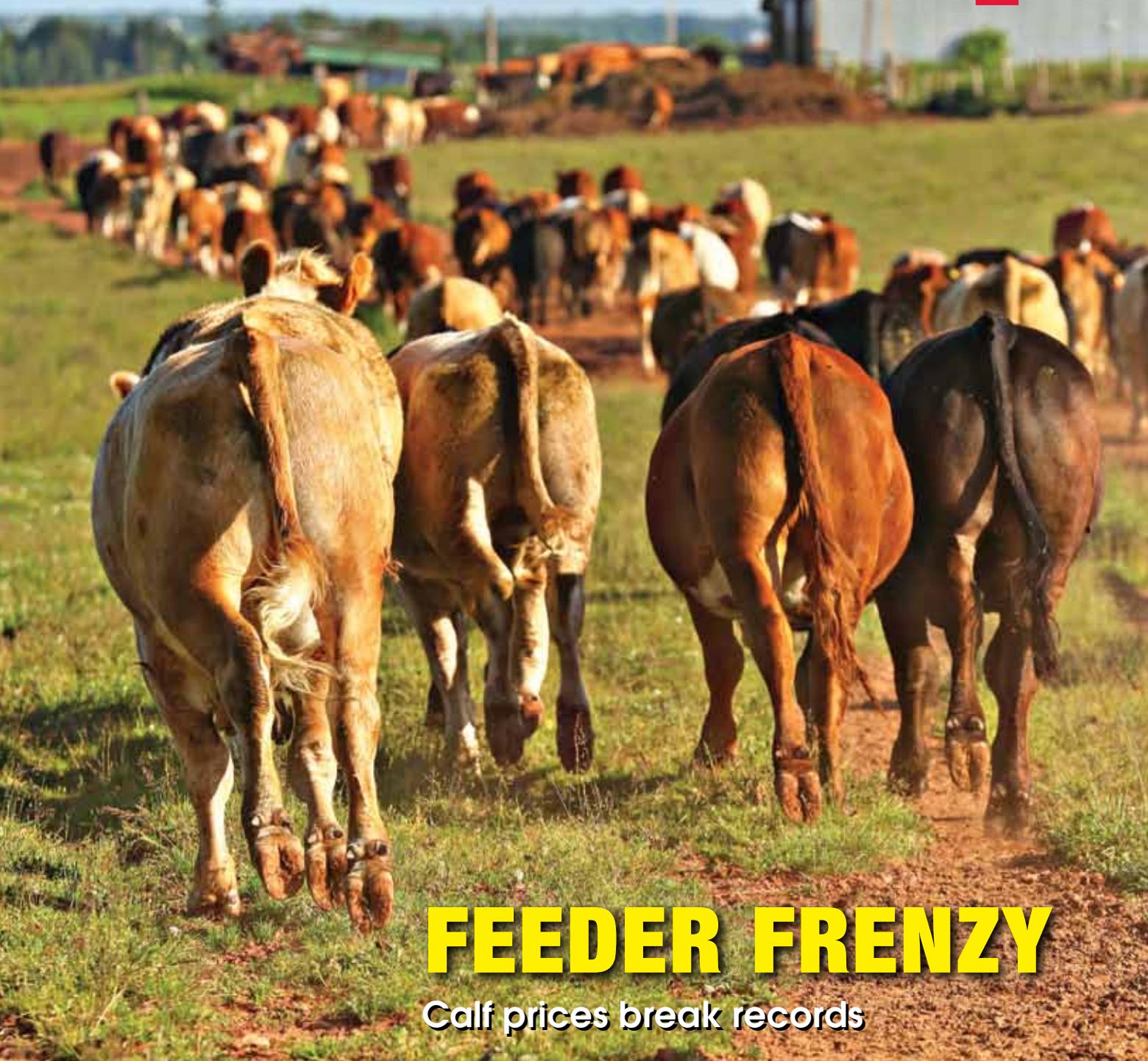


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Beef & Sheep

Volume 25 #2, Summer 2014

(Date of issue — June 2014)

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COVER: (Nina Linton photo)

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Atlantic Canada's Livestock Marketing Centre

Fall 2014 Feeder Sale Dates – all start times 10am

- Saturday September 13 • Saturday October 18
- Saturday November 15 • Saturday December 6

Fall Equipment Sale Date – 10am start

- Saturday September 20

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** Please note that cattle need to be on the premises for Thursday sale day by noon and by 1pm for sheep and goats.**

The pulse is strong in cattle land

And what's wrong with CFIA?

Here's an easy way to take the pulse of the cattle industry, at least at the cow and calf level. Try buying a fence stake after April. This spring they became harder and harder to find until by late May it was a scramble to find more than a dozen here and a half dozen there. By that time some manufacturers reported they were done for the year while others could not keep up with demand. It did not matter if the hunt was for hackmatack, spruce, or green, rot-in-a-year fir.

Cedar, the gold standard and really the only acceptable, long-lasting wooden post for anyone raising organic beef or lamb, is a rarity in Nova Scotia where few areas grow them. They could be bought early on for \$5 per. A New Brunswick mill was selling them for \$2.50 – you fetch. Would they cut the price for a truckload? Nope. The price was the price, for one or hundreds.

And so, the pulse is strong, especially so for cattle while for lamb it flutters depending on timing, quality, and circum-

stance. It would not hurt at all to have a federally inspected plant killing lambs in Atlantic Canada. Northumberlamb Co-op members are growing understandably restless waiting for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to get off its bureaucratic butt and license the shiny re-vamped Brookside Abattoir.

Most of us who've built any structure in the country larger than a wellbox have had to deal with building inspectors. Some can be pills, to put it mildly, while others are great to deal with. Imagine having to hire an engineer for whatever project, and only after building to his or her specs having the building inspector okay the job. It's an extra layer of detail and paperwork and chance for communication to go off the rails, especially when it can't be expected that your engineers have any previous experience with your particular undertaking and the rules that apply.

This is what Brookside faces. They have had to hire Perennia to oversee



"By the side"

an editorial comment

rebuilding the abattoir outside Truro to meet CFIA requirements. That might be somewhat okay were it not that CFIA offers no preliminary inspections or advice as work progresses. An inspection will only take place when the work is done and it suits CFIA to take a look. Can't you see it? At long last the day arrives. CFIA comes to view the work and, oh no, you can't have that door there! And those lights will never do, and you'll have to raise that ceiling. . . .

Come on, CFIA, you're not dealing with Cargill. You might wish that you were, for bigger is always better in the eyes of some, but we are talking about a producer-owned co-op with severely limited abilities to play your expensive games. We are talking about support for the rural economy of a region. A great deal of lip service is paid the rural economy by every level of government. Every level stalls when it comes to cutting red tape that throttles endeavors like Brookside. DvL



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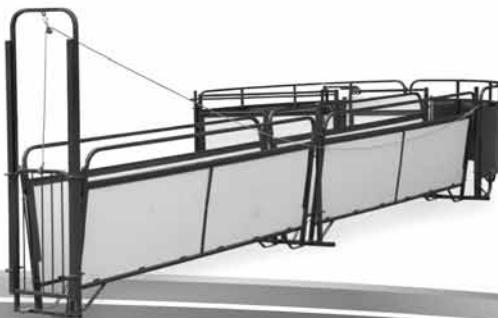
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Rib Ends: Notes, news 'n' notions

Guy LeBlanc honored

At a March 28 ceremony during the New Brunswick Beef Conference in Moncton, Guy LeBlanc, longtime beef specialist with the provincial Department of Agriculture, became the first recipient of the Bob Colpitts Memorial Award. Colpitts, a 35-year department veteran and one of LeBlanc's early mentors, died on January 12, 2014, and the award is intended to recognize others who have followed his model of leadership in supporting the province's beef industry. LeBlanc started with the department in 1980, and is highly regarded for his numerous contributions to the cattle sector, including his outstanding "Letter From New Brunswick" which appears regularly in this magazine. He recently announced he will be retiring later this year. Watch for a profile in our next issue.

New Junior Beef show

The South Shore Cattlemen's Association is behind a new Junior Beef Show taking place July 24 at the South Shore, Nova Scotia (BigX) Exhibition. Ribbons and prize money and class fees covered by donations from the Association and several local businesses including the South Shore Vet Clinic, Shur-Gain, and Co-op Atlantic sponsors. Cattle shown must be on the exhibition grounds for the week as part of a display in the Beef Barn or in the 4-H barn as part of a 4-H project. For details Becky Crouse at 523-0710 (or rebecca_crouse@hotmail.com) or Steve Ward at 521-3038.

Grass-fed video launched

A new video from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research scientist Yousef Papadopoulos investigating new, improved, grass and legume mixtures for cattle is now available in both French and English. Based on trials at the Nappan research farm, the video focus is on mixtures designed to improve growth and meat quality. To access the video visit the "Grass Fed Beef: An Edge for Atlantic Beef Producers" link on RuralLife.ca.

Heifer trial

This summer a research trial is underway at the Maritime Bull Test Station to examine feed efficiency and productivity



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in replacement heifers. The project is intended to provide information about the role of sexual maturity (age at first heat), and the potential use of assessment tools such as hair testing, blood work, heart rate monitoring, and ultrasounds. This project is made possible by local producers who are allowing the researchers to test a number of heifers born between September 1 and November 1, 2013. Watch for updates in future issues of *Atlantic Beef and Sheep*. 

Chops: News, views, and updates

Tag price increases

This May the price of Shearwell CSIP ASET sheep tags went up by 10 cents to \$1.85 (subject to tag levies where applicable), marking the second increase in a year. The Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Limited (CCWG) said the tags, which are manufactured in Scotland, have become more expensive due to the depreciation of the Canadian dollar against the British pound. The Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) has said it will continue to explore opportunities for minimizing the costs of the Canadian Sheep Identifi-

cation Program (CSIP), while ensuring its effectiveness. Follow the CSF sheep tagging link at [RuralLife.ca](#) to view a series of short videos on this topic.

Scrapie plan

A Scrapie Eradication Strategic Plan for Canada was completed this spring, following a two-year study which collected 11,704 testable sheep samples from abattoirs across Canada, determining the rate of scrapie infection to be 0.08 percent, or 1 in 1,300 mature sheep. The plan calls for continuing surveillance, with 4,450 sheep samples collected annually for a minimum of four years in the first phase. Once there have been five consecutive years with no positive scrapie cases identified, the second phase of the surveillance strategy will commence, with 2,430 sheep tested per year. The plan also calls for continuation of the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program (VSFCP), which recognizes producers' scrapie control efforts through a certification process.

Ewe flock down

Statistics Canada figures released in January 2014, indicate there are 557,600 ewes in the national flock, down 5,000 (or 0.89 percent) from 2013. But the flock remains 3.1 percent larger than it was five years ago, when there were 540,700 ewes. The five-year average is 555,200 ewes. Nova Scotia's market share is up slightly to 2.30 percent, from 2.26 percent last year, while the other Atlantic provinces have held steady, with less than one percent each. In the past year the number of replacement lambs on-farm dropped 2.1 percent nationally, indicating that the downward trend in flock size may continue in 2015.

New Salers members



Ernest Hunter, president of the Maritime Salers Association, presents Scott and Lindy Brown, of Portage Vale, N.B., with a gift for becoming the group's newest members. Hunter, of Simonds, N.B., was himself the recipient of the association's Best Bull Award, which is given to the breeder of the best Salers bull on test at the Nappan Test Station each year.
(Steve Parrish photo)

during a visit this May. The launch event took place on Victoria Day in Pictou, N.S., with models dressed head to toe in woolly fashions. Also in attendance were local sheep, farmers, artisans, and industry representatives. Initiated in 2010 and now active in 12 countries, the program is intended to raise awareness of the unique natural and environmental benefits of wool. Campaign organizers claim these promotional efforts over the past four years have helped to triple the price farmers receive for their wool. "Wool is a wonder material, a sustainable fabric that supports rural economies," said Eric Bjergso, general manager for Canadian Cooperative Wool Growers, the program's Canadian delivery partner.

Import requirements

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) recently released proposed changes to the requirements for importing small ruminants from the United States. Major revisions include restricting the import of females to those from "negligible risk" flocks; previously females could also be imported from flocks enrolled in the USDA Scrapie Flock Certification Program, provided they were imported to a Canadian flock enrolled in the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program (VSFCP). A number of options for importing males have also been proposed. Comments on these changes were received until the end of May. The Canadian Sheep Federation worked closely with industry stakeholders to provide feedback to the CFIA.

Purebred sheep to Ukraine

The government of Canada announced May 22 that it had signed an agreement to allow the export of purebred sheep and goats to Ukraine, expanding marketing options for Canadian producers while giving Ukrainian breeders access to improved genetics. In 2012 the two countries reached an agreement for exports of Canadian purebred cattle, a market that proved to be worth more than \$1.5 million last year. The government press release quotes Michael Hall, executive director of the Canadian Livestock Genetics Association, saying he was "very pleased with this new market access to the Ukraine for live small ruminants." 

Where's the Beef?

A Calendar of Cattle Events

June 25: Sussex and Studholm Agricultural Society Sale, Co-op livestock barn, Sussex, N.B. Sale starts at 11:30 am. Contact 506-432-1841.

July 9: Sussex and Studholm Agricultural Society Sale, Co-op livestock barn, Sussex, N.B. Sale starts at 11:30 am. Contact 506-432-1841.

July 9-12: All Canada Sheep Classic, Ancaster, Ont. Largest sheep event in the country. Visit www.sheepbreeders.ca/classic.html.

July 19: 15th North Shore Antique and Engine Club Tractor and Engine Show and Heritage Day at the Verstraten Farm, 5736 Hwy 366, Lorneville, N.S. Woodlot tour, 4-H woodsmen demonstration, and more. Contact Francis Verstraten, 902-661-9534 or Vincent Hollis, 902-447-3062 or francisverstraten@yahoo.ca.

July 22-27: BigX South Shore N.S. Exhibition, Bridgewater. Contact 902-543-3341.

July 23: Sussex and Studholm Agricultural Society Sale, Co-op livestock barn, Sussex, N.B. Sale starts at 11:30 am. Contact 506-432-1841.

July 24: Youth Beef Show, South Shore N.S. Exhibition, ribbons and prizes, no fees to enter, sponsors including South Shore Cattlemen's Assn., Shur-Gain, and Co-op Atlantic. Contact Becky Crouse at 902-521-3038.

July 28: Small Farm Expo, Englishtown, N.S. Join us in celebrating small scale farmers, interactive sessions, live demos. Phone 902-563-200 or visit www.novascotia.ca/thinkfarm.

Aug. 2: Maritime Junior Shorthorn Showcase, a day devoted to young Maritime Shorthorn enthusiasts from 0 to 21 years of age. Hosted by the Nova Scotia Shorthorn Association, Fraser's Farms in Millbrook, N.S. Contact Adam and Christy Fraser at 902-396-1937, adamc.fraser@hotmail.com or newviewfarm@hotmail.com.

Aug. 7-16: P.E.I. Provincial Exhibition, Charlottetown Civic Centre. Angus events Aug. 14-16. Contact Rayanne

Frizzell, 902-629-6623 or visit www.oldhomeweekpei.com.

Aug. 9: The Annual Farm Field Day at the Atlantic Cool Climate Crop Research Centre, St. John's Nfld., research displays, free tractor tours, rain or shine, 10 am-5 pm. Contact 709-772-4747 or Lesley.Cowan@AGR.GC.CA.

N.S. Provincial Exhibition Grounds, Truro. Animals on view Aug. 29 from 7 pm, sale starts Aug 30, 11 am. Entries for the sale close July 12. Contact Rosemary Wort, 902-671-2410, herngatefarm@ns.sympatico.ca or visit www.sheepnovascotia.ns.ca under fall sale 2014.

Sept. 5-6: 4-H Rural Youth Fair, Abram's Village, P.E.I. Contact the 4-H office, 902-368-4833 or visit pei4h@gov.pe.ca.

Sept. 13: Fall Feeder Sale, Atlantic Stockyards Limited, Murrays Siding, Truro, N.S., 10 am start. Contact 902-893-9603 or email sfirth@atlanticstockyards.com.

Sept. 20: Fall Equipment Auction Sale, Atlantic Stockyards Limited, Murrays Siding, Truro, N.S. 10 am start. Contact 902-893-9603 or email sfirth@atlanticstockyards.com.

Sept. 13: Loon Point Herefords, Sale of the East and Atlantic Bonus Sale. Contact 506-488-3100.

Sept. 14: Maritime Simmental Association Open Field Day, open invitation at André and Geraldine van Agter's Giarro Farm in Petitcodiac, N.B. Contact 902-566-3613 or 506-756-2550.

Sept. 19-21: Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association is hosting the 14th Annual Cream of the Crop Sale, 1 pm in conjunction with the Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine 40th anniversary National Show, sale, and AGM, Lindsay, Ont. Contact Steven Acres, 613-836-4190 or visit www.canadianblondeassociation.ca.

Sept. 19-21: N.B. Beef Expo in Sussex. Sept. 20, Maritime Limousin Association AGM, Sept. 21, Junior Limousin Show. Contact John Calvin, 902-664-8008. Maritime Angus Association events contact Betty Lou Scott, 902-925-2057.

"Where's the Beef" is a free service to advertisers, subscribers, and non-profit groups. Commercial rate \$23, 20 words max. Send notices to *Atlantic Beef*, Box 1509 Liverpool, NS B0T 1K0. Include event name, date, location, and contact information. Turn to *RuralLife.ca*, "Events & News," for a regularly updated list.

Predictions of rising feeder calf prices held true

by Sean Firth

Predictions of rising feeder calf prices earlier this winter held true as prices broke all-time record highs in April and May. Strong demand and light offerings of stock cows has also translated to high prices for bred cows. Look for prices to hold for fall 2014 and beyond.

Feedlots are enjoying excellent profits despite high feeder input costs. This is driven by sustained finished prices and modest grain costs. Break-evens for finished cattle marketed locally are well below current fat prices (\$2.53/lb current vs \$2.24/lb June breakeven), providing \$150-plus

profit per head.

Feedlot profit needs to be strong given the high risk of inputs for feeders. Imagine losing \$150 per head at marketing and buying replacement cattle for \$1,500 – no joy there. Everyone in the beef industry should be happy with feedlots making money; it is a good situation for all.



The feeder calf market in Canada has enjoyed a record spring. This situation applies locally. Atlantic Stockyards Ltd. (ASL) sold calves on April 22 for

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700-800	165-190	194-212	168-219
800-900	140-165	180-195	175-198
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D1 cows	.88-.96	1.02-.115	.101-1.13
A1/A2	2.53	2.53	2.61



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The temptation is still strong to sell good heifers as feeders at fantastic prices

Orchard Hill Farm (Steve, Sue, and Chad Darragh) for \$2.25 and \$2.06/lb; the first time in history that local feeder calves sold for more than \$2 through the ring. Since then we have sold more than 200 calves for prices above \$2, reaching a high of \$2.59 for a group of four black Limousin steers on May 22. These cattle represented some of the highest prices in Canada on that date.

This market looks secure for fall marketing as too few cattle across North America are available as replacements. At ASL, we are also seeing the beginning of herd rebuilding as the number of heifers being offered as feeders is declining. This means producers are reacting to market signals to retain heifers for breeding and to increase numbers.

This is a tradeoff, as the temptation is still strong to sell good heifers as feeders at fantastic prices. Statistics Canada, however, shows only a modest increase in heifer retention for breeding

(200 additional heifers retained in 2014 compared to 2013) for the entire Atlantic region; this is not the case at auction.

Stock cows are extremely well priced as too few are being sold and too many are in demand. ASL sold decent stock cows in calf six to nine months for \$1,500–\$2,000 with solid demand. Doing the math on these cows makes sense considering the high feeder and cull cow prices. Cows safe in calf, now calving in late spring, will wean a calf worth more than \$1,000, with a salvage value on the cow of \$900; \$2,000 for a cow works. Same deal for cow-calf pairs — good pairs have sold for \$2,000–\$2,500, a safer bet with a live calf at side and great cull cow prices. Bred heifers are the constant balance between buying good young breeding animals and incurring higher risk of safe calving and getting heifers rebred. Hights for bred heifers this spring were \$2,200, with average good bred heifers selling for \$1,800.

Cull cow prices have remained high with thinner, good framed beef cows commanding a premium through the ring as grass cows. Well-fleshed dairy and beef cows are averaging \$1,200 as culls, reflecting the need by processors to keep lines busy with a combination of fat and cull cattle. Strong export demand also helps to maintain cull prices.

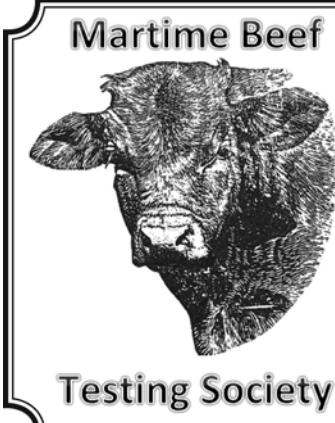
A cooler and drier spring so far (June 3) is a bit concerning. I hope timely moisture will provide good grazing conditions and good forage yields. This fall is shaping up to be extremely strong for cow-calf producers and feedlots. Good times continue.

(Sean Firth is the owner-manager of Atlantic Stockyards Ltd. in Truro, N.S.)

BREAK-EVEN ANALYSIS

June 2014 - October 2014

Delivered Barley	\$3.93/bu.
Grass Silage	\$49.98/t
Yearling Steer	\$152/cwt
Cost of Gain (Feed)	\$58.19/cwt
Cost of Gain (All Costs)	\$91.71/cwt
A1/A2 Steers Atlantic	\$148/cwt (\$2.53/lb rail)
Break-even October 2014	\$133.02/cwt (\$2.27/lb rail)



Thank you to all MBTS consignors and purchasers of bulls and heifers for making the 2014 Breeding Stock Sale a success.

Consignment forms for the 2014-15 test will be available in September.

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*We are proud supporters of 4-H and the Maritime Junior Hereford Association.
 pictured is a group photo of the Maritime Junior Hereford kids at their
 recent field day and Wyatt Oulton with his heifer.*

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 old bulls, cows, feeders or fats all at competitive prices.
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Charolais fetches top dollar at Nappan

by Charlie Weeks

Sixty-nine premium Maritime bulls were auctioned off at the Maritime Beef Test Station Bull Sale on April 5. Auctioneer Andy Carter coaxed close to \$190,000 from the buyers during the 41st annual sale – the largest bull sale east of Quebec.

Maritime breeders have brought their best bulls to the Nappan Experimental Station for testing in Nappan, Nova Scotia, since 1962. One hundred and thirty bulls were in this year's total performance 112-day test. A Charolais bull from Downeast Charolais brought the top price at \$5,800, well above the \$3,207 average of the 14 Charolais bulls for sale.

Seventeen Simmental bulls went for \$51,250 total with a \$3,100 average. The top Simmental bull came from Melvern Simmentals and sold for \$3,900. There were 16 Black Angus on the block this year, up from the usual 10 or 12. The top bull in this breed, from Melvern Simmentals, went for \$3,600. Seven Herefords averaged \$3,200, with an Allen's Herefords bull topping out at \$3,200. Three Red Angus averaged \$3,600 with one consigned by Katahdin View Red Angus topping out at \$4,600.

The top-selling Limousin, consigned by Othberg Limousin, went for \$3,900. The four in the sale averaged \$2,900. The lone Shorthorn, consigned by Dalvin Farms, went for \$1,800. Four Salers, consigned by Outback Ranch Land and Cattle, averaged \$2,375 with a top price of \$2,900. Three Hybrids F1 Cross, consigned by Melvern Simmentals, went for \$6,550 with a top price of \$2,750.

This year's overall average was about \$2,700, a few dollars less than in 2013. The Maritime Beef Testing Society had veterinarians from the Atlantic Veterinary College in Charlottetown, P.E.I., conduct a semen test on each bull. This was at the request of consignors and buyers. Of the 69 bulls tested, 20 did not pass. Several of these were last year's March and April calves so they will pass in a couple of months, but there were several that will never be breeders. That's the whole point of the test – better to find out now than later.

Sandra Othberg is vice president of the Society and a Limousin breeder near



Charolais were the top seller in the 41st Annual Maritime Beef Test Station Bull Sale on April 5. The 14 bulls sold brought an average price of \$3,207, and one from Downeast Charolais commanded the top price of \$5,800.

Sussex, New Brunswick. For her the test station is the place to see top-quality bulls from other areas of the Maritimes in one place. The testing is vital for consignors and buyers. "I wouldn't buy a bull that wasn't on test," she said. "I look at the numbers before looking at the bull. If the numbers

aren't right, I don't look at the bull."

Allen's Herefords of Oxford, N.S., had a bull on test that proved to be the highest index Hereford bull for 2014, bringing in the top sale price in the breed. Such designation, especially for a first-time consignor, goes beyond just the dollar amount. It's a

Breed	Number in sale		Total Dollars		Average 2013
	2013	2014	2013	2014	
ANGUS	8	16	\$ 28,800	\$ 39,150	\$ 3,600.00
CHAROLAIS	13	14	\$ 44,000	\$ 44,900	\$ 3,384.62
RED ANGUS	2	3	\$ 7,000	\$ 9,300	\$ 3,500.00
SIMMENTAL	21	17	\$ 52,700	\$ 51,250	\$ 2,509.52
LIMOUSIN	7	4	\$ 17,800	\$ 11,600	\$ 2,542.86
HEREFORD	5	7	\$ 10,400	\$ 15,450	\$ 2,080.00
SALERS	3	4	\$ 7,000	\$ 9,500	\$ 2,333.33
SHORTHORN	3	1	\$ 6,000	\$ 1,800	\$ 2,000.00
HYBRIDS	4	3	\$ 8,900	\$ 6,550	\$ 2,225.00
GELBVIEH	1	0	\$ 1,600	\$ 0	\$ 1,600.00
Totals	67	69	\$ 184,200	\$ 189,500	\$ 2,749.25
HEIFERS	15	28	\$ 17,900	\$ 41,700	\$ 1,193.33



The Maritime Beef Testing Society held a heifer consignment sale in conjunction with the bull sale on April 5. Heifers haven't been on test the past couple of years, but there is demand for top quality animals. By sale time there were 28 open heifers ready for the ring, and the average price came in at close to \$1,500.

validation of their breeding program, that they are choosing the right genetic lines in their AI breeding. It puts them on the buyers' radar when they look for a bull or heifer to add to their herd.

"If you do well then people start watching you and coming to your farm," said Leonard Allen.

The annual Maritime Beef Test is a breeder-owned cooperative and the one program that stresses total performance, measuring gains on-test as well as reporting indicators of reproduction and carcass evaluation.

(Charlie Weeks is the editor of *The Oxford Journal* and a freelance writer.)



Heifers near \$1,500 mark at Nappan sale

by Charlie Weeks

Heifers weren't on test this year at the Maritime Beef Test Station in Nappan, Nova Scotia, but there was a consignment sale.

Brian Trueman, a director of the Maritime Beef Testing Society, said the test was canceled because there were too few heifers on test the past couple of years. It wasn't financially feasible to continue. However, the demand for a heifer sale was there, so the board of directors decided to hold a consignment sale.

The goal was to sell up to 30 quality purebred, crossbred commercial, or F1 heifers from as many consignors as possible. The only other stipulation was they were to be at least 900 lbs. By sale time 28 open heifers were consigned. Trueman was impressed with the quality of the animals brought in. Heifers of similar quality sold for about \$1,100 last year and he expected to see a \$1,400 average this year. He wasn't far off, as the average price was close to \$1,500.

"With the upturn in the beef industry there will be herd rebuilding and startups in the future," said Trueman. "It's our goal this sale will provide a needed service to purebred and commercial breeders."

He said the Society will continue to be a major player in the development and improvement of the beef industry in Atlantic Canada.

The 14 composite heifers, consigned by S&S Dixon went for \$20,050, averaging \$1,432 with the top seller coming in at \$1,550. Five Black Angus from LXL Charolais Farm sold for \$8,000, averaging \$1,600 with a top seller of \$1,900. Four Balancers from O'Faelan Farms Inc. brought \$5,625 with a top seller of \$1,525. Two Gelbvieh from O'Faelan Farms went for \$3,200, the lone Hereford from Young's Polled Herefords for \$1,750, and two Simmental from Jo-Dreen Farm for \$3,075.

(Charlie Weeks is the editor of *The Oxford Journal* and a freelance writer.)



e Dollars 2014	Top Seller		Top # 2014	Top Owner		Top Buyer	
	2013	2014		2013	2014	2013	2014
\$ 2,446	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 3,600	2	Melvern Simmentals	Melvern Simmentals	Andrew Jessens	Malcolm Gilbert
\$ 3,207	\$ 5,100.00	\$ 5,800	27	Cornerstone Charolais	Downeast Charolais	Kevin Simmons	Bob Bates
\$ 3,100	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,600	17	Lindale Farms	Katahdin View Red Angus	David Campbell	Daniel Cyr
\$ 3,914	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 4,100	45	Matheson Farms	Melvern Simmentals	Eric Cochrane	Kevin Simmons
\$ 2,900	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,900	34	Blue Diamond Polled Limousin	Othberg Limousin	Peter Floris	Eric Millen
\$ 2,207	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 3,200	59	Willow Pond Farm	Allen's Herefords	Forest Lothian	Belinda Hunter
\$ 2,375	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 2,900	55	Brian & Linda Walker	Dalvin Farms	Bruce Skinner	David Stoeves
\$ 1,800	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 1,800	66	Michael Bertram & Seymour Hurry	Outback Ranch Land & Cattle	Richard Feeney & David Stoeves	Scott Brown
\$ 2,183	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,750	67	Orchard Hill Farm	Melvern Simmentals	Donald Leger	Eric Gagner
\$ 0	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 0	0	O'Faelan Farms Inc.	-	Edmund Kolter	-
\$ 2,746	\$ 5,100.00	\$ 5,800	27	Cornerstone Charolais	Downeast Charolais	Kevin Simmons	Bob Bates
\$ 1,489	\$ 1,425.00	\$ 1,900	86H	Brodie Trenholm	LXL Charolais Farm	Glenn Cameron	Beth Trueman

Bull buyers like gain and size

But are they ready to pay more for feed efficiency?

by Sean Firth

The annual Maritime Beef Test Station spring bull and open heifer sale on April 5 brought good prices and, as always, great support from Maritime beef producers. The addition of Residual Feed Intake (RFI) data provided another method for producers to evaluate bulls on offer and enable them to make decisions based on their farms' needs.

Atlantic Beef and Sheep provides an analysis of the bull sale each year, attempting to discover why bulls sell for the prices they do and what data farmers use (and how much that data is worth). Selecting a bull is 50 percent art, 50 percent science. All the data in the world will not necessarily translate to top prices if the bull lacks eye appeal, and vice versa. There is also the individual farmer's need to provide certain traits to his herd – a balance of maternal and production needs, based on market. Also consider that most producers buy a bull once every two or three years. The decision of which bull to buy is perhaps the single most important one a producer will make.

Table 1 provides a summary of the 2014 sale, with a brief comparison to previous years. In terms of breed value, Charolais has once again topped the overall sale. Producers spent an average of \$450 over the average sale price for Charolais bulls, reflecting in large part the preference at calf sale time for Char-cross yellow and tan calves. The breed continues to provide good thick, growthy calves.

The Simmental breed is making continued progress in providing balance for producers who want good maternal ability and solid colored calves at sale. This progress is reflected in the increasing value of the bulls sold each year. The Red Angus and Limousin breeds also sold above the sale average. Limousin provides calving ease with outstanding



Black Angus continue to command strong prices at the annual Maritime Beef Test Station Bull Sale. There were 16 on offer this year, with the top bull going for \$3,600.

carcass traits, and Red Angus provides gain and moderate frame size.

It is useful to understand the drivers for the Canadian grading system: rib eye size and external fat cover. In simple terms, the bigger the rib eye and the less external fat (as long as it is over two millimeters), the better the lean yield. Lean yield determines which A grade the cattle fall into. For bull buyers with the end market of feeder calves, it is important to produce high yielding calves – those that will grade well for feedlot buyers. High yielding (well-muscled) calves sell at the top of the market. This is the driving concept for premiums and discounts in the marketplace.

It is instructive to look at the breed averages in Table 1

Table 1 –2014 Sale Averages by Breed With Past Year Summaries.

	#	ADG (lbs)	RFI (kg/day)	BW (lbs)	ADYW (lbs)	REA (sq in)	Marbling (%)	Fat (mm)	Scrotal (cm)	Price (\$)
Charolais	14	4.01	-.1	95	1235	13.9	2.4	4.6	37	3204
Limousin	4	3.20	-.84	79	1125	14.2	2.5	4.5	34	2900
Red Angus	3	4.06	-.78	84	1138	11.1	3.6	5.0	36	3100
Angus	16	4.20	.04	84	1195	12.3	3.7	7.0	38	2447
Saler	4	3.90	-.02	91	1090	12.2	2.9	5.0	37	2375
Simmental	17	3.90	.31	91	1295	14.2	2.5	5.5	39	3015
Shorthorn	1	3.30	1.0	75	1134	14.1	3.3	8.0	37	1800
Hereford	7	3.60	-.68	87	1164	11.9	2.0	6.6	36	2207
XX	3	3.70	.30	88	1113	12.0	2.3	5.3	36	2183
Overall	69	3.92	-.06	88.3	1208	13.1	2.78	5.7	37.6	2745
Range 2012	72	3.17-4.78		68-110	1012-1338	10.8-20.3	1.5-3.8	2-9	31.5-46	1500-6900
Range 2010	67	2.62-4.35		70-106	951-1414	10.4-17.8	1.3-5.6	2-9	30.5-43	1200-3500
Range 2008	80	2.96-5.15		65-110	965-1377	10.2-17	2.8-7.1	2-10	31-45	1150-4400
Range 2009	65	2.96-4.75		70-110	962-1335	10.6-17.3	3-7.4	2-10	30.5-43	1400-3800

for traits that affect end value of calves: gain, REA, fat, and marbling. Of the beef graded in Canada, 95 percent will have a marbling score of AA (45 percent) or AAA (50 percent). Prime and A (single A) account for the remaining 5 percent. There is an abundance of research showing that marbling has a very small impact on final eating quality; the negative financial emphasis for marbling shown in table 2 is not a bad thing. Given the extremely strong prices in all portions of the beef industry now, it was a bit surprising that the overall average price did not surpass last year's.

TRAITS

Table 2 provides an estimate of the dollar value producers place on individual traits, with a comparison to previous years. The bottom 50 percent value is the average of the bottom 35 bulls (50 percent of the bulls on test) for the trait listed; the top 50 percent is the average value for the top 35 bulls (50 percent of the bulls on test). The trend to reward gain and size is clear, as gain (ADG), yearling weight (ADYW), and rib eye area (REA) are all positive for all three years examined for the top 50 percent for each value. The REA and YRWT values somewhat

go hand in hand, as larger bulls tend to have larger rib eyes. The exception is the Limousin breed, which achieves large rib eyes (tied for the largest breed average with Simmental) with moderate yearling weights. The reward for gain (ADG) has been a longstanding trend in the beef industry. Poor gaining bulls are removed from the sale so buyers are bidding on the best gaining bulls from the test.

The addition of a Residual Feed Intake (RFI) value for each bull this year offered producers yet another means to evaluate the animals. As with any new technology, there will be a learning curve for producers to understand and use this value. The "Coles Notes" explanation of RFI is that it is a measurement of how well an animal converts feed to maintenance and growth. The "residual" refers to the difference between the predicted and actual feed eaten by the animal. A negative value means the animal ate less than predicted (and is therefore more efficient); a positive value means the animal ate more than predicted (and is therefore less efficient). A suggestion for next year may be to explain the value in terms of weight of feed per day.

Did the RFI make a difference in the prices paid for the bulls? There was a

mathematical difference of \$301 for bulls with a negative RFI. The spread was 2.0 (-1 to +1) RFI units from the average low 50 percent to the average high 50 percent. I will say this: I am not convinced that producers consciously paid more for better RFI bulls, but the trend of doing so was correct. We will see in years to come whether this trend continues.

Table 3 is useful for looking at trends. In a relatively harsh winter, the sale bulls grew very well. They achieved great gain, and high adjusted yearling weights with lower than average birth weights – likely a result of better than normal grass silage. Birth weight is not trending up (a good thing for calving ease); marbling and scrotals are flat; but rib eye appears to be trending smaller, which is not a good thing given our discussion about yield. Have a look at the data and decide for yourself where your buying emphasis would be.

ADG = average daily gain, the animals' average gain over the 112-day test period, not including the adjustment period. Generally the higher the better. BW = birth weight in lbs, compromise between lower birth weight for calving ease and higher birth weight for higher weaning and yearling weights.

ADYW = adjusted yearling weight in lbs, weight adjusted to 365 days of age, allowing for age of dam and including an adjusted weaning weight. Moderate ADYW translates to progeny that will finish at moderate weights.

REA = rib eye area in square inches, generally the higher the better, can indicate progeny that will have higher yield grades when they are finished, REA is a measurement that is calculated in the Canadian beef grading system Marbling = percent intramuscular fat through the loin, again the grading system segregates carcasses based on marbling, less than 1.86% marbling means carcasses cannot grade A

Fat = mm of fat over the loin, less than 2 carcasses cannot grade A, high fat indicates lower yielding animals Scrotal = in cms indicates fertility, all breeds have minimum standards.

Table 2. \$ Spread Values by Trait

Trait	Bottom 50%	Value (\$)	Top 50%	Value (\$)	2014 Spread (\$)	2012 Spread (\$)	2010 Spread (\$)
ADG	3.6	2530	4.25	2967	437	22	195
ADYW	1129	2421	1284	3061	640	790	330
REA	11.9	2440	14.3	3043	603	357	264
Marbling	2.3	2876	3.3	2625	(251)	(13)	(107)
Fat	4.44	2926	6.9	2570	(356)	74	(17)
Scrotal	35.8	2669	39.5	2825	156	(385)	282
BW	81	2676	96	2818	142	133	58
RFI	1.05	2894	-1.14	2593	301	na	na

Table 3. Multi Year Average Summary (bulls).

Year	ADG (lbs)	BW (lbs)	ADYW (lbs)	REA (in ²)	Marbling (%)	Fat (mm)	Scrotal (cm)	Price (\$)
2014	3.92	88.3	1208	13.1	2.78	5.69	37.6	2745
2012	3.73	90.75	1169	14.2	2.26	5.28	37.9	2876
2010	3.38	90.38	1141	13.6	2.45	4.45	37.05	1910
2009	3.79	91.77	1135	13.9	4.14	4.32	37.6	2280
2008	3.67	92.5	1144	13.5	4.7	4.9	38.4	2074

Boosting phosphorus and legume levels

Trial plots monitored at Cape John Community Pasture

by Jonathan Wort

The Cape John Community Pasture project is entering its fourth season, generating data that may point the way toward more productive grazing. The demonstration project is a cooperative effort involving Perennia, the Cape John Community Pasture Co-op, the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture (NSDA), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), Dalhousie University's Faculty of Agriculture, and the Nova Scotia Cattle Producers. In the previous three years, funding from the NSDA has allowed us to implement intensive rotational grazing on part of the 700-acre pasture.

Growing conditions were good in 2013, unlike the previous year. In 2012 the summer was dry until August and September, when rainfall far exceeded the 20-year average, resulting in a late flush of growth. Despite those dry conditions in the first part of the 2012 season, we were able to increase stocking to 150 head on the 120-acre trial area, above the previous level of around 100 head.

In 2013 stocking was increased again to 180 head. This was achieved at the same time that the average daily gain increased from 1.4 lbs/day to 1.7 lbs/day. From May through until the end of August the cattle were gaining 2.1 to 2.4 lbs/day, but from the end of August until pasture close the rates were 1.1 lbs/day to 1.7 lbs/day, reflecting September rainfall levels lower than the 20-year average.

FERTILIZATION

In 2013 some of the pasture blocks were divided, and half were fertilized with 200 lbs/acre of 17-21-17, based on soil tests that indicated phosphorus levels were declining. Compared to the control plots, the fertilized plots exhibited dry matter yield increases of approximately 30 percent from May to the end of August, which amounts to a return of \$147.67/acre of equivalent feed value. At a fertilizer application cost of \$61.36/acre, the net return was \$86.36/acre. This is not earth-shattering, but it confirms that dividends can be achieved by maintaining pasture fertility, even at today's fertilizer prices.

Weight gains on pasture are directly related to the amount of forage available and the nutrient value of the forage. This is illustrated in the graph at right, which shows that the cattle gained consistently until the end of August, but their weights plateaued and fell slightly when the availability of grass declined in September and October.

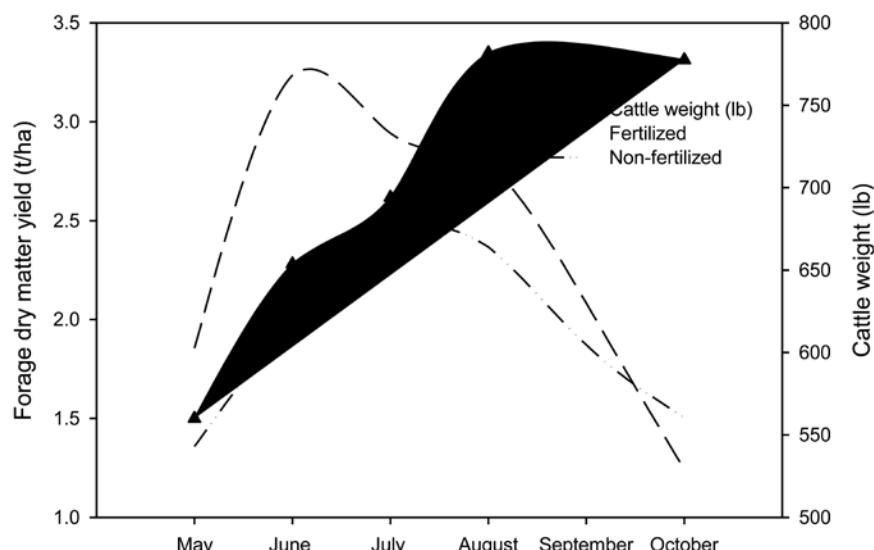
This significant drop in growth rates could have been avoided by reducing stocking, making more forage available to the cattle. This was not done because



Bill Thomas, of Perennia, talking about sod seeding at the Cape John Pasture Day 2013. (Jonathan Wort photo)

there was a shortage of forage on other parts of the pasture, and the decision was made to move some more cattle on to the trial area.

In addition to the fertilizer plots, we established four plots that were sod seeded to demonstrate the potential for improving forage quality. Using a no-till seeder, a total area of approxi-



Average cattle weight and forage dry matter yield, May to October, 2013. Cape John Pasture Project

mately 14 acres was seeded with Meadow Fescue, Red Clover, and White Clover. This was done in June of 2013, and it is expected that the beneficial effects will be measurable in the 2014 growing season.

The percentage of legume in the sward at Cape John is lower than we would like to see. Botanical sampling on four occasions through the summer of 2013, using two methods, indicated that legume content ranged from three percent to 30 percent, though the average was in the vicinity of 10 percent. Legume content varies through the growing season, but by increasing it we can ensure optimal nitrogen fixation, productivity, and nutritional content of the sward.

MOB GRAZING

The Cape John Pasture Co-op is anticipating that 2014 will be a good year. It appears the pasture is booked to capacity, with more than 700 head. Turnout days were delayed by a week to May 26 and 27, in order to ensure there was adequate grass.

Monitoring of the fertility and sod seeding plots is continuing. In addition, following this winter's visit by Dr. Allen William, we are going to try a demonstration of mob grazing on some of the trial pasture blocks. This will involve increasing stocking density to the point the available grass can be grazed in as little as an hour. The cattle will then be moved to a similar area, and over the period of a day one block will be grazed in this fashion, resulting in significant deposition of manure and the trampling of a lot of plant material. Proponents of this method say it improves soil biology and increases pasture productivity. By monitoring the progress of the pasture following the mob grazing, we hope to test this claim.

In early fall we hope to host another Pasture Day, similar to previous years, with some informative demonstrations and speakers. Watch for an announcement of the date and details.

(Jonathan Wort is a Perennia Livestock Specialist in Truro, N.S. He can be reached at 902-896-0277, or by email: jwort@perennia.ca.)



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SHOW SEASON IS UPON US -

Are we ready?



As you read this, the first major show for Angus breeders has already taken place. The annual Maritime Angus Junior Show saw 23 Junior Angus members strut their stuff before the discerning eye of Corinne Gibson, of Six Mile Red Angus, Canadian Angus Association President.



For the 2014 Angus show season, new rules for our Angus Gold Shows (points shows) are in place. All exhibitors at these shows will be wearing white shirts and black show vests. In addition to their 'handler dress code' the four legged competitors born in 2012, 2013 and 2014 will be sporting a GREEN ANGUS RFID tag.



As the breed with the largest number of animals registered in Canada (more than ALL other breeds combined) Angus is well recognized for its superior beef qualities. Be sure to attend an Angus show this summer and feast your eyes on the fine bovine beasts before you and support the faithful breeders who take the time and money to make cattle shows possible.



2014 Angus Gold Shows will take place in Charlottetown - August 15th, Sussex-September 20th and Halifax - October 12th.

SEE YOU AT A SHOW DOWN THE ROAD.



Maritime Angus Association

Betty Lou Scott

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maritimeangus.blogspot.ca



*Upcoming
Events!*

CJAA Showdown: July 17-19 Virden, Manitoba

Old Home Week Angus events: August 14-16 Charlottetown, PEI

Beef Expo: September 19-21 Sussex, NB

Maritime Fall Fair: October 10-13 Halifax, NS

Angus in Action Sale: October 25 Nappan, NS

Maritime Angus Association Annual Meeting: December 7th – Amherst, NS

Also check out the Provincial 4-H shows in Sussex New Brunswick (Aug. 26-28), at the Evangeline Exhibition Grounds on Prince Edward Island (Sept. 6) and in Truro Nova Scotia. (Sept 26-28).

MARITIME ANGUS BREEDERS



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Cell: 902-254-4499

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RR 1, Hopewell, NS
B0K 1C0
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Fax: 902-923-1956
Cell: 902-396-6240

Lorcain Farms Red Angus
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Top of the Hill Farm
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Dusty Breeze Farm
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Garvis Mountain Angus
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Katahdin View Red Angus
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Lindale Farms Red Angus
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Lisson Dale Farm
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Pondsview Farm
Peter, Debbie and Candice Estabrooks
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Sunnyburn Farm
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PEI C0A 2E0
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joanne.mutch@bellaliant.net
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Feeder Calf Sale sets record prices

by Charlie Weeks

For the first time in the history of Atlantic Stockyards, feeder calves sold for more than \$2 per pound on April 22. Atlantic Stockyards owner Sean Firth said he expected the market to reach that threshold at some point.

"It's a good psychological barrier to break through, that \$2 barrier for feeder calves," he said. "It's good for the industry in terms of profitability. It gives producers in the industry a pat on the back for sticking with it." He expects those prices to continue and the industry will be sustainable for a few years. In a subsequent sale, with 630 calves sold, 115 brought more than \$2 per pound.

Steve and Sue Darragh, owners of Orchard Hill Farm at Pugwash, Nova

Scotia, couldn't be happier. Their Angus-Simmental calves set the price record at the earlier sale, with a high of \$2.25 per pound.

"Cattle prices were down to a half or quarter of what they should have been for at least 10 years," said Sue. "There's a shortage of cattle everywhere now, and as a result prices are back up to where they should be." If prices remain as they are, the Darraghs will be able to put money back into their 300-head cow-calf operation. "Before, it took our off-farm wages to do it."

Unfortunately, so many have already gone out of business in Nova Scotia, there may not be enough beef producers to keep the industry going. The producers who are left are the serious ones. They can now recuperate, paying off some of the debt they've ac-



cumulated, and begin to recover. The Darraghs were worried the roughly 50 cows and calves they had in the sale might have been too many for the number of beef producers still in business.

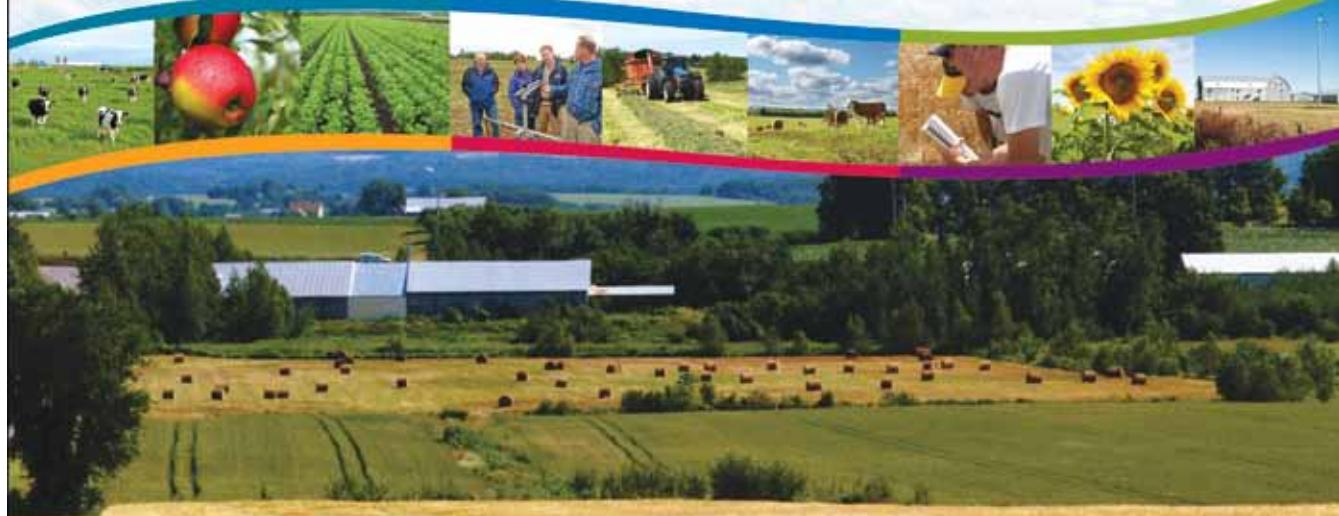
The higher prices will be reflected at the meat counter. Whether or not it will be an immediate change remains to be seen. Consumers are not aware of how serious it has been for beef farmers the past 10 years since the BSE scare. They will balk at the price increase and complain farmers are demanding too much for their product.

"We're not going to get rich, for sure," said Sue. "It's just that prices are where they should be." The Darraghs have worked hard on breeding the best cattle they can.

"We've always invested in good cattle, and it certainly pays off," she said. "We say good cattle pay, they don't cost."

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(Nina Linton photo)

Burger Love records tumble

P.E.I. Campaign blossoms from love affair to something more

by Nina Linton

Now in its fourth year, PEI Burger Love returned to local restaurants. The 2014 campaign was an unrivaled success that topped the million-dollar mark.

Presented in partnership with Fresh Media, Prince Edward Island Cattle Producers (PEICP), P.E.I. Department of Agriculture and Forestry, and P.E.I. Flavours, the sizzling marketing campaign that showcases 100 percent Island beef is the most successful independent food marketing initiative in the province, and the largest non-franchise restaurant food campaign in the country, say organizers.

With 54 participating restaurants, the annual burger promotion—which enlists local eateries to offer unique burgers throughout April, and encourages patrons to “rate their love” for each tantalizing favorite online—easily outsold previous totals, raking in \$1,159,000 in hamburger sales alone.

Over the course of the campaign, com-

mercial kitchens battling for provincial burger supremacy and the title of P.E.I.’s “Most Loved Burger,” churned out an impressive 92,168 signature burgers, up from 46,204 in 2013. In total, 42,083 pounds of ground beef were consumed—more than all prior Burger Love campaigns combined.

“What can I say, it was amazing,” said Rinnie Bradley, executive director of the PEICP. “It never ceases to amaze me.”

Interest skyrocketed throughout the promotion. Burger sales boomed. Line-ups coiled around buildings. Patrons crammed into local eateries causing some restaurants, overrun with drop-in diners, to operate on a “reservation only” policy during peak times, while other establishments hired additional help, or extended their hours to meet demand. Even an opening day snowstorm that closed roads and slowed city traffic, forcing organizers to call off the official campaign launch, couldn’t keep

die-hard hamburger buffs away.

And it wasn’t only Islanders salivating over the social media based initiative. Facebook pages were flooded with snapshots of innovative burgers, and more than 4,300 Twitter followers introduced PEI Burger Love to audiences as far away as Australia. The campaign was even picked up by an internationally renowned food magazine and featured online, upping the profile of P.E.I. beef with foodies worldwide. “It has put us on the map,” Bradley said.

She believes the upbeat burger campaign will translate to increased year-round business for Island cattle producers, helping them get their “foot in the door” with more consumers, restaurants, and distributors. “Their product is fabulous, it’s local and it’s fresh,” she said. “People are asking for it now.”

(Nina Linton lives in East Royalty, P.E.I.)



Beef amid the blizzard

Apparently nothing can stop the P.E.I. Easter Beef Show and Sale

by Trevor MacDonald

Although the quality of the cattle was excellent and the selling prices were good, when people look back at the 63rd annual P.E.I. Easter Beef Show and Sale, what they will remember is the early spring blizzard that pretty much shut down Prince Edward Island for three days. Islanders, however, tend to take the view that the show must go on.

This year's event was held March 27 and 28 at the Eastlink Centre in Charlottetown. Organizers delayed the start of the show by a couple of hours, and the annual banquet was canceled due to the weather, but other than that, everything went ahead as planned. John Nostadt of Windsor, Ontario, beat the storm by flying in a day early, to ensure he could be there to sort through the cattle and determine the winners. He worked his way through the 65 steers



As always, local business owners came out to support the agricultural community by bidding on the steers and heifers offered at the P.E.I. Easter Beef Show and Sale.

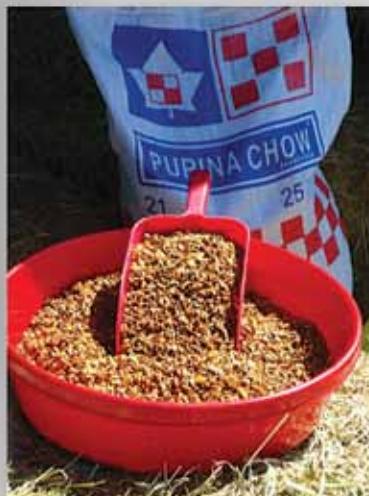
(Trevor MacDonald photo)



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4-H Champs

and heifers that were shown in various breed classes, and also judged the 4-H showmanship classes.

Veteran Easter Beef exhibitors Brian and Dora MacKinley, of York Point, came away with the grand champion, a Maine-Anjou steer. The reserve grand champion, the top-placing steer in the Any Other Breed class, was exhibited by Irwin Jay of Mount Stewart. Auctioneer Andy Carter, from Nova Scotia, oversaw the purchase of the grand champion by Sobeys for \$5.50 per pound, while McKenna Brothers picked up the reserve grand champion with a successful bid of \$5.25 per pound.

The event also featured a visit by the Easter Seals ambassador, 15-year-old Brett Robinson, a student at Charlottetown Rural High School. Robinson thanked those who have contributed to the fundraising campaign, and also took a moment to recognize the passing of longtime Easter Beef Show and Sale announcer Charles Scranton, who was a staunch Easter Seals supporter. 

P.E.I. Easter Beef Show champions:

Heifers: Champion - Rodney Sanderson; Reserve - Brian and Dora MacKinley.

Angus: Champion - James Worth; Reserve - Irwin Jay.

Charolais: Champion - Glenn Campbell; Reserve - Randy Sanderson.

Hereford: Champion - Emma Murnaghan; Reserve - Emily McKenna.

Limousin: Champion - Tara Jay; Reserve - Allan and Jan Holmes.

Maine-Anjou: Champion - Brian and Dora MacKinley; Reserve - Alana Worth.

Shorthorn: Champion - Glenn Jay; Reserve - Colby MacQuarrie.

Simmental: Champion - Ernie and Joanne Mutch; Reserve - Colby MacQuarrie.

Any Other Breed: Champion - Irwin Jay; Reserve - Derek Sanderson.



Siblings James and Alana Worth, of Hampshire, P.E.I., took top honors in 4-H conformation classes at the March 27 P.E.I. Easter Beef Show. James' Angus steer was named championship animal, while Alana won reserve champion with a Maine-Anjou steer. Many 4-H members from clubs across the province braved the biggest storm of the year to attend the event – some spending the night in the Civic Centre in order to care for their animals, while others secured tractor escorts so they could make it to Charlottetown in time to show.

(Fay Worth photo)

4-H Showmanship Classes:

Junior Showmanship: Emma Murnaghan, Ft. Augustus Shining Stars 4-H Club

Intermediate Showmanship: Jake Matheson, Grand River East 4-H Club

Senior Showmanship: Logan Ford, North River 4-H Club

Champion Showmanship: Logan Ford, North River 4-H Club

Reserve Champion Showmanship: Jake Matheson, North River 4-H Club

Maine-Anjou: Alana Worth, North River 4-H Club

Shorthorn: Carter Matheson, French River 4-H Club

Simmental: Alex Mutch, Cherrycliffe 4-H Club

Angus: James Worth, North River 4-H Club

Any Other Breed: Derek Sanderson, North River 4-H Club

Champion Animal: James Worth, North River 4-H Club

Reserve Champion Animal: Alana Worth, North River 4-H Club

Green Diamond 4-H Calf to Market Animal Project Class: James Worth, North River 4-H Club

Junior Member Award (9-14 years): Emma Murnaghan, Ft. Augustus Shining Stars 4-H Club

Senior Member Award (15-21 years): Tricia Sanderson, North River 4-H Club

Overall Member Award: Tie between Tricia Sanderson, North River 4-H Club, and Emma Murnaghan, Ft. Augustus Shining Stars 4-H Club

4-H Conformation Classes:

Charolais: Brady Matheson, Grand River East 4-H Club

Heifer: Dylan Sanderson, North River 4-H Club

Hereford: Emma Murnaghan, Ft. Augustus Shining Stars 4-H Club

Limousin: Tricia Sanderson, North River 4-H Club

Better together?

Considerations for grazing cattle and sheep together

by John Duynisveld

Despite the commonality of both being ruminants, sheep and cattle are very different from each other on many fronts. We know that sheep have a smaller mouth and are thus more selective than cattle, and they also tend to graze closer to the ground than cattle. Sheep do a better job of distributing their manure over the pasture than cattle, and don't show an aversion to grazing close to their own manure. However, these traits also make them much more susceptible to internal parasites than cattle. Research studies from around the world have shown reductions in internal parasites for both species when cattle and sheep are grazed together.

The explanation typically given is that most parasites are specific to the animal species they infect, so when two animal species graze on the same land we effectively reduce the likelihood that they will consume

larvae that will cause an infection. It kind of makes sense. On my home farm I graze about 80 ewes with their lambs, plus about 300 head of cattle of various ages. With rising levels of resistance to dewormers in sheep parasites, and some evidence of this in cattle parasites, I am trying very hard to make use of this opportunity. It does come with its share of challenges though.

I am working with a group of 20 growing and finishing cattle and 60 dry ewes, plus one guard llama. Locally, a research trial done at the former NSAC grazed sheep and cattle in the same paddock, and it worked well, increasing overall animal gain. However, I have some reservations about grazing the two species in the same paddock. Cattle are much larger than sheep, and when it is time to bring them to the corral to sort, wean, or deworm, I have concerns about the cattle hurting the sheep. So I have decided to run them

as separate groups, an approach used in several other research trials.

SEPARATE PADDOCKS

Almost 90 percent of the fences on my farm are single-wire high-tensile steel electric fence, which is great for cattle – cheap and low maintenance – but useless for sheep. Installing a multi-wire, permanent electric fence for sheep on the 30 acres I am using for this would have a high up-front cost, and a high maintenance cost to keep the grass out of the electric wires, so I'm using electrified netting for the sheep. (A note on electric netting: it is well worth the extra \$20 per roll for better quality nets—the ones with plastic upright wires, not twine. They are much easier to work with, they don't sag as easily, and they last longer.)

When this field was subdivided for cattle paddocks eight years ago, we spaced the fences in strips every 50 meters, the

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Shorthorns.....turning Grass Into Beef!

distance of one sheep net. Each sheep paddock is three nets long by one net wide, which is close to the size of the cattle paddocks. There are eight paddocks on the south of the centre lane, and eight paddocks on the north side. The sheep are grazing the north paddocks first, staying about four to seven days in each one (longer when grass is growing slower), and the cattle are in the south paddocks with similar moves to new grass.

In the second rotation the sheep graze the south side, the cattle the north. This flipping of paddocks will occur over the entire grazing season. Essentially this doubles the rest period for each livestock species. My hope is that most of the parasites from the sheep will be grazed by the cattle in the subsequent rotation, and the same for the cattle parasites with the sheep.

Although it is early June when I am writing this, and it is too early to say how effective the system will be for parasite control, from a management and labor perspective it is working well. We are five weeks in, and the cattle are growing very well. (Two are ready to ship next week, and others are coming along well.)

Next week the ewes will be shorn (easy to see body conditions), and we will do our first round of FAMACHA scores (an anemia test on the inner eyelid to check for likely Barber pole worm infections) to see if we need to do much deworming (look for low body condition, signs of anemia, or scouring as indicators). Only the sheep that need deworming will be treated, which helps minimize the chances for resistant parasites to develop.

For the cattle, scouring or poor body condition are the signs we look for to indicate a need to deworm. We do have numerous chemical options available to us to control parasite infections and enhance livestock growth on pasture, but if we use management as our first line of defence and only use the chemical approach when necessary, we will slow or even eliminate the development of resistance, and we will still have these tools to use when we absolutely need them. That is good for us, and for our livestock.

(John Duynisveld is a research biologist with the Crops and Livestock Research Centre in Nappan, N.S.)

The advertisement features a black and white photograph of three cattle (two dark and one light) at the top. Below them is the slogan "HUMANE - BLOODLESS - DRUG FREE". The middle section is divided into two parts: "DELAYED CASTRATION" on the left showing a tool and the "Callicrate BANDER®" logo, and "EARLY CASTRATION" on the right showing the "Callicrate 'WEE' BANDER™" logo and a smaller image of the tool. A "Proudly MADE IN USA" star is also present. The bottom section shows a black and white photo of two lambs. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner of the main ad area.

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Tiny P.E.I. company has a worldwide market

Belfast Mini Mills maintains a small flock of Shetland, Border Leicester, and Rideau Arcott sheep for their tightly crimped fleece. The wool clip is hand dyed and sold to fiber artists through the business's on-site wool shop. (Nina Linton photos)

by Nina Linton

When two British Columbia shepherds couldn't get their livestock's fleece processed by commercial woollen mills without the addition

of other farms' fiber, the dissatisfied pair decided to develop their own machinery to do the job at home.

"That was the seed that started the business," says Linda Nobles, who,

along with her mother, Sheila Sutherland, saw the need for scaled-down fiber processing equipment based on mill machinery already in use.

It took nearly two years for Nobles and her family to build the first prototypes in their spare time. They tested the carder and picker using fibers from their West Coast flock before moving to Belfast, Prince Edward Island, on a whim. That was when the "business really started to catch on."

Today, Belfast Mini Mills is a world leader in cottage industry fiber-spinning machinery. Co-owned by Linda and Doug Nobles, the small manufacturer employs 22 people (including seven family members) and has 190 installations in 30 countries.

"For a tiny little company in P.E.I., we are doing okay," she laughs. "Here we are 22 years later, all over the world. It's pretty amazing. It has enabled people to produce their own fiber from a variety of animals."

Currently, the company offers 16 individual units that, when used together, form a working mill. These



Technician Andrew Carpenter assembles a carder at the Belfast Mini Mills production shop. The small Prince Edward Island business is a world leader in small-scale fiber spinning machinery, with 190 installations in such far-flung locales as Australia, South Africa, Norway, Libya, and Argentina.

mini-mill sets, which easily tuck inside a double-car garage and require only one person for operation, often appeal to other family-based businesses trying to make a living off the land. “One advantage is that the equipment is modular so people can mix and match for what they want to do, and it is small enough to get into remote areas. We (have mills) 14,000 feet up in the mountains of Bolivia, and (close to) the Arctic Circle.”

There are five mini fiber processing mills scattered throughout the Maritimes that, like all the brand’s other mills, are capable of processing batches of fiber ranging from ounces to tons.

Each new machinery order takes about six weeks to make at their eastern P.E.I. shop, and can cost anywhere from \$150,000 to \$250,000, depending on the configuration. The family routinely customizes equipment to meet clients’ needs.

As finished pieces roll out of the fabrication shop, each is thoroughly tested before being packed for shipment. Once it reaches its new home, an employee is sent to unpack, install, and offer training on the mill. Additional follow-up training is also provided. “We give them full support because all those mills’ success is our success.”

Looking back, Nobles says it was a combination of factors including passion, innovation, and opportune timing that helped the business thrive.

“When we started, it was only sheep and Angora goats. Then the alpaca craze hit and now it is all the exotics like bison, qiviut (Musk ox), Angora rabbit, vicuña, and Persian cat – it is just everything that is out there. We continue to evolve as the dynamics change.”

One of their biggest challenges was adapting tried-and-true mill technology – designed to process sheep and mohair alone – to handle exotic fibers. The trick, Nobles says, was in their fiber separator. “We had to build eight prototypes before we got the right configuration of card cloth and drum size. And we are still changing things.”



Peter Carpenter wires a piece of equipment at the Belfast Mini Mills production shop. Each mini mill set takes about six weeks to manufacture, and can cost anywhere from \$150,000 to \$250,000 depending on configuration.



Belfast Mini Mills co-owner Linda Nobles feeds colored roving through a carder manufactured by her family's Prince Edward Island business.

“We run our own mill, and are constantly working our own equipment so we can improve our machines,” says Nobles, who helps her sister, Hazel Spencer, process 5,000 pounds of fleece per year. Always on the lookout for new and unusual fibers, they have spun camel, silk, possum, wolf, Highland cow, and seal; the latter was a total bust, emitting such a foul odor that it had to be stored outside. “Sometimes ideas don’t work out.”

Although Belfast Mini Mills won’t go down in history as the creator of seal wool, the family-run manufacturer is credited with saving rare

types of livestock, like the primitive North Ronaldsay sheep – a unique seaweed-eating breed that remains virtually unchanged from its Bronze Age ancestors. The slender ruminant with “fiber like cashmere” has roamed the coast of North Ronaldsay, the northernmost of Scotland’s Orkney Islands, for centuries.

In 2003, local residents decided to invest in a Canadian-made mill after they found it increasingly hard to locate large mills willing to process small runs of North Ronaldsay fleece. Set at the foot of the oldest intact lighthouse in Scotland, the



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Maritime Limousin Association Annual meeting September 20th at N.B. Beef Expo.

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There will also be a Limousin Show in Truro at the N.S. Provincial Exhibition.

See you there!



Linda Nobles operates an 8-spindle spinner. The user-friendly machine that twists rovings into yarn is one of 16 small-scale fibre spinning machines made at Belfast Mini Mills.

installation has enabled this remote community of “67 people and 2,000 sheep” to maintain its traditional way of life. “They’ve found they can sell the product, so it encourages people to conserve these breeds.”

But it’s not just breeders of dwindling domestic stock and fiber animals who can benefit from the business’s pint-sized pickers and plyers.

“In some respects we are impacting the meat industry,” says Nobles, who’s currently processing bison undercoat for a western Canadian farmer, turning what once was waste into an additional \$200 to \$400 per pound of fiber. “People have to look at their animals and see what else they can make out of them. It is not cut and dried anymore.”

She believes lucrative opportunities exist for local sheep producers, too. As the ancient art of hand twisting freshly shorn fiber into yarn gains popularity, selling raw fleece to craftspeople can bring a big return. Handspinners shell out upwards of \$5 per pound for preferred wool clips, paying a bonus for colored and tightly curled locks.

“Traditionally those colored ones were culled out,” says Nobles. She thinks producers need to shift their mindset to reap higher returns, reconsidering which breeds to raise. “There are dual purpose breeds out

there that produce fine yarn and good meat.” (Corridale, Rideau Arcott, and Lincoln are just a few.)

But for those unable or unwilling to switch, even wirey wool unsuited for yarn production is often worth more money than many farmers realize. “If you have equipment that you can make a finished product with, there is your value-added.”

“We are going to be taking some local wool, even though it is coarser, and making saddle pads and insoles,” says Nobles, who’s noticed the recent resurgence of natural fibers is encouraging more people to warm up to wool.

As entrepreneurs enter the fiber industry hoping to cash in on increased consumer demand, they are turning to Belfast Mini Mills to provide the base. Gone are the days when the fledgling company advertised in trade magazines to drum up sales. Now, the high quality mills sell themselves. “These last two or three years have been our biggest so far.”

“We are booked up into 2015 right now,” says Nobles, who gets about 100 inquiries a month, adding, “It is not hard for us to promote our equipment because we are using it here. We love the business that we are in.”

(Nina Linton lives in East Royalty, P.E.I.)

They're flocking to Belfast

Wool shop becomes fiber destination

by Nina Linton

For Belfast Mini Mills co-owner Linda Nobles, opening a fiber shop alongside her family's mill manufacturing business was a natural progression. "We had people coming to see what we were doing, bringing their fiber in (for custom processing), and wanting to buy," she recalls.

Fifteen years later, the on-farm shop has grown from a small 10-by 12-foot space designed to showcase items made with their machinery into a 2,100 square-foot store that features an array of woolen wonders from around the world.

"We started with a store in the back of the mill and then we thought, 'This is ridiculous.' So we built the big one and it has taken on a life of its own. It isn't just a little sideline anymore. It is hard to keep the shelves filled."

The store, open daily throughout the summer months and by chance the rest of the year, employs seven people during

peak season. This includes Nobles' mother, semi-retired family matriarch Sheila Sutherland, who weaves intricate items for sale; and sister, Hazel Spencer, who hand dyes home-grown and locally-sourced wool, transforming the unruly tufts into brightly-pigmented masses – "candy" for fiber artists. In addition, Spencer spins and dyes skeins of yarn, including Bluefaced Leicester wool, named for the English longwool breed from which the wool was shorn.

"We deal in a lot of exotic fibers like qiviut (Musk ox), mohair, and Angora rabbit," says Nobles, who also stocks pet fibers including Samoyed, Poodle, and Golden Retriever. Other unique items that fly



The shop at Belfast Mini Mills has grown into a 2,100 square foot retail space, featuring traditional and exotic fiber products, some locally produced and others imported from countries where the company has made connections after installing mills.

off store displays include locally knitted hats and mitts, felted runners, and handcrafted duvets. "We try and appeal to everybody."

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So far, that approach is working. Thousands of visitors flock to the rural retail location each year, putting the popular P.E.I. Fiber Trail stop on the top of to-do lists of fiber fanatics, tourists, and local residents alike. Many make an annual pilgrimage to see what's new. Some bring out-of-town guests to the one-of-a-kind attraction.

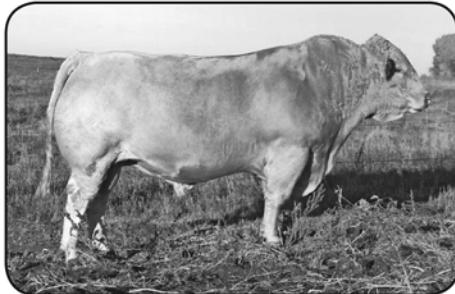
More than a run of the mill wool shop, Belfast Mini Mills is an all-out fiber extravaganza that starts the moment cars pull into the driveway hemmed by rolling hills and roaming sheep. "We have animals out in the field so people can touch them, have a picnic, and make it an outing. It is a fiber destination."

Offering free tours that wind through the working mini mill gives visitors a peek at where (and how) 60 percent of items for sale in the shop are made, demystifying the process that transforms a pile of fleece in the corner into a final product on the shelf. The guided walk, a huge draw for visitors, also offers an immeasurable upside – it boosts sales, says Nobles.

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"If people come into the store first they say, 'Oh yeah, yarn. That's nice.' But when they see it made, they say, 'Oh my goodness, we just had no idea how many steps were involved.' So when people see this and go back into the store they say, 'Okay, I love this yarn and I know why it is this much money,' and they buy it."

Something else that appeals to shoppers and sets the shop apart is the display of imported handicrafts, brought in from countries where the business has made fiber industry connections after installing mills.

The family behind the business is keen to share their success, seeking out ways they can help others in the tight knit fiber community, like buying buttons handcrafted by South African women as a means to support their families, and socks made by an eco-friendly company located in the Unites States.

After all, Nobles says, "the whole idea of mini mills is making work for people in remote places."



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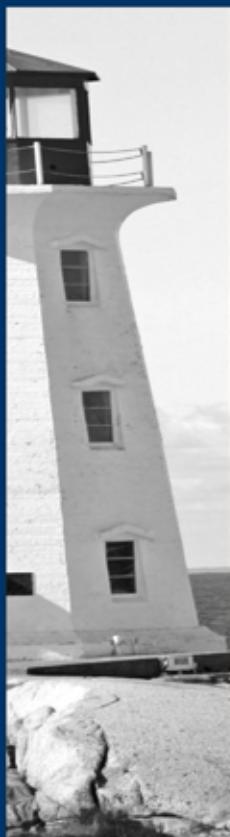
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Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition

Thursday August 21st - Friday August 22nd

Maritime YCSA Events & Show

Saturday August 23rd

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CSA Entry Form can be found on the CSA website
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When: Fall 2014

Where: Andre & Geraline VanAgten
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When: September 14, 2014

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YCSA Rep: Heather Creamer **CSA Director:** Lacey Fisher

Women dominate the Carleton County Show

by Cecile Blackie

For the first time in the Carleton County Spring Show and Sale's 61 years, two young women walked away with the champion titles.

Caitlin Brake, 14, and Dallas Hunter, nine, of the River Valley 4-H Club, took top honors with their steers in both the 4-H and open breed classes on April 8 at the Northern Carleton Civic Centre in Florenceville-Bristol, New Brunswick. This is only the third time 4-H members won the top two awards.

The Grand Champion Steer, owned by Brake, was also the Champion 4-H Steer and the Champion Angus Steer. The steer sold for \$5.50 per pound to Piper's Welding and Repair Inc. and Gramma's Restaurant, both of Centreville, N.B. Brake was also named top 4-H Junior Showman. The Reserve Grand Champion title went to Hunter's steer, also the Champion Charolais Steer and Reserve Champion 4-H Steer. The first-year 4-H member, who also won the 4-H Pee Wee showmanship competition, sold her steer for \$4 per pound to the Carleton Co-op of Florenceville-Bristol, N.B., and Co-op Atlantic of Moncton, N.B.

In the 4-H showmanship competition, Ashley Black, a senior member of the Countryside 4-H Club, was crowned the Champion Overall Showman. Kyle Parkinson, also a senior member from the Countryside 4-H Club, won Reserve Champion Overall Showman.

Brian Trueman made the trip from Amherst, Nova Scotia, to judge the show for the fifth time since 1992. Thirty-six animals competed for True-man's attention, with eight breed champions crowned along with a best pair of animals, 4-H champions, and overall champions. The sale on April 9 brought an average of \$2.87 per pound, with auctioneer Andy Carter selling the steers.

After 21 years, the Charity Steer fundraiser was replaced with a new event. A cake and picnic table were auctioned off, raising \$4,575 for the Carleton County Medical Assistance Foundation.

(Cecile Blackie has been the Secretary-Treasurer of the Carleton County Spring Show and Sale since 1993. She lives in Florenceville-Bristol, N.B., where she raises her family and purebred Suffolk Sheep.)

Charity steer fundraiser replaced after 21 years

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Award winners and updates

by Kim Waalderbos

New Brunswick cattle producers are reminded to fill out their annual producer registration form by Aug. 31, 2014. The goal is to have a better handle on who New Brunswick Cattle Producers (NBCP) members are and what their needs are, so resources can be better matched. There is no cost to register as a member. The form must be completed and returned to demonstrate good standing for program participation. For a form, visit www.bovinsnb.cattle.ca or call Brenda at 506-458-8534.

New Brunswick Cattle Producer of the Year

Father-and-son duo Bob and Jamie Carpenter were presented with the inaugural Producer of the Year Award at the Spring Beef Conference in Moncton, N.B., on March 28, 2014. The award recognizes outstanding producers who have contributed to the development of the New Brunswick cattle industry. Nominations are made by fellow producers.

The Carpenters are the sixth and seventh generations working the family farm since it was first settled in 1784 in Wickham, N.B. Today, the cow-calf herd raises a calf crop of approximately 40 head each year. Neighboring farmer Hugh Harmon, who nominated the Carpenters, says they have always kept a tidy farm operation. "They're really good people that love to work with cattle and love their industry," says Harmon.

Bob Colpitts Memorial Award

Guy LeBlanc was named the first recipient of the Bob Colpitts Memorial Award at the Spring Beef Conference. This award recognizes leaders who are committed to the continual improvement of the New Brunswick beef industry.

It was a fitting award considering LeBlanc's first day working for the New Brunswick Department of Agriculture in 1980 started with a 4 am trip to Miramichi, N.B., to weigh cattle with Colpitts. LeBlanc worked with Colpitts for the first 20 years of his career in the Department.



Throughout his career, LeBlanc always demonstrated his commitment to advancing the agricultural sector. LeBlanc has initiated a number of projects and worked with numerous breed organizations, field days, shows, and sales, and continued the winter training programs he and Colpitts began.

Beef Cattle Handling and Weighing Systems Initiative

New Brunswick producers can receive financial assistance of 50 percent towards the purchase of animal handling facilities and/or weighing systems. The maximum assistance will be \$3,000 per farm. The application deadline is Sept. 30, 2014. The claim form deadline is Dec. 12, 2014. The application form and program guidelines are available at www.bovinsnb.cattle.ca. Producers must complete their producer registration form and submit copies of all sales receipts from Jan. 1, 2013, to Dec. 31, 2013, showing they are in good standing with the NBCP. Funding is limited and assistance will be granted on a first-come-first-served basis.

Beef Enhanced Herd Health and Quality Initiative

New Brunswick producers are eligible for financial assistance up to a maximum of \$32 per beef cow-calf pair for cost associated with implementing a comprehensive herd health program. The application deadline is Sept. 30, 2014. The claim form deadline is Jan. 9, 2015. The application form and program guidelines are available at www.bovinsnb.cattle.ca. Producers must complete their producer registration form and submit copies of all sales receipts from Jan. 1, 2013, to Dec. 31, 2013, showing they are in good standing with the NBCP.

(For more information on the NBCP, contact Brenda Macloon at 506-458-8534, or nbcattle@nb.aibn.com.)



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Busy spring, busier summer!

by Rinnie Bradley

What an incredibly long winter we have just come through! I am writing this article on May 29, and when I awoke this morning, there was a heavy white frost on everything. The rain has finally stopped long enough to allow producers to plant crops that are at least three weeks behind schedule. Let's hope the weather goes easy on us for the remainder of this year.

It was a busy spring for the P.E.I. Cattle Producers (PEICP). The biggest issue was the launch of the new fee structure for on-farm deadstock removal services. The PEICP had to determine fees, set up accounts, invoice, and collect fees from more than 400 new vendors. This was no small task, and it took a lot of hard work. Many thanks go to Amanda Miller and the Board for their efforts in developing and implementing this system.

Beginning May 19, 2014 (and updated daily), a list of all those who have paid their deadstock invoices was sent to Maritime Pet Foods (MPF). Only those named on this list will be eligible for pickup. This list will also be shared with the P.E.I. Department of Agriculture, which will be conducting random audits of farms that have cattle but have not paid their deadstock removal fees. Only producers who have paid their deadstock removal fees will be in good standing with the PEICP and will be eligible for programs offered through the PEICP.

If a producer has not paid their deadstock removal fee, and they require a pickup, they will be directed as follows:

a) MPF will instruct them to call the PEICP office.

b) The PEICP will determine if the producer was issued an invoice. If not, an invoice will be issued and the producer will be required to pay it before the PEICP notifies MPF that the producer is eligible for pickup. MPF will not accept payments directly from producers, nor will they go out to the farm for pickup until they are advised by the PEICP to do so.

The PEICP has lobbied the Department of Agriculture for beef program funding provided under Growing Forward 2. We anticipate this year's programs to be similar to those offered last year with a few exceptions. Once they are announced, we will post the programs on our website and share via email.

The PEICP's annual general meeting was held on April 14 at the Farm Centre in Charlottetown, P.E.I. The main topic of discussion was deadstock removal. A resolution to implement a buyer's license was also discussed and approved. We were pleased to have John Masswohl from the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) in attendance. Masswohl provided an overview of the CCA's efforts to gain access to new export markets, as well as an update on Country of Origin Labeling (COOL).

April was PEI Burger Love month and, as anticipated, it surpassed expectations once again. Fifty-four restaurants participated in 2014. We are fortunate to have Island Beef at the centre of this campaign. Islanders have been supportive of the beef industry and demonstrated their support through this campaign. We continually look for ways to build on this support and encourage consumers to buy local year-round.

From Aug. 13-16, 2014, the PEICP will host the CCA for its semi-annual meeting. We are honored to host this event, and encourage producers to take advantage of the opportunity to attend the town hall meeting on the morning of Aug. 16. CCA staff will provide brief overviews of the work they do on behalf of producers. This is a great opportunity to see what is being done to promote and support the Canadian beef industry. It's free, and lunch will be provided. We hope to see you there.

On behalf of the P.E.I. Cattle Producers and directors, I would like to thank Ivan Johnson for his hard work as chairman. Johnson completed his second term on the board and retired following the AGM. It's been my

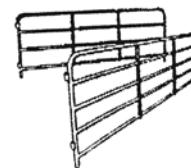


pleasure to work with someone who is so dedicated to the beef industry. Johnson has graciously agreed to stay on as the PEICP's representative on the CCA Board of Directors. I am also pleased to congratulate Brian Morrison on being elected as our new chair, Jeremy Stead as vice chair, and David McCloskey as secretary-treasurer, as well as welcoming new and returning directors Kenneth MacEachern, Derek Annema and Sterling Jay, and Ranald MacFarlane (DFPEI representative). I look forward to working with all of you.

(Rinnie Bradley is executive director of the P.E.I. Cattle Producers. She can be reached at 902-368-2229 or by email at cattlemen@eastlink.ca.)



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Message from the Nova Scotia Cattle Producers

by Jim Fraser

As we move through the early days of June, spring and summer finally appear to be here as temperatures and sunshine continue to increase. This is my first update as Chair of the Nova Scotia Cattle Producers (NSCP) after being elected by the Board earlier this year. I would like to thank outgoing Chair, Terry Prescott, as well as retiring board members Marilyn Carter and John Tilley for their hard work and dedication to the provincial, regional, and national beef industry over the past several years. I look forward to working with members of the board and cattle producers to further improve the beef industry in Nova Scotia and throughout the Maritimes.

After working several years with Dalhousie University and the Department of Agriculture, Dr. Yuri Montanholi has been hired as the beef research chair. If you haven't had a chance to meet or speak with Montanholi, I suggest you make the effort to do so. Montanholi will be conducting research through Dal on feed efficiency and animal reproduction, which fits well with what we are trying to accomplish at the Test Station and in our Genetic Enhancement Program.

Over the past year, we have worked very closely with the Board of the Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia to develop a strategy that works for their members, dealers, auction houses, and the NSCP on levy collection. In January the Dairy Levy collection Program was launched. This allows dairy producers to voluntarily pay levy directly from their milk cheques. The initial program was a success and



we will continue to improve it as we move forward. Note to dairy producers – if you have double remitted, please contact Brad at the office to arrange for a refund.

In a further effort to ensure regulations are being met, we continue to work with increasing numbers of dealers/drovers on animal commerce and levy collection. When you are buying or selling animals we encourage you to do so only through a licensed livestock dealer. If you are unsure if your dealer is licensed, please contact the office.

As you are aware, the Home Grown Success Program application period has come and gone. This year, there was a significant change made to the Genetic Enhancement Program, which now requires farmers to purchase heifers in order to be eligible for compensation. This change came as a surprise to the NSCP. We have met with Minister Colwell to discuss this negative change to the program. Though we were unable to convince him to change the program back to its original form, we are working with Mr. Colwell to develop a program for the beef industry.

The NSCP is in the process of reviewing its marketing plan and regulations – the first time we have done so since they came into force in 2006. This process will continue into the fall and winter. We will be presenting the proposed changes at the 2015 Annual

General Meeting in February.

Do you have an on-farm market, sell freezer beef, or sell at the local farmers' market? If you market directly to consumers and are looking for promotional and marketing materials, please let us know. We have cut charts, buying guides, and recipes for everything from burgers, to steaks, to pizzas and fajitas. We can put together a package of materials and ship it directly to you; please call the office and speak with Brad. If you are looking for additional material, please visit www.canadabeef.ca.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact me or Brad at the office by email at office@nscattle.ca, or 902-893-7455.

(Jim Fraser is the Chair of the Nova Scotia Cattle Producers.)



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Zone 3 (2017) – Ralph Thompson
Zone 4 and Vice Chair(2015) – Larry Weatherby
Zone 5 (2016) – Randy Neily
Zone 6 (2017) – Wayne MacKay

At Large and Chair(2016) – Jim Fraser
At Large (2017) – Boyd Crouse
At Large and CCA Rep (2015) – George Smith
Past Chair – Terry Prescott
DFNS Rep – Derick Canning
NPMC Rep – currently vacant

Summer recruitment in full swing

by Daniel Muir

With support secured for the next two years, the Young Cattlemen's Council is heading to Charlottetown, P.E.I., this summer and is looking for new members interested in becoming active in the beef industry.

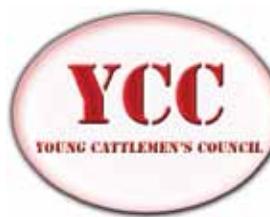
Five members of the Young Cattlemen's Council (YCC) traveled to Ottawa, Ontario, to attend the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) Annual General Meeting on March 4-7, 2014. The YCC held its own meeting during the gathering, and members were able to observe the other CCA activities. During the AGM, the CCA approved the continuation of the council past its one-year trial period. This support will be on a two-year basis. With this continued CCA backing, the YCC wants to increase membership and get young producers involved in industry projects.

We are looking to work closely with industry partners to advance the knowledge and participation of young people in the beef industry. Presently, we have monthly conference calls and meet twice a year in conjunction with CCA meetings. We are currently trying to build an online membership base, which will allow us to start sending newsletters to members and to hold regional meetings and information sessions across the country.

The CCA Semi-Annual Meeting and Convention will be held in the Maritimes this year, with Charlottetown hosting the forum Aug. 13-16. There will be a YCC round-table meeting, and members can sit in on CCA committee meetings. Many YCC members are planning to attend. We

encourage young beef producers to join the YCC to stay informed on events the council is involved with and to share your opinion on important issues in the Canadian cattle industry.

For more information, please visit www.youngcattlemen-scouncil.com. To join the YCC, fill out the membership form on our website. You can also follow us on Facebook at Young Cattlemen's Council, or @YCCbeef on Twitter.



(Daniel Muir, B.Sc. (Agr), is the YCC's Atlantic Representative and the Agriculture Stewardship Program Officer at the P.E.I. Department of Agriculture and Forestry in Charlottetown, P.E.I.)



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Beef's surging prices

A time to celebrate and a time to cull

by Les Halliday

Just when you thought beef prices had peaked, they surge even higher to an all-time record. At the time of writing, the price for finished beef at Atlantic Beef Products (ABP) was \$2.50 per pound. Margins in the feedlot sector are good, but feeder prices have also moved swiftly to record highs and when the replacement cost is \$1,100 to \$1,300, the margins shrink significantly. Cull cow prices are also hitting all-time highs and demand for cull beef remains high.

In the cow-calf sector there is a tendency to lose sight of the market when prices are favorable and concentrate solely on sale weight to generate profit margins. This approach does work to a large degree, but when the beef cycle is on a downturn, quality cattle will lead the way. Now is the time to really evaluate cows in the herd and cull for quality. Of course it helps to know the progeny performance (days on feed, carcass weights, grade and lean meat yield, etc.) as a guide. This is easy if you finish your own but if not, talk to your feedlot buyer about carcass data. If you have a good working relationship with your buyer, sharing carcass data is a win-win situation.

Effective culling will improve the muscling, growth, and grade potential of your calf crop and generate higher returns. The win for the feedlot is less off-type cattle such as those Over Thirty Months, single A, yield grade 3, and the B grades. In the absence of performance information, cull for type, health and temperament issues. Bottom line — cull now for future profit.

For future planning there will be a tremendous opportunity to test heifers this summer at the Maritime Beef Test Station in Nappan, Nova Scotia. Dalhousie University's Dr. Yuri Montanholi will be running a significant heifer trial over the summer months to evaluate genomics in relation to residual feed intake and reproductive

traits. If you are interested in consigning heifers send an email to yuri.montanholi@dal.ca.

The long cold spring has dampened pasture growth and the temptation to turn cattle out on short growth grass could lead to problems later in the season. Overgrazing early in the season can weaken plants as they draw on root reserves to regenerate top growth. In the heat of the summer months, root mass can be so severely reduced that they are unable to reach sufficient moisture to survive, leading to weed infiltration and poor production. For spring calving, summer is breeding time and poor nutrition between calving and breeding can result in poor conception rates.

MIND THE MINERALS

In the last issue of *Atlantic Beef & Sheep* I talked about mineral and vitamin nutrition, which is worth repeating. Mineral and vitamin supply in the pre- and post-calving period helps improve calf survival and high growth rates through good quality colostrum and milk supply. Cows with good mineral balance also have higher re-breeding efficiencies due to a more well developed reproductive tract. The vitamin content of stored feed is reduced to zero after approximately four months of storage. Good quality pasture would normally provide sufficient nutrition, but I am concerned the slow start to the grazing season could lead to reproductive problems later in the season.

In other news, the new P.E.I. Certified Beef brand is gaining momentum with premiums being paid to all involved in the production chain — ABP, feedlots, cow-calf producers, and the Culinary Alliance for marketing. The beef is marketed by Dolan Foods in Ontario. Additional producers are being audited to ensure consistent supply, as demand for the product has increased in recent weeks.

The new Growing Forward 2 (GF2)

beef project, which is administered through the P.E.I. Cattle Producers, has been approved. The guidelines and forms are available through the department website. The programming covers three areas under GF2: Genetic Innovation, Health Protocols, and Feed Efficiency. Additions to the programming are commercial heifer retention, F1 bulls, livestock scales, and heifers consigned for research purposes.

Hoping for a productive summer.

(Les Halliday is a beef development officer with the P.E.I. Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Aquaculture, in Charlottetown, P.E.I.)



Atlantic Beef & Sheep Affiliates

For information on becoming a member of any of these groups contact **the club** at the address shown:

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Contact: Amanda Proud
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902-675-5431

Maritime Aberdeen-Angus Association
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Doing better

N.B. Beef Conference challenges producers, embraces optimism

by George Fullerton

If you looked at the agenda for the New Brunswick Beef Conference and saw that an Alberta rancher was going to be speaking on pasture management, you might have wondered how a prairie farmer's perspective would be relevant here in the water-laden east. But Steve Kenyon proved his worth as the headliner, setting an appropriate tone for the March 28-29 event in Moncton.

Youthful looking in a big cowboy hat and roomy black shirt, Kenyon asked tough questions to get his audience engaged. He discussed paddock layout, watering, hot weather mitigation, and machinery costs. (On his own operation he uses only an ATV and a pickup truck). Kenyon challenged producers to plan practical and economical grazing systems. Not surprisingly, he's a popular speaker and a widely published writer on this topic.

Also on the agenda was veterinarian Dr. Les Byers, reviewing the causes of what he referred to as "open cow disease." Byers operated a large animal surgery and medicine practice in Vegreville, Alberta, for 20 years, and is currently employed by Zoetis.

Jane Morrigan, a farmer and animal welfare expert from Scotsburn, N.S., made a compelling case for energy conservation, stress reduction, and higher productivity through improved livestock handling techniques. Morrigan is a devotee of Temple Grandin,

and helped to host the famous animal welfare scholar's visit to Nova Scotia last year.

Nathan Phinney, a feedlot operator

origin of any animal, and he reviewed the available technologies.

Phinney acknowledged this comes at a cost, but he said it will provide

a valuable management tool, making feedlot and carcass performance data available to the producer who raised the animal. More importantly, a traceability system will limit the impact on the industry in the event of another herd health crisis. "When BSE hits again," he said, "we have to be ready for it."

Neatly dovetailing with this topic, Amanda Miller took the podium to review the Verified Beef Program, reiterating that rigorous recordkeeping practices will serve practical business management purposes for individual operations, in addition to providing an excellent quality assurance system for the industry as a whole.

Conference attendees were impressed with the tremendous organizational effort on the part of the New Brunswick Cattle Producers, in cooperation with Guy LeBlanc, Duncan Fraser, and associates from the provincial De-



Steve Kenyon, of Greener Pastures Ranching Ltd. in Busby, Alberta, was the headlining speaker for the March 28-29 New Brunswick Beef Conference. (Contributed photo)

from Cookville, N.B., spoke passionately about the need for traceability. He recalled the huge economic losses suffered by all beef producers as a result of the BSE crisis, and said the industry cannot afford to repeat that experience. He implored audience members to support the development of a system that will allow authorities to quickly and effectively trace the

partment of Agriculture Aquaculture and Fisheries. The event not only offered a generous helping of information and insight, it also allowed producers from across the Maritimes to share in a sense of optimism, with improved beef prices signaling an industry recovery.

To learn more about Kenyon, follow the Steve Kenyon link at RuralLife.ca.



Let's make carcass grading more accessible

by Charlie Gracey

In May 1995 I was retained by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association to privatize the delivery of the Beef Carcass Grading System, and in April 1996 the job was successfully completed. But I nearly talked myself out of the job because my first serious recommendation was the plants should be allowed to grade the carcasses, and the newly established Canadian Beef Grading Agency should have authoritative auditing and oversight functions.

This was not a particularly new or revolutionary idea. Many farm commodities are graded by the plant. Beef carcass grading, after all, is not a health or food safety issue but, for the consumer at least, a quality issue, and the quality grade can be determined as easily and as accurately by a plant employee as by an Agency employee.

My proposal was rejected. Some producers were leery of placing so much trust and confidence in the plant operator and plant-employed grader, and some plant operators were skeptical about their competitors. Those were and still are probably reasonable concerns. But the consequence has been that grading has generally disappeared from smaller plants and provincially-inspected plants because the per-carcass cost of grading in small plants has become uncompetitive and prohibitively high.

In 2013 grading in the largest plants cost \$0.54 per carcass and in the smallest plants \$6.92, a figure that doubled in 2014. So I think it is time to again consider plant-based grading with an adequate and well-run auditing function.

Why is this important? It is important to allow smaller packing plants and abattoirs to compete on an even footing with larger plants. Recently I dined in a nice restaurant where the menu offered ground beef products from a well-known, highly reputable local abattoir, but the steaks were all advertised as AAA-graded products from western Canada. I asked the server

why they didn't get their steaks from the same local supplier, and her answer was their chef insisted upon graded product. I couldn't fault the chef. He or she was right. Grading matters to the discerning diner. So why do we tolerate a continuing situation where grading is economically unavailable in a society where buying local and supporting local businesses is so typical?

The matter of trust, as I have said, can be reinforced by a reasonable auditing system. And grading itself, though vitally important, is a laughably easy exercise, at least insofar as the quality aspect is concerned. Let me explain.

Grading in Canada is, as in the U.S., a dual system where the carcass is graded for quality and assessed for "yield." Yield relates to the lean meat

the cut face of the *Longissimus Dorsi* (rib eye) muscle at the ribbing site, and grade standards charts are available to illustrate the four quality grades: Canada Prime, Canada AAA, Canada AA, and Canada A.

In 2013 only 1.6 percent of fed carcasses were graded Prime and only two percent were graded Canada A. Fifty-five percent were graded AAA and 39 percent were graded AA. Another two percent fell into the B grades; if the carcasses were too lean (B1), had yellow fat (B2), were poorly muscled (B3) or were "dark cutters" (B4). No grader, be it a plant grader or an Agency grader, would have the slightest difficulty singling out such carcasses.

One other determination to be made is that the carcass is from a sufficiently "youthful" animal. That standard is around 30 months of age, and the determination is made on the basis of the degree of bone ossification. Today the issue is largely moot, as approximately 96 percent of fed beef carcasses are from cattle processed at or before 24 months of age.

I am not advocating an unregulated system. I am advocating that with a proper auditing function the advantage of grading can be extended to all plants that are under either federal or provincial meat inspection.

I propose the suggestion I put forward 18 years ago should now be reconsidered. And let us not forget the best auditor is the plant operator, who is vitally interested in satisfied customers.

(Charlie Gracey is a retired livestock industry consultant with special experience and expertise in the beef cattle industry and in international trade. He lives with his wife Donna Gracey in Ancaster, Ontario.)



It is important to allow smaller packing plants and abattoirs to compete on an even footing with larger plants

content of the carcass. Both aspects are important to the industry, but the quality grade is what matters most to the consumer. In the U.S., quality and yield grading are "decoupled," meaning the packer can choose to grade only for quality (or yield) if he or she so chooses. I would not discourage yield assessment. In fact, from an industry standpoint yield assessment is at least as important as the quality grade. But yield speaks to the efficiency and cost of beef production and, as such, is of no immediate importance to the consumer.

Assigning the quality grade to fed cattle is simple. The main determinant is the level of marbling in evidence at

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East Coast Round Up

The Maritime Junior Hereford Association (MJHA) held its annual East Coast Round Up show and annual meeting June 6 to 8 at Gordie and Allyson Raymond's farm in Waterford N.B., attracting a great turnout of about 30 junior members.

At the annual meeting, chaired by President Bennett Crane from Grand River East, P.E.I., the main topic of discussion was the hosting of next year's Canadian National Junior Hereford Bonanza show, which will be held in Fredericton, N.B., at the end of July, 2015. A few members are attending Bonanza 2014 in Lindsay, Ontario, running July 30 to Aug. 2 this year.

The new MJHA executive comprises Wyatt Oulton as president,

Bree Curry as vice-president, and Nicole Booth as secretary. The new CJHA national delegates are Wyatt Oulton and Bree Curry. The members in attendance enjoyed the supper and demonstrated strong support at the fundraising auction, raising about \$2,000 to go toward Bonanza 2015.

There were about 25 head of cattle registered for the show on Sunday, with judging duties handled by Terry Geddes. The Champion Showman was Josh Hunter, who was presented with the trophy by Bree Curry, in memory of her father Byron Curry. Reserve Showman was Ashley Black. The Champion female was shown by Will Raymond, and the Reserve by Josh Hunter.



Terry Geddes (left), judge for this year's Maritime Junior Hereford Association East Coast Round Up, looks on as Will Raymond (centre) receives the Champion Female trophy from Stephen Scott, general manager of the Canadian Hereford Association.



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Exciting time for beef

While a trying time for sheep

by Guy LeBlanc

Never in my 34-year career have I experienced record prices for all types of cattle. Just last week, the average price for good 600-700 lb feeder steers in Quebec was \$2.32, and \$2.16 for good heifers in the same weight range. The fed cattle price for A1-A2 steers in Ontario on May 27 ranged from \$2.59 to \$2.64/lb carcass weight. Cull cows in Ontario for the week of May 19 averaged \$0.99/lb live. Let's hope this market run keeps up for a long while. It's going to take a while for most beef producers to recover from the negative fallout of the BSE crisis.

It may be exciting times for beef farmers; however, for many sheep farmers markets are presently a challenge, if they are lucky to find one. A few years ago things looked positive for the sheep industry. Then, because of several factors, markets dried up.

The Canadian sheep industry has a lot of potential. A 43-percent increase in demand for lamb is predicted by 2020. The challenge for the sheep industry, from my perspective, is how to meet this demand. The industry is still very much seasonal with a variety of breeds, thus creating an inconsistent supply of product and a wide range of lamb quality. Until some of these challenges are solved the industry will be hard pressed to meet the potential future demand.

Once again the New Brunswick Department of Agriculture will offer the Livestock Genetic Enhancement Program (LGEP) this year. This program is part of our Federal-Provincial Growing Forward 2 agreement. It is expected LGEP will be offered to beef and sheep producers until 2018. As in other years beef farmers will also have to be in good standing with the New Brunswick Cattle Producers (NBCP) before any assistance will be paid out.

LGEP consists of four components for beef producers: Elite Sires, Elites Females, Elite Embryo, and Genetic

Testing. The Elites Sires component provides financial assistance to beef farmers to purchase genetically-superior bulls. Qualifying bulls can be eligible for 30 percent of purchase price up to a maximum of \$1,000 per bull. Bulls having completed a test station test could be eligible for further bonuses of up to \$300. An approved applicant farm operation is eligible for one bull per 30 breeding females (or less) every two years.

The Elite Female component provides assistance to purchase genetically-superior females. Qualifying females can be eligible for 30 percent of purchase price up to a maximum of \$600 per female. Qualifying females having more than two production and/or carcass trait EPDs can qualify for an additional bonus of \$100. The Elite Embryo component provides financial assistance to purchase genetically-superior embryos. Qualifying embryos can be eligible for 30 percent assistance of purchase price up to a maximum of \$500 per embryo.

The last component, Beef Genetic Testing, includes two activities. Activity one is for beef herds participating in an approved herd genetic evaluation programs. Assistance levels are up to 100 percent to a maximum of \$500 per herd. Eligible costs include herd genetic evaluation program enrollment, data entry fees and weighing fees, purchase of herd genetic evaluation software, ultrasound testing, and genomic testing. Activity two is for beef farmers consigning bulls to an approved test station, with a maximum assistance of \$200 per bull.

As of press time we have not received word on funding for the Beef Herd Renewal Program (heifer program).

For sheep producers, LGEP has three components. The Elite Ram component provides financial assistance of 30 percent of purchase price up to a maximum of \$250 per purebred ram.

The Elite Ewe component provides assistance of 30 percent of purchase price up to maximum of \$150 per purebred ewe. Additional bonuses of \$50 can be added to rams and ewes having three EPDs breed average or above, and an additional \$50 bonus for rams and ewes with proof of scrapies resistance.

The program also includes a Sheep Genetic Testing component. Sheep flocks participating in an approved flock genetic evaluation program and/or scrapies-resistant genotyping are eligible for assistance levels up to 100 percent to a maximum of \$500 per flock.

For more details and the LGEP application form you can check out our website or contact your nearest Agriculture Development Officer.

The NBCP has once again received funding to administer the popular Beef Herd Health Program and Beef Handling Equipment Program. Program details and application forms will be out soon, if not already. For more details you can also call the NBCP at 506-458-8534.

The New Brunswick Sheep Breeders Association has also been busy. In February they completed a provincial sheep industry strategy, and from this they have already or will have completed several projects. In April they organized three farmer information meetings with the Canadian Lamb Marketing Co-op. The Association also made a request to the Department of Agriculture regarding a Flock Health Program. They were recently approved for a project to help producers with sheep handling equipment. Details will be available soon.

Until the next issue, hoping your pasture season and forage harvesting goes well this summer.

(New Brunswick Livestock Development Specialist – Beef, Guy LeBlanc, works out of Fredericton, N.B.)



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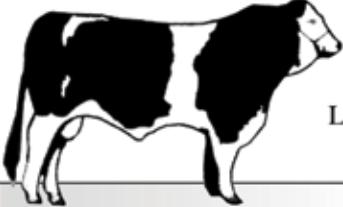
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Sheep to sweaters

Newfoundland heritage farm adds value to wool

by George Fullerton

At Fahey Farm at Chapel's Cove, on Conception Bay, Nfld., visitors are welcomed to a neat story-and-a-half house and a squared off, neatly sided and painted barn, surrounded by straight, square fences. Linda Lewis and her husband Bern are the shepherds for a flock that currently comprises nine ewes with 14 lambs, as well as two llamas, two Angora goats, and one dog. A sign on the front porch identifies this as a value-added operation: Baynoddly Knitwear, Spinning & Weaving. You could call it a sheep-to-sweater enterprise.

Fahey Farm was established in 1789, making it the oldest farm in the province, according to Linda. She and Bern inherited the homestead in 1999 following the death of his uncle Ed Fahey. After the house had been renovated, the couple got down to farming these 15 acres of land. The first ewes arrived in 2003, the first llama in 2004, and Angora goats were added in 2008.

Linda had been a craftsperson since the 1980s, using the Baynoddly banner, while pursuing a career in the insurance industry. She retired from the insurance business in 1997, to concentrate on her fiber enterprise. It was the land base, combined with a fondness for animals, that led her to branch out into keeping sheep and other fiber-producing livestock.

"We had to keep the fields clear," she recalls. "I love working with animals, and take great pleasure in seeing the entire process through from delivering lambs, to haying, to selling the sweater."

Initially the sheep were purebred North Country Cheviots, but now the flock is Columbia and Bluefaced Leicester crosses. The animals are on pasture in season, and on hay fields using electric mesh temporary fencing to strip graze after harvest. The couple harvest their own hay, and supplement with purchased round bales running up to pasture season, as required.

FLEECE

Linda shears her sheep in late May to June. To keep their fleece clean through



Fahey Farm is home to a small flock of Columbia and Bluefaced Leicester cross sheep, as well as two llamas and two Angora goats that are also kept for fiber.
(George Fullerton photos)

the year, she pays close attention to clean bedding and clean pasture, to prevent the animals from lying down in manure. The Angora goats, which produce mohair, are fleeced in October and April. Llamas, on the other hand, only see the shears every second year, usually in June.

The raw wool is stored in clean feed sacks, and Linda washes it in a five-gallon bucket using Dawn dish detergent. Clean wool is sold in bags, either natural or dyed. The balance is processed into yarn, and a good portion of the yarn is knitted or woven into finished products. Linda uses Ashford dyes from New Zealand.

Washed and dyed wool is dried on wire screens in the sun, as weather permits, or in a greenhouse-like shelter with good airflow. The next step is picking, using a Pat Green triple picker, a machine manufactured in British Columbia.

"I tried out some Pat Green equipment, and found it very well engineered," says Linda. "It is also well-sized for craft production. Pat built his manufacturing business after observing his partner working with wool and con-

cluding he could build better equipment. I had bought several pieces, then other crafters saw it and wanted pieces as well, and soon I found myself stocking equipment to sell to crafters."

Once picked, the wool is carded on a Pat Green motorized drum carder. The lovely fiber that comes off this machine is either a roving or a batt – the former to be spun into yarn, and the latter usually used for felting.

Linda's favorite spinning wheel is an Ashford Elizabeth 2. "It's fast," she declares. Yarn is then wound into a skein on an antique winder.

About 30 percent of Baynoddly wool is sold as skeins, and about 40 percent goes into knitted or woven products, which are primarily sold out the front door. The remaining 30 percent is sold as picked and dyed fleece to spinners, felters, and rug hookers.

Linda hand knits and weaves more than half of the finished products sold by Baynoddly, and relies on other local craftspeople to knit certain products. Mohair and llama wool is used in yarns, sweaters, hand-woven shawls, and scarves. Linda's loom is about 100 years old, made by LeClerc, a company



Skeins of yarn for sale at the farm shop, Baynddy Knitwear, Spinning & Weaving.

that still manufactures looms in Quebec.

Baynddy markets a few spinning wheels, drum carders, hand cards and small looms. "I like to work with a craftsperson who is buying the equipment, and teach them how to use it," says Linda, "so they get the maximum enjoyment out of it."

(George Fullerton lives in Long Reach, N.B., and is a frequent contributor to *Rural Delivery*, *Atlantic Beef & Sheep*, and *Atlantic Forestry Review*). 



Linda Lewis feeds a mix of dyed and natural wool into the drum carder; every skein or batt is a unique crafted product.

How are your sheep selling?

And other sheep news

by Cathy Vallis

Lamb prices have generally improved over the past year in the Atlantic Provinces, with light lambs (60-85 lbs) and heavy lambs (98-125 lbs) currently selling well. On average, the last few weeks have brought fair prices for lambs at Atlantic Stockyards, considering our geographical location. Market reports show prices fluctuating a bit, but that is a reflection of supply and demand. Prices in Atlantic Canada are not as high as in Ontario, but historically, we haven't matched Ontario's prices because we do not have the same level of demand. Looking at the markets in Ontario and Quebec, I think we are on a more stable footing at present, due in part to the growing "buy local" movement. For those who send lambs to market in Ontario, you must keep in mind your profit margin, transportation costs, and resale costs.

I am happy to say the lambs sent to market in the Atlantic Provinces are generally high-quality, which helps to increase both price and demand. The sooner lambs are sent to market, rather than being held back to feed longer, the greater the profit and the chances of buyers coming back for more. Keep up the good work, producers; it is great to see lambs coming to market looking as they should.

Sheep production is up globally, although focus for foreign product seems to be shifting slightly from the North American markets to the Asian markets. However, I often see Australian lamb just sitting on supermarket shelves, while fresh lamb is almost always sold out. To me, this indicates consumers want something produced locally.

On a sad note, the sheep industry has lost a great advocate, Dr. Nigel Firth. Firth was an associate professor in the Department of Plant and Animal Sciences at the Dalhousie University Agricultural Campus, and a major supporter of the sheep industry. He helped with workshops for the Sheep Producers Association of Nova Scotia,

and helped the Purebred Sheep Breeders Association of Nova Scotia with their Labour Day weekend sheep sale. He ensured the Dalhousie Ag library had up-to-date books on our industry. Firth was loved by students and farmers alike for his approachability and genuine interest in what you had to say. In his spare time, he was a musician and volunteer. As the list of his endeavors to support our industry is long, this is a brief recognition of someone with great dedication to agriculture. The sheep industry passes on its condolences to Firth's family.

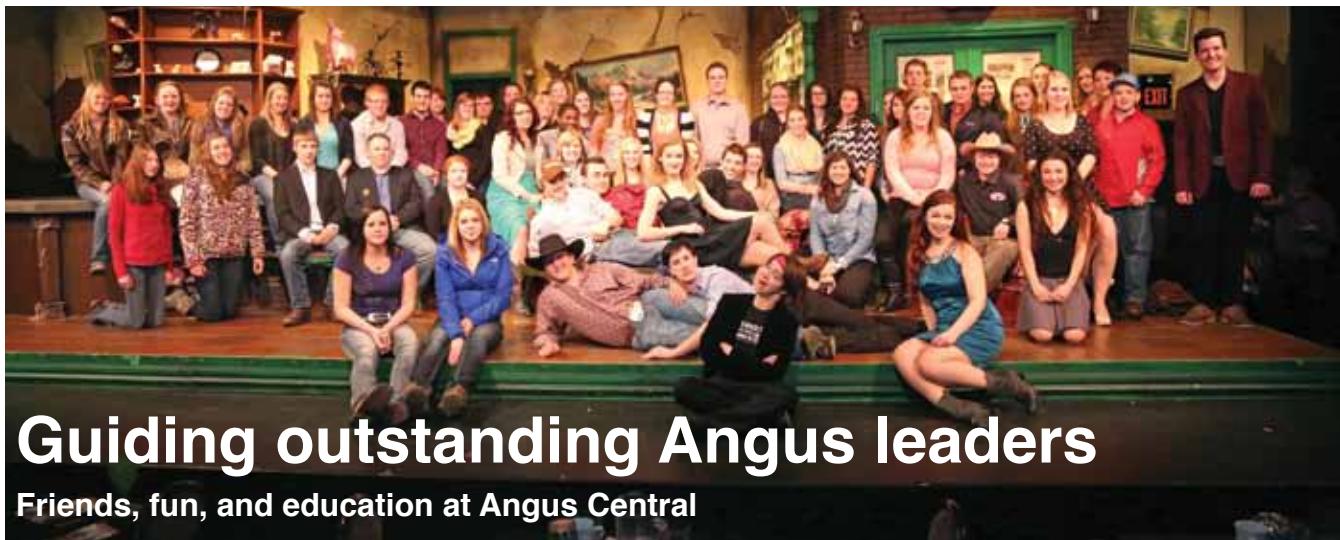
Be sure to keep an eye out for parasites this summer, particularly the Barber pole worm. This parasite can devastate a flock in the matter of a few weeks. To stay on top of this, it will be essential to monitor frequently for signs of anaemia (how pale is the inside of the lower eyelid?). Get fecal samples checked regularly, and consult with your veterinarian.

Paula Menzies' Sheep Parasite Handbook, available to download from the University of Guelph website, addresses this issue and should be in every sheep producer's library. Go to the sheep parasite link at Rural-Life.ca.

The Modern Shepherd Course will be available again this fall through the Continuing Education Department at the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus. Contact Tracy Kittilsen if you are interested in taking this comprehensive sheep production course.

On that note, I leave you to return to my electric-fencing endeavors. I couldn't live without this type of fence, but getting the darn thing up and running is always a bit of a challenge for me. Happy farming and wishing you all a great harvest in preparation for the upcoming winter – did I just say winter?

(Cathy Vallis farms in Princeport, N.S. She is the owner of Atlantic Wool Growers Supplies, and is past-president of SPANS.) 



Guiding outstanding Angus leaders

Friends, fun, and education at Angus Central

CJAA Group photo at Jubilations Dinner Theatre in Calgary, Alta.

(Photo courtesy of Cassie Dorran of the CAA)

by Patrick Holland

The Guiding Outstanding Angus Leaders (GOAL) conference, presented each February by the Canadian Junior Angus Association (CJAA), is a great opportunity for members to meet, share ideas, and develop new skills. GOAL is generally held in western Canada to bring in the highest number of juniors possible, but this makes it difficult for members from the Atlantic region to attend. Thanks to new funding from the Canadian Angus Foundation (CAF) and the CJAA, six members received financial assistance to travel to this year's Feb. 15-17 gathering in Calgary, Alberta – included three Maritimers: James Worth, Ella Wood, and me.

Overall there were 52 delegates, including two from the U.S., making the event one of the largest to date. Motivational speaker Alvin Law did a great job of kicking off the conference,

sharing some of the challenges he has overcome in his life, having been born without arms. We then reconvened for a formal supper with the Canadian Angus Association (CAA) Board of Directors.

I was fortunate enough to be one of the five finalists for the CAF Foundation Legacy scholarships, totalling \$10,000. We were put through our paces with individual interviews on Saturday morning before participating in a panel discussion that evening.

Sunday began with a presentation titled "A Global Agriculture Perspective" by Art Froelich, as well as a presentation on calving from Dr. Tom Pittman of the University of Calgary. The 2013 CAA interns Matt Bates, Karla Ness, and Katelyn Dietrich gave us a taste of their interactive presentation directed at school-aged children. Stacey Domolewski and I wrapped up

the morning with a short presentation on our time in New Zealand at the 2013 World Angus Forum.

Sunday afternoon was the highlight of my trip, as we visited the new Angus Central office, the first member-owned beef breed office in Canada. Then-CAA President Kevin Blair and CEO Rob Smith welcomed us to this impressive building filled with memorabilia of Canadian Angus history.

The next morning included presentations from Fred Taylor, a grading contractor at Cargill; Kim McConnell, on youth in agriculture; CJAA President Michael Hargrave, on scholarship opportunities; and Austen Anderson, on the Cattlemen's Young Leader program. It was an awesome experience, and I can't wait to return next year. I hope I can convince a few more Maritime juniors to join me in Guelph, Ontario, in February 2015. 

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Beef & Sheep

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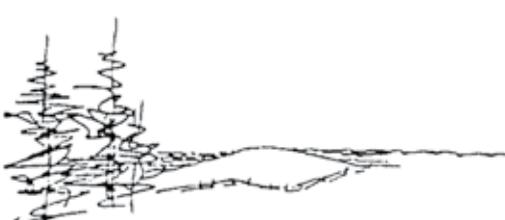


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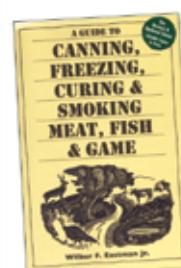


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