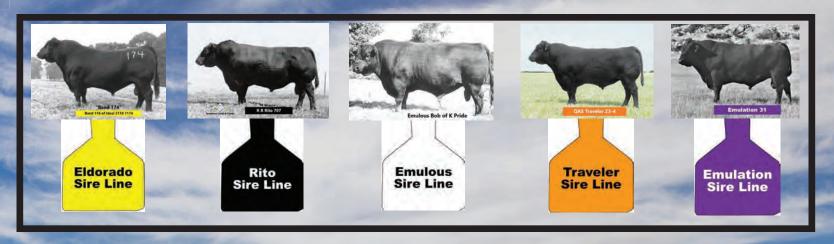
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Do you have a road map to farm or ranch succession?

By Lacey Vilhauer

We hear the phrase, "You can't take it with you," referring to money and possessions, but the same can be said for farming and ranching operations. Having a plan for farm or ranch succession is crucial to ensuring the enterprise stays in the family another generation. Coby Buck, director of strategic accounts at AgriWebb, spoke on the topic of succession on a recent webinar and explained his family's ranch, Wray Cattle Co. in eastern Colorado, has prepared for succession over the last two decades and how others can take steps to protect the legacy of their operation.

Buck said his family's ranch is comprised of 800 cow-calf pairs on 10,000 acres. His parents, who are in their 50s and 60s, own and operate Wray Ranch and have raised four children on the operation—one works fulltime on the ranch and the others have pursued outside careers.

"My parents are pushing against that time when you start to think slowing down might be better for



(Photo by Bailey Alexander.)

your health," Buck said. "When we as a family looked at succession and considered the end result that we wanted, the end result is to continue ranching and having that as a primary livelihood of our family base and continue that legacy we are very proud of."

Buck said when his family ana-

lyzed their goals and priorities, maintaining strong, loving and happy family relationships was first on their list.

"When land comes up for sale, it's largely because there was a major life event within a family or a situation where no one knew how to move forward in the family design,

as opposed to someone simply going out of business," Buck said. "By prioritizing family relationships, I think that helps minimize the biggest risk to succession and to the continuation of your operation."

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Succession

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Next, the family wanted to ensure operational economic viability and maintain a healthy livelihood for the family.

"Your legacy at the end of the day doesn't matter if the ranch can't stay in business or people cannot draw incomes from it."

It was always important to prioritize the needs of the previous generation and maintain their well-being into retirement and provide good health insurance, housing, travel and a grandparent lifestyle.

"At the end of the day, succession is effectively inheriting the assets from the previous generation," he said. "With their dedication, hard work and wherewithal, succession isn't a problem and that is something we should all remand conscious of."

Finally, Buck said his family was working toward an end result of continuing the livelihood and

legacy of ranching.

How to plan for succession

started unofficially succession planning in the mid-2000s when my siblings and I became teenagers," he explained. "We do annual check-ins, in-depth reviews every five years and after major life events, such as births, marriages, or profession changes."

Buck said he recommends planning for succession as soon as possible. It does not have to be a formalized plan, but ranchers need to be able to write down goals and create management plans.

"Looking back, in 1995, my family had four small children and my parents ran about 350 cows on 4,500 acres," Buck said. "My family could draw a livelihood off of that size operation during that time, but for the next generation it might be economically unviable to split it into quarters and have a little over 1,100 acres and 75 cows per family. If the operation can't support multiple families, it's something to take note of and look for ways to adapt."

Buck said one thing he believes is crucial is the value of education which can be formal or informal education. He encourages parents to allow each child to grow their skill sets and have access to education to open up different professions if they choose to pursue outside employment.

"My parents have this policy where every kid had to leave the operation for a minimum of five years to work for someone else, pursue an education and if they come back, they know why," Buck explained. "The ones that don't come back to the ranch are an asset as well, and it avoids the stress of having multiple families draw income from one ranch."

Buck also encourages ranchers to have an expansionary mindset and to take risks that can pay off big in the long run.

"We work very closely with our bankers to see if it's a risk we can manage over a longer time span to expand our operation to hopefully decrease the succession pressure as far as continuing to ranch."

Buck said it is important to remember ranching is not just physically intensive, it is also knowledge intensive.

"Successors have to have the desire to do the work, intimate knowledge of the industry and a deep understanding of how the property has been managed," he said. "Ideally, there should be overlap with the previous generation to build confidence, trust and transfer of operational knowledge."

Additionally, the generation that is ascending into ownership needs to understand fair is rarely equal, but fair should not be easy. The most difficult situation is when most or all of the next generation aspires to return, but then the operation cannot support everyone, which is why it is incredibly important to make plans and discuss the future of the farm or ranch.

"Without a succession plan, it is likely that you are turning an asset into a liability for the next generation," Buck said.

Lacey Vilhauer can be reached at 620-227-1871 or lvilhauer@hpj.com.





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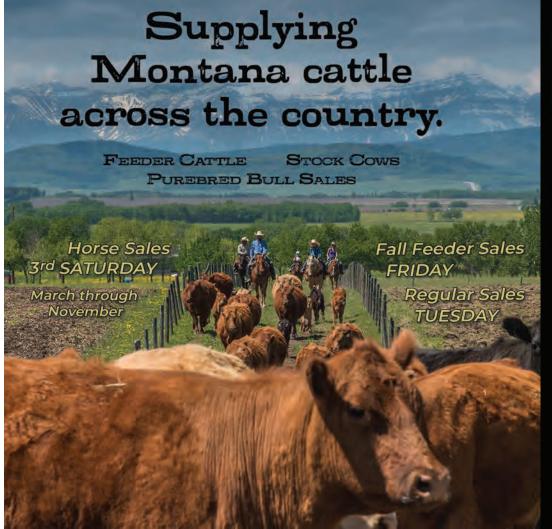


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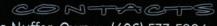


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Cattlemen offer tips to top the sale

By Kylene Scott

Four panelists offered tips on how to help make every dollar count when it comes to taking calves to market during the recent Stockmanship & Stewardship virtual event.

Mike VanMaanen, Eastern Missouri Commission Company; Trey Patterson, Padlock Ranch Company; Doug Stanton, IMI Global, a division of Where Food Comes From, Inc.; and John Hutcheson, Merck Animal Health, were on the panel moderated by Don Schiefelbein, current National Cattlemen's Beef Association president.

The cattle industry has changed over the years, and Schiefelbein tasked each panelist to detail what has stuck out to them when it comes to change.

For Stanton it was the "cow who stole Christmas" in 2003 when a bovine spongiform encephalopathy-infected animal was found in Washington state. Market access to Japan was halted after the discovery. At the time, the Japanese market was very profitable and the only way back in was a source verification program.



Don Schiefelbein (Courtesy photo.)

"And we basically had to make sure that all product that was going there was verified that it was under 20 months of age," Stanton said. "We were one of the first programs in the U.S. to do source and age verification under a process verified program with [U.S. Department of Agriculture]."

Patterson said from the changes in the systems, producers became more aware of all the value-added programs and realized it's about filling the demand for consumers. On the Padlock Ranch being in the cow-calf business can be a tough way to make a living. Costs of production, market volatility and other events pushing pricing around make ranchers find ways to tighten their belt.

"I can't tell you how important managing risks through marketing really is to profitability in a business. It's just really, really important," he said. "If you think about many of our operations, and we're no different even though we have this backgrounding program where we're carrying calves over. Most of us in this business produce calves and they're ready to be sold at a particular time of year."

He said cattle producers were able to navigate market crashes and shutdowns, but still manage those changes with diversification in the markets they produce calves for. Padlock has a Wagyu program and he can market to a certain segment compared to conventional feeder steers and heifers.

"That also creates a diversification in the timing because we're hitting that fall market with them and also gives you the opportunity to evaluate



Doug Stanton (Courtesy photo.)

retained ownership," Patterson said. "And that's something that we do all of the time. If we feel like there is value in retaining ownership to finish rather than selling we're gonna look at that."

"There are cash flow considerations, but it also allows for flexibility down the road. And the additional tools available to producers—futures and options, forward contracts, basis contracts, and long-term relationships with our customers to help manage risk on these cattle."

"That sounds pretty complicated, right?" Patterson said. "But is there anything more important than find-

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Sale tips

Continued from page 52

ing the right channels and working on this revenue side of the business?"

Patterson and his crew work on marketing all year long, and don't just wake up one day and decide they need a plan.

"We're very intentional about developing these and creating diversification," he said.

When it comes to the role of livestock markets, all sizes of operators are important. But so are relationships with producers in the area of the sale barn.

VanMaanen said for those customers who want to sell in those markets, they need to understand the care and handling of their livestock once they reach the market. Employees know how to sort and weigh for marketing purposes.

"We are good marketing people. We have lots of contacts for buyers that we will call and get them to either bid online as well as buyers in the seats," he said. "So it's very competitive."

Take homes

Patterson said cattle producers of any



John Hutcheson (Courtesy photo.)

size need to develop a marketing plan and be very intentional about their program.

"You can do that and you can leave flexibility in your system to respond to drought and those type of things," he said. "We produce some great cattle in this country, and consumers desire it. So let's figure out what fits your systems and be very intentional about developing marketing programs that have an ROI in our businesses."

VanMaanen said no matter what value-added program livestock are enrolled in or what phase you want to sell them or market them at, it's important.

"I'm a firm believer that to keep our industry healthy you need to market as many segments of those as you can in a competitive auction market



Trey Patterson (Courtesy photo.)

or a competitive bidding situation or a negotiated trade and to keep our industry healthy price wise," he said. I

For Stanton, if a producer isn't happy with what they're getting for their cattle or calves they need to do some extra legwork.

"If you feel like that you've heard about some other pricing out there. You heard about a neighbor that got better pricing on their cattle and you feel like your cattle are just as good or better than theirs, then, do a little bit of market planning," he said. "Do a little bit of research and figure out if you fit into some of those programs, and then take that initiative to move forward."

Hutcheson agreed. Producers who can develop a comprehensive health

and nutrition program will have calves that are suited for whatever stage of life they're headed to next.

"Take care of them on the ranch and don't forget that taking care of them starts from when they're bred all the way to the point that they're taken off the ranch," he said. "Again, that's the comprehensive health program and know the impacts of that, and nutrition underpins all of it."

Hutcheson stressed finding resources and people who can help improve your herd and operation.

"I always have the motto of continual improvement," he said. "As an industry, I would continue to try to improve themselves, whether that's to listen to seminars like this or panel discussions like this but find people you can talk to and bounce things off."

Finding what works is the difficult part, but Hutcheson believes it's a continual process to stay competitive.

He said, "Thinking holistically as a cattle raiser is the challenge to every-body out there so we can continually improve as this industry changes."

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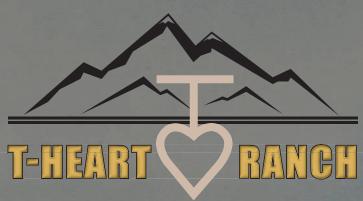
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