



# Feeder Associations of Alberta Ltd.

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## Fall 2009 Newsletter

### **Greetings from the Provincial Board of Directors!**

The past summer has been a very trying time for the cattle industry again. The dry summer combined with the US dollar exchange headed for par makes a person wonder why we have cattle. As we see the fall run pricing calves well below 2008 values, producers are anxiously weighing their options. There are no easy solutions- markets are now affected by so many things it is difficult to see the positive. Ann Dunford was speaking recently at a number of meetings and spoke positively about the industry in the long run, but it will be a difficult time for 2009 – 10! That's an understatement!

This summer the Provincial Board had developed a proactive plan in response to a potential reduction in cattle numbers financed this fall. We have taken the position that cattle numbers are likely to fall to the 2002 -03 drought year that had the biggest impact on our operations. We have examined all facets of our business and applied stringent controls on any new or non-essential meetings or projects. In addition a review of staff and management was completed as part of the transition from Bielert Accounting to our own staff. We believe this planning should avert the financial losses encountered in 2003.

Effective September 1 2009 Garry and Sylvia have retired from more than 17 years of service with the Feeder Associations of Alberta. We wish them well in slowing down the pace of life and having a little more time for themselves. A big thank you to Garry and Sylvia!

During the summer Dale Engstrom guided your Provincial Board through a very professional and rigorous recruitment process. We needed to find 2 key people that were capable of high level accounting and general office supervision with the ability to multi-task. The process was very successful as it provided the background to the Provincial board of what was actually NEEDED to operate the office efficiently.

To provide solid control of the office in the short term, we asked Reg Schmidt to step down from the Chairman position and take over as interim General Manager. Reg has worked closely with the APP programs, the indemnity program, and general office operations in the last number of years. It was a clear decision this is a temporary measure until we get the new staff up to speed, hopefully by Christmas. Reg's time spent in the office together with Dale Engstrom revealed that changes had to be made.

With due respect to our previous staff members, this has not been an easy process. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for all their work and value they brought to the FAA office over their term of employment. We wish them well in their new endeavors.

After all that planning and gaining a firm understanding of the Provincial office needs, the Provincial Board has completed the restructuring. We are pleased to announce our new team that will be devoted to the whole FAA program and APP.

Marlene Dezaeyer has worked at the APP office since January. She has been the main contact in the office since May and will remain the go-to person for all Association needs including APP questions.

Ann Gerhardt joined us on Sept 1. She has been named our Accounting Executive. Ann brings a great deal of experience and will handle the accounting needs for the entire operation including APP.

Nicole Webb has just been hired to take the position of Operations Manager. Nicole was a key person at another Barrhead business where she proved that she could be a leader and a multi-tasker. She will be trained in all aspects of our business. We plan to have Nicole join us at some local AGM's this fall.

We are excited about our new office team and what these people bring to the table. These changes were made with the best interest of all Feeder Associations and their members. We are very confident in the direction we have taken as it addresses the serious budgetary issues that we will discuss at your AGM this fall.

Speaking of Annual General Meetings; Please contact your zone director when you schedule your AGM. There are many important issues we need to share with you and answer your questions. We will have a short presentation that will cover the Board's activity for the last several months as we look forward to getting the latest information to you. Please call early to ensure our attendance.

The Regulatory Working Group was tasked with updating the regulations that govern our associations last spring. The group was made up of staff from Regulatory Services, Alberta Justice, Dale Engstrom, and Harvey Donahue. Because of the numerous changes that follow the new Act introduced in April, this has been a slow, time consuming task. Presently legal counsel has provided a final report that sets out recommendations for program changes that will lead to final regulation development. We will have much more information to present at your Annual General Meeting.

Convention 2010 is scheduled for Jan 29 and 30 at the Capri Centre Hotel. We have slated two excellent speakers for both Friday and Saturday as well we have provided more time to deal with questions and general business of the FAA. You should see you convention packages in early November.

We hope this covers the latest issues and provides background to our ongoing activities! Please call your zone director if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jim Bowhay, Harvey Donahue, Ted Quist, Don Christensen, and Reg Schmidt