



The Minnesota Cattleman

The Official Newspaper of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association

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Southwest Cattlemen Take the Reins for 2026 MSCA Summer Tour

Marshall, Minn. — The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) invites cattle producers, industry partners and beef advocates to attend the 2026 MSCA Summer Tour on Tuesday, July 14, 2026, in Marshall, Minnesota. This year's tour is hosted by the Southwest Cattlemen, one of 21 local affiliate cattlemen groups in Minnesota.

This annual event brings together members of Minnesota's beef industry for a full day of education, networking and firsthand insight into progressive cattle operations and al-

lied businesses. The tour will be based at the Lyon County Fairgrounds where attendees will gather before traveling to tour stops throughout the region.

The MSCA Summer Tour is one of the organization's premier events, offering participants the opportunity to:

- ~ Tour innovative cattle operations and agricultural businesses
- ~ Engage with fellow producers and industry professionals
- ~ Explore new practices, technologies and management strategies

~ Strengthen connections within Minnesota's beef community

The day will kick off with morning registration and a light breakfast at the fairgrounds, setting the stage for a full day of tours. Attendees will then board buses to visit a variety of tour stops across the region, returning to the fairgrounds for a midday lunch before heading back out for additional stops. The day will wrap up with a steak dinner.

Tour stops on this year's agenda include Loyson Farms, Chandler's/Triple

C Feeders, Delaney Herfords Inc., Weber Land & Cattle, Coon Creek Cattle, ADM, Ralco, Todd Meulebroeck's Farm and Vos Feeders – highlighting a diverse mix of progressive operations and industry partners.

"The Summer Tour is a highlight each year for Minnesota cattle producers," says MSCA President Jake Thompson. "It's a chance to see firsthand the innovation happening across our state while building relationships that strengthen our industry."

Registration is \$30 per

individual and includes a light breakfast, lunch and steak dinner. Students and children are welcome to attend free of charge.

To learn more about the 2026 MSCA Summer Tour or to purchase tickets, visit mnsca.org/summer-tour.

There are various vendor and sponsorship opportunities available as well. Visit mnsca.org/summer-tour to learn more and sign up.

Direct any tour questions to Angie Ford at mnscamembership@gmail.com.

MSCA

MSCA is a grassroots organization consisting of over 20 local cattlemen's groups, providing the greatest opportunity for producer input and policy recommendations

Minnesota State Cattlemen's members, did you know you can pay your local affiliate dues online? Use the link below to renew your membership for the state and local association!

<https://www.mnsca.org/become-a-member/membership-application>

MINNESOTA STATE CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION
DISTRICT MAP & LOCAL AFFILIATES

1. Central Minnesota Cattlemen	11. Mower County Cattlemen
2. Cottonwood Cattle Producers	12. Murray County Cattlemen
3. Three Rivers Cattlemen	13. Northwestern Stockmen
4. Fillmore County Cattlemen	14. Redwood Area Cattlemen
5. Glacial Ridge Cattlemen	15. Rock-Nobles Cattlemen
6. Houston County Cattlemen	16. Snake River Cattlemen
7. Le Sueur County Area Cattlemen	17. Southwest Cattlemen
8. Midwest Cattlemen	18. Tri-County Cattlemen
9. Minnesota Cattlemen	19. Wabasha County Cattlemen
10. Mississippi Valley Cattlemen	20. West Central Cattlemen
	21. Pipestone Cattlemen

Prescribed Fire for Tick Control

*Dr. Angela Varnum, University of MN Extension Livestock Veterinarian
Lane Johnson, Coordinator & Forester, Cloquet Forestry Center and Chair of the Minnesota Prescribed Fire Council*

Following the detection of the Asian Longhorned Tick in southeast Iowa and continued prevalence of bovine anaplasmosis in Minnesota, discussions about tick control have ramped up. This article addresses questions received after UMN Extension's Cow Calf Days annual event, pulling from statewide knowledge in forestry, conservation and natural resources, and veterinary medicine.

Tick-livestock interactions

Ticks on cattle have direct impacts on production, but more concerning are the diseases they carry, namely Anaplasmosis (wood tick) and Theileriosis (Asian Longhorned Tick; previously found in Iowa). Severe blood loss, fever, abortion, or death can result when a tick carries these bacteria or protozoa and fast-tracks them to the animal's bloodstream. Although some tick-borne diseases are treatable, Theileriosis currently has no labeled treatment, making control of the disease's vector the best tool at our fingertips.

Traditional tick control

While there are a variety of pharmaceutical control methods for ticks on livestock, including rotational

topical acaricides, new products are infrequently available and do not provide long-term control. Like other parasites, ticks develop resistance to their active ingredients. Producers are interested in alternative methods for their control in the environment, such as in tick-infested grassland pastures or forested grazing areas.

Defining a prescribed fire

A prescribed fire is any fire used to meet a certain management objective. Fire can control brush in grasslands, stimulate forage production and quality for livestock, manage wildlife habitat, improve groundwater quality, benefit forest biodiversity, and reduce woody vegetation density and encroachment. It's like an ecosystem reset.

Fire likely played a historical role in keeping tick populations in check; current day, most U.S. states have at least one form of a prescribed fire program. Fires may both kill ticks directly as well as destroy their habitat, such as the underbrush and thatch, including where they overwinter.

Fire and ticks
Preliminary research

about fire as a tick mitigation practice is promising yet not understood well enough to optimize recommendations for livestock producers. In Kansas, fewer ticks were collected from grassland pastures after four consecutive years of burning than in pastures which had not been burned. The tick species recovered in that study were different than those common to MN. In the eastern U.S., populations of common tick species were successfully reduced in burned forest in multiple studies. Researchers continue to question prescribed fire's effects on tick-borne disease prevalence in an area.

Prescribed burning resources

There are many reasons for livestock producers to consider fire as a management practice. Conducting a safe, effective prescribed fire requires a burn plan, experienced people, and equipment. However, there are a number of resources across Minnesota. Factors to consider are trained people, equipment availability, and weather. Several groups are working

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NEWS - TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

**KAITLYN ROOT**

Executive Director
Office: 763-479-1011

As the legislative session continues to unfold in St. Paul, advocacy remains front and center for the MSCA. This time of year is always a balancing act: watching bills move, building relationships and making sure cattle producers have a seat at the table when decisions are made.

Over the past few weeks, we've had several opportunities to do just that.

One of those moments

came in late February, when MSCA President-Elect Rachel Gray testified in support of a rotational grazing pilot program. The proposal would invest in infrastructure and help demonstrate the long-term value of managed grazing systems. While the bill faces long odds this session with a \$2 million price tag in a non-budget year, it's still a meaningful step forward. Sometimes, the goal isn't immediate passage, but planting the seed for future success.

Predation continues to be another pressing issue. Earlier in March, I testified in support of legislation aimed at increasing funding for elk and wolf depredation. Even after recent funding boosts, both accounts have already run dry ahead of the next fiscal year. That reality speaks volumes.

For many producers, this isn't a theoretical issue, it's a

daily challenge that impacts their bottom line and peace of mind.

We've also had the opportunity to step back and tell the broader story of our industry. During a Senate committee hearing, agricultural groups were invited to provide updates, and MSCA shared an overview of the cattle industry and the challenges facing Minnesota producers.

These moments matter. The more lawmakers understand what goes into raising cattle, and the role our industry plays in local economies and environmental stewardship, the better equipped they are to make informed decisions.

Another area we've been engaged in is product labeling, specifically around cell-cultured meat. At the core, this is about transparency. Consumers deserve to know what they're buying, and clear labeling helps maintain

trust while protecting the integrity of real beef.

If there's a common theme this session, it's that progress doesn't always happen overnight. Some of these efforts may not cross the finish line this year, but that doesn't make them any less important. Advocacy is often about building momentum and laying the groundwork today for wins down the road.

And that work is always stronger when producers are part of the conversation. Staying informed, reaching out to your legislators and sharing your story all make a difference. The voices behind this industry are its greatest strength, and they carry weight far beyond the farm gate.

I hope you all are able to join us on Thursday, April 16, as we grill steaks and share the story of beef production at the State Capitol!

**JAKE THOMPSON**

President

Hello, fellow cattlemen and cattlemen.

Spring is just around the corner which makes me think about upcoming tasks and projects. The Minnesota Beef Council has a referendum that will help them ac-

complish those very things.

As Minnesota cattle producers prepare to vote this spring on a proposed refundable \$0.50 increase to the state Beef Checkoff, the decision represents more than a financial adjustment – it's an investment in the long-term vitality of the beef industry.

Since its establishment in 1986, the Beef Checkoff has funded crucial programs for promotion, education and research of beef, helping shape how beef is viewed by consumers across the country and around the world. These dollars have built market demand, supported nutrition research and promoted beef's story in classrooms, kitchens and export markets.

Without this investment,

beef producers would have faced steeper declines when consumer confidence wavered decades ago. As the national program celebrates forty years of growth, its impact remains as vital as ever.

In Minnesota, producers currently contribute \$1 per head at sale, with funds split between the Minnesota Beef Council and the Cattlemen's Beef Board. If approved, the state checkoff would rise to \$1.50 per head, with the new funds being retained within Minnesota for local initiatives. Producers could request a refund of the new 50 cents if they choose, ensuring flexibility while empowering statewide programs to do more targeted work.

We at the MSCA feel the

increase is necessary for the Council to keep pace with inflation and declining herd numbers. This is a great investment into keeping beef first and foremost on consumers' plates when considering protein.

By voting "yes," Minnesota producers have an opportunity to strengthen the state's beef industry, ensuring continued consumer trust, competitive markets and a secure future for family cattle operations. Check your mailboxes for ballots, and make sure to have your ballots postmarked by April 20th.

Until next time, may your pastures stay green and your fences tight!

**RACHEL GRAY**

President-Elect

Hello from northern Minnesota.

If you are calving, I hope that it is going well. We have just finished calving

and are thankful we got it done ahead of the nine inches of snow predicted to start tonight. We are thankful that we are going to see some much-needed moisture.

In our area, the drought monitor is reading at D1; however, I would maintain that we are closer to D2. It has been a dry winter and spring so far.

We are looking to do pre-breeding exams on heifers and order bull semen right now. As ranchers, we are constantly looking at what is a few months away. I had a good reminder on Sunday to stop and enjoy the season

we are in.

My grandkids are always so excited to see the calves, and my youngest grandson, who is one, is especially excited about baby calves. I took him to the barn with me on Sunday. He was so excited to see the brand-new calf.

He was clapping, jumping and squealing! Pure joy at the sight of the new baby. It reminded me that sometimes, if we have a hard calving season or something goes wrong, we need to stop and find joy in what we are doing.

Everyone asks me if I see rebuilding starting to

happen and what heifers will bring. So far, what I am hearing and seeing is that there is a lot of interest in bred heifers and that people are very optimistic about the calf prices into the fall.

I think more heifers were retained this year than last year, and even some feedlots are breeding some of their heifers. In talking to a rep from a semen company, he confirmed that same observation.

I hope your spring is wonderful, that the planting season goes smoothly and that you stop to enjoy this job we get to do.

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Minnesota Cattleman

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AMANDA ARMSTRONG
PRESIDENT, MNCW

Happy Spring!

At the end of January, we hosted a well-attended webinar featuring Lindsey Loken of Blondie's Butcher Shop. The session, Building Your Brand, highlighted Lindsey's approach to marketing both herself and her butcher shop, offering valuable insights. A recording of the webinar is available on our website behind the members-only firewall.

In February, during CattleCon, Minnesota CattleWomen member Deb Chute was elected President-Elect of the American National CattleWomen. Congratulations to Deb on this outstanding achievement.

Our Flat Farmer Program is underway in recognition of National Agriculture Month. Approximately 270 youth across Minnesota are currently connected with farmers and ranchers, providing them an opportunity to learn more about agriculture.

The Minnesota State Beef Ambassadors are preparing for their annual Beef Boot Camp, scheduled for March 28 at Schiefelbein Farms. This year's focus is on reproduction. The camp is open to youth ages 14-19. All 30 spots are filled!

We are also excited to introduce "Salt Block Social," launching April 7 at

7 p.m. This virtual Zoom gathering will provide a casual space for conversation among cattlemen, an opportunity to connect, share updates from the farm or ranch and discuss topics such as the calving season.

Applications will be opening soon for the 2027 Minnesota Beef Ambassador Team. The program is open to both male and female youth, with application details available on our website.

This will mark our 35th annual competition, held in conjunction with our summer banquet in St. Joseph, Minnesota, on Friday, June 19. The day will begin with an educational session focused on marketing custom beef, which is open to the public. A luncheon and brief awards ceremony will follow.



ERIC ZELTWANGER
Vice President

As I sit down to write this letter, the weather is great.

Cows have started calving for many commercial cattlemen. Lots of the purebred guys are working on wrapping up the calving season. Feeders and fatters have recovered from the down ticket they had, and things look very good for the cattle industry!

We have seen some volatility in things such as gas and fertilizer prices and will probably continue with that for the short term anyway. All of these things are mostly out of our control as cattlemen.

What we can look forward to are the things we can do to make our businesses as profitable as possible while we are in these good times. Things like paying down debt or adding a piece of equipment to make your lives safer or easier are things I hear people talking about. Take advantage of these things while we can.

Other things that we can do because we live in the great USA include:

serving some of our amazing beef up at the state Capitol. We just so happen to have this event lined up for April 16th on the front lawn of the Capitol (as long as Kaitlyn gets the weather request right).

This is one of the highlight events for the MSCA and for the legislators and their staffers working at the Capitol.

It has been a great event to bring people together. We want the people working in the Capitol, put there by us, to have a connection with Minnesota ranchers and feeders.

We want them to think of us when they have questions about our industry and hopefully reach out to those of us that do it for a living. We want to make lasting connections without the pressure of policy on that day.

I, along with the board, welcome you to join us on the 16th to make those connections. Please reach out to Kaitlyn if you can make it.

I also want to give a shout out to Bruce Kleven for the job he does for all cattlemen on a daily basis down at the Capitol. I don't think I am alone in saying that I am glad we have Bruce working for us, so we don't have to be there every day, and we can stick to doing what we do best. Raising the high quality, humanly cared for in an environmentally friendly way BEEF that we are so proud of!

As always, may your cows be fat and your calves be heavy.



DALLAS KNOBLOCH
MSCA FEEDER CHAIR

Hello from the southwest corner of Minnesota!

Overall, the second half of winter was very friendly to us. Besides those crazy temperature swings in March, the cattle have been doing well.

We have mostly wrapped up our calving season, and what a fun year it was to calve. Between the market and the weather, it would have been a good year to calve twice as many. And we all know how that turns out and how fast things can change!

I hope this finds you all doing well. Sounds like moisture is on most of the minds across the entire state, so we

will wait and see what the spring showers bring us.

The cattle market seems to be just bidding its time for most of the month of March. We received some strong cash early in the month, and it's been holding steady for the last 3-4 weeks at the \$2.34 range live and 372 in the meat.

Choice boxes have lost some ground, but select and overall demand seem to be holding well. The overall headwinds seem to be geopolitics, heavier weights and the uncertainty whether traders should push this higher.

Heifer retention was certainly present in Q1, and that should benefit summer markets. Will the taste of beef outweigh the current demand on the consumers' checkbook?

Will the packer regain leverage and be able to keep cattle around them and keep boxes elevated in price to stay profitable? Time always tells.

Overall demand remains strong. Anything lighter than 800# seems to be holding quite well. The 900# cattle seem to have levelled

off more and held steady the last month or so. I believe that is mostly due to the timeframe they are marketed.

Regarding the topic of 7020 rule making, there was a deadline reached to get one's name on the list to be on the producer's advisory board. This board will be composed of producers across the state, and some of the local SWCD officers will also be able to weigh in on what they are seeing.

This will be a long process, and we will update you as things progress. The MSCA will continue to closely monitor and weigh in on this topic as timing allows.

Overall, it seems that cautious optimism persists. There is lots of positive news to be found across our industry and reasons to do business as things make economic sense.

This month always kicks off the crazy time frame of planting and all those things that lead into summer. May there be plentiful grass for the new calves, and may the feedlot pens stay full.



MSCA July Quarterly Meeting

Monday, July 13

Red Baron Arena & Expo
Marshall, MN

11a.m. - 3 p.m.

Upcoming Events Important Dates

April 16 – **Steak on a Stick** – Minnesota State Capitol, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

July 13 – **MSCA Quarterly Meeting** 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Red Baron Arena & Expo, Marshall, MN

MSCA PAC Event, registration starts at 4:30 p.m., Red Baron Arena & Expo, Marshall, MN

July 14 – **MSCA Summer Tour** – Headquarters Lyon County Fairgrounds, Marshall, MN

December 11-12 – **2026 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention** – Mankato, MN

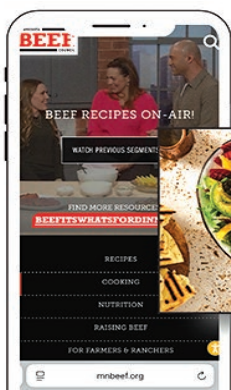
December 10-11, 2027 – **2027 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention** – Mankato, MN



For more details on events listed below, visit www.mnsca.org.

Minnesota Beef Council

BEEF PROMOTION, EDUCATION, & RESEARCH



www.mnbeef.org

May is Beef Month!

While we are busy promoting beef all year long at the Minnesota Beef Council (MBC), May as Beef Month provides an added opportunity to further expand on our efforts to share about all the benefits of beef and beef production. We have a set of resources available for any individual or group of people to use

in promoting beef throughout the month of May.

These resources include photos, videos and audio clips. To gain access to these resources, contact the Minnesota Beef Council office at 763-479-1011 or email Kelly Schmidt at kelly@mnbeef.org.

Twin Cities Live

The Minnesota Beef Council makes a monthly appearance on Twin Cities Live, a show airing daily from 3-4 p.m. CST on KSTP, Channel 5-Eyewitness News, and is rebroadcast late in the evening. For March, MBC CEO Kelly Schmidt featured two different beef stir fry recipes, highlighting beef's convenience, versatility, flavor and affordability. You can find the recorded segment along with recipes and a grocery list on our Facebook page and on our website at mnbeef.org.



Beef Backer Award

The Minnesota Beef Council staff attended the Minnesota Association of Meat Processors Convention in St. Cloud. Minnesota Beef Council sponsored the Innovative Beef Contest and had a booth in the tradeshow where staff engaged with meat market attendees from throughout the state and provided them with beef education and promotion resources.

At the convention, St. Joseph's Meat Market, St. Joseph, MN, was awarded the Minnesota Beef Council 2026 Beef Backer Award. Each year, this award is given to a meat market in recognition of their dedication to premium beef products, exceptional customer service and commitment to supporting Minnesota's beef industry.



Top of the Class

The mission of the Top of the Class program is to greater develop the skills of Minnesota's beef industry leaders to maximize their impact and effectiveness in local, state, national and international arenas. The program is a dynamic, year-long educational experience featuring two separate in-state seminars along with an out-of-state experience in Colorado. The members of the current Top of the Class program completed their third and final session on March 4-5. The first day included an industry tour at US Foods -Stock Yards in St. Paul, MN, where the class learned about their meat distribution business and learned about customers' preferences and business development.

In the afternoon, the class went to the University of Minnesota Meat Science Lab. In that session, they learned from meat scientist Dr. Ryan Cox and Jordan McCallum, supervisor of the meat lab about beef cutting and factors that influence beef prices at the primal and finished cuts level. On the final day, the group heard from speakers from the MN Board of Animal Health and MN Department of Agriculture. They had a "Policy 101" session with MSCA Legislative Consultant Bruce Kleven, toured the State Capitol and sat in on a House of Representatives committee meeting. That concluded a fantastic year of learning, leadership development and advocacy for all things beef.



Minnesota Beef Council Events

April 10, 2026 | Minnesota Academy of Nutrition Dietetics Conference (Eagan, MN)
 April 20, 2026 | MN FFA Convention (University of Minnesota)
 April 24, 2026 | FACS to the Max (Mankato State University)
 April TBD, 2026 | Twin Cities Live (KSTP Studio, St. Paul, MN)
 May 8, 2026 | Forest Lake Ag Day (Forest Lake Area High School)
 May 12-14, 2026 | Urban Ag Day (Minnesota State Fairgrounds)
 May 20, 2026 | Eden Prairie Ag Day (Eden Prairie High School)

MBC Unique Twist on Tacos Recipe

BUFFALO-STYLE BEEF TACOS



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound Ground Beef (93% lean or leaner)
- 1/4 cup hot pepper sauce
- 8 taco shells
- 1 cup thinly sliced lettuce
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat prepared blue cheese dressing
- 1/2 cup shredded carrot
- 1/3 cup chopped celery
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- Carrot and celery sticks or cilantro sprigs (optional)

COOKING:

1. Heat large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Add Ground Beef; cook 8 to 10 minutes, breaking into small crumbles and stirring occasionally. Remove from skillet with slotted spoon; pour off drippings, as necessary. Return to skillet; stir in pepper sauce. Cook and stir 1 minute or until heated through.

Cook's Tip: Cooking times are for fresh or thoroughly thawed ground beef. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F. Color is not a reliable indicator of ground beef doneness.

2. Meanwhile, heat taco shells according to package directions.

3. Evenly spoon beef mixture into taco shells. Add lettuce; drizzle with dressing. Top evenly with carrot, celery and cilantro. Garnish with carrot and celery sticks or cilantro sprigs, if desired.

Cook's Tip: One quarter cup prepared ranch dressing combined with 2 tablespoons crumbled blue cheese may be substituted for blue cheese dressing.

Nutrition information per serving using 93% lean ground beef: 326 Calories; 135 Calories from fat; 15g Total Fat (5.6 g Saturated Fat; 0.2 g Trans Fat; 2.2 g Polyunsaturated Fat; 5.5 g Monounsaturated Fat); 84 mg Cholesterol; 315 mg Sodium; 19 g Total Carbohydrate; 2.3 g Dietary Fiber; 1.8 g Total Sugars; 28 g Protein; 0.3 g Added Sugars; 61.2 mg Calcium; 3.6 mg Iron; 569 mg Potassium; 0 mcg Vitamin D; 0.2 mg Riboflavin; 6.9 mg NE Niacin; 0.5 mg Vitamin B6; 2.8 mcg Vitamin B12; 303 mg Phosphorus; 6.9 mg Zinc; 22.5 mcg Selenium; 107.1 mg Choline.

This recipe is an excellent source of Protein, Niacin, Vitamin B6, Vitamin B12, Phosphorus, Zinc, and Selenium; and a good source of Potassium, Riboflavin, and Choline.

For more tasty beef recipes, visit us on the web at www.mnbeef.org.

MBC Board Meeting

The next Minnesota Beef Council Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 27-Tuesday, April 28, 2026. The meeting will be held at the Minnesota Beef Council office in Maple Plain, MN.



DUSTIN WIESE
MSCA COW/CALF CHAIR

Optimism – there is no better word to describe cattle producers today. As agriculturalists, we are naturally optimistic: next crop will be better, next season will be better, next year will be better; but this cattle market has everyone more excited and optimistic than usual.

The USDA is forecasting 2026 cash receipts for cattle to rise to an astonishing 39 percent since 2020. Calves are selling as strong as ever, and the bull sales have been on fire.

The 2025 calf crop set a record low, down two percent from 2024. Last year was the second consecutive year a record low has been set.

We are at an astonishing 75 year record low for

cow herd inventory. And the trend continues with the January 1st, 2026 U.S. Cattle Inventory Report down 300,000 head, a 0.3 percent drop from 2025.

Beef cows that have calved are down one percent, to the lowest inventory since 1961. We are seeing a slight uptick in heifers for cow replacement, but this is at a modest increase of one percent. This means that we cannot expect to see any true herd expansion until 2028.

With that in mind, and with a market like this, now is the time to put your best foot forward and invest in the future. Let's talk bull selection.

As our great nation works towards rebuilding a dwindling cow herd, now it is as important as ever to purchase genetics that will lay the foundation for an expanding cow herd. In fact, 87.5 percent of your current calf crop's genetics are influenced by the last three bulls in the pedigree. A bull's impact can last in your herd for over 25 years through his daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters. What a profound effect a bull can have on your bottom line.

Knowing this, it can be a daunting task to choose your next herd bull. But it does not have to be.

First, determine your operation's marketing goals. Are you selling weaned calves, retaining ownership, selling finished calves or are you raising replacement heifers?

The best bull will vary according to one's own needs and desires but ultimately the best bull will complement your herd and produce a calf that will bring the best product to meet your marketing goals.

Next, utilize the data presented in sale catalogs. Analyze the actual production and learn how to read the Expected Progeny Difference (EPD). An EPD is the estimate of how future progeny is expected to perform.

Determine which EPD's are more important for your cattle. For breeding heifers, CED is high on the list of importance. For finishing cattle, look at \$B. All the information is necessary but which ones to focus on is determined by what you want out of a bull and your

marketing plans.

That said, don't get lost in the numbers alone. Phenotype still matters. A bull must be good in sound and function to do well in the pasture for himself and his daughters. Good feet and legs, appropriate frame size and a masculine look are all vital traits.

If you are still not certain what type of bull you want or what your marketing goals are I would

Dustin Wiese

.. continued on page 12

Thank you, 2026 Beef Alliance Members

THANK YOU to the following businesses that have committed to support members of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association as a part of the Minnesota Beef Alliance Program for 2026. If you are interested in learning more about the Beef Alliance program, contact Angie Ford at mnscomembership@gmail.com.

Prime

ADM
American Foods Group*
Carlson Wholesale
Merck Animal Health*
Minnesota Beef Council
Roto-Mix
Form-A-Feed
Producers Livestock Marketing Association
AgCountry Farm Credit Services
Boehringer Ingelheim

Choice

Artex Manufacturing
Minnesota Corn Growers Association
Purina Animal Nutrition
Zoetis

Select

Kent Nutrition Group
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NEWS BRIEFS

House Agriculture Committee Advances Farm Bill 2.0

WASHINGTON (March 5, 2026) – On March 5, the House Agriculture Committee advanced the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026 out of committee. The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) supports this legislation to finish the Farm Bill process and strengthen provisions that provide certainty to farmers and ranchers across the country.

“The provisions included in the Farm, Food, and National Security Act build upon the legislative successes in the Farm Bill title of the One Big Beautiful Bill for American cattle producers. This legislation finally completes the Farm Bill cycle and gives producers the operational tools and programmatic investments they need,” said NCBA Senior Vice President of Government Affairs Ethan Lane. “NCBA thanks Chairman Thompson and House Agriculture Committee members for passing this crucial legislation for rural America.”

Grants Available to Boost Sales of Minnesota Ag Products

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for the Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Value-Added and Meat, Poultry, Egg, and Milk Processing (MPEM) Grants. These reimbursement grant programs provide funding for eligible applicants to invest in equipment and physical improvement projects that support expanding processing capacity, market diversification, and market access for Minnesota agricultural products.

The MDA expects to award up to \$2.25 million through these reimbursement programs. Individual awards will range from \$1,000 to \$150,000 and require a cash match. Reimbursement grants mean that awardees receive funds after project expenses are paid and documented.

“I’ve visited grant recipients across Minnesota and have seen firsthand how these investments help businesses expand, innovate, and reach new markets,” said Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen.

“Thanks to the support of the Minnesota Legislature, these grants continue to deliver strong returns by building a more diverse and resilient agricultural economy in our state.”

The scoring criteria of this grant program include priority points for projects that increase food safety, hemp fiber processing capacity, and access to kosher or halal markets. Applicants with projects that are led by, impact, or serve Native American Tribal communities are also encouraged to apply.

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- ~ Equipment used in the production of value-added agricultural products
- ~ Grading, packing, labeling, packaging, or sorting equipment
- ~ Cooler walls and refrigeration units
- ~ Equipment that improves process efficiency at biofuel plants
- ~ Livestock slaughter equipment such as cradles, saws, hooks, scalders, or sinks
- ~ Creamery or milk product processing equipment

cessing equipment

~ Egg sanitizing, candling, drying, and grading equipment

~ Equipment that helps to maintain product identity and traceability

Full eligibility requirements and application details are available on the AGRI Value-Added and AGRI MPEM Grant webpages. Applications must be submitted by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17, 2026.

Funding for the Value-Added and MPEM grants is made available through the MDA’s AGRI Program, which administers grants to farmers, agribusinesses, schools, and more throughout Minnesota to advance the state’s agricultural and renewable energy sectors.

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NEWS BRIEFS

President Trump Signs U.S.-Indonesia Trade Deal Expanding Access for U.S. Beef

WASHINGTON (February 20, 2026) – Today, the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) welcomed the announcement that U.S. beef exports will now have duty-free access to Indonesia. Gaining access to the Indonesian market, where U.S. beef has faced significant barriers, has been a priority for NCBA for years. As part of the trade deal, Indonesia will purchase at least 50,000 metric tons of U.S. beef annually and now recognizes USDA authority on food safety and animal health, opening more opportunities for exports.

“U.S. beef exports to Indonesia have faced numerous tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, which has made it incredibly difficult to develop any type of market presence. With this agreement, American cattle producers now have access to the fourth most populous country, the largest halal beef market in the world, and more opportunities for producer profitability,” said NCBA President

and Virginia cattle producer Gene Copenhaver. “When combined with the Taiwan trade deal signed last week, U.S. cattle producers now have more market access than they have had in decades. NCBA thanks President Trump and U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer for their diligent work to sign this trade deal to the benefit of American producers.”

USDA Promotes New, Voluntary “Product of USA” Label

New guidance supports transparency, consumer trust, and American ranchers

(Washington, D.C., March 24, 2026) – Today, on National Agriculture Day, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins announced the launch of a national public awareness campaign to inform meat, poultry, and egg producers of the “Product of USA” voluntary labeling standard which went into effect on January 1, 2026, and increases consumer understanding of what the label means.

“Our great patriot ranchers and producers grow, raise, and harvest

the world’s safest, most affordable, and abundant food supply. American consumers want to support America by buying American and this label will strengthen our food supply chain through transparency, fairness, and trust,” said USDA Secretary Rollins. “This new standard policy ensures producers who invest in a fully American supply chain can compete fairly, and it gives consumers the confidence they deserve about the food they bring home.”

“When we choose to purchase from American producers, we get a superior product while supporting the hardworking family farms who put it all on the line every day to feed, clothe, and fuel our nation,” said SBA Administrator Loeffler. “Amid President Trump’s work to end years of unfair competition and eliminate the massive red tape that has crushed domestic agriculture, Made in America is finally making a comeback. Today, on National Agriculture Day, I urge all Americans to join me in support of the hardworking farmers and ranchers who anchor the U.S. food supply chain that is so vital to keeping our nation strong, safe, and healthy.”

“Our farmers and ranchers are essential to putting real food back at the center of the American plate and delivering on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans,” said HHS Secretary Kennedy. “‘Product of the USA’ labeling puts American producers first, gives families clear, honest information, and empowers them to choose food raised right here at home.”

Under this standard, the “Product of USA” label is reserved exclusively for meat, poultry, and egg products from animals that were born, raised, harvested, and processed in the United States. The claim is voluntary, but companies using it must meet this transparent and verifiable requirement. This ends the prior practice which allowed imported products to carry the claim after minimal processing and strengthens consumer confidence by aligning with what Americans expect and demand.

Since 2017, the United States has lost over 17 percent of family farms, more than 100,000 operations over the last decade. The national herd is at a 75-year low while consumer

NEW BRIEFS

... continued on page 10

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- **GrazeHERs Field Days** – June 11 or June 16 | Sleepy Eye or Blackduck
- **Virtual Fencing & Dairy Grazing** – May 19 | Morris
- **Audubon & Conservation Grazing** – June 9 | Stewartville
- **Virtual Fencing & Beef Grazing** – July 13 | Blue Earth
- **Grazing School 2026** – June 25, July 2, 9 & 16 | Virtual
- **Grazing School Field Days** – July 27 or Jul 30 | Duluth or Harmony
- **NATGLC Grazing the Heartland Bus Tour** – Sep 23–24 | Sioux Falls

View all events and learn more at mnglca.org/events

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NEWS BRIEFS

NEW BRIEFS

... continued from page 9

demand for beef has grown nine percent over the past decade. In October 2025, Secretary Rollins released the USDA Plan to Fortify the American Beef Industry that focuses on rebuilding domestic capacity, improving transparency across the supply chain, and ensuring U.S. ranchers can compete on a level playing field.

Today's announcement on enforcement and promotion of the strengthened "Product of USA" label is a key deliverable under this initiative, advancing the Trump Administration's priorities of fairness, competition, and consumer trust.

Learn more at productofusa.gov.

NCBA Praises U.S.-Taiwan Trade Deal Expanding Duty Free Access for American Beef

WASHINGTON (February 12, 2026) – Today, the National Cattleman's Beef Association (NCBA) welcomed the announcement that U.S. beef exports will gain duty-free

access to Taiwan under a new trade agreement. The agreement removes both tariff and non-tariff barriers, strengthening one of the most important and fastest growing markets for U.S. beef.

"Strong, science-based trade agreements are essential to adding value for U.S. cattle producers, and Taiwan has emerged as one of the strongest international markets for U.S. beef. Duty-free access improves competitiveness and provides long-term certainty for producers who depend on export markets to maximize the value of every animal," said NCBA President Gene Copenhaver. "Foreign markets play a critical role in producer profitability with beef exports accounting for more than \$415 per fed cattle processed in 2024. American cattle producers look forward to this expanded market access for years to come thanks to the work of President Trump and U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer."

The Agreement on Reciprocal Trade (ART) between the U.S. and Taiwan is a big victory for U.S. cattle producers and consumers in Taiwan. Taiwan is currently the sixth largest

export market for U.S. beef, valued at \$709 million in 2024. The landmark trade deal eliminates tariffs on U.S. beef and breaks down non-tariff barriers by reinforcing science-based standards consistent with the World Organization for Animal Health and Codex Alimentarius.

USDA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Advance New World Screwworm Preparedness with New Texas Sterile Fly Facility Contract

Partnership with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Ensures Engineering Excellence and Operational Effectiveness

(Washington, D.C., March 9, 2026)

— The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) today announced a construction contract with Mortenson Construction to build a new sterile fly production facility at Moore Air Base in Edinburg, Texas. This facility is a key component in Secretary Rollins' sweeping 5-prong strategy (PDF, 1005

KB) to fight New World Screwworm (NWS), as it will expand USDA's domestic response capacity, bolstering protection for U.S. livestock, wildlife, and public health.

USACE is partnering with USDA and will provide oversight for the contract, design, engineering, and construction of the facility.

"The Army Corps of Engineers is an essential partner in bringing this facility to life and further highlights the Trump Administration's government wide effort to fight the New World Screwworm threat in Mexico," said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins. "The Army Corps is the best in the business and their engineering expertise and proven track record in delivering complex projects will help ensure we can build a modern, resilient facility that protects American agriculture from invasive pests for decades to come. This first of its kind facility on U.S. soil will ensure we are not reliant on other countries for sterile flies."

For more information about NWS and USDA's efforts, visit <http://www.screwworm.gov/>.

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Prescribed Fire . . . continued from page 1

to develop ways local landowners can assist each other with burns.

According to Lane Johnson, Research Coordinator and Forester at the UMN Cloquet Forestry Center and Chair of the Minnesota Prescribed Fire Council, “Prescribed fire can be a safe and effective stewardship option for landowners who value fire as a tool and ecological process. If you think prescribed fire is right for your land, it is within

reach! Patience and perseverance are needed. Information on variance burn permits for each county is available through the MN DNR Division of Forestry [https://apps.dnr.state.mn.us/burning-permits/admin_areas]. Prescribed fire technical assistance can sometimes be available from your local Soil and Water Conservation District and/or Natural Resource Conservation Service office. Depending on your re-

gion, expertise may also be obtained from your nearest MN Department of Natural Resources office and local fire departments. The Minnesota Prescribed Burn Association [www.minnesotapba.org] has recently been established for landowners seeking cooperative burning opportunities in their local area. Prescribed Burn Associations are a grassroots, neighbors-helping-neighbors model that have origins in rangeland management. With the recognition that improved access to prescribed fire resources is badly needed, the Minnesota Prescribed Fire Council [www.mnprescribedfire.org] is actively working to promote enabling conditions for prescribed fire across the state.”

Implementing prescribed fire as a management practice includes a learning curve. It is a gradual pro-

cess instead of immediate treatment. Like most practices with your livestock, there is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Beyond staying safe, interested producers will benefit from working with professionals the first time around, to select ideal burn area, timing, and frequency. After that, private landowners can likely make the practice their own.

References

Special thanks to Greg Hoch for his consultation about prescribed burning in Minnesota.

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Dustin Wiese ...continued from page 5

recommend getting out and visiting other cattle farms/ranchers. Visiting progressive operations can provide clarity and confidence in your decisions.

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