

Beef Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

November 14, 2011- Stettler, Alberta

Members present: Greg Coleman – Chair and West Central, Val Townsend – West Central, Owen Almberg – East Central, Marina Oatway – Peace, Ed Johnston – Peace, Sid Livingstone – Northwest, Lyndon Mansell – Northeast, Brent Christensen – Northeast, Mark Sayers – South, Leisa Gallelli – Calgary
Staff: Yvonne Yaremco, Andrea Church

Greg Coleman called the meeting to order at (approx) 10:15 am.

Feed affidavit – Is the online affidavit updated? Yvonne said she would check into that.

Regional reports

NE – Brent Christensen

Beef numbers seem to be up, there is more interest in the Cleaver Kids
Ear tags have increased in price from \$1.00 to \$1.25

NW – Sid Livingstone

The region recently held their beef learning day. Topics included traceability and review of the new record book.

East Central – Owen Almberg

Cleaver Kids seems to be helping to increase the interest. There is still that “want” out in the region for the Cleaver Kids to be able to sell their projects. This 4-H year they are going to be having 3 judging competitions.

West Central – Greg Coleman

Feedback from clubs that have seen the new market record books has been positive.

Beef member numbers seem to be the same or maybe down a bit.

Calgary – Andrea Church

We’re working on a regional workshop with the potential of demonstrating the new cowbytes program. A lot of details to develop yet.

South – Mark Sayers

The regional show is going to be hosted by the Lethbridge and District Show and Sale committee in Lethbridge.

Due to concerns of under finished calves at the 2011 sale, the committee put in a 600 – 850 pound window for calves to be eligible as a project in this show and sale. It’s a solution they are trying to address the ongoing concerns. There may be pushback from some people due to the perceived restrictions. Should the need ever arise that animal care is questioned, it is very important that AFAC be the first line of contact/communication.

Alberta 4-H Council - The council is in the process of restructuring. More information to come as the development resumes.

Provincial Beef Heifer Show - Numbers were down somewhat, perhaps attributed to Summer Synergy?

Andrea would like to move away from the competition aspect by adding some workshops or seminars for a learning component.

The PBHS is a great opportunity to ask the “keen” members about “what is pertinent for them and their friends” in the beef project.

The group then had a discussion about proving an animal’s identity and ensuring that the animal is a legitimate 4-H project at the PBHS. Not all regions require beef female registration at the regional level so information is not readily available across the province. The light horse members have to bring their record book to the Provincial Horse Show with a declaration of mount signed by the leader. Registering for the PBHS will move back to the 4-H office handling them, perhaps the RFID tag could be required on the registration? The group felt that the PBHS committee needs to be asked about this. Andrea will look into the possibility of asking beef clubs throughout the province to list RFID tags for the female projects as part of the ID when registering.

The group also had a discussion about Premise ID numbers. They felt they could not enforce it, but this would be a great learning opportunity and get someone in to speak on the reason for PID’s and traceability.

Regional Beef Project Workshops There is \$800 available per region to host a beef workshop. The workshop needs to be done in 2011 or a proposal in place that would see the workshop completed in early 2012 (ie January at the latest). If regions don’t use the funds, there is a chance they could be lost.

Dual Heifer projects – There had been a proposal on BAC records from previous meetings that needed to be addressed. There needs to be clarification around the opportunity for a member to register both a purebred and commercial heifer project each year. The group had a lengthy discussion about the dual project and one of the key ideas that kept coming out was, what purpose would the dual projects serve? As the policy stands right now, it is open to interpretation so it was decided to clarify the ruling.

Motion **Lyndon Mansell moved that under the rule category of Policy 6.05 Alberta 4-H Beef Project Policy the first rule listed read: *A member may register only one breeding heifer project.* Leisa Gallelli seconded the motion, carried.**

Backgrounding project – Owen asked about the idea of a backgrounding/feeder project. Discussion moved toward the pen of three or creative options in order for a member to undertake this concept. There was concern about a buyer’s eating experience if the animal was mistaken for finished and put in the freezer. In order to ensure that doesn’t happen, the project must be marketed as a feeder and perhaps the sale is not the time to sell it?

This type of project would be a truer picture of today’s beef industry because beef farms today don’t have steers in the back pen being fattened for Lakeside and Cargill. Except for niche markets, it’s just the feedlots finishing for slaughter.

Showing a steer past sale day - Brent asked the question of what happens if a member wants to show their finished steer all summer?

Although a 4-H member must sell their market beef project, the member can negotiate with the purchaser to retain the steer for a longer period of time. In some known cases, it has been the buyer that has approached the member. To mitigate risk, it is strongly suggested that the animal be insured during that time. Part of the negotiation between the member and the buyer needs to be who will insure and pay for the insurance?, who will pay for feed?, etc. For the most part, the party that wants to show the animal would bear the costs. This is a good chance for a 4-H member to work on their assertiveness and communication skills.

Market Beef Record book update - There has been a lot of positive feedback from both members and leaders about the new market beef record book. There has been one member who submitted concerns about the record book and Yvonne responded to the issues.

Lyndon had a template for a marking guide that may be helpful to leaders. It and the former marking guide are going to be revised and posted on the website for leaders to download and use. Yvonne will produce a draft and send it out to the BAC for comments.

Breeding Record book - Leisa rolled out her proposed changes for the beef breeding book...

Under heifer project related costs BAC wants to keep yardage (with a definition of term) and take out the implants in suggestions.

Leisa noted a number of other changes that I didn't catch...oops!

The record book will not be tested for a year in one region like the market record book. The goal is to have the new beef breeding record book ready for the fall of 2012.

BAC is going to call for a photo contest for the cover of the beef heifer record book. Deadline for submissions weren't determined but will have to be before June 2012.

Beef Project Material - Yvonne and Andrea met with the BAC subcommittee and Shari Smith to discuss the beef project material. Out of the discussions, the BAC subcommittee is going to go through the US Beef Activity books and glean information and activities that pertain to Alberta/Canada and then work to make the activities specific to Alberta/Canada. The project books, levels 1 – 3, are not going to be printed further. If leaders need specific information from them, the books are on line and can be printed. With funding from the national level, the project books are going to be reviewed and combined into one reference manual, similar to the light horse "fat book". The activity guide and reference manual will then be linked to each other. In the activity guide there will be links to direct further information to be found in the manual and if someone is reading the manual, there will be links to direct them to a specific activity.

On-line Beef Bowl - Will be held March 9 – 18, 2012 using the same format as last year

BUD 2012 - Discussion around the program and format. Suggestions included:

- 1) Emergency preparedness – about an hour in length put on by Brad Andres at a workshop and it was well received. Would be a definite consideration for BUD 2012.
- 2) Judging workshop/competition – could include even how to host a competition. Could also include consumer goods. Bernie Prefontaine does a great job of presenting this information and will actually be doing a workshop at LC 2012.
- 3) Feeding and nutrition – was definitely seen by the group as an important topic to cover
- 4) New leader workshop that could cover: how to run a beef club, effective meetings, roles of the executive, record book highlights, beef project options
- 5) Cattle handling and behavior (could include stock dogs)
- 6) The big picture view of the beef industry
- 7) Health and genetics
- 8) Beef economics
- 9) Finding judges
- 10) Games and activities
- 11) What about sheep leaders and a sheep component to the weekend?
- 12) Clipping and grooming (this is usually a 3 hour session) by present 4-H members
- 13) ABP current trends and issues in the industry
- 14) Infomercial on the upcoming/new reference manual

Silent auction – funds are to allow for BIF

Clothing – jackets were good for BAC members. Delegates clothing could include a full zip hoodie, if around \$40? What about ball caps?

Delegates conference kit – accordion folders are very useful.

New Business

UFA rep – There was a discussion about the UFA rep that would like to join the committee. As this question was posed to committee members prior to the meeting, by email, and the majority was in favor, Jeffery Bilow will join the committee for the determined time period.

Motion **The bylaws of the BAC committee as circulated by Yvonne were discussed. Mark Sayers moved that the committee approve the changes to the bylaws as of November 2011. Brent Christensen seconded the motion. Carried.**

BAC workshop – Yvonne asked if there would be interest in having a BAC workshop sometime in Jan/Feb 2012. With the launch of the new Cowbytes program, perhaps a training workshop for the entire BAC committee could replace BIF for one year. This would also provide an opportunity for some socializing and sharing of ideas between the regions. The idea was tabled to the February 2012 meeting.

Halter breaking date - Val brought up a concern about animals being left until the last minute for halter breaking and people using inhumane ways to make the process happen. The committee discussed having a date (suggested Dec 31) that members would need to have their animals halter broke but the committee determined that this would be a difficult date to manage. This is a topic that BAC and 4-H leaders need to educate, not mandate. BAC suggested a strong recommendation be provided to clubs that “club leaders are supported to encourage their members to have a halter broke animal by December 31st or at least 2 weeks before Achievement Day”.

Policy 6.05 - Yvonne proposed some changes to the Beef Policy 6.05 as had been discussed earlier in the day to clean up the intention of the policy and make it easier to follow. She will send it out to the BAC committee for further review before submitting to the Provincial Council for recommendation of approval. Please watch for her email.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40pm.

The next meeting will be February 7, 2012 in Stettler.

There was a presentation by the BAC committee to Mark Sayers for his contribution as Chairman. Thank you Mark for all you have done and continue to do!!