

Inside the 2026 Minnesota Legislative Session

Bruce Kleven

The 2026 regular session of the Minnesota legislature adjourned at approximately 12:00 a.m. on the evening of Sunday, May 17. The time and date of adjournment is set forth in the Minnesota State Constitution.

This session was shorter than the 2025 session, which was the longer, budget setting year of the bi-ennium. Governor Walz and legislative leaders agreed to an overall supplemental budget of \$660 million for the 2026 session.

This figure follows the primary two-year state budget that was set last year in the amount of \$66 billion. Of that amount, the ag committees had an additional \$80,000 to spend this year while the environment committees did not receive any additional funding.

The MSCA supported two different Republican-authored bills that would have provided additional funding for the wolf and elk depredation programs, but due to the low budget amount allocated to the ag committees, neither bill passed this year. But even if additional funding had been made available, the ag finance bill did not clear the House due to a dispute over the use of the herbicide paraquat.

Democrats on the House Ag Committee insisted that the legislature adopt an outright ban on the sale and the use of paraquat by January 1, 2028. If the ban was not adopted, the House Democrats threatened to refuse to pass the ag finance bill.

In the end, the ban was not passed by either body. House

Democrats kept their promise and did not allow the ag finance bill to pass the House floor.

The House Environment Committee heard a bill this year that would require any new livestock operation with over 10,000 animal units to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Current law requires any proposed livestock operation that is 1,000 animal units or more to complete an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW).

An EIS is a much more in-depth and comprehensive level of environmental review than an EAW. The bill did not pass the House Environment Committee, and the companion bill was not heard or considered by the Senate. The MSCA opposed this bill.

The MSCA also supported various bills exempting small employers from the 2023 Paid Family and Medical Leave Act which became effective on January 1, 2026. The Act imposes

an estimated \$1 billion tax increase annually on businesses, and it will make it nearly impossible to find replacement workers during this challenging tight job market and workforce shortage.

All employers are subject to this bill; there are no agricultural exemptions. The MSCA also supported a bill exempting family farms with five or fewer employees from the 2023 Earned Safe and Sick Time law.

The unique and seasonal nature of the agriculture industry makes recordkeeping and compliance with both of these laws challenging for family farms. Unfortunately, none of the bills related to either program passed this year.

With the legislative session complete, all eyes now turn to the November elections. This fall, all 134 seats in the Minnesota House, all 67 seats in the Minnesota Senate and the Governor's office will be up for election.

Governor Walz announced that he is not running for re-election in early January, so the governor's office is wide open without an incumbent. As a result, there will be a new administration sworn in during the first week of January, 2027.

As of this writing, a total of 43 sitting legislators are retiring or running for other offices, which means just over 21 percent of the members of the legislature will be new next year. Of the 43 retirees, a total of 26 are retiring from service altogether (15 senators and 11 representatives). Seven members of the House are seeking election to the Senate, while another 10 sitting House and Senate members are seeking other offices, including the office of governor, the U.S. Congress and local county commissioner.

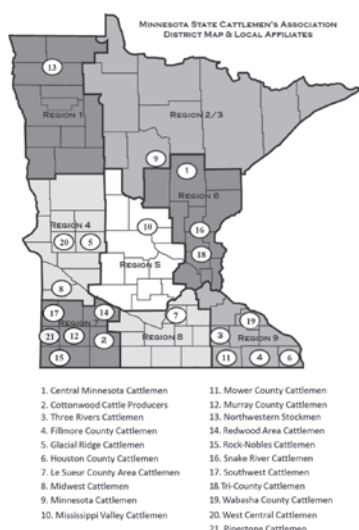
The next regular legislative session is set to begin at noon on Tuesday, January 12, 2027.

MSCA



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>



Broad Coalition Puts Spotlight on Farmer Suicide Prevention

Stress in farm country leads to increased suicide rates

St. Paul, MN: The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is teaming up with a broad coalition of farm, food, and commodity organizations to support a statewide Farm Suicide Prevention Campaign.

The campaign, which kicked off during May's Mental Health Awareness Month, looks to highlight the realities farmers experience and provide resources to those in need.

Currently, farmers are facing financial challenges that have people recalling the farm crisis of the 1980s. These pressures, coupled with farmer suicide rates estimated to be 3.5 times higher than the general population, underscores the need to talk more openly about stress and mental health in agriculture.

"We're all hearing increasing reports of farmers in stress who have taken, or may be thinking of taking their own lives, and we're all concerned about them," said Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen. "We are humbled by the immediate and generous response from our partners who have contributed \$47,500 so far to this suicide prevention campaign."

To date, campaign contributors include:

- Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association
- Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council
- Minnesota Foundation for Agriculture
- Minnesota Grocers Association
- Minnesota Pork Producers Association
- Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council
- Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers
- Minnesota Wheat Research and Promotion Council
- Second Harvest Heartland

The campaign uses 30-second radio spots broadcast on more than 150 AM/FM radio stations throughout Minnesota, as well as social

media. Upcoming workshops in agricultural communities will also teach farmers, farm family members, and agricultural advisors skills they need to help keep a suicidal person safe.

Messages talk about the higher-than-average risk of suicide that farmers and ranchers face and ways farmers who are struggling can seek effective, nonjudgemental help – such as calling or texting 988 or reaching out to the Minnesota Farm and Rural Helpline at 833-600-2670. The campaign also offers tips to family members and others who are concerned, but don't quite know how to help.

The effort was created by an advisory group that includes agricultural mental health providers, Minnesota Department of Health's Suicide Prevention Program, the Minnesota chapter of NAMI, the National Association for Mental Illness, University of Minnesota Extension, and Lake Benton farmer Bob Worth.

"Getting help if you have anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts is really no different than going to the doctor about heart trouble or high blood sugar," said Worth, who serves on the advisory group and speaks openly about his own battle with depression. "We've got to let people know that getting help helps."

Organizations or businesses looking to support the campaign efforts can contact Meg Moynihan at meg.moynihan@state.mn.us.

Additional agricultural mental health, stress, financial resources, and other information are available at www.mnfarmstress.com.

Contact

Allen Sommerfeld, MDA Communications
651-201-6185
allen.sommerfeld@state.mn.us

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NEWS - TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

**KAITLYN ROOT**

Executive Director
Office: 763-479-1011

The recent Minnesota beef checkoff referendum results were certainly disappointing for many who supported the proposed increase. After months of outreach, discussion and producer engage-

ment, the measure failed by an incredibly narrow margin – 380 votes opposed to 377 votes in favor. As a result, the Minnesota beef checkoff will remain at its current rate of \$1 per head, with 50 cents of each dollar allocated to the Cattlemen's Beef Board.

While the outcome was not what many in the industry had hoped for, including myself, there are still important positives to recognize from this process. Over the past several months, the referendum sparked meaningful conversations across Minnesota about the value and purpose of the beef checkoff. The Minnesota Beef Council and cattle industry leaders had a strong presence at producer meetings and events

throughout the state, while additional outreach efforts included mailings, newsletters, radio interviews, public hearings and social media posts.

Those efforts created valuable opportunities to connect with producers and increase understanding of how checkoff dollars are invested to promote beef, support research and strengthen consumer confidence.

Even though the referendum did not pass, the work of promoting beef does not stop. The Minnesota Beef Council will continue operating under the current \$1-per-head assessment, with funds continuing to support beef promotion, research and education efforts. The commitment to building demand for beef and

supporting Minnesota producers remains unchanged.

The educational efforts and relationships built during this process will continue to benefit Minnesota's beef community moving forward.

Most importantly, the industry remains united in its mission to promote beef, support producers and ensure a strong future for Minnesota beef production. The referendum may be over, but the work and the commitment to the industry continues.

For more information on the referendum results, visit the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's website at <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/beef-producers-reject-proposed-beef-checkoff-increase>.

**JAKE THOMPSON**

President

Minnesota's cattle industry continues to play a vital role in our state's economy, rural communities and agricultural heritage. From family cow-calf operations to feedlots and dairy-beef producers, cattle producers across Minnesota work every day to pro-

vide high-quality beef while caring for their livestock and the land. Despite ongoing challenges including rising input costs, market volatility, labor shortages and weather extremes, our producers remain resilient and committed to the future of the industry.

Today, the cattle business is evolving rapidly. Consumers want transparency, sustainability and confidence in how their food is raised. At the same time, producers face increasing regulatory pressure and uncertainty in national markets. These realities make it more important than ever for cattle producers to have a strong, united voice representing their interests at the state and national levels.

That is where the Minnesota State Cattlemen's As-

sociation (MSCA) becomes essential.

Membership in the association provides producers with advocacy, education, leadership opportunities and a network of fellow cattlemen and women who understand the challenges of the business. Whether fighting for fair policy, supporting animal health initiatives or promoting beef to consumers, the association works to protect and strengthen our industry every day.

From my perspective, the strength of the organization depends on the involvement of its members. Every membership adds another voice supporting agriculture and ensuring producers are represented in legislative discussions that directly impact their operations. The associa-

tion also helps develop future leaders who will guide the cattle industry for generations to come.

The future of Minnesota's cattle industry is bright, but continued success requires producers standing together. By becoming active members of the MSCA, cattle producers invest not only in their own operations, but in the long-term success and sustainability of the entire beef industry in Minnesota.

I hope to see you Tuesday, July 14, in Marshall for MSCA's Summer tour hosted by Southwest Cattlemen's. Information and tickets can be found at [MNSCA.org](https://www.mnsc.org).

Until next time, may your fences stay strong and your pastures stay green.

**RACHEL GRAY**

President-Elect

Hello from northern Minnesota.

It has been a remarkable spring in the north country, with record-setting cold followed by record-setting heat, all in May.

Across our area, crop planting is well underway. Most of the corn and soy-

beans appear to be in the ground, and my own corn has already emerged. The cattle are finally heading to pasture after an unusually slow start to the growing season. We have been closely monitoring and measuring pasture conditions to determine the right time for turnout.

Dry conditions have prompted us to revisit our drought plan, and I encourage others to do the same. We have talked through several scenarios and made decisions based on the lack of rain this spring.

For example, we turned bulls out a bit earlier so heifers could be bred sooner and be ready to ship if conditions become especially dry. We also identified areas

to stockpile grass, arranged to purchase the hay we expect to need and focused on spreading available manure to reduce fertilizer costs. Proactive planning now can make a meaningful difference if dry conditions continue.

We have finished AI breeding the heifers, and the bulls are now turned out. Completing that stage of the season always brings some relief.

As the heifers move through the breeding process, I am reminded again of the value of scoring replacement heifers. We evaluate docility, breeding soundness and size, and during pre-breeding exams we measure pelvic size, check for any concerns and document

temperament. This year, we culled three percent of the heifers we had been developing, which is consistent with previous years.

Addressing those issues early should create a more productive herd over time. If you have not had your veterinarian perform pre-breeding exams on retained heifers, it may be worth considering for the insight it provides into your herd.

I hope your spring is going well and that we all receive the sunshine and rain we need in the weeks ahead. I look forward to seeing everyone at the summer tour. If your membership is due for renewal, or if you know someone who has not yet joined, please stop by the membership table.

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Minnesota Cattleman

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**Friday,
JUNE 19**

**2026 Summer Tour
Early Bird Pricing Deadline**

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**AMANDA
ARMSTRONG**
PRESIDENT, MNCW

The Minnesota CattleWomen's (MNCW) Summer Banquet and 35th Annual Beef

Ambassador Contest will be held in St Joseph, Minnesota, on Friday, June 19. The educational session will focus on Direct Marketing Beef with:

- Tina LeBrun, Executive Director of the Southern Center of Agriculture; Tuff Luv Cattle and Backstreet Country Market, Gibbon, Minnesota
- Jessica Heiden, Heiden Century Farms and Hart Country Meats, Rushford, Minnesota, MNCW board member
- Lindsey Fulton Loken, Blondies Butcher Shop, Wa-

namingo, Minnesota,

- Jordan McCallum, University of Minnesota Meat Lab, Minnesota Association of Meat Processors

- Jennifer Stephe, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Meat Inspection Program

Need not be a member to attend these events. There will be a lunch and awards ceremony after. For more information and to register, check out our website at <https://www.mncattletwomen.org/events>.



ERIC ZELTWANGER
Vice President

Greetings fellow cattlemen,

As I write this article the weather forecast finally looks like growing weather. We will get some heat to grow the grass to feed this calf crop and to grow corn to feed them through finishing. With 90 degrees in the forecast for the week and snow not a distant memory at all, welcome to Minnesota.

I had a great opportunity a couple weeks back to visit Washington D.C. for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's (NCBA) Legislative Conference. While at the conference I was amazed at the amount of work NCBA does on cattle producers' behalf daily.

They have many different hurdles to overcome on the daily and do a great job navigating them and putting things in place to protect our

way of life. I would highly encourage anyone with the opportunity to visit D.C. and see what NCBA does first-hand if given the opportunity.

We meet with nine of the 10 Minnesota Congressional offices while in D.C. and had meaningful discussions with all of them about issues facing the cattle industry. They continue to work on passing a new Farm Bill. We can all hope they get that done for the good of ag.

I appreciate all of those who allowed me to go represent Minnesota cattlemen on our trip.

As we hit warm weather, most calving has wrapped up. Many purebred guys are already breeding cows, and most commercial guys are preparing.

Like always, I will encourage you to have a BSE done on your bulls. This ensures you that as of today they are ready for the job at hand. We need all the pregnant cows we can get for a profit and to keep feeding a population that has a great appetite for our beef!

Keep up the great work and as always, may your cows be fat and your calves heavy. Hope to see everyone at the Summer Tour for the great event the Southwest Cattlemen have planned for us!



DALLAS KNOBLOCH
MSCA FEEDER CHAIR

Hello from southwest Minnesota, where we find the crops emerged and waiting for the heat and the past week's moisture to kick in.

It's been an interesting spring again for getting things going. There have been a lot of cold temperatures which have held soil temperatures down. Most areas are dry, so that allowed for early planting but very slow emergence. Pasture grass has been very slow, but things can change and get going quickly.

With an early Memorial Day weekend, summer is kicking off and there is not a better time to invite friends and family and load up the grill with steaks and burgers. It is the preferred protein, and we need to keep the consumer demand high.

With the geopolitical turmoil affecting the oil market, there is a sharper pull to fill the gas tank, so we will see how that all plays out. Demand is great in part due to the years of groundwork laid by the many organizations promoting and advocating for the beef industry. Volunteering and supporting these groups is critical in maintaining and growing into the future!

May has brought record highs in the cash cattle market. The mid to upper \$260s was reached and has since set back slightly on a pull back on the CME. The next two to three months will be interesting trying to balance packer margins, feeder cattle supply,

encroaching western drought and feed prices.

Volatility will be the name of the game, and as a producer it's important to not get caught leaning one way or the other. Discipline in marketing and sticking with programs and strategies that work on your farm are critical in managing times like this. Know your numbers and take advantage of profitable opportunities.

Be sure to enjoy the many summer activities over next few months. This time frame always seems to fly by on the farm, so be sure to take the time to enjoy it.

Lake vacations, county fairs, town celebrations, parades, MSCA's Summer Tour and many others. Sure sounds like great opportunities to load that grill up with BEEF!

May there be enough grass for the cows, and may your gates stay closed and the feedlot pens full!

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB AT
www.mnsca.org

**MSCA July
Quarterly Meeting**

Monday, July 13
Red Baron Arena & Expo
Marshall, MN
11a.m.- 3 p.m.

Upcoming Events Important Dates

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

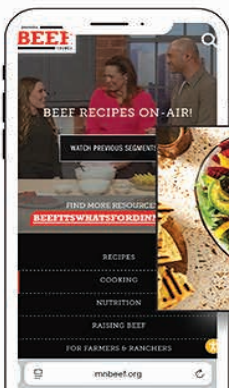
December 10-11, 2027 – 2027 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention – Mankato, MN



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

Minnesota Beef Council

BEEF PROMOTION, EDUCATION, & RESEARCH



f i y p www.mnbeef.org

Minnesota Academy of Nutrition Dietetics Conference



Each year, the Minnesota Beef Council participates in the Minnesota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Conference to connect with nutrition professionals from across the state. This year's event took place on Friday, April 10, at the Eagan Community Center.

Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) staff Kelly Schmidt and Heather DeLong represented the Council

and engaged with a wide range of aspiring registered dietitians and health professionals focused on improving client well-being. The Council's booth featured a variety of educational materials, with a special emphasis on beef's role as a nutritious, high-quality protein – encouraging attendees to consider beef as part of a healthy, balanced diet for their patients and clients.

This year, MBC also sponsored a featured speaker at the conference. Amy Goodson, MS, RD is a nutrition consultant and Board-Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics. She shared a presentation about effective communication and trained attendees on productive conversations regarding food choice and highlighted beef in her presentation.

Minnesota State FFA Convention



The Minnesota State FFA Convention brought together FFA chapters from across the state, creating a dynamic opportunity to connect with future agricultural leaders. On April 20, the Minnesota Beef Council participated with an interac-

tive booth where students could spin the wheel, answer beef-related questions and win fun giveaways. The booth drew an enthusiastic crowd, with hundreds of students eager to learn more about beef and its role in agriculture.



The Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) makes a monthly appearance on Twin Cities Live, a TV show airing daily from 3-4 p.m. CST on KSTP, Channel 5-Eyewitness News, and is rebroadcast late in the evening. At the end of April, MBC CEO Kelly Schmidt featured festive taco recipes on-air in light of Cinco de Mayo. For May, Kelly featured two different beef burger recipes, fitting for this summer season, May Beef Month and National Burger Month. You can find the recorded segments on our Facebook page and on our website at mnbeef.org.

Forest Lake and Eden Prairie Schools Ag Days

On Friday, May 8, the Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) joined other commodity groups at Forest Lake Ag Day, hosted by Forest Lake High School. The Council set up an interactive booth featuring a "spin the wheel" game that quizzed students on beef knowledge and rewarded them with fun giveaways. Forest Lake FFA members also played a key role in serving beef sandwiches to hundreds of students – made possible through

funding from the Local Producer Promotion Program.

On May 20, the MBC attended a similar event, the Eden Prairie Schools Ag Day, hosted by Eden Prairie High School. The same table booth setup and education was delivered at this event. These events underscored the value of bringing beef education to young consumers, especially in urban communities.



Urban Ag Day

The 2026 Urban Ag Days were held at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds on May 12-14. This event, hosted by the Minnesota State Fair, is an educational event where hundreds of third graders from metro schools come to the Minnesota State Fairgrounds to learn about agriculture and get a connection to where their food comes from. The Minnesota Beef Council is a sponsor of the event

and helped in grilling beef burgers and serving lunch to all the students and volunteers. Each attendee was provided with a cheeseburger lunch. The grilling is executed by the West Central Cattleman's Association. This is a great event to teach kids about agriculture and serve them a tasty, nutritious lunch that they will enjoy. It is a fantastic way to reach our future beef consumers.



MEDITERRANEAN GRILLED CHUCK STEAK



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 beef Chuck Steak (about 1 pound)
- 2 teaspoons Mediterranean Spice Mix
- 2 zucchini, cut lengthwise
- 8 baby sweet bell peppers
- 1 teaspoon olive oil

Marinade

- 2/3 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Mediterranean spice mix

COOKING:

1. Combine marinade in a small bowl. Place beef Chuck Steak and marinade in food-safe plastic bag; turn to coat. Close bag securely and marinate in refrigerator 6 hours or as long as overnight, turning occasionally.
2. In a medium size bowl toss zucchini & mini bell peppers with 1 teaspoon olive. Place vegetables on grid over medium heat. Grill 3 to 5 minutes on each side. Remove from grill and set aside. Once slightly cooled slice zucchini into 1/4 inch slices and set aside.
3. Remove steak from marinade, discard marinade. Season each side of roast with 1/2 tablespoon of spice mix. Place on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Grill, covered, 3 to 4 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, 3 to 4 minutes) for medium rare (145°F) to medium (160°F) doneness, turning occasionally.
4. Remove from the grill and season with salt, as desired. Serve alongside grilled vegetables.

MBC Summer Intern

The Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) is pleased to welcome Mary Lanoue as the Summer 2026 Communications Intern. Each year, MBC selects a communications intern to assist in promoting beef, supporting Minnesota cattle farmers and gaining hands-on experience in the agricultural communications field.

The summer internship program provides students with valuable, hands-on experience in agricultural communications and advocacy. The main project of the intern is to coordinate and manage the MBC's presence at the Minnesota State Fair during the 12 days with a booth in the Dairy Building. Other opportunities the intern may partake in include social media and digital content efforts, videography and photography projects and assisting with educational and outreach initiatives that help raise demand for beef and strengthen the Minnesota beef industry.

Hailing from Marshall, Minnesota, Mary brings with her a strong background in the beef industry and a passion for consumer outreach and education. She grew up on a 180-head cow/calf to finishing operation, helping her family with daily maintenance of the farm and working with calf health. This firsthand experience with the beef industry has been the cornerstone of her agricultural outreach and educational efforts.

Mary will be a junior this upcoming fall at the University of Minnesota, pursuing a degree in agricultural communication and marketing with a double major in agricultural education. On campus, she is actively involved as the National President-Elect of Alpha



Mary Lanoue

Tau Alpha, the Representative at Large for Lambda Delta Phi sorority, Creative Coordinator for the CFANS Undergraduate Student Board, student team lead for the Policy Engagement Program and a member of the Agricultural Education, Communication & Marketing (AECM) Club. She also works as a student employee for the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) alumni relations and communications department.

"I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to promote Minnesota beef and ensure the longevity of the industry," Mary said. "I am looking forward to becoming a member of the MBC team this summer and am excited for the future opportunities to come."

Mary began her internship on May 18 and will be with the Council through Labor Day, September 7. Throughout the internship, she can be reached at intern@mnbeef.org or (763) 270-6085.

Minnesota Beef Council Events

May 30 – 31, 2026 | GrillFest (CHS Field, St. Paul, MN)

July 14, 2026 | Summer Tour (Marshall, MN)

July 25, 2026 | Dieticians Workshop,
Oliver Kelley Farm, Elk River, MN

July 21 – August 5, 2026 | TCL 12 Days of Grilling
(KSTP Studio, St. Paul, MN)

July 27 – August 7, 2026 | Trust in Beef (Starbuck, MN)

August 4-6, 2026 | Farm Fest (Morgan, MN)

August 27 – September 7, 2026 | Minnesota State Fair

MBC Board Meeting

The next Minnesota Beef Council Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 13, 2026. The meeting will be held at the Red Baron Arena and Expo in Marshall, MN.

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DUSTIN WIESE
MSCA COW/CALF CHAIR

First cutting of hay is under way, and cow/calf pairs are heading to pasture across Minnesota. While it is one of the best times of year, it is also the time producers need to be especially vigilant about wolves and calf losses. Wolves continue to be a major concern for cow/calf producers in northern Minnesota.

According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), the Minnesota Wildlife Services program received 185 wolf-related complaints in 2025. Of those complaints, 102 were verified with 93 of those cases involving livestock or poultry, with cattle accounting for the majority of the losses. In response to the confirmed depredation, 203 wolves were removed.

Beyond the direct loss of calves, wolf depredation can create additional stress on cattle herds, reduce performance and cause unnecessary veterinary expenses. Furthermore, not every loss can be confirmed, especially in large or remote pasture settings where calves may disappear before evidence can be documented.

Minnesota is home to more than half of the wolf population of the entire lower 48 states. Minnesota is also the only lower 48 state where wolves were never completely eradicated. As the wolf population has expanded over the years, conflicts with livestock producers have also increased.

The MN DNR currently has a wolf management plan in place that provides guidance on wolf population monitoring, depredation control, public safety and population management. The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) had representation on the committee that helped shaped the management plan. The current plan was finalized in 2022 and is intended to guide wolf management efforts for the next 10 years.

However, despite the existence of a state wolf management plan, Minnesota has limited authority to fully implement it because wolves remain

federally protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Efforts to delist wolves have repeatedly faced legal challenges with federal court rulings overturning previous delisting decisions.

What is needed now is a bill that would permanently allow Minnesota to manage their own wolves.

Congress has started taking the steps toward that goal. In December, the U.S. House of Representatives passed HR 845, the Pet and Livestock Protection Act, by a narrow 211-204 vote.

The bill would remove wolves from the ESA and prevent any judicial review of the delisting decision thus allowing each state to have the ability to manage wolves without the interference of a federal judge. Now the bill moves to the Senate where it will hopefully be heard, voted on and passed.

For now, in the event you do have a wolf incident, report it to your local DNR Conservation Officer. If they are able verify your animal was killed by a wolf, you may be compensated for that animal.

Thanks in part to the efforts of the MSCA, additional funding was secured for livestock predation compensation in the 2025 legislative session. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture was allotted \$525,000 total for FY 26&27 to compensate producers in the event of verified wolf kills.

MSCA will continue to advocate for increased funds to ensure producers are reimbursed in a timely matter and will also continue pushing for Senate passage of the Pet and Livestock Protection Act.

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.

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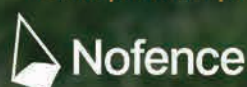
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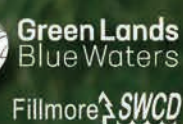
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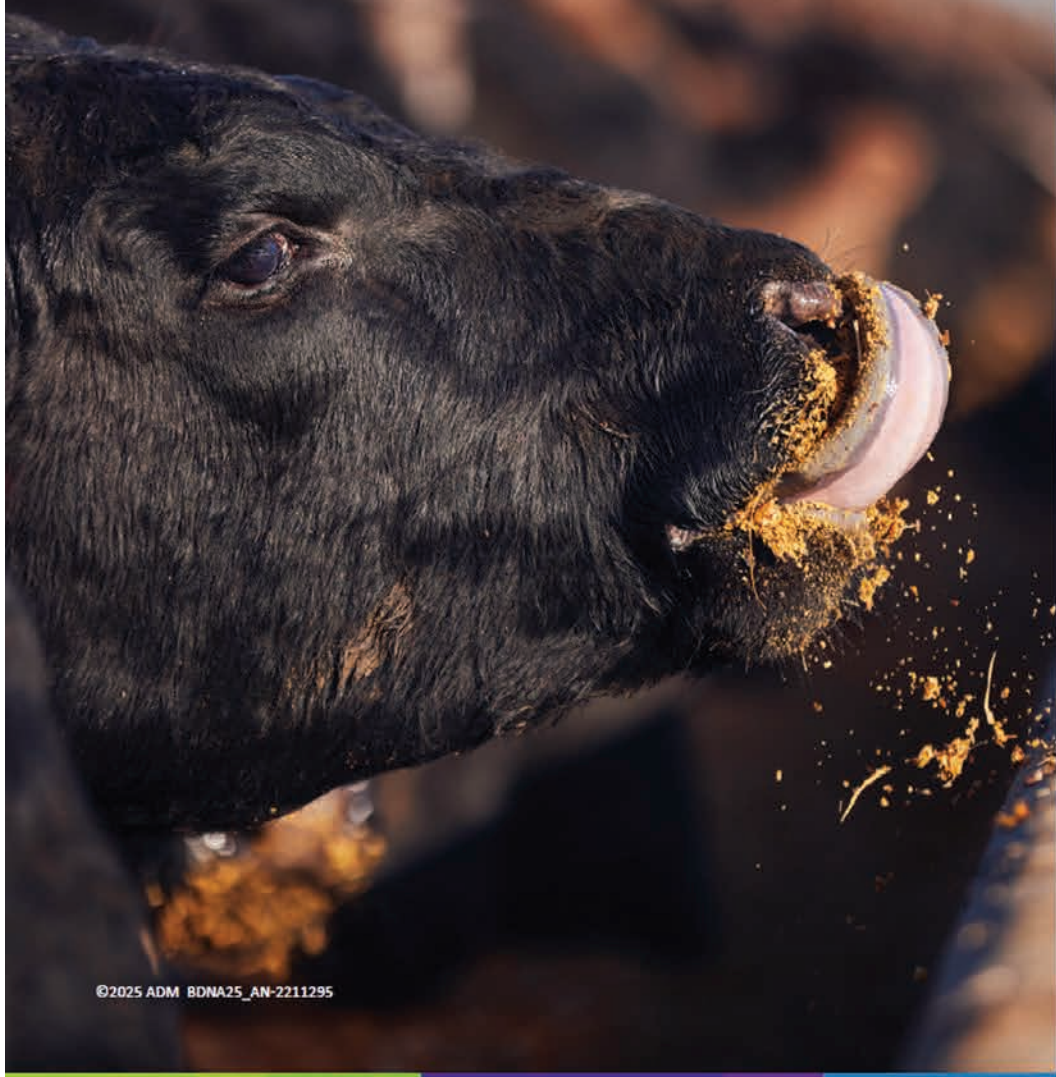
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Ralco's story started over five decades ago in Bob Galbraith's garage in southwest Minnesota. Passed down through the generations, Ralco's legacy now extends beyond family lines, with the first non-family member leading the company. Despite the expansion, Ralco remains deeply rooted in the principles of faith, family and doing what is right.

Today, Ralco's natural solutions have earned the trust of farmers in more than 40 countries worldwide. By helping farmers reduce their reliance on fertilizers and antibiotics, they've pioneered pathways to a safer food supply for consumers while equipping producers with long-lasting natural tools.

For more information, visit ralcoagriculture.com.



Delaney Herefords, Inc.

Jerry Delaney was born and raised on a cattle and farm operation in southwestern Minnesota. His dad, Jack Delaney, started in the Hereford business in 1936 when he won his first purple ribbon at the Minnesota State Fair 4-H show. Jack and his wife Dorothy established Delaney Herefords, Inc. in 1969.

Today, the farm is owned and operated by Jerry and Shelly with their son Nick and wife Holly. They run 1,300 acres of corn and beans and 500 acres of hay and pasture ground. The cow herd consists of 180 mother cows and 80 replacement heifers. Delaney Herefords uses ET, AI and TPR to improve their genetic base and all of the cutting-edge technology that the American Hereford Association (AHA) has to offer.

The Delaneys are located near Lake Benton, Minnesota, on the top of the Buffalo Ridge.

They hold an annual female sale in September, offering top end heifer calves. They also hold an annual bull sale the middle of February with their partners, the Pete Atkins family, from Tea, South Dakota. The Delaneys sell 50 yearling bulls and 30-40 bred heifers.

They also sell embryos and semen. The Delaneys consign

cattle to the National Hereford Sale in Denver and the Gopher and the Purple Sale in Hutchinson.

Jerry has been a lifetime member of the AHA, served on the executive board of the Minnesota Beef Expo and served as past president and director of the Minnesota Hereford Breeders. Jerry is currently the president of the Lincoln County Fair Board.

Jerry has been honored to be inducted into the Minnesota Livestock Breeders Hall of Fame in 2023, as well as his father Jack who was inducted in 1984.

Jerry has been on the farm from the day he graduated high school and lived through every twist agriculture, weather and the Hereford business has thrown his way. He learned that you have to be willing to make changes and adapt to every changing condition to survive.

The Delaney family is a huge part of their business. Jerry and Shelly have five children, Katie and Neil, Jaci and Dayton, Marty and Rikki, Michael and Makenzie and Nick and Holly that all help in some shape or form. They have 15 grandchildren as well that Jerry and Shelly enjoy spending time with.

The Delaneys are excited to be approaching 100 years in the cattle business. They tried to meet this goal of longevity with family, integrity, hard work and honesty being their focus. They notice there is such a difference in the quality of cattle now compared to 100 years ago.

The Delaneys' future goals are to transition this farm over to the next generation without losing any of the land.

What is one thing you wish you would have invested in sooner?

"We wish we could have purchased more land when we were younger and purchased a bale shredder a lot sooner." – Jerry and Shelly Delaney

What's one thing the next generation should know?

"Be progressive but stick with your gut and what works. Don't chase fads." – Jerry and Shelly Delaney



Coon Creek Cattle Company

For Jeremy Larson, cattle farming is both a family legacy and a personal passion rooted in stewardship, hard work and a commitment to progressive grazing practices. As the owner and operator of Coon Creek Cattle Company, Jeremy manages a Limousin cow-calf operation near Tyler, Minnesota, where he raises both commercial and purebred cattle.

The operation traces back to Jeremy's grandfather, who began raising Limousin cattle in 1983. Over time, Jeremy and his father each purchased cows from the family herd, helping grow the operation across generations. After the passing of both his father and grandfather, Jeremy continued carrying on the family tradition while building the operation into what it is today. In 2006, he purchased his own farm and further established Coon Creek Cattle Company.

Today, Jeremy runs approximately 200 to 250 cow-calf pairs. While black-hided cattle are often the industry standard, Jeremy has developed a reputation for his preference for red Limousin cattle, giving Coon Creek Cattle Company a distinctive identity within the region.

The operation focuses heavily on both cattle performance and pasture management. Calving begins each March, and after weaning, calves are retained and backgrounded through the winter until the following spring before moving on to the next stage in the feedlot sector.

Rotational grazing plays a major role in the operation's management strategy. During grazing season, Jeremy moves cattle daily to provide fresh forage while maintaining pasture health and productivity. His grazing system reflects not only his experience as a cattle producer, but also his professional career as an engineering technician with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In his role with NRCS, Jeremy works with farmers to design and implement conservation practices, including rotational grazing systems similar to those used on his own farm.

Looking ahead, Jeremy hopes to continue growing the cattle operation to the point where he can focus entirely on farming

full time. Until then, he remains dedicated to balancing both careers while continuing to build upon the family legacy at Coon Creek Cattle Company.

What is your favorite day of the year on the farm?

"The first day we turn the calves out onto the calving pasture." – Jeremy Larson

What's one thing the next generation should know?

"Take the chance and buy the land." – Jeremy Larson

What's one thing you wish you would have invested in sooner?

"Performance Beef – this technology makes rations so much more efficient and easier. A Ranger with a cab sure is nice, too." – Jeremy Larson



Loyson Farms Inc.

Doug Loyson of Loyson Farms Inc. proudly describes his operation as a "true family farm." Alongside his wife, Jodi, and their four children Lane, Kylee and twins Jacob and Mariah, Doug runs a well-rounded business featuring corn, soybeans, hay and an expanding feedlot system.

"I'm the third generation to live on the farm," says Doug. "It started small, as many operations do, with my grandfather having a little bit of everything. A few hogs, chickens and cattle like they did back then. My dad then focused on feeder cattle, and it grew over the years. When I graduated from college in 1998, we built our monoslope cattle barn to expand as I transitioned back into the operation, and we did the same thing last year as my son (Lane) came back in 100 percent capacity and we grew even further."

A multi-faceted operation from cattle to row crops and a wide variety of feeder cattle housing makes the Loyson operation particularly notable.

"The systems we have are probably what set us apart. From open yards to bed packs to confinement barns and now a deep pit barn," he says. "Last year we built a new deep pit cattle barn featuring a gable roof and state of the art aeration system. Lane is back to the operation, and that was our way to expand to make room for him."

Doug's future in the business stems back to his family and their involvement. He explains that bringing the next generation back into the business is one of the most exciting things to think about.

"I take a lot of pride in it, and it's very exciting to see things go for another generation. We will leave as many doors open as we can for them, and we would look to expand if we ever got to that point."

What is one thing you wish you would have invested in sooner?

"The deep pit barn. If we had built it five years ago, it would have been a lot cheaper, but the timing wasn't right for us until we knew our son was coming back." – Doug Loyson

Favorite days of the year?

"Getting cattle in or shipping cattle out. If you don't get excited about that in the occupation I'm in, you are probably not in the right career." – Doug Loyson

What's one thing the next generation should know?

"Know your costs. With the price of cattle where they are you have to 100 percent know your costs. As far as feeding cattle, you have to know your break evens and cost of gain. It's something we have always strived to do, but you are always learning – learning new opportunities to try new feeds or experiments to get as low of cost of gain as you can. Anything you can do to get a competitive edge. You are either going forward, or you are falling backward. It's either one or the other."

This bio was provided by Michelle Weber

2026 SUMMER TOUR STOPS



Triple C Feeders

For five generations, the Chandler family has built a cattle feeding operation rooted in hard work and a commitment to the beef industry. Today, Triple C Feeders is owned by Troy Chandler alongside his father, Jeff Chandler, with the next generation already preparing to step into the family business.

The operation's history dates back to the 1950s, when Troy's great-grandfather purchased Holsteins on the same site where the farm still operates today. Starting small, the family steadily expanded through the 1970s and 1980s, eventually growing to around 700 head by the early 1990s. Troy's grandfather, Marvin Chandler, later took over the operation before passing it on to Jeff and now Troy, continuing a long-standing family tradition in cattle feeding.

Troy officially joined the operation in 2002, and today the family business includes Troy, Jeff, Marvin and Troy's son, Drew, who is preparing to become the fifth generation involved in the operation following college graduation. Along with family labor, Triple C Feeders employs one full-time hired man to help manage the day-to-day responsibilities of the farm.

Over the years, the operation has continually evolved to improve cattle comfort, efficiency and feeding practices. The farm transitioned from traditional dirt lots to concrete open lots with access to shelter buildings before making a major investment in 2008 with the construction of a 2,000-head monoslope bed-pack barn. Today, the operation is permitted for 2,700 head, with cattle in the monoslope barn and the original feedlot area.

The feeding system has also modernized significantly through the years. What once relied on silos has transitioned to flat storage and bunker systems with concrete retaining walls, creating a more efficient and streamlined feeding process.

In addition to the cattle operation, the Chandler family farms approximately 3,000 acres of corn, soybeans and alfalfa to support the livestock enterprise and overall farm operation.

Like many in agriculture, the Chandlers have faced challenges over the decades. Troy notes that balancing time between work and family life remains one of farming's greatest demands. Financial pressures were especially difficult through the 1990s and early 2000s, while today's challenges center more around the high cost and risk associated with purchasing cattle in a volatile market.

The Chandler family is excited to welcome visitors to Triple C Feeders during the 2026 Summer Tour. They value opportunities for producers to learn from one another and believe tours like this help strengthen the industry by allowing attendees to take home new ideas and practices that may benefit their own operations.

What is one thing you wish you would have invested in sooner?

"Everything. If you are thinking of expanding, sooner is better. Cost is always going up. If you are thinking of making changes that will benefit the operation, do it." – Troy Chandler

What's one thing the next generation should know?

"If you are considering getting into this industry and you have the resources, don't wait, get started right away." – Troy Chandler



Vos Feeders

For Danny Vos, cattle farming has never just been an occupation, it's been a lifelong goal rooted in family, hard work and a passion for agriculture. Today, Danny owns and operates Vos Feeders alongside his wife, Holly, and their five children, continuing to build a cattle operation that reflects both tradition and innovation in southwest Minnesota.

Danny's journey in the cattle industry started early. At just 17 years old, he purchased his first 36 head of heifer pairs, already determined to build a future in agriculture. After graduating high school in 2003, he officially began farming the half section of land where his mother grew up. Danny's parents had purchased the farm in 1995 and rented it out until he was ready to take over the operation himself.

Raised around agriculture, Danny always knew cattle would be part of his future. His father had cattle custom fed and briefly maintained a small cow herd while also working full time as a truck driver. Although balancing trucking and cattle wasn't sustainable for the family at the time, the experience left a lasting impression on Danny and helped shape his passion for the livestock industry.

In 2009, Danny took a major step forward when he purchased a feedlot from a retiring producer. At the time, Danny was hauling cattle full time, but the opportunity to own and operate a feedlot was one he couldn't pass up.

Over the years, Vos Feeders has continued to evolve. Danny transitioned much of the operation from outdoor pens to a confinement-style barn system, improving efficiency and cattle comfort. More recently, the farm added a new load-out and cattle working area to further modernize the facility.

Today, the Vos family manages approximately 250 stock cows alongside the feedlot and farms around 600 acres of corn used primarily to feed the cattle. The operation also incorporates conservation-minded practices, including grazing cattle on corn stalks seeded with cover crop mixes. Partnering with a neighboring no-till farmer, Danny grazes cows across nearly 1,000 acres of cover-cropped ground each year.

Family remains at the center of everything at Vos Feeders. Danny and Holly's five children are actively involved in the day-to-day work of the farm, often helping before heading off to school in the mornings. Their involvement reflects the strong family values and work ethic that continue to drive the operation forward.

Danny remains committed to the industry and believes caring for livestock takes a special kind of dedication. He is excited to welcome visitors to the 2026 Summer Tour and showcase both the cattle industry and the agriculture community of southwest Minnesota.

What is one thing you wish you would have invested in sooner?

"Technology – there is a lot of good technology out there to benefit operations." – Danny Vos

What's one thing the next generation should know?

"Start as young as you can. The older you get, the harder it is to get started in this industry." – Danny Vos



Weber Land and Cattle Inc.

Drive 25 miles straight east of Brookings, South Dakota, through rolling hills just off the peaks of the naturally formed Buffalo Ridge and you will find yourself slipping down into a scene worthy of a Hallmark movie with a welcoming lakeside community nestled in the valley of Lake Benton, Minnesota. Continue just four miles north, and this is where you will find the headquarters of Weber Land and Cattle. Commonly filled with a buzz of energy pulsing through the yard with its heart-beat of kids playing, the hum of farming and cattle equipment as horses, cows and calves graze quietly.

Owner and operator, Jesse Weber, has built the farming and cattle operation from the ground up for the past 25 years and now, with his wife of 15 years, Michelle, and their five young children Wacey (13), Reese (11), Andi (10), Mick (7) and Wren (5). Jesse's parents, Joe and Jodi Weber, both also play a pivotal role in the day-to-day operations making Weber Land and Cattle a family business to the core.

"The kids are getting more and more active each and every day," Jesse states. "The farm and ranch have been a challenge to grow and maintain without expanding our labor force, but with my family it helps me get through the toughest of days. The kids are still very young, but I'm excited to see them get involved more in their own way and every bit helps."

As a first-generation rancher at the age of 13, Jesse purchased his first heifer, a Hereford, and with that a seed was planted and has continued to blossom as he developed a progressive purebred Red Angus breeding program recognized for his attention to phenotype, structure and genetic diversity.

"I think one thing that makes our program unique is the extremely limited ET work we do," he says. "Our focus has always been on quality instead of quantity. If an individual animal isn't pulling their weight here, they are gone. It's that simple for us. Our cattle have to perform in the role they were bred for, whether that is here or for our customers, so we run a 'no excuses' breeding program. Now, there is nothing wrong with the way the industry is trending, with a strong focus on ET, but it's just not what I want to do here. I think that is something very special about us."

Throughout Jesse's career he has seen some great accomplishments which he modestly and rarely brings up.

"Our foundation cow, Dolly, is what got us off and running with her first two calves winning as champions at the National Western Stock Show in Denver," he says.

He also carries a long list of national Grand and Reserve Champion titles including winning the NWSS Pen of Three Bulls for five consecutive years until 2017.

"Jesse used showing his cattle as a tool to get them in front of the right audience. Instead of running ads he would take them straight to the potential buyers to create an active contact list and build strong face to face relationships for many years," Michelle explains. "When we decided to bring the bull sale home, we changed directions to focus on our home operation instead of hauling to shows. It was the right move for our young family, the cattle we are raising and growing new awareness of the bull sale. It made the customer need to come visit the ranch verses seeing only the few we were hauling."

"We want producers to come and really see what we are doing here," Jesse adds.

Jesse's efforts and influence on the Red Angus breed have not gone unnoticed as Weber Land and Cattle received 2025 "National Red Angus Breeder of the Year" in Loveland, Colorado.

In addition to the continual changing of seasons with an active family, farming (tillage, planting, spraying, harvest and hauling) and ranching (calving January through March, AI'ing, rotational grazing system, weaning and marketing) there are a few major landmarks that stand out in the Webers' year.

Every year, on the second Tuesday of March (March 9, 2027), the Webers host their annual bull sale at the ranch headquarters selling 50 yearling bulls along with some select yearling heifers.

Summer Tour . . . continued on page 14



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Summer Tour . . . continued from page 13

Michelle's role also shifts with the seasons as she spends January, February and March full-time on the ranch alongside Jesse for the entire calving season through the bull sale then shifts her attention back to her own business, Michelle Weber Studio, where she operates an online portfolio as well as a gallery and studio space in Lake Benton, MN. Her art career began within the niche of the beef industry and has grown onto a national level where she represents agriculture and the western lifestyle by capturing rural life on canvas.

Michelle's clients range from creating a collection for the renowned 6666's (Four Sixes Ranch), a longtime relationship with the American Hereford Association, American Angus Association and more. Her annual "Fall Print Release" opens late September or early October through her website michelleweberstudio.com. Most recently, Michelle was invited to be featured in the Museum of Western Art (voted 2026 #1 Western Museum in the nation) in Kerrville, TX in 2025 and 2026.

"My only goal is to do this with my kids. That is literally my sole goal," Jesse states.

Michelle says, "Jesse and I as parents have a clear vision of how we want to raise our kids as well-rounded individuals, and the ranch is the best we have found to do that. Hard work, commitment to something greater than yourself and a level of drive which can take you beyond your own expectations. Start small and dream big wherever life takes you."

Follow Weber Land & Cattle and Michelle Weber Studio on Facebook or on their websites weberlandandcattle.com & michelleweberstudio.com.



Todd Meulebroeck Farms

Located eight miles south of Marshall and five miles east of Russell, Minnesota, Todd and his dad Dennis Meulebroeck operate a diversified cattle and crop farm built on generations of hard work, family involvement and a commitment to growth. The operation includes approximately 1,500 acres of corn, soybeans and hay, along with feeding capacity for around 800 head of cattle when the yards are full.

In 1970, Todd's grandpa Raymond purchased the farm, and Dennis purchased the farm in 1990. Todd grew up working alongside Dennis who has raised cattle for decades. Eight years ago, Dennis moved off the farm and Todd gradually began taking over the day-to-day management of the operation, though Dennis still comes to help most days. Today, the farm continues to evolve as Todd balances tradition with efficiency-focused improvements.

A major milestone for the operation came with the construction of a new pit barn completed last year. Todd custom feeds cattle out of the new facility, with the first group set to exit in early June. The farm also includes older outside yards and a bed-pack monoslope barn. Throughout the year, cattle move through a steady rotation – calves fill the older yards in the fall, outside

yards house cattle in the spring, and yearlings are fed through the summer months before the next group of calves arrives in November.

For Todd, the new pit barn has transformed efficiency on the farm. Without the need for bedding, chores and cattle management are streamlined, allowing him to better balance the demands of the operation and family life.

"The efficiency is so much better," Todd says. "The kids aren't quite old enough to help too much yet, so I needed a system that worked better for me to manage."

Family remains at the center of everything the Meulebroecks do. Todd and his wife, Amber, are raising three children who are already beginning to take an active interest in the farm. Todd especially enjoys seeing his oldest child help with stacking bales, moving cattle and tillage work. Having grown up spending time alongside his own father and grandfather, Todd values the opportunity to now create memories with his children.

Looking ahead, Todd hopes to continue growing the operation while keeping the next generation involved. Expanding beyond what his dad started was always a goal, and the addition of the new pit barn helped make that possible. If his children choose to return to the farm someday, Todd hopes there may be opportunities for even more growth in the future.

What is one thing you wish you would have invested in sooner?

"Different equipment to make everything more efficient. Top discharge bale shredder is something specific and a bigger feed wagon." – Todd Meulebroeck

Favorite days of the year?

"Loading out cattle and fall combining and harvesting are always rewarding." – Todd Meulebroeck

Least favorite?

"Snowstorms and moving snow. Although I do not enjoy the storms, I do like the changes in seasons and having something different each day." – Todd Meulebroeck

What's one thing the next generation should know?

"If you can cashflow and make it work, you just have to do it. It's always going to be 'too expensive.' Spend within your needs, but if you can afford it, you don't want to regret not taking the chance." – Todd Meulebroeck



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