



Ted Reichmann
President, Minnesota State
Cattlemen's Association

Hi All!

As I write this column winter is coming to an end at least by looking at the calendar I hope it stops soon as we are running out of places to push snow off of the roads here in central MN. It always amazes me how fast cattle grow in winters like this, when we filled some of the pens in November the calves seemed pretty small, now (3) months later they are as tall as the gates and have no problem reaching the bunks, maybe we should clean the pens?

As you all know the legislature is back in session. MSCA has been fully engaged meeting with elected officials and agencies. As you will see in the paper we are pushing hard with the help of other like minded groups and individuals on the wolf issue. I am hopeful that our hard work will have lasting benefits. On almost daily basis we are in direct contact with the MN Dept. of Ag about TB or MPCA about TMDL issues. It is amazing to me how much time is spent by MSCA in staying up to speed with everything that is going on.

Please be pro-active, don't hesitate to contact your state representative and senator on our issues. We have an excellent team working for you to ensure that we get a fair shake at the legislature. However, your 5 minute phone call, brief email or note to your elected officials has more direct impact on getting the job done than anything we can do as an organization.

I was able to go to Brazil in mid January. The focus of the trip was on Brazilian Agriculture. Most of the trip was showcasing crop production, but I was able to get a mind full of information about the beef industry in their country as well. Most of the trip took place in the State of Mato Graso, which is located in the center of South America. It is hard to put into words just how vast their agricultural capabilities are. In one area there were twelve combines harvesting soybeans, they had already been going for two days. I am not so sure that they could finish that area in two more days. As soon as they have finished harvesting a crop, they are planting a second crop. They have no trouble getting two crops out of one year. When we stopped at a research farm it was impressive to see corn that was planted 30 days prior to our arrival to already be just over waist high, - 39" tall.

The current infrastructure is worse than what I was led to believe. You need to experience how bad thier ability to move things really is in order to understand. The sobering thing is how far they have come in such a short time. The area was first developed in the early 1980's. One town had 13 buildings in it in 1981 and now has close to 15,000 inhabitants. Compare that to our experience in rural Minnesota and what is happening to out rural towns. They are full speed ahead trying to get their infrastructure up to a higher level as there are plans for train tracks to be completed in the next two years.

The Brazilian beef industry seems to be behind in its development compared to the cropping systems, as you know it is a grass based industry. I suppose that it is much the same as our own beef industry before modern feeding operations came online for finishing cattle. One of the operations that we stopped at that I would consider diversified had 250,000 acres of crops, and 30,000 head of cattle. They were also starting a breeding herd that would have superior genetics compared to the average cattle founding Brazil. It was invigorating to feel the pride that their country has in its Agriculture, they understand what it means for their future and the potential their country has.

We need continue to improve what we do as an industry here in United States. Our ability to compete with the rest of the world in the decades ahead depends on it. Regards, Ted



Mike Feikema
Chairman,
MSCA Feeder Council

Greetings to All,

What a challenging last six months to feed cattle. The weather has not cooperated at all. It seems like the snow just keeps coming every couple of days. About the time you get everything cleaned up the next storm moves in and dumps more snow and wind!

The simple task of hauling manure has become quite a challenge this winter. We are having to push paths through the field so that the spreaders can make it through. Like it or not regardless of the weather, winter spreading of manure is necessary here in Minnesota, despite that some "so-called" environmentalist would like to stop all winter manure applications. The only positive that has come out of this tough winter is that the cattle market has gone up significantly in part due to lighter carcass weights because of poor performance in the feed yard.

One thing to keep your eyes on is there is a proposal to make it illegal to mow roadside ditches before Aug 1. This to me is absolute insanity. We own the land and we pay taxes on the ditches and they want us to forfeit what little bit of productivity we can get out of a ditch. Waiting until late in the summer results in much less protein content in the hay and we all know you put up hay when the sun shines, not based on some arbitrary date set by the government. We all look pretty stupid if we don't turn wheels to get crops put up when they are ready. A wet week or two can stop all harvesting dead in its tracks.

I know lots of cattle producers mow roadsides for the forage it provides and restricting that will have a huge impact on our industry. Not to mention that counties, townships and the state gets the mowing done for free. If farmers aren't allowed to take care of mowing the ditches, then our tax dollars will have to be spent to pay for mowing and cleaning up the ditches. I don't know all the details but I do believe that there will be a public comment period on this proposal so I would encourage you to make sure your voices are heard. Sincerely Yours, Mike Feikema



Tim Nolte
Chairman, MSCA
Cow-Calf &
Stocker Council

Hello Again,

I'm looking forward to 2010, it is going to be a lot better than 2009 was, I know it is! Now that my first year is over on the State Cattlemen's Executive Committee I can tell you I'm more than ever impressed with what is going on at this level right now. It looks like Steve May our new Exec is going to be a real asset. He has been attending meeting after meeting, effectively representing us all over the state and especially in Saint Paul.

We wonder why we can't get more people involved. It's simple, the average cattleman doesn't really like meetings and always has work to do at home. That's okay, what is more critical than always being the guy that shows up - is being a member of an organization makes sure someone does shows up when ever our interests are at stake. That's what membership in MSCA does for you.

A good example is the wolf issue. If you think nothing is happening, then I would suspect you may not be a member of MSCA. There is a lot going on and a lot yet to be done. MSCA is right in the middle of it. Check out page 7 and speak with Dale Lueck about the wolf issue if you want an update.

I am still searching for the right answer about land values. Somebody, somebody please come up with the answer. Here is the million dollar question, "How do we ensure that stock cows generate enough income to pay for the land we need to produce beef?" We all need to continue to work to answer that question.

It is bull buying season! It is always fun to get out and visit with cattlemen and compare this year's crop of breeding bulls. Good luck buying and selling this year's crop of bulls. I hope we all pick the right match for our herd. This beef business is something else! Despite the market ups and downs, cows have been really good to us over the long haul. We have been able to make a living as a family for twenty years now. Farming and ranching is more than just a business, it's a way of life. It's about family, working, playing and learning together every day.

Spring is just around the corner, good luck calving! Please note my phone # change to: (218) 539-0322. Regards, Tim

Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association

3901 Joppa Ave. South
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
(952) 920-9512
www.mnsca.org
maysteve@comcast.net

Executive Committee

- President - Ted Reichmann**
(320) 808-3207
treichmann@wisper-wireless.com
15290 - 127th ST, Villard, MN 56385
- President Elect - Don Schiefelbein**
(303) 324-5149 dschiefel@meltel.net
34897 - 717th Ave Kimball, MN 55353
- Vice President - Dar Giess**
(320) 249-2130 darlynn@fallsnet.com
33424 - 183rd Street, Pierz, MN 56364
- Feeder Council Chair - Mike Feikema**
(605) 212-5037 msfeik@svtv.com
1683 - 110th Ave., Luverne, MN, 56156
- Cow-Calf Council Chair - Tim Nolte**
(218) 539-0322 noltelivestock@wcta.net
26914 - 181st Ave., Sebeka, MN 56477
- Executive Director - Steve May**
(952) 920-9512 - 3901 Joppa Ave S
St Louis Park, MN 55416 maysteve@comcast.net
- Past President - Tom Pyfferoen**
(507) 254-9490 - tpyffer@pitol.net
53249 - 275th Ave. Pine Island, MN 55963
- Legislative Chair - Brian Schafer**
(651) 380-6230 - brian@schaferfarm.com
37740 - 240th Ave, Goodhue, MN 55027
- Membership Chair - Dale Lueck**
(218) 927-2495 dklueck@embarqmail.com
37489 - 295th Street, Aitkin, MN 56431
- Secretary - Kevin Hoge**
(218) 549-3337 - flatrock@frontiernet.net
32413 280th Place, Aitkin, MN, 56431
- Treasurer - Dale Lueck**
(218) 927-2495 dklueck@embarqmail.com
37489 295th ST, Aitkin, MN 56431

MSCA Regional Directors

- Region - 1 Gordy Landin**
(218) 386-1346 jlandin@centurytel.net
325900 630th Ave., Warroad, MN 56763
- Region - 2 & 3 Gary Sampson**
(218) 296-1154 gustranc@staplesnet.com
7765 - 120th St SW, Motley MN 56466
- Region - 4 Krist Wollum**
(507) 296-4471 kkwollum@yahoo.com
3912 County Rd 109, Porter, MN 56280
- Region - 5 Steve Moe**
(218) 829-7215 mmfarms@brainerd.net
1996 - County Rd 130, Ft. Ripley, MN 56345
- Region - 6 Roger Wagner**
(320) 355-2622 Eaglepass2@jetup.net
10606 420th Ave. Hillman, MN 56338
- Region - 7 Mark Malecek**
(507) 828-8193 markroxymalecek@yahoo.com
29595 - Omega Av. Redwood Falls, MN 56083
- Region - 8 Doug Anderson**
(507) 375-4617 jnndrsn@myclearwave.net
27625 - 700th Ave, Saint James, MN 56081
- Region - 9 Brian Schafer**
(651) 923-5415 brian@schaferfarm.com
37740 - 240th Ave., Goodhue, MN 55027

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For Advertising Contact Dale Lueck
Managing Editor: dklueck@embarqmail.com
37489 - 295th Street, Aitkin, MN 56431
(218) 927-2495 (voice) (218) 927-2473 (Fax)

Post Master Send Address Corrections to:
Minnesota Cattleman Publications
37489 - 295th Street, Aitkin, MN 56431

Cattlemen's Calendar

2010

- July 12 MSCA BOD Quarterly Mtg/Golf Outing
- July 13 MN Beef Tour (West Central Cattlemen)
- July 28-Aug 1 NCBA Summer Conference (Denver, CO)
- Sep 11 MSCA Quarterly Mtg (tentative date)
- Sep 12-18 NCBA Legislative Conference (DC)
- Oct 1 Open Lot Agreements (Corrective Actions Due)
- Dec 3-4 MSCA Annual Convention & Trade Show

2011

- Jan 2-5 NCBA Annual Convention (Denver)
- Dtd TBD MN Beef Tour, Rock-Nobles Cattlemen

2012

- Dtd TBD MN Beef Tour, Mississippi Valley Cattlemen