The Minnesota Cattleman®
The Official Newspaper of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association
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Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention Set for December 11-12 in Mankato

MANKATO, Minn. – Minnesota cattle producers will gather in Mankato Dec. 11-12 for the 2026 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention, hosted by the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA). This year's convention, themed "Forging the Future," will focus on the vital role individual cattle producers play in shaping the future of Minnesota's cattle industry.

The convention will be held at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center in downtown Mankato and will feature a trade show, educational sessions, networking opportunities, awards, entertainment, live & silent auction and the MSCA's annual business meeting.

The convention officially gets underway Thursday, Dec. 10, with the Policy and Resolutions Meeting from 2-6 p.m. All MSCA members are welcome to participate as the Resolutions Committee members discuss and vote on policies that help guide the organization. Policies approved during the meeting will be brought before the full MSCA membership for consideration during the MSCA Annual Meeting on Saturday.



Friday: Education, Industry Insights and the Best of Beef Banquet

Friday's educational lineup will offer producers practical information and perspectives from across the beef industry.

Sessions and panels include:

• **Young Producers in Ag Panel:** A discussion on navigating social media, technology and the evolving role of digital tools in agriculture.

• **Cattlemen's Education Series:** Sponsored by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and National Corn Growers Association, this session will focus on "Selling Cattle: What Drives Value."

• **Farm Succession/Transition:** An individual representing Uncommon Farms will present on farm succession and transition planning.

•**Beef x Dairy:** Feedlot Data & Future for Genetic Makeup of Crosses: presented by Melissa Runck, Extension Educator, Beef Production Systems, University of Minnesota.

• **Minnesota Legislative Update:** Bruce Kleven, MSCA, legislative consultant will take a look at the Minnesota legislative landscape and current issues affecting cattle producers.

• **Friday Keynote Speakers:** Kent Bacus, Executive Director of Government Affairs for NCBA, and Jennifer Nealson, Senior Vice President of Global Marketing & Research for NCBA.

Friday evening will conclude with the Best of Beef Banquet, featuring a beef dinner, awards ceremony and entertainment by comedy magician and mentalist Parker William. The evening will wrap up with a live auction, with proceeds benefiting the MSCA.

Saturday: Cattle Industry Education and Annual Meeting

Saturday's programming will feature additional educational opportunities and organizational updates, including:

•**American National CattleWomen (ANCW) Update:** presented by Debbie Chute, ANCW president-elect.

•**Rethinking the Cow: Small Management Changes, Big Reproductive Returns:** presented bv John Jaeger, South Dakota State University Professor and Extension Specialist – Beef.

• **Minnesota CattleWomen's Meeting:** 10 a.m.-noon.

• **MSCA Quarterly & Annual Meeting:** 10-11:30 a.m.

The convention provides Minnesota cattle producers and industry members an opportunity to learn from industry experts, connect with fellow producers, recognize outstanding accomplishments and participate in discussions that will help shape the future of the cattle industry.

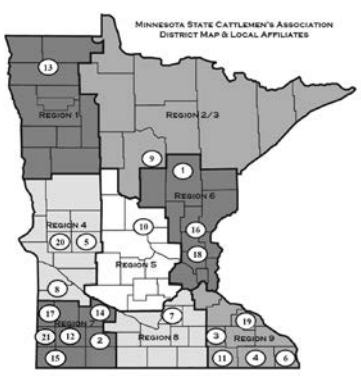
Register Now

Registration is available at mnsca.org/convention. Registration prices increase Monday, Nov. 30, so attendees are encouraged to register by Nov. 30 to take advantage of the lower registration rate. Sponsor and vendor signup is available online as well.

For more information about the Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention, visit mnsca.org/convention. If you have questions about the convention, contact MSCA Executive Director Kaitlyn Root by emailing kaitlyn@mnsca.org or calling (763) 479-1011.

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!

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

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NEWS – TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL



KAITLYN ROOT

Executive Director
Office: 763-479-1011

Hello, readers!

I hope you are all doing well and staying busy during this fall harvest season.

With the Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention and Annual Meeting just around the corner, I thought this would be a good time to take a closer look at the policy process within the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA).

Each December, one of the most important grassroots processes in the MSCA takes place: the Policy and Resolutions Meeting, held the Thursday before convention. This year's meeting will be held Thursday, Dec. 10, from 2-6 p.m., at the convention center in Mankato.

During this meeting, MSCA members have the opportunity to discuss, debate and ultimately vote on policy resolutions. Policies that receive approval at the Policy and Resolutions Meeting are then brought before the full MSCA membership for consideration and a vote during the Annual Meeting on Saturday of convention.

Those policies approved by the full membership become part of the MSCA policy book and help guide the association's advocacy efforts throughout the year.

But the process doesn't necessarily stop there. The MSCA Resolutions Committee may choose to bring some of Minnesota's policies forward for consideration by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), potentially adding Minnesota producer voices to NCBA's policy discussion.

That is grassroots advocacy at work.

It starts with Minnesota cattle producers identifying issues that matter to them, bringing those ideas forward and working together to develop policy that represents the interests of our state's cattle industry. Those policies can then make their way from a local cattlemen's association to the MSCA and, potentially, all the way to the national level through NCBA.

If you are interested in submitting a policy resolution, I encourage you to visit with your local cattlemen's association and get involved in the process.

I hope to see you all at the Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention! And consider attending the Policy and Resolutions Meeting. Your voice matters, and this is one of the best ways to make sure it is heard.



JAKE THOMPSON

President

For generations, Minnesota cattle producers have weathered challenges ranging from harsh winters and droughts to market volatility and changing consumer demands. Through hard work, resilience and determination, our industry has continued to provide safe, high-quality beef while serving as the backbone of rural communities across the state. Today, however, we face a new set of challenges that remind us of the importance of standing together as one unified voice.

Many producers are increasingly concerned about market manipulation and the imbalance of power within the cattle marketplace. Government regulations and policies often impact producers who already operate on thin margins, while continued consolidation among packers limits competition and leaves many cattlemen and women questioning whether they are receiving a fair price for their livestock.

When individual producers face these challenges alone, their voices can be drowned out. Together, however, we can advocate for policies that promote transparency, competition and fairness throughout the supply chain.

At the same time, Minnesota's agricultural landscape is changing. Large-scale solar projects, data centers and other development interests are competing for valuable farmland and grazing acres. While property owners have the right to make decisions about their land, cattle producers must remain actively engaged in conversations about land use, property rights and the long-term impact these projects may have on food production and rural communities. Once productive agricultural land is lost, it can be difficult, if not impossible, to bring it back into production.

These challenges highlight why organizations like the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association are more important than ever. Membership is more than a line item on a dues statement.

It is an investment in the future of our industry. A strong membership base increases our ability to advocate at the Capitol, influence policy decisions, educate consumers and protect the interests of cattle producers across the state.

The success of our industry depends on unity. Whether you run a small cow-calf operation or a large feeder enterprise, we all share a common goal: preserving our way of life for the next generation. The challenges facing cattle producers are not going away, and neither can our commitment to protecting our industry.

If you are already a member, now is the time to renew your membership and continue supporting the work being done on your behalf. If you know a neighbor, friend or fellow producer who is not a member, encourage them to join. Every membership strengthens our voice, expands our influence and helps ensure that Minnesota cattle producers have a seat at the table when decisions affecting our livelihoods are being made.

The Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention provides a valuable opportunity to turn that commitment into action. By attending, members can engage in meaningful discussions about the challenges facing our industry, help shape policy priorities, learn from industry experts and connect with fellow producers who share the same passion for protecting agriculture and rural communities. The convention is more than a gathering, it's where we come together to build the relationships and strategies needed to defend our industry's future.

Together, we are stronger. Together, we can push back against threats to our markets, our land and our way of life. Renew your membership, make plans to attend the 2026 Convention and help ensure that Minnesota cattle producers remain a powerful force for generations to come.



RACHEL GRAY

President-Elect

Greetings from northern Minnesota.

The defining word this month is rain—we have received more rainfall than at any other point this year.

Some producers have begun chopping corn and harvesting beans, but fieldwork is currently on hold until conditions dry. In the meantime, we are tackling the ongoing work of cleaning and organizing the shop.

We have been shipping bred heifers and beginning to purchase open heifers. Fall is always a busy season as we transition from bred heifers to opens, and it is my favorite time of year. After watching these heifers grow and develop over the past year, we are pleased to send them to their new ranches.

As summer work winds down, this is an ideal time to evaluate your herd and identify which cows are meeting expectations and which are not. Scheduling pregnancy checks early and administering fall vaccinations while the weather remains warm are both sound management practices.

It is also a good time to review your calendar and make plans to attend our annual convention. The event continues to grow each year, the trade show is excellent and the featured speakers will provide valuable information. I hope to see you there.

Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association
PO Box 12
Maple Plain, MN 55359
763-479-1011
www.mnsca.org
mnsca@mnsca.org

Executive Committee

President - Jake Thompson
Barnesville, MN 56514
(218) 329-9293, fourhillfarms2@yahoo.com

President-Elect - Rachel Gray
Blackduck, MN 56630
(218) 766-4929, ltimber1616@gmail.com

Vice President - Eric Zeltwanger
Morris, MN 56267
(320) 766-0066, ericzcattle@gmail.com

Past President - Grant Breitkreutz
Redwood Falls, MN 56283
(507) 430-0607, gdbreitkreutz@hotmail.com

Cow-Calf Council Chair - Dustin Wiese
Pequot Lakes, MN 56472
(218) 537-0096, dustinwiesefwr@gmail.com

Feeder Council Chair - Dallas Knobloch
Hills, MN 56138
(507) 227-1304, daknob@alliancecom.net

Legislative Chair - Ryan Vos
Hadley, MN 56151
(507) 227-2188, ryanvosfarms@gmail.com

Membership / Industry Relations Chair - Angie Ford
Slayton, MN 56172
(507) 360-7937, mnscamembership@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer - Kevin Hoge
Aitkin, MN, 56431
(218) 549-3337, flatrock@frontiernet.net

Business Director & Accounting – Heather DeLong
Maple Plain, (763) 479-1011

Executive Director - Kaitlyn Root
Maple Plain, kaitlyn@mnsca.org
Office: 763-479-1011

MSCA Regional Directors

Region – 1 James Widner
Strandquist, MN 56758
(218)-991-2210, james.widner@hotmail.com

Region – 2 & 3 Eric Nolte
Sebeka, MN 56477
(218) 539-0124, hiddenangus@gmail.com

Region – 4 Mark Schoenfeld
Dawson, MN 56232
(612) 325-4001, circlescc@hotmail.com

Region – 5 Darv Keehr
Little Falls, MN 56345
(320) 630-6337, dkeehr@brainerd.net

Region – 6 Ryan Anderson
Aitkin, MN 56431
(320) 364-0355, royalempireangus@gmail.com

Region – 7 Ryan Vos
Hadley, MN 56151
(507) 227-2188, ryanvosfarms@gmail.com

Region – 8 Ruth Hoefs
Le Center, MN 56057
612-756-1500, rashoefs@gmail.com

Region – 9 Chris Miller
Mabel, MN 55954
(507) 458-7776, viewlawn1@gmail.com

Minnesota Cattleman

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For Advertising Contact:
Kaitlyn Root, kaitlyn@mnsca.org,
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AMANDA ARMSTRONG
President, MNCW

Happy fall everyone,

A quick update from the Minnesota CattleWomen!

The Minnesota State Beef Ambassadors attended the Minnesota State Fair and hosted Beef Bingo with the crowd at the Christensen Stage. They gave out highlighters with the Minnesota Beef Ambassador logo on which were used by participants as dabbers for bingo.

It was a great interactive turnout and lots of educational fun. The ambassadors also read ag books in the Dairy Building during the fair for Ag in the Classroom and volunteered in the Minnesota Beef Council Booth.

If you have any activities or events you'd like the Minnesota Beef Ambassadors to attend, please reach out to myself or Rosemary Gustafson, the adult leader of the program.

The Minnesota CattleWomen will be at the Minnesota Beef Expo this year with a booth. We are planning on a welcome booth and youth education activities in the calf pen.

Our next webinar is Oct. 29 at 7 p.m. and will feature Mom at the Meat Counter Janelle Yancy, a meat scientist at the University of Arkansas. She has quite a following on social media, and it's going to be a great webinar that is open to everyone. To register, visit mncattlewomen.org.



ERIC ZELTWANGER
Vice President

Greetings fellow cattlemen,

As we march through the fall harvest workload, we have been given some time to stop and think (rain delays). What will the price of fat cattle do? What will calves be worth at Christmas? What about in March? Why does the government keep meddling in our business and trying to wreck a market that we have worked long and hard to get?

I for one don't have the answers to these questions, but they do give me something to think about on a daily basis. I also have time to think about the list of things to do before the ground is frozen and water outside turns solid.

The top of my list in the near future is to get calves pre weaning shots and get them ready to wean and to be the highest value that I can make them. It's important to protect them from any issues I can by getting them vaccinated and worked so they are ready for wherever they go from my place.

Cutting bulls, vaccinating calves and getting them boostered are some of the easiest ways for a rancher to make money. This also sets them up to be better animals for the next person in line to own them. The whole point being to make them the best beef they can be for the food chain.

Once we get harvest behind us and the calves settled in, we can look ahead to things like the Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention. This year's convention will be held in Mankato Dec. 11-12.

The Resolutions Committee will meet on Dec. 10 to discuss and address all the resolutions brought forward from all members of the MSCA.

This is where we come up with policy that we as an organization vote on. Some of this policy has been carried all the way to NCBA's policy book from locals in Minnesota. It is the true grassroots structure that makes MSCA work.

If you want to attend, please reach out to Kaitlyn or someone on the board for more information. Also, it is time to get NCBA CattleCon plans locked up to make sure you have a place to stay and can be a part of all NCBA has to offer.

Til' then, I am sure we will all find enough to keep us busy. May your cows be fat and your calves heavy.



DALLAS KNOBLOCH
MSCA Feeder Chair

Hello to everyone from SW MN!

We'll start with the weather since there is plenty to talk about there. In this part of the state, we have entered an extremely rainy period over the last few weeks. We have gone from dry and doing anything everyday to wet almost every day.

The damp weather is certainly providing some challenges to outside cattle feeding and crop harvest. It looks like a challenge in the extended forecast with a dry sunny day being a gift.

Certainly refilling a very empty soil bank. We'll carry on as always and somehow harvest always finds a way to get done!

One of my thoughts over the last month or so has been the challenges of feeding cattle. We complain about the weather and deal with its many challenges and untimely weather events, but it usually averages out in the end. There are health challenges when feeding livestock.

We adapt and learn different management strategies and learn to minimize large disease breakouts on each of our specific farms. Then we have the markets.

They have their supply and demand challenges along with the seasonal trends each year. We learn to manage that with experience and better marketing skills gained along the way.

Over the last year, one of the biggest blindsides has been social media posts. Over the last 50 years, the beef industry has paid a lot of attention to its products and what the consumer wants.

I feel the beef industry has done well with adapting to the consumer, building their confidence in American beef, and giving them many choices at the store counters along with developing a very tender, tasty and healthy product.

We have DEMAND for our product. But in this past year, beef has been singled out as a product that is too pricey. So, we have had the social media post providing very large market swings and dramatic price plunges that have become very hard to manage.

Moves of $400 per head have been common the last two falls in just a week or two. This is quite a shock to those that have very limited market days such as cow/calf producers and feedlots that market fewer heads of cattle. A year's work can be lost in just one day.

It is hard to find an industry that is more resilient, independent and capital intense yet dedicated to overcoming. Pay close attention to friends, neighbors and oneself for signs of struggles and feelings of failure within operations.

The super wet weather and these challenges really reinforce the need for signs of mental health. We have always found a way, but the road currently seems to have a steeper incline than normal.

It is still exciting to see the calves as they are weaned and moved on to feedyards and backgrounders. It signals the start of a new season at the feedyard. Cash cattle have seemed to stabilize and let's look for the seasonal trends and tighter supplies to start climbing our way higher. The fundamentals of tight supplies are still there!

I wish each of you a safe and successful harvest. Keep the grills sizzling, the new calves in the pen and remember our next season won't have any flies!

Nominations Open for 2026 Minnesota Cattleman of the Year and Minnesota Beef Industry Service Awards

The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) is accepting nominations for two awards honoring individuals/businesses who have made significant contributions to Minnesota's cattle and beef industry.

The Minnesota Cattleman of the Year Award and the Minnesota Beef Industry Service Award recognize individuals/businesses who have gone above and beyond in their commitment to Minnesota's beef industry and whose efforts have made a lasting impact on producers, communities and the industry as a whole.

"Recognizing the people who dedicate their time, talent and passion to Minnesota's cattle and beef industry is an important part of our annual convention," says MSCA President Jake Thompson. "These awards provide an opportunity to celebrate the individuals whose contributions help strengthen our industry and build a future for the next generation."

MSCA encourages cattle producers, industry professionals and members of the agricultural community to nominate deserving individuals for either award.

Nomination deadline: Friday, Oct. 30, 2026

Award recipients will be announced during the Best of Beef Banquet at the Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention on Friday, Dec. 11, in Mankato.

For additional information and to submit a nomination, visit mnsca.org/scholarships-awards.

Help us recognize the people who make Minnesota's beef industry stronger.

Upcoming EVENTS & Important DATES

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

JULY 12, 2027
MSCA Quarterly Meeting & PAC Event

JULY 13, 2027
MSCA Summer Tour – hosted by Glacial Ridge Cattlemen's Association, Belgrade, MN

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

DECEMBER 1-2, 2028
2028 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention – St. Cloud

DECEMBER 7-8, 2029
2029 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention – St. Cloud



Minnesota Beef Promotional Booth





The Minnesota Beef Council once again had a strong presence at the Minnesota State Fair, with our exhibitor booth located in the Dairy Building near the Dairy Princess butterheads. Over the course of the 12 days, we interacted with thousands of fairgoers – many from metro areas – providing a great opportunity to promote beef and share more about modern production practices. Our booth was designed with interaction in mind, featuring a spin wheel that prompted visitors to answer educational beef-related questions. Participants received a giveaway, including cutting boards for adults and chef hats for kids, while additional literature, such as recipes and sustainability information, was available for everyone to take home. The overall theme of the booth highlighted cooking methods, encouraging confidence in the kitchen. We are grateful to the many volunteers who gave their time to help make our booth a success along with our summer intern, Mary Lanoue, who coordinated the majority of the booth details. As one of our largest promotional efforts of the year, the State Fair provides a unique chance to connect directly with consumers, answer their questions, and build trust in beef – work that ultimately raises demand for this great protein.

Beef Cooking Demonstration With Chef John Van House

The Minnesota Beef Council sponsored two beef cooking demonstrations on Sunday, Aug. 30 at the Christensen Stage outside of the very popular attraction, the Miracle of Birth Center. This is a very well-attended venue at the Minnesota State Fair and fairgoers were able to learn beef cooking techniques from Chef John Van House. Chef John featured how to cook beef fajitas using Skirt Steak, teaching fairgoers about this cut and showcasing how to cook it on a griddle. These cooking demonstrations were a great opportunity to showcase beef's great taste and versatility.

MBC CLASSIC BEEF COMFORT RECIPE

BEEF POT PIE



Ingredients:

- 2 pounds beef Stew Meat, cut into 1 to 1-1/2 inch pieces
- 5 cups water
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped Yukon Gold potatoes
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste
- 1 packet (.87 ounce) brown gravy mix
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup frozen peas
- 1 package (14.1 ounces) refrigerated pie crust
- 1 egg
- Mixed green salad (optional)

Cooking:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Add all ingredients, except peas, pie crust and egg to Dutch oven. Mix lightly, but thoroughly. Bake, covered, 3-1/2 hours or until Stew Meat is fork-tender. Stir in peas; cool mixture slightly.

2. Coat 9-inch pie plate with cooking spray. Unroll pie crust on flat surface, pressing out fold lines with fingers. Place 1 crust in bottom of pie plate allowing edge to drape over rim. Spoon beef mixture into pie crust. Top with remaining crust, crimping edge to seal. Cut three slits in top of crust to vent; brush top with egg.

3. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Let stand 5 to 10 minutes before serving. Serve with salad, as desired.

Twin Cities Live at the Fair

The Minnesota Beef Council shares recipes and cooking tips for consumers each month on Twin Cities Live, a show that airs daily at 3 p.m. CST in the afternoon on Channel 5 Eyewitness News. During the month of August, instead of showcasing recipes in the KSTP studio, Ashley Wulf, Communications Director, featured beef dishes from around the fair live from the fairgrounds at the Twin Cities Live booth. This is a unique way to showcase beef and encourage fairgoers to try these fun dishes at the fair. We received many



positive comments from fairgoers sharing they had seen our segment and were encouraged to stop by our booth in the Dairy Building and inspired to try the dishes featured.

Minnesota 4-H "Minnesota Meats" Contest

The Minnesota Beef Council Business Manager Heather Delong and MSCA Board Member Eric Zeltwanger were judges for the beef division of the "Minnesota Meats" contest organized by Minnesota 4-H. There were 10, four-person teams of 4-Hers from all across the state who had interest in cooking and preparing beef. The teams were given Petite Sirloin Steaks and a pantry table of ingredients to choose from to prepare a creative, unique dish that was presented to Heather and Eric. The teams were judged on their creativity, beef knowledge, culinary skills, teamwork and taste/presentation of their dish. It was a great activity for young people to get excited about cooking and serving beef.

MBC Website

The Minnesota Beef Council website has a new look! The site reflects the national Beef. It's What's For Dinner brand as they have recently re-branded with a brightened appeal while using the same logo and taglines we have all come to know. More importantly though, our website continues to have a wide variety of information about beef with useful content such as beef recipes, cooking information, and nutrition education to name just a few. The site now includes a more expansive homepage, resources that are easier to find, and something for both producers and consumers. For producers, we have a special tab at the top called "Famers & Ranchers." Here you can find more information on the Beef Checkoff and what your dollar is doing. Be sure to head on over to mnbeef.org to see all the great changes we've made.

Performance Foodservice – Foodcentric Experience

Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) CEO Kelly Schmidt participated in the Performance Foodservice – Foodcentric Experience food show at Grand Casino, Hinckley, MN. The MBC was a part of the "Center of the Plate" showcase and had a full table with foodservice specific resources and information. There were over 1,000 attendees from restaurants and foodservice providers all across Minnesota and northern Wisconsin. Engaging with foodservice providers is a great way to impact many consumers through providing resources and information to be shared throughout the supply chain.

Grilling beef for Purple Ribbon Auction

Minnesota Beef Council CEO Kelly Schmidt joined MSCA members Mark Schoenfeld, Dallas Knobloch, Eric Zeltwanger and other members of the West Central Cattlemen's Association (WCCA) to grill beef for all the donors, sponsors, family members and participants of the Minnesota 4-H Purple Ribbon Auction. The WCCA and Minnesota Livestock Breeders Association provided the grills and beef was donated by Swanson's Meats. Nearly 1,000 attendees enjoyed beef as they attended the pre-auction festivities. It was a great way to showcase beef.

Minnesota Beef Council Events

October 9 | Minnesota Consultant Dietitians Fall Conference (Sysco | Mounds View, MN)
October 12 – 14, 2026 | Partnership in Action Conference (Denver, CO)
October 15 – 18, 2026 | Minnesota Beef Expo (St. Paul, MN)
December 11– 12, 2026 | Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention (Mankato, MN)

MBC Board Meeting

The next Minnesota Beef Council Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 16, 2026. The meeting will be held in Maple Plain, MN at the Minnesota Beef Council office.

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DUSTIN WIESE
MSCA Cow/Calf Chair

As I look out the window, the leaves are changing and the nights are getting cooler. Fall is definitely in the air and if you have a spring-calving herd, now is the time to think about weaning calves.

Every year I see a lot of calves going through the sale ring as bawling calves. In some circumstances that may be the only option, but by selling calves immediately after weaning there is money being left on the table.

Think about the investment that goes into every calf by weaning. It takes roughly two years to develop a heifer before she produces her first calf, followed by nearly nine months of gestation and another six to eight months of raising that calf to weaning. There is years of genetics, feed, labor and management invested into that calf before it ever reaches the sale ring.

Preconditioning is a great way to capture more value from your investment. A typical preconditioning program is at least 45 days from weaning. This gives the calves time to adjust to new rations, become "bunk broke," build immunity and reduce stress at the feedlot. A preconditioning program should also include vaccinations, castration, dehorning and deworming.

The goal is to reduce the number of major stressors of weaning that a calf experiences at one time. Instead of a calf being hauled to the sale barn, mixed with unfamiliar cattle, sold and then hauled again to a feedlot where everything is new from the feed and water, to the environment.

Preconditioning allows the calves to go through that transition in a more familiar environment. Giving calves time to settle, acclimate to a new ration and respond to vaccinations can reduce sickness and the associated treatment costs for the next owner. And buyers recognize that value.

Preconditioned calves come with less risk for the buyer and as a result buyers are willing to pay a premium for those calves. Additionally, you are adding pounds to your calves. But the biggest value is reputation.

If your preconditioning program is solid and you are consistently selling healthy, vaccinated, bunk broke calves, buyers remember. Over time, that reputation can create confidence in your cattle and help differentiate them from the rest of the sale offering.

Preconditioning is not the right decision for every producer or every year. You need to have the facility, feed and time. Also, in a drought year when pasture, hay and feed supplies are limited, early weaning or selling at weaning may make more sense. The decision needs to be based on the resources available and the economics of each operation.

But if you have the ability to do so, preconditioned calves will add value to your calves and may increase your profit margin.

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

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 mnscamembership@gmail.com.

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NEWS BRIEFS

MDA, Partners Offer Free Workshops to Support Farmers in Times of Stress

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and partners in the Minnesota Farm Suicide Prevention Campaign are offering free mental health and suicide-prevention trainings in communities across Minnesota this fall. The workshops will teach people who live and work in agricultural communities how to recognize when someone may be struggling and help connect them with support.

"Sadly, farmers have long faced higher-than-average suicide rates. Given the adversity and uncertainties producers have been facing, we need to be concerned about each other," said Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen. "A family member, friend, neighbor, colleague or anyone who regularly interacts with a farmer may be the first to notice that they're struggling. These two workshops can help take the mystery out of wondering what to say to someone you're really worried about."

Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) for Agriculture is a two-hour evidence-based workshop that teaches three steps to recognize warning signs, engage in supportive conversations and connect someone at risk to appropriate care and life-saving resources. The workshop can serve as an introduction to suicide prevention or reinforce skills for people who may have participated in similar training before.

Changing Our Mental and Emotional Trajectory (COMET) is a two-hour interactive workshop that teaches participants how to start a caring conversation with someone who seems sad, withdrawn or not quite themselves. Using a seven-question guide, participants learn how to help someone who may be moving toward a mental-health crisis turn their own trajectory back toward a place of wellness.

Others who interact with farmers are encouraged to attend, including crop consultants, agricultural lenders, insurance adjusters, Extension educators, county and township officials, rural clergy, agricultural cooperative and other rural business owners, state and federal agency staff, veterinarians and others. There is no charge to attend.

For more information on the workshops, visit the MDA's website.

Two Grants Open to Support Minnesota Livestock Producers

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for the Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Livestock Investment Grant and the AGRI Protecting Livestock from Avian Influenza (Protect) Grant. The AGRI Livestock Investment Grant helps Minnesota livestock farmers and ranchers improve, update, and modernize their infrastructure and equipment. The AGRI Protect grant helps livestock producers purchase equipment that reduces the risk of avian influenza transmission on their farms.

Up to $1.5 million is available for the AGRI Livestock Investment Grant, applicants may request $400 up to $25,000. Up to $250,000 is available for the AGRI Protect Grant, applicants may request $500 up to $10,000. Both are reimbursement grant programs and require recipients to contribute matching funds.

"Livestock production accounts for nearly half of Minnesota's $22 billion agricultural economy and is essential to the strength of our rural communities," said MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen. "Investments in equipment, infrastructure, and biosecurity not only help farmers strengthen their operations, but when livestock farms do well, so do the feed mills, veterinarians, processors, cooperatives and other local businesses that work with them, creating jobs and keeping dollars circulating in communities across the state."

Both grant programs give priority to applicants who have farmed for 10 years or less. The AGRI Livestock Investment Grant also prioritizes:

Generational farm transitions

Technology improvements, including robotic dairy milking equipment

Projects that respond to and prepare for extreme weather

Applications for both programs must be submitted by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 17. Visit the AGRI Livestock Investment Grant webpage and the AGRI Protect Grant webpage for eligibility requirements, application instructions and information about previously funded projects.

Since the start of the Walz-Flanagan administration, the MDA has invested more than $10.3 million through the AGRI Livestock Investment Grant to help producers improve and modernize livestock operations across Minnesota.

Funding for both grant programs 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.



NEWS BRIEFS

Senate Agriculture Committee Passes Farm Bill

In September, the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee passed the Agricultural Act of 2026 (Senate Farm Bill 2.0) on another party-line vote of 12–11. NCBA opposed passage of the Senate Farm Bill due to the inclusion of MCOOL and failure to provide reform language to combat California's Proposition 12. During the first committee markup and this week's meeting, the chairman only allowed one real vote on a single amendment – MCOOL – and disregarded dozens of other proposals from both Republican and Democratic members. The bill now moves to the full Senate but faces numerous challenges, including limited working days remaining and a low desire to pass partisan legislation prior to the November primaries. If passed, the final bill would then need to be reconciled with the House version of the bill that was passed in April.

Provide Data to Improve Accuracy of U.S. Drought Monitor Map

Producers who want to help improve the accuracy of the U.S. Drought Monitor can do so by submitting their own local precipitation observations. The best way to participate is through the CoCoRaHS program, which is a volunteer network that collects daily precipitation data from across the country. Signing up is simple, and it only takes a few minutes each day to make a meaningful contribution.

Visit the CoCoRaHS website at cocorahs.org for more information.

Schiefelbeins Host Congressman Tom Emmer for Roundtable

On Thursday, Sept. 24, Congressman Tom Emmer joined other Minnesota ag leaders at Schiefelbein Farms in Kimball, MN, for an ag roundtable. Topics discussed included issues with the administration intervening with markets, fuel and fertilizer costs, trade, small butcher shop concerns, labor supply and more.

Grants Available to Minnesota Livestock Owners for Prevention of Wolf Attacks

St. Paul, Minn: New funding is available to Minnesota livestock producers to help prevent wolf attacks. A total of $25,000 funded by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, will be awarded by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) through the Wolf-Livestock Conflict Prevention Grants.

"Livestock depredation by wolves is a serious threat to farms in Minnesota," said MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen. "Receiving this funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and being able to administer it to farmers experiencing this hardship is a crucial step to help curb this conflict."

The grants provide reimbursement for costs of approved practices to prevent wolf-livestock conflicts. Eligible expenses for the grant program include:

Purchase of guard animals
Veterinary costs for guard animals
Wolf-barriers which may include pens
Fladry and fencing
Wolf-deterring lights and alarms
Calving or lambing shelters

Eligible producers must live within Minnesota's wolf range, as designated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, or on property determined by the Commissioner of Agriculture to be affected by wolf-livestock conflicts. Any animal species produced for profit and documented to have been killed by wolves in Minnesota in the past is eligible.

The funding requires an 80:20 matching cost-share, meaning 80 percent of eligible project costs will be reimbursed by the grant and the remaining 20 percent will be paid for by the grantee.

Applications must be submitted by 4 p.m. on Dec. 18. Work for this grant must be done and expenses reported by Oct. 31, 2027. The application and more information can be found on the Wolf-Livestock Conflict Prevention Grant webpage.

In addition to this funding, the MDA has been able to take vital steps in easing the burden of wolf livestock depredation on farmers by providing a compensation fund for livestock lost by wolf depredation. In 2026, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided the MDA with an additional $55,000 to compensate farmers for previously lost livestock.

This funding was available to aid more farmers and supplement the state investment in livestock compensation allocated by the Walz-Flanagan Administration. More information on the Wolf Compensation Depredation Fund is available on the MDA website.



Let's Pass the Baton



GENE
COPENHAVER
NCBA President

The long-term strength of the U.S. beef industry depends on the preparation of the next generation to carry and improve upon our legacies. Without a well-planned transition, we expose ourselves to the possibility of losing valuable farms and ranches across the country. If we want to safeguard the future of American beef production, we must prioritize succession planning today.

Just as we need strong hands and sharp minds to take ownership of our operations and cattle businesses, we also need the next generation's insight and perspective in our meeting rooms. As an industry facing challenges and opposition from many directions, we need strong voices to advocate for American cattlemen and women. That signals to me that we should intentionally encourage and equip emerging leaders to participate in policy conversations, serve within state affiliates and partner organizations, and help consumers understand that farmers and ranchers are responsible stewards of the land and produce a safe, nutritious food supply.

I know that it can be easy to leave our sons and daughters on the farm to care for the cattle and handle day-to-day challenges while the older generation attends important meetings like state cattlemen's conventions or CattleCon. But I urge you to rethink that approach. While it is valuable for the incoming generation to manage daily operations so we can network with fellow producers and vote on important issues, the decisions made in those rooms, where producers come together, will shape their future far more than our own. They deserve a seat at the table and to be heard in those conversations.

Sometimes all it takes is a little encouragement, a clear invitation or an introduction to help a young leader build industry connections and gain confidence to step into leadership roles. Having served as a volunteer leader for many years, I have seen firsthand how change is made by those who show up. That's why I believe the first step is giving the next generation the opportunity to be present. The next step is ensuring they have clear pathways into leadership.

I remember cattlemen who encouraged me to attend my first county cattlemen's meeting and I remember taking on responsibilities that felt greater than I was ready for. Their confidence helped me find my place and taught me leadership is learned by doing — not by waiting until you feel fully prepared. Looking back, those initial opportunities shaped my role within the cattle industry today.

In my conversations with young cattlemen and women throughout my travels this year, I am consistently impressed with their understanding of industry issues and their eagerness to be a part of the solution. Many of them grew up hearing the same concerns: farmers are aging out and the agriculture workforce is shrinking, while access to land becomes increasingly difficult. Rather than discouraging this generation, I clearly see that they are driven by a remarkable level of grit and determination. Because of that, they are ready to represent the cattle industry and defend the future of beef production.

I am excited and encouraged to see many young producers who are willing to give their time, resources and talents to reinforcing the future of American beef production. As a leader and a parent, I want to support them in any way I can, and I believe mentorship is one of the best methods to prepare the next generation for success. Mentorship does not have to be complex. Invite a young producer to attend a county meeting, introduce them to industry leaders, or ask them to serve on a committee. Small opportunities often lead to meaningful contributions.

To those of you waiting for your turn to step into leadership, take that step today. Don't wait. Join your local cattlemen's association. Attend national events such as CattleCon, Summer Business Meeting or Legislative Conference. And to those of you who have carried the baton for a while, turn around and offer a hand to someone coming behind you who is ready to lead our industry forward.





Building on Strength



COLIN WOODALL
NCBA CEO

Today, the cattle producers are in a position of strength.

That strength did not come easily. It was built through years of drought, herd liquidation, rising input costs, tight margins and constant uncertainty. Through it all, farmers and ranchers continued investing in their operations, improving their herds and finding better ways to produce beef.

Those investments are paying off through strong cattle prices and exceptional beef demand. The quality and safety of U.S. beef has never been better.

None of this happened by accident.

The leaders of this industry made deliberate decisions to improve genetics, nutrition, animal health and management. Producers adopted technologies and production practices to produce more efficiently, use resources more effectively, and deliver a more consistent product. We see the results in the marketplace. The clearest measure of our success is historic consumer demand despite high prices. Americans are paying more for nearly everything, yet they continue to choose beef. That shows us consumers value the nutrition, quality and eating experience beef provides.

Our industry has learned that quality drives demand.

Strong markets create opportunity but they should also create perspective. Cattle markets, weather, input costs, animal health threats and global markets all shift. Conditions that look favorable today can change quickly. The question is not how long strong prices will last but what we do with this opportunity while we have it.

This is the time to strengthen operations, improve balance sheets, invest and prepare for the next shift in the market cycle. The fundamentals that brought us here have not changed. Quality, efficiency, animal health and sound business management all matter. Above all, the consumer matters. Our future depends on consumers continuing to believe beef is worth buying, and today they clearly do.

We must continue delivering the safety, quality, consistency and value that consumers expect every time they purchase beef. We also must understand that expectations extend beyond the product in the package. Consumers want confidence in how their food is produced. They care about food safety and animal well-being. They want to understand who raises their food and how it reaches their table.

Cattle producers have a strong story to tell.

Every day on farms, ranches and feedyards across America, producers care for livestock, manage natural resources and provide safe, nutritious protein for families. Our job is to ensure consumers understand our commitment behind every pound of beef.

We also cannot ignore the impact of public policy which can impact profitability. The past year has demonstrated how quickly decisions made in Washington, D.C., can influence markets, disrupt business planning, and create uncertainty across the cattle and beef supply chain.

That is why cattle producers need a strong and consistent voice. NCBA is that voice.

NCBA fights for policies that protect producer profitability, expand market access, and support growth of the U.S. cattle industry. Administrations will change. Political priorities will change. Our mission will not. We will continue working to ensure cattle producers have the freedom and opportunity to succeed.

The next decade will be consequential for our industry.

Technology will transform how we manage cattle and operate. Genetic advancements will drive productivity and carcass quality. Animal disease preparedness will become increasingly critical, while weather and resources will continue influencing production decisions. At the same time, there's an opportunity with the growing global demand for high-quality protein. Capturing those opportunities requires discipline, strategic investment and a long-term perspective.

Profitable years provide the best opportunity to prepare for the future. History shows that producers focused on sound business fundamentals are better positioned to withstand inevitable challenges when conditions change.

The industry's strength today is a direct result of the people who built it.

American beef has earned a global reputation for safety, consistency and quality. Consumers continue to choose our product, and producers are seeing returns

Building on Strength. . . continued on page 13



Graduate Students Encouraged to Apply for W.D. Farr Scholarship

By the National Cattlemen's Beef Association

For 20 years, the W.D. Farr Scholarship has created a legacy of helping graduate students pursue careers in meat science, animal science and related fields. Applications are now being accepted for the final year of the program.

The scholarship honors the successful career of the late W.D. Farr, a third-generation Coloradan, pioneer rancher, statesman and banker who was known for his extraordinary vision. Established in 2007 by the National Cattlemen's Foundation (NCF), the scholarship recognizes outstanding graduate students committed to advancing the beef industry.

Two $15,000 grants will be awarded to graduate students who demonstrate superior achievement in academics and leadership. Previous scholarship recipients recognize that the program not only benefits their work but also the entire industry.

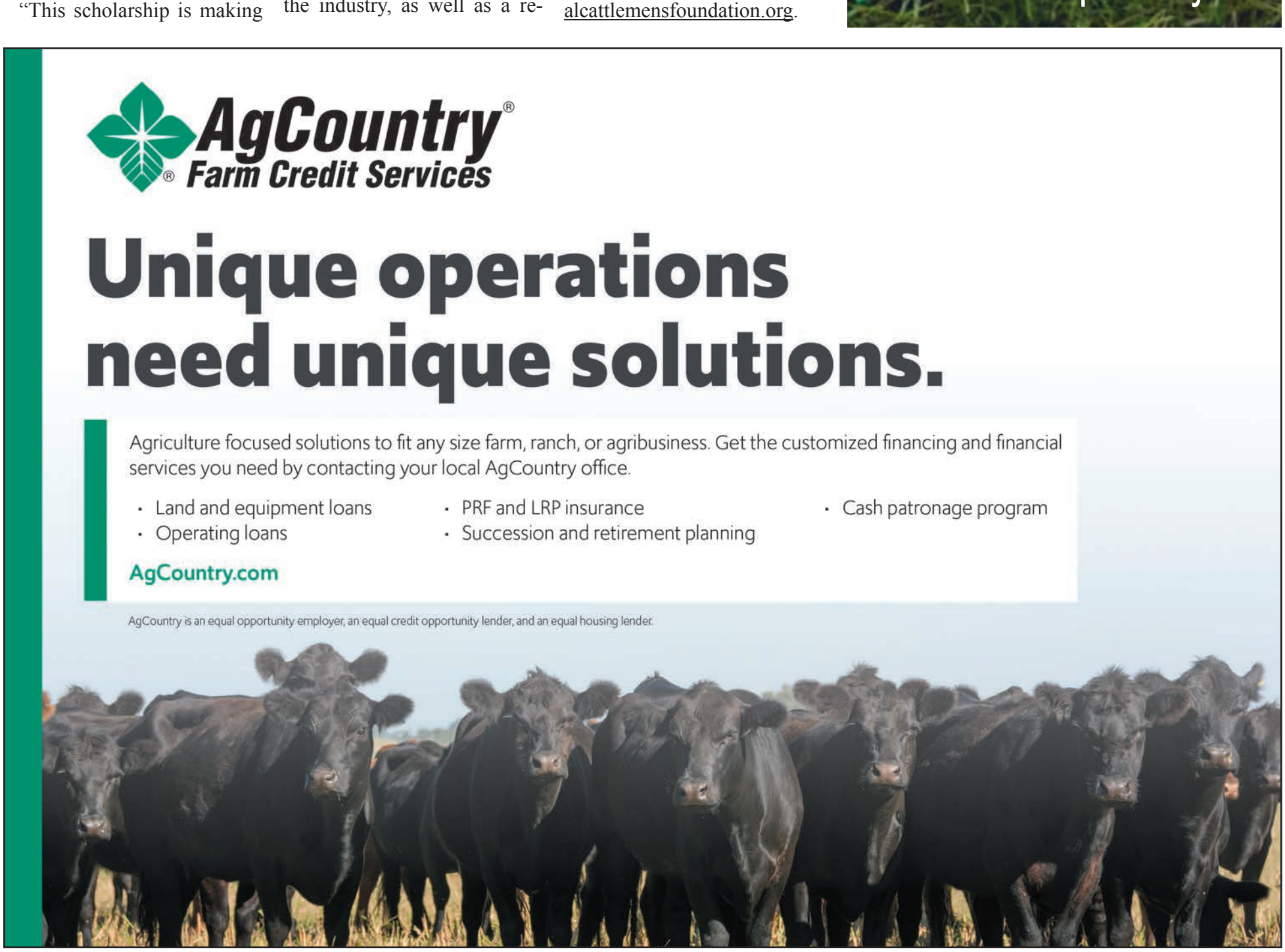
"This scholarship is making a monumental difference in my pursuit to further the future of the cattle industry and is helping me encourage the next generation of agricultural leaders in both youth and undergraduate teaching programs," said 2025 recipient and Colorado State University doctoral candidate Sydney Bowman-Schnug.

Eligible students must apply online by submitting a cover letter, curriculum vitae, description of applicant's goals and experience, a short essay, statement of belief in the industry, as well as a review of the applicant's graduate research and three letters of recommendation by Oct. 9, 2026. The 2026 scholarship recipients will be recognized at CattleCon 2027, Feb. 2-4, in Nashville, Tennessee.

Farr's dedication to improving agriculture, livestock and water development resulted in significant changes in farming methods that have influenced the practices of ranchers and farmers throughout the nation. Farr was the first president of the NCF and served as president of the American National Cattlemen's Association, which would later become the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). Farr died at age 97 in August 2007.

The NCF advances the future of the beef industry by assisting in the education of the next generation of beef industry professionals. For more information and to apply for the scholarship, visit www.nationalcattlemensfoundation.org.





Applications Accepted for CME Group Beef Industry Scholarship

By the National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Students pursuing careers in the beef industry are encouraged to apply for the 2027 CME Group Beef Industry Scholarship through the National Cattlemen's Foundation. Ten scholarships of $1,500 each will be awarded.

Introduced in 1989 and sponsored by CME Group, the scholarship identifies and encourages talented students who play a vital role in the future of food production. Students studying education, communication, production, research or other areas related to the beef industry are eligible to apply for the annual scholarship program.

"We are honored to partner with the National Cattlemen's Foundation and National Cattlemen's Beef Association to champion the next generation of leaders in the cattle industry," said John Ricci, CME Group managing director and global head of agricultural products. "By investing in these emerging leaders today, we're helping ensure that tomorrow's cattlemen and cattlewomen have the knowledge, innovation and resilience needed to feed a growing world for generations to come."

Eligible applicants must be a graduating high school senior or full-time undergraduate student enrolled at a



two- or four-year institution. The application process includes submitting a one-page letter expressing career goals related to the beef industry, a 750-word essay describing an issue in the beef industry and offering solutions to this problem, and two letters of recommendation. The applicant or a family member must be a member of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

The application deadline is Oct. 9, 2026. For more information and to apply, visit www.nationalcattlemensfoundation.org. Scholarship recipients will be recognized during CattleCon 2027, Feb. 2-4, in Nashville, Tennessee.

Organized in 1972, NCF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing charitable, scientific and educational activities to benefit the cattle industry.

Building on Strength. . . continued from page 11

that reflect years of hard work, investment and risk. Those accomplishments are worth celebrating, but they should never be taken for granted.

Success is not permanent. Markets will fluctuate. Policy challenges will arise. Unexpected events will test us. Yet those same periods of change often create opportunities for producers willing to adapt.

Resilience is a defining characteristic of the cattle business. Time and again, producers have overcome challenges and moved the industry forward. Continued success will depend on our ability to produce a superior product, create value for consumers, and build operations that can thrive in any environment.

The foundation is strong, built through hard work, innovation and a relentless commitment to improvement. Now we build on it. If we remain focused on quality, profitability and the consumer, the future of the U.S. cattle industry is exceptionally bright. The best days are still ahead.



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New Book Profiles Trailblazing Women Who Reshaped Male-Dominated Fields

When many of today's leading women were growing up in post-World War I America, standard career paths for women were few and far between. A new book by author Ronald Eustice, Brave Women Who Broke Barriers, takes a personal look at twelve women who pushed past those boundaries and helped change the professional landscape.

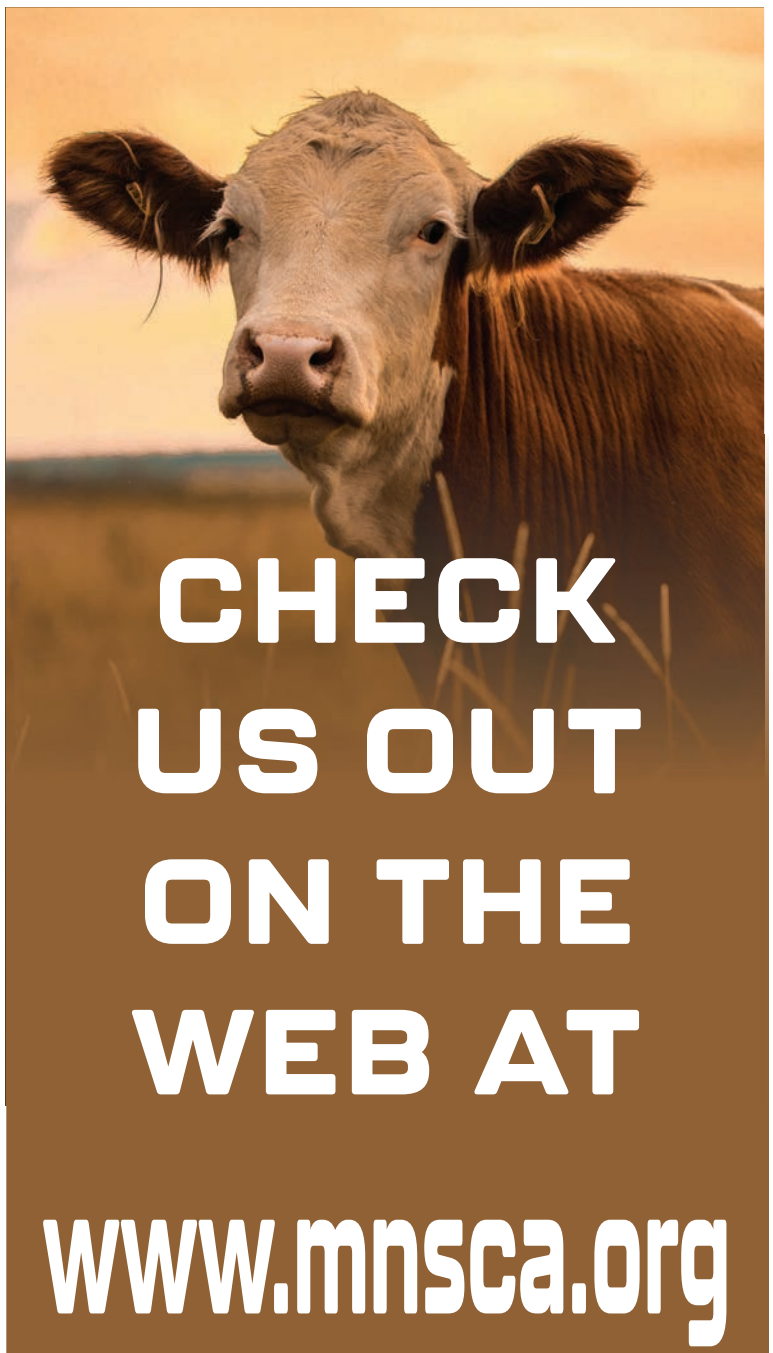
The book features several pioneers from the American beef and dairy industries, including Minnesota's own Juanita Reed-Boniface. Raised on a four-generation family beef operation, Reed-Boniface built a career around agricultural education and leadership, teaching young people through Extension 4-H programs and community organizations.



Author Ronald Eustice and Juanita J. Reed-Boniface pictured

Eustice was inspired to write the collection after reflecting on the many accomplishment-driven women he had met over the years. His goal was simple: pass their lessons and grit along to readers who might be facing their own professional challenges today.

Brave Women Who Broke Barriers is available on Amazon.com or directly from the author by phone at 612-202-1016 or email at reustice@gmail.com.





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