



MINNESOTA STATE CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Annual Report

Another year has come and gone. Most of the state started with an abundance of snow and cold which then switched to the have and have nots. Summer rain was spotty throughout the state, and pasture production was good for some and not so good for others. The same went for stored feed and forage production — some producers having overwhelming first crops versus hay production half of normal. There was above average silage and there was some chopped to get something out of a burning up crop.

Markets were also a roller coaster, starting the year in fair condition, then record high prices, ending the year similar to how it started. Inputs, even though lower than the previous year, are still high compared to average — mainly due to the higher interest rates and inflation compared to previous years. The national cow herd is still not showing any growth, with numbers as low as in 1962.

Our membership numbers for the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) increased last year which is great to see. Kaitlyn Root, our new executive director, has worked extremely hard alongside MSCA Membership and Industry Relations Chair Angie Ford to make this happen. Having a strong membership is extremely important when we go to St. Paul or Washington, D.C. Rising costs also forced us to ask for a membership dues increase which was approved in July. Our partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim allows us to offer new members a free bottle of Eprinex Pour-On to each new producer member, so help us spread the word on this new offer!

With the heavy snow during the winter, producers faced an increase in deer depredation issues on stored feed. The MSCA met with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources multiple times throughout the year on this topic and are still currently working with them and other departments to come up with solutions to this problem.

Elk also have been a growing nuisance in northwestern Minnesota, and wolf depredation claims were high this year. With gray wolves still being protected under the Endangered Species Act, MSCA met with U.S. Representatives to discuss the need for the delisting of the gray wolf in Minnesota.

Our second largest fundraiser, Farmfest, had a great year with many Big Beef Sandwiches going out the front of the monoslope building. Thank you to everyone who volunteered your time and the committee who put this great event on. A special thanks to Minnwest Bank who brought some manpower to help us out, and another thank you to American Foods Group for the donation of the meat. Farmfest was heavily attended by many state and national politicians who stopped and talked with multiple members of the executive team about the concerns cattle producers have, with the Farm Bill being at the forefront of the conversation.

The MSCA tour was a huge success with 630-plus people in attendance and multiple tour stops from all aspects of the industry in Pipestone and Murry counties. Once again, thank you to everyone who planned the event, worked at the event, grilled, and allowed people to view their operations.

We continue to have a great working relationship with the Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) and contract staff to cover all our administrative needs as our membership grows and workload increases. The MSCA and MBC have some of the best people on staff who I'm very grateful for.

Thank you to all the MSCA Board Members who volunteer time. Your time away from your farms and ranches does not go unnoticed. This association would not work without all of you. Your input and leadership help MSCA represent producers across diverse environments within this state.

Producer membership is the reason we have a voice in St. Paul and Washington, D.C. Thank you for your membership, and I ask you to continue encouraging others to join.

-Jake Thompson

President, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association



Mission:

**To create and maintain
an economic and
political climate that
provides individual
members the
opportunity to sustain
and grow the cattle
industry in Minnesota.**

2023 *Cattlemen Events*

Steak on a Stick



The MSCA once again grilled steaks at the Capitol in St. Paul in April. This annual event brings cattle producers and state legislators together to network and discuss priority issues. The West Central Cattlemen's Association and Cottonwood Cattle Producers provided grills

for the event, and MSCA members assisted with grilling and serving steaks. We were able to serve over 750 steaks in just one hour!

Legislative Conference

MSCA President Jake Thompson, Industry Relations and Membership Chair Angie Ford, Executive Director Kaitlyn Root and NCBA Region III VP/ MSCA member Mike Landuyt headed to Washington D.C. April 24-26 to meet with congressmen and



and congresswomen to discuss issues Minnesota cattle producers are facing, including: support for the Beef Checkoff; farm bill priorities; modernizing the Endangered Species Act and delisting the gray wolf; and the importance of voluntary, incentivized conservation programs for cattle producers. The MSCA team met with Representative Brad Finstad, Representative Angie Craig, Representative Michelle Fischbach, Representative Pete Stauber, Senator Tina Smith and staffers from Senator Amy Klobuchar's, Representative Betty McCollum's and Representative Tom Emmer's offices.

Top of Class

The MSCA sponsors the Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) Top of Class program, and MSCA Executive Director Kaitlyn Root attends the in-state sessions. This year's class met at the MBC office in June. Root taught the class about the MSCA during her presentation, and Minnesota Department of Agriculture Deputy Commissioner Andrea Vaubel and Minnesota Board of Animal Health Senior Veterinarian Dr. Katie Cornille gave updates from their organizations. The class also met with MSCA Legislative Consultant Bruce Kleven for a "Policy 101" discussion and toured the Minnesota Capitol in St. Paul. The group met again in October when they visited U.S. Foods Stockyards in South St. Paul, Rancher's Legacy and the University of Minnesota Meat Lab.

Summer Tour

Murray and Pipestone County Cattlemen's Associations hosted this year's Summer Tour on July 18. The tour brought in around 630 attendees, and tour stops included feedlot, cow/calf and seedstock operations, as well as innovative industry business stops. Tour attendees were able to network with producers, visit the onsite tradeshow vendors and learn about southwestern Minnesota cattle operations. It was a hugely successful tour, with beautiful weather and great networking opportunities for all!



Farmfest

The MSCA kept tradition this year by selling our Big Beef Sandwiches at Farmfest Aug. 1-3. This is one of the largest fundraising events for the MSCA, and the event also serves as an opportunity for discussion with Minnesota policy makers and representatives. Influential representatives stopped by to grab a sandwich and discuss what is happening on the ground for Minnesota cattle producers and the MSCA's top priorities for the year.



Japan Trip

MSCA Executive Director Kaitlyn Root and member Mike Landuyt traveled to Japan Sept. 8-15 on the Minnesota Department

of Agriculture's Ag and Food Mission Trip. Landuyt and Root worked to strengthen and expand relationships with Japanese consumers and distributors, increase their understanding of business needs of foreign markets, establish useful contacts and understand consumer behaviors in foreign markets during their time in Japan.

Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention

The Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention was held Dec. 15-16 at the Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria. The convention included networking opportunities, entertainment, educational sessions, live and silent auction and more. This year's theme was, "Creating a Dynasty, Leaving a Legacy." Mark Pankonin was awarded as the 2023 Cattleman of the Year, and American Foods Group received the 2023 Industry Service Award during the Best of Beef Banquet.



Priority Issues

Animal Depredation

Cattle producers in the state of Minnesota face year-round animal depredation challenges. Whether it is a calf loss due to wolves, forage loss caused by deer or elk damaging fence, the loss to producers is prevalent, and it is substantial. According to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), wolf depredation payments totaled \$136,388 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, up from \$100,275 in FY 2022, and elk damage payments totaled \$263,598.79, up from \$124,999.68 in FY 2022. During 2023, the MSCA worked with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the MDA on wildlife management, especially pertaining to deer population. These discussions with state agencies will continue moving forward.

Environmental Stewardship

Minnesota cattle producers are facing more scrutiny than ever from environmentalist groups. The MSCA is aware of the commitment producers have to providing clean water and maintaining healthy soil on their operations, utilizing best management practices day-in and day-out. This year, MSCA continued advocating for cattle producers and sharing the efforts producers make each day to sustain their land for future generations. In 2023, the MSCA advocated for voluntary, incentivized conservation programs in the farm bill; met with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency numerous times throughout the year to discuss feedlot permits, environmental review, farming in the karst regions, etc.; and continued efforts as a state partner with the Alliance to Advance Climate-Smart Agriculture program.

Drought

With another dry summer for many areas of the state, the MSCA provided access to state and national drought resources to producers through our weekly e-newsletter. MSCA works with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service

Agency to monitor drought levels and provide programs/resources for producers.

Farm Expansion

The MSCA supports expansion of cattle operations in the state of Minnesota. Some counties in Minnesota, such as Fillmore County, have a cap on number of animal units allowed per operation. In February of 2023, the Fillmore County Commissioner Board approved a raise in the county's animal unit cap, moving it from 2,000 to 4,000. The MSCA wrote a letter of support for this rule change prior to the vote. MSCA will continue to ensure that our family farmers have the opportunity to expand and provide for future generations.

Farm Bill

The MSCA's 2023 Farm Bill priorities included strengthening risk management programs such as Livestock Risk Protection, supporting disaster relief programs and funding, promoting voluntary conservation programs, protecting animal health by advocating for support for the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program and funding for the Foot-and-Mouth Disease vaccine bank. This year, MSCA leadership discussed these top priorities with Congressmen and Congresswomen, and due to the farm bill extension, these conversations will continue into 2024.

