



WINTER
2024

The Mountaineer CATTLEMAN

A PUBLICATION OF THE WEST VIRGINIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION



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One person alone will have little impact on the future of the cattle business, but cattlemen across the state of West Virginia are standing together to make a difference. To face and conquer these issues head-on, the West Virginia Cattlemen's Association exists, in partnership with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, to protect the business climate for beef.

Members receive networking and producer education opportunities, support for the youth of the industry, and representation in both state and national houses of legislature. Join today to become a part of the effort dedicated to protecting your industry for generations to come.

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14

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5

A Message from the President

Megan J. Webb *President, WV Cattlemen's Association*

6

How the Death Tax Almost Killed My Ranch

Mark Eisele *NCBA President*

7

Legislative Updates

8

Hay Feeding Management

Bruce Loyd *WVU Extension Service Agent – Lewis County*

9

USMEF Conference Opens with Election Analysis and Focus on U.S.-Mexico Trade Relations

11

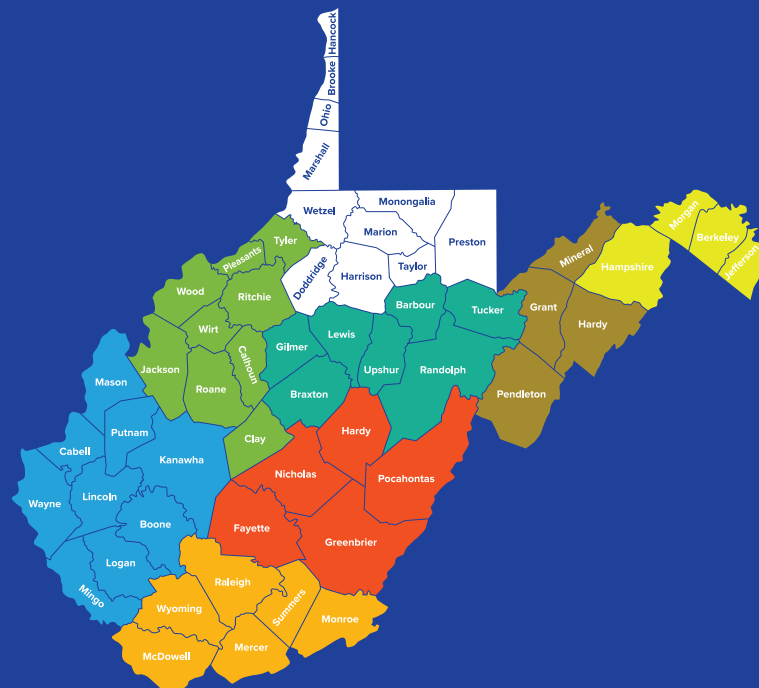
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A Message from the President of the West Virginia Cattlemen's Association

Greetings, WV Cattlemen!

It's an exciting time for the West Virginia Cattlemen's Association as we enter a new chapter together, and I'm honored to welcome each of you on this journey. Our association is steadfast in its mission to represent and advocate for all WV cattlemen, working tirelessly to ensure your voices are heard in Charleston, in collaboration with partner associations and with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association in Washington, D.C.

Under the guidance of WV's new Executive Director, Dr. Kevin Shaffer, we've already seen remarkable progress. In just a few short months, Dr. Shaffer has invigorated our membership base, secured 65 renewals and collected nearly \$7,000 in dues since mid-August—an achievement that has already surpassed our total for the 2023 fiscal year.

Across the nation, cattlemen are facing challenges such as supply chain constraints, rising costs of production and environmental factors. Shifts in consumer preferences and market dynamics further complicate this landscape, and West Virginia is not exempt from these issues. Here in our state, we've endured drought and have seen production costs continue to rise. Through all of this, WV cattlemen have demonstrated resilience and unity, pushing forward with a commitment to strengthen our livelihoods and secure the future of agriculture in our mountain state.

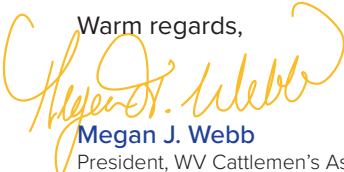
The WV Cattlemen's Association believes that we do our best work together. That's why we foster open conversations around these challenges, identify support needs and strive for meaningful solutions. We are honored to collaborate with the WV Farm Bureau, an organization that embraces the motto, "We pull the most when we pull together."

Additionally, we are thrilled to announce our new partnership with the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association, which will allow us to deliver a consistent, quarterly magazine to our members. These magazines will highlight member stories, board activities, valuable industry resources and educational content, keeping you informed and connected with our association.

As your president, appointed this past April, I'm honored to serve you for the next year and a half. As we look forward to the new year, I am excited to share that we will be unveiling a revised mission and vision that reflects our commitment to a bright future for WV cattlemen.

If you're not already following us on social media, join us at WV Cattlemen's Facebook page and share your thoughts or contact me by email mjwbeef@gmail.com or cell 304-790-2615.

Your voice is integral to our association, and together, we can ensure a prosperous future for West Virginia's cattle industry and for generations to come.

Warm regards,

Megan J. Webb
President, WV Cattlemen's Association





How the Death Tax Almost Killed My Ranch

Mark Eisele NCBA President

My path in the cattle industry looks different from many. Growing up, I always knew I wanted to be a rancher. My family had a ranch in Wyoming, but there was limited opportunity to take on that operation. I knew that if I truly wanted this life, I would need to build a ranch of my own.

As a teenager, I baled hay and worked on local ranches, and eventually I became a hired hand at the historic King Ranch in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The King Ranch was established in 1911 as a sheep operation but transitioned to cattle in the 1960s. I loved the ranch; I loved working with the cattle, and I could think of no better way to make a living than by being a rancher.

As an employee, I grew close with the owners Ann and Jerry King. The Kings had no heir to pass the ranch on to, and I think they appreciated how excited I was to make a living in the cattle business. Eventually, I became a partner in the King Ranch with the ultimate goal of owning the ranch outright.

But my dream of ranching in Wyoming with my family was almost shattered by one thing — the Death Tax. Just seven days into 2011, Mrs. King passed away. Once the funeral arrangements were finished, I heard from lawyers that if I wanted to keep the ranch going, I had to cut a check to the federal government to pay the Death Tax. The Death Tax, also known as the federal estate tax, is the government taxing your possessions that pass on to another person. It's a cold, cruel tax that hits at a moment of immense family tragedy.

At the time, we were operating under what I describe as a siege mentality. The King Ranch had survived so many challenges. We survived even as the "cattle free by '93" campaign raged across the West to end livestock grazing on public lands by the year 1993. We survived wildfires, harsh winters, drought and everything else nature threw at us. We worked through numerous threats from the Endangered Species Act. I did not want the ranch to close up under my watch in order to pay a tax bill or because of other government regulations. I knew I needed to be proactive so, in the early '90s, I started contacting experts in a variety of areas to make sure the ranch was in as good of a position as possible.

After Mrs. King's passing, because I was a non-blood heir, the Death Tax burden I was facing was potentially 50%. Think about that for a moment and imagine a tax bill for half of the value of your farm or ranch. That should be terrifying, and it certainly was for me. Thankfully, because of the estate planning work I did 10 years prior with tax professionals, accountants and even former IRS agents, I was able to find ways to reduce my tax burden. Their work cost us more than \$30,000 at the time and that bill cut deep into our bottom line, but it was so much cheaper than

paying more than half of the ranch. When all was said and done, the Death Tax we ended up paying was around 15%.

As I travel the country, I hear similar stories from other cattle producers about how their farming and ranching dreams were almost cut short by tax bills from the IRS. My personal experience with the Death Tax is exactly why I am so fired up to fight against tax increases in every form. I am proud of the ranching legacy I built with my family, and I never want to see another producer forced to sell off cattle, turn their land over to developers or exit the cattle industry for good because of a tax bill.

NCBA is fighting to defend our farming and ranching legacy. The current Death Tax exemptions sunset at the end of 2025, but a solution is needed sooner rather than later. I often ask, "How many times does a family have to pay for a farm or ranch before they actually own it?" That's why we'll keep the fight going on our end so you can keep doing what you love: running your farm or ranch, caring for your family and producing a high-quality protein that consumers demand. ♡

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Track Cattle Records With 2025 NCBA Redbook

CENTENNIAL, Colo. (Oct. 21, 2024) – For more than 30 years, the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association has offered the annual Redbook to help cattle producers effectively and efficiently record their daily production efforts. The pocket-sized booklet simplifies recordkeeping, which can enhance profitability and reduce stress levels. The 2025 edition of the Redbook is now available.

In addition to Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) practices and proper injection technique information, the 2025 Redbook includes current information about the judicious use of antibiotics in cattle, fitness for transport, and how to build a biosecurity plan. There are more than 100 pages to record calving activity, herd health, pasture use, cattle inventory, body condition, cattle treatment, AI breeding records and more. It also contains a calendar and notes section.

Redbooks can be purchased online at <https://store.ncba.org/> for \$8.00 each, plus shipping. Customization, including adding a company logo on the cover, is available in quantities of 100 books or more. For more information on custom orders, contact Grace Webb at gwebb@beef.org or (303) 850-3443.

NCBA Slams Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Recommendations

WASHINGTON (Oct. 22, 2024) – Today, the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) slammed the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee’s unhinged recommendations that propose replacing high-quality proteins like beef with beans, peas and lentils.

“The preview meeting of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee this week stands out as one of the most out-of-touch, impractical and elitist conversations in the history of this process,” said NCBA Vice President of Government Affairs Ethan Lane. “After 22 months of public discussion and lip service to transparency, we are disappointed by the number of chaotic new directions that were proposed at the literal last minute. We would laugh at the suggestion that beans, peas and lentils are going to replace lean red meat and fill all the nutrient gaps Americans are facing if it weren’t such a dangerous and deceptive idea.”

“We’ve had more than four decades of Dietary Guidelines advice, and during that time red meat consumption has declined, yet obesity and chronic disease is on the rise. 70% of the calories in the U.S. diet are plant based. Now, the committee wants to reduce red meat intake even further, marginalizing the 80% of the population who identify themselves as meat eaters,” said NCBA Executive Director of Nutrition Science and Registered Dietitian Dr. Shalene McNeill. “These recommendations put some of the most vulnerable at risk for nutrient gaps, especially older Americans, adolescent girls and women of child-bearing age. Beef contributes only 5% of the calories in the American

diet, but more than 5% of essential nutrients like potassium, phosphorous, iron, B6, niacin, protein, zinc, choline and B12. It’s baffling that we are trying to get Americans to cut out red meat when the evidence indicates nutrient deficiencies and chronic disease are increasing as red meat consumption declines. As a registered dietitian and nutrition scientist, I am concerned that basing guidelines on highly academic exercises, hypothetical modeling, and weak science on red meat will not produce relevant or practical guidelines and will not help us achieve healthier diets.”

The Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee is tasked with delivering recommendations to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as the agencies craft the 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.


Future Agricultural Leaders Encouraged to Attend CattleCon 2025

CENTENNIAL, Colo. (Nov. 13, 2024) – CattleCon 2025 invites future agricultural leaders to San Antonio, Texas, to experience the largest cattle industry event of the year, Feb. 4-6. Courtesy of Culver’s and Nationwide Insurance, FFA and 4-H members can receive free trade show admission on Thursday, Feb. 6, which includes access to a variety of educational events.

The first 250 FFA members and 250 4-H members to register will receive complimentary Thursday NCBA Trade Show admission. FFA members and alumni are also invited to the Culver’s Blue Jacket Social, a special gathering designed for networking, sharing experiences and building lasting relationships.

NCBA Trade Show attendees can explore more than nine acres of displays and exhibitors offering the latest advancements, from equipment and technology to pharmaceuticals and feed supplements. In addition to finding the right product or service to solve any problem, there are a variety of educational opportunities within the show.

Attendees can stop in the Learning Lounge to enjoy informal, face-to-face talks in an intimate setting right on the trade show floor. The popular Stockmanship & Stewardship Demonstration Arena also returns with stockmanship experts providing low-stress cattle handling demonstrations, Beef Quality Assurance educational sessions, industry updates and facility design sessions. Cattle Chats will feature beef industry educational sessions, and the Chutes and Scales Showdown will offer a side-by-side comparison of equipment where producers can watch cattle run through chutes then get hands-on experience.

To receive free Thursday NCBA Trade Show registration, FFA members must use the code FFACULVERS, and 4-H members, 4HNW. In addition, children 12 and under receive free trade show admission with a paying adult. A variety of other registration options are also available. For more information and to register and reserve housing, visit convention.ncba.org. 

Hay Feeding Management

Bruce Loyd WVU Extension Service Agent – Lewis County

The simple act of feeding hay is considerably different than it was 50 years ago, mostly due to the transition from small, square bales of hay to large, round bales.

Even though round bales have been around for years, feeding management practices have often fallen behind the technology used to make the bales.

Unrolling hay

The challenge with round bales, whether dry hay or wrapped, is reducing waste. Unrolling round bales can be an effective way to feed – if you have a large enough area to unroll only what the cattle will eat in one day. Otherwise, a significant amount of hay can be wasted.

Using this method allows beneficial nutrients to be spread around the field and returned to the soil from the wasted hay and the livestock's manure and urine.

Using hay feeders

Over the years, several types of hay feeders have been developed to make it easier to use round bales. These vary from round hay rings to hay-saving feeders to bale wagons that hold multiple bales. The advantage of these is you can feed enough hay to last multiple days and do not have to feed hay every day.

With any hay feeder, the real challenge is managing the area around the feeder to avoid mud. Using hay rings or feeders in the fields can work well if the ground is frozen. However, there are very few days during most winters where the ground is hard enough, especially in the daytime, to avoid damage.

If the damage around the hay feeder is severe enough, grass will not readily grow back in spring. Typically, these areas are where weeds get started in a field.


Moving the hay feeder every time a new bale of hay is brought out can help. But, that still means the feeder is in one spot for multiple days, and significant damage can occur quickly.

Using feeding pads

Hundreds of feeding pads have been built around the state in recent years with this challenge in mind. These feeding pads are essentially barns designed specifically to feed round bales. They are effective, but have their own problems.

These feeding pads have an adjacent, non-concrete, outdoor loafing area to allow the cows to get off the concrete. The transition area from the concrete to the field is almost always muddy.

You can gravel high traffic areas, but a muddy area will develop wherever the gravel ends. Feeding pads also need cleaned out, which is an operation you avoid by feeding in the field.

However you choose to feed hay, it's important for farmers to incorporate hay feeding management into their nutrient management plan and to strive to feed hay in areas where nutrients are needed most. 



USMEF Conference Opens with Election Analysis and Focus on U.S.-Mexico Trade Relations

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) launched its annual strategic planning conference in Tucson, Arizona, Nov. 6 with an analysis of the U.S. election's potential impact on agricultural policy and international trade. USMEF members also received an in-depth look at the new administration in Mexico, as the United States prepares for a critical phase of trade relations with the largest export destination for U.S. red meat.

USMEF President and CEO Dan Halstrom opened the conference with an overview of U.S. red meat exports in 2024 and his outlook for the coming year. Halstrom highlighted the resilience in international demand for U.S. red meat despite volatility and serious headwinds in major Asian markets. USMEF forecasts that U.S. pork exports will set volume and value records in 2024, surpassing 3 million metric tons (mt) valued at \$8.63 billion. U.S. beef exports are projected to reach 1.28 million mt worth \$10.5 billion, an increase of 5% over 2023. A critical piece of this export performance in a volatile year is the demand growth for U.S. red meat in Latin America. Halstrom emphasized the importance of protecting hard-fought market share in increasingly competitive environments. The Latin American

boom is real, Halstrom said, and the U.S. industry must keep a close eye on its competition.

"Brazil is starting to get more volume into Mexico, Central America and even into Japan," Halstrom said. "That being said, our quality – beef, pork and lamb – is second to none. Our products command a superior price and that's the way that we're approaching it when we work to develop these markets. We need to maximize opportunities in our major markets and carve out new destinations, such as Africa, for the future."

Keynote speaker Jim Wiesemeyer, a veteran journalist and renowned Washington insider, delivered his insights about the presidential and congressional elections and the potential effects on U.S. agriculture and trade policy. Wiesemeyer highlighted that Trump is the first candidate in over a century to reclaim the White House after losing it, having gained even stronger support in rural America than he had in two previous elections. Republicans did much better than most expected in U.S. Senate races, with a likely pickup of four seats in addition to the 49 held in the current Congress. Although several House races were still too close to call, it appears the GOP will hold on to its narrow majority, he reported.

Wiesemeyer speculated on the post-election agendas for the White House and the 119th Congress and identified what he expects will be their key issues. He stated that the election outcome may have improved the chances of completing a new Farm Bill before the end of 2024, with Senate Agriculture Committee Ranking Member John Boozeman (R-Ark.) leading the effort during the upcoming lame duck session of Congress.

Wiesemeyer pledged to return with additional election analysis on Friday, the final day of the USMEF conference, when he also plans to discuss potential candidates for cabinet positions and other major presidential appointments.

Although the U.S. election was top-of-mind for conference attendees, key trading partners are also undergoing changes at the highest levels of government. At the top of this list is Mexico, where President Claudia Sheinbaum was elected in May and inaugurated on Oct. 1.

Guest speaker Mateo Diego, a partner in the regulatory consulting firm AGON and one of Mexico's leading trade experts, walked USMEF members through President Sheinbaum's philosophy on critical issues impacting agricultural trade.

Diego emphasized that the United States and Mexico generally enjoy productive and mutually beneficial trade, but cautioned that there are "irritants" that could disrupt



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CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



USMEF President and CEO Dan Halstrom updates members on red meat export results and the outlook for 2025



Veteran ag journalist Jim Wiesemeyer provides post-election analysis to USMEF members



Mateo Diego, one of Mexico's leading trade experts, discusses the state of U.S.-Mexico trade relations


this relationship. Some directly impact agriculture, such as Mexico's restrictions on imports of genetically modified corn, new USDA rules on voluntary country-of-origin labeling of beef and pork, and threats from the U.S. side to limit imports of certain produce items. Another contentious trade issue is automotive rules of origin, which Diego feels will be at the forefront of the upcoming review of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

Diego outlined the possible scenarios that could emerge when USMCA comes up for review in 2026. While it is possible that the agreement could be reopened, negotiations on key issues fail, and the United States withdraws from USMCA, Diego sees this as unlikely.

"Unlike NAFTA, the USMCA is President Trump's baby – he negotiated it," Diego said. "Trump has talked about USMCA as being the best trade agreement ever, so withdrawing from his own creation would be a strange signal."

Nevertheless, Diego urged conference attendees to speak up and voice their support for USMCA.

"We need USMCA and other rules of order to provide certainty to what we do, and keeping a stable trade relationship in the agricultural sector is critically important," he said.

The conference continued Nov. 7 with a panel of livestock producers sharing their experience meeting with buyers and consumers in international markets, as well as meetings of USMEF's sector-specific standing committees. The closing business session on Nov. 8 included the election of USMEF's new officer team. 

The Mountaineer CATTLEMAN

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 beef Ribeye Roast Bone-In (2 to 4 ribs), small end, chine (back) bone removed (6 to 8 pounds)
- Salt
- Roasted Fennel (recipe follows) (optional)

SEASONING

- 2 tablespoons coarsely ground mixed peppercorns (black, white, green and pink)
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil

HORSERADISH SAUCE

- 1/2 cup whipping cream
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh fennel bulb
- 3 tablespoons finely grated fresh horseradish
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh fennel fronds
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

COOKING

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Combine seasoning ingredients; press evenly onto all surfaces of beef roast.

Cook's Tip: Mixed peppercorns are sold in specialty food markets and in some supermarkets. Black peppercorns may be substituted. To easily grind whole peppercorns, use a pepper mill or coffee grinder (used only for seasonings). Or, place peppercorns in a food-safe plastic bag, squeeze out the air, and seal. Use the bottom of a custard cup, a rolling pin, or the bottom of a heavy pan to crush the peppercorns.

2. Place roast, fat side up, in shallow roasting pan. Insert ovenproof meat thermometer so tip is centered in thickest part of beef, not resting in fat or touching bone. Do not add water or cover. Roast in 350°F oven 2-1/4 to 2-1/2 hours for medium rare; 2-1/2 to 3 hours for medium doneness.

3. Prepare Roasted Fennel, if desired.

4. Meanwhile, prepare Horseradish Sauce. Beat cream in medium bowl just until soft peaks form; do not overbeat. Add fennel bulb, horseradish, fennel fronds and salt; mix well. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Cook's Tip: Whipping cream has reached soft peaks when the beater is lifted and the cream forms a peak that gently falls to one side.

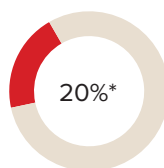
Two tablespoons prepared horseradish may be substituted for fresh horseradish. Omit salt in sauce.

Two tablespoons chopped fresh chives may be substituted for fresh fennel bulb and fronds.

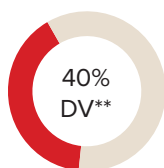
5. Remove roast when meat thermometer registers 135°F for medium rare; 145°F for medium. Transfer roast to carving board; tent loosely with aluminum foil. Let stand 15 to 20 minutes. (Temperature will continue to rise about 10°-15°F to reach 145°F for medium rare; 160°F for medium.)

6. Carve roast into slices; season with salt, as desired. Serve with horseradish sauce and roasted fennel, if desired.

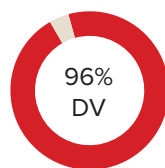
Roasted Fennel: Trim off and discard fronds and stems from 4 large fresh fennel bulbs (about 3-1/2 pounds) to within 1 inch of bulbs. Cut each bulb lengthwise into quarters. Place on metal baking sheet. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons olive oil; toss gently to coat, keeping fennel pieces intact. Season with 1/2 teaspoon salt; arrange cut side down. About 2 hours before roast is done, place fennel in lower third of oven. Roast for 1-3/4 to 2 hours or until tender and lightly browned, turning and rearranging once.



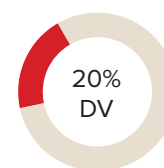
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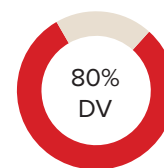
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