

# SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



## Message from the Chair

We had another hot, dry summer this year, with some parts of the province unfortunately experiencing drought effects. I think we are all hopeful for a cool, calm fall ahead.

The 2020 Canadian Beef Industry Conference (CBIC) was virtual this past August, due to COVID regulations, and featured great presentations from Dr. David Hughes (aka Dr. Food) and Amanda Radke, as well as included many interesting panel discussions.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Nova Scotia Elite Beef Expo was unfortunately postponed because of Public Health restrictions with COVID-19, but will be back in August 2021 at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition (NSPE) grounds. Planning for next year's Expo will begin in late winter/early spring so please keep a look out for that.

The Maritime Beef Testing Society (MBTS) will once again have a winter test this year, with consignment forms available on the website. Bulls will arrive at the Station October 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. The MBTS Annual Meeting will be announced at a later date. The Test Station is also happy to announce that they have worked with the NSCP, SPANS and AgSights to secure funding to enhance the testing program at Nappan. Beginning in 2021, they will offer a Central Ram Evaluation (details on [nssheep.ca/](https://nssheep.ca/)).

This past spring and summer, the NSCP once again offered a producer program to encourage genetic selection in the industry. The Nova Scotia Elite Sire Program (Bull Bonus) was able to award 26 producers funding for bull purchasing, with an overall total of nearly \$14,000 awarded in our fully industry funded program.

Due to the very dry growing season we experienced this year with drought-like impacts, there may be forage and/or hay shortages in parts of the province. I strongly recommend producers do the following:

- Test forages to plan for feeding regimes
- Visit the Perennia Marketplace website ([marketplace.perennia.ca/](https://marketplace.perennia.ca/)) if searching for hay.
- Buy grass early, don't wait. This will ensure you have a supply, rather than taking the chance there may not be any available later on.

I encourage everyone to attend the NSCP workshops occurring the next couple of months, as you can watch from the comfort of your home while still hearing of new forage opportunities and reminders of vaccination handling and injection techniques. Additionally, the Maritime Beef Conference, which was postponed from March of this year, will be held virtually, beginning October 22<sup>nd</sup> and occurring every Thursday evening for five weeks. Additional information can be found at [maritimebeef.ca/](https://maritimebeef.ca/). There are also planned modules for the upcoming Virtual Beef School for November 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, with more information on the MBC website.

I would like to remind producers of the live animal carcass ultrasound technology we have available in the region. If you are interested in having this service performed on your cattle, please visit the website for pricing, booking forms and breed scan age requirements ([nscattle.ca/ultrasound/](https://nscattle.ca/ultrasound/)).

The NSCP office has livestock transport manifest books available at \$10.00 each, for 50 triplicate copies. To place a customized order, please contact ASE Print at 902-895-8804. There will be a fee of \$25.00 for customization.

We have funding opportunities available for Nova Scotian commercial truckers for Canadian Livestock Transport (CLT) training. This is an online course with three-year certification for \$200.00. Additional course information can be found on their website ([livestocktransport.ca/](https://livestocktransport.ca/)). For funding to be approved, the commercial trucker would complete the livestock course (five hours, on their own time) and submit the receipt and certificate to the NSCP office. Upon receipt of these documents, reimbursement of the \$230.00 paid for the course (\$200.00 + HST) would be granted. All documentation needs to be submitted prior to February 1, 2021.

If you have questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact Brad at the office, [office@nscattle.ca](mailto:office@nscattle.ca) or 902-893-7455.

*Larry Weatherby*

Larry Weatherby, Chair

## Test Station Now Accepting Bull Applications for 2020-21

### Maritime Beef



### Testing Society

The Maritime Beef Testing Society (MBTS) is now accepting applications for the 2020-21 winter test. We are entering the sixth season using the GrowSafe feeding system to evaluate bull performance. This year's consignment forms have been added to the MBTS website and are due back October 9, 2020. These can be found at [www.maritimebeefteststation.ca/consignment](http://www.maritimebeefteststation.ca/consignment).

The MBTS Annual General Meeting will be announced at a later date. Please stay tuned to the MBTS website, as well as the NSCP website and social media channels for updates.

## Cattle Industry Enhancement Program

One of the newest Nova Scotia Programs available is the **Cattle Industry Enhancement Program**.

This program seeks to improve industry competitiveness and resilience through disease prevention and control, enhancing animal health and welfare, and improving genetic potential.

The Cattle Industry Enhancement Program is open for applications until December 31, 2020.

For additional information, such as eligibility, program guidelines and how to apply, please visit [novascotia.ca/programs/](http://novascotia.ca/programs/). Please contact Programs and Business Risk Management directly with any questions at 902-893-6377 or [prm@novascotia.ca](mailto:prm@novascotia.ca).

## Agency Elects Board Members at AGM

The Canadian Beef Check-Off Agency (the Agency) held their Annual General Meeting virtually this year, occurring September 24, 2020.

Larry Weatherby, NSCP Chair, was re-elected to the board as the Primary Producers representative for Nova Scotia, as well as Chair of the Governance Committee.

If you were unable to catch the AGM live, a recording can be found on our website ([nscattle.ca](http://nscattle.ca)).

## 2020 Maritime Beef Conference



## 2020 Maritime Beef Conference Virtual Series

Will be offered via Zoom platform:

Thursday October 22nd 7:00-8:30pm

Thursday October 29th 7:00-8:30pm

Thursday November 5th 7:00-8:30pm

Thursday November 12th 7:00-8:30pm

Thursday November 19th 7:00-8:30pm

ZOOM Details will be emailed. Our Zoom Room is limited to 100 people so please register early and we'll upgrade if the response is strong.

NOTE If you register, the recording will be available afterwards.  
Content translation into French is being worked on.

Please indicate on your registration if you require this service.

Contact Amy at (506) 349-5395 or [maritimebeefcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:maritimebeefcouncil@gmail.com)

Thursday Evenings beginning Oct 22, 2020



Virtual - register @ [www.maritimebeef.ca](http://www.maritimebeef.ca)

## Upcoming Events

With this year being challenging for in-person workshops, we are planning a series of **Virtual Farm Tours** on varying topics:

- Danford Murphy (Doirie Maple Farm Ltd.) and Ryan McCarron (Carrondale Cattle Co.), will discuss their season growing **Sorghum Sudan grass**. A presentation from Jonathan Wort, Ruminant Specialist, Perennia, will be included
- Andrew MacLennan will offer a **tour** of Kintail Farms, discussing how his operation is managed

We are also offering **chute-side presentations in partnership with Fundy Vets and Middleton Vets**. These will focus on veterinarians delivering vaccine handling tips and injection techniques, to increase overall vaccine effectiveness. At the time of newsletter print, it was not yet

confirmed if these would be held virtually or in-person.

Additional information and updates on these tours and workshops can be found on our website, as well as our Facebook and Twitter accounts. Once the videos are prepared, the YouTube link will be sent to membership.

# Feeder Cattle Vaccination Screening Report

The Feeder Cattle Vaccination Screening Project ran from November 2019 to February 2020 at the Atlantic Stockyards Ltd. (ASL).

The objective of this project was to determine the effectiveness of different vaccination protocols in feeder cattle sold through the ASL and to improve the quality of feeder cattle sold through the ASL.

This study examined antibody titers for bovine viral diarrhea (BVD) in randomly selected cattle sold through ASL feeder sales. This was done by collecting blood samples, performed by Fundy Vets, from restrained cattle. Sampling occurred the day before three feeder sales (November, December and January), upon animals being delivered to and unloaded at the sale barn. Samples were spun by technicians at Fundy Vets lab, then sent by courier to the Atlantic Vet College (AVC) in PEI for analysis.

In total, 418 blood samples were analyzed using an ELISA test for the presence of BVD vaccine antibodies. Results from this testing were organized in accordance to data provided by ASL, which indicated whether cattle were vaccinated or unvaccinated prior to sale. Over 100 farms were represented within the data, as well as 106 lots (groups of animals brought to ASL together).

Of the 418 samples collected, 284 cattle (68%) were declared to be vaccinated upon entry to ASL, in 63 of the 106 lots sampled (59%). For the purpose of analyzing the data and determining results, animal lots were examined, rather than looking at each animal individually. Therefore, of the 63 lots declared vaccinated, 33 were positive for the BVD titer, generating a 52% response rate. However, if the 18 lots which were vaccinated under the preferred three-week window are disregarded, since there may not have been enough allotted time to produce an antibody response, then the response rate would increase to 73%.

There were also instances of a positive and/or suspect (neither positive or negative) results generated within the 134 unvaccinated cattle. It is reflected that this was most likely due to one of three instances:

- The animal had a natural infection, meaning they were most likely exposed to a BVD strain at some point, or
- The animal had developed passive immunity, most likely from colostrum consumption, or
- The animal had previously been vaccinated for BVD, potentially if a change of ownership throughout their production had occurred

There were not enough samples collected of each vaccinated product within the bloodstream to conclude if the negative titres were due to the product's effectiveness, and the reasoning is also not known as negative results could have been from any number of factors (i.e. improper administration, inadequate timing of the administration, improper handling of the vaccine, etc.).

Overall project challenges identified included:

- Boosters were not always administered as suggested on the product label, potentially affecting vaccine efficacy
- Age of animal not known (perhaps there was maternal antibody interference)
- Small sample size

The NSCP would like to redo this project in the future, with larger sampling sizes so more determinants can be made for results. Although, the 73% response rate does illustrate there is room for improvement within the industry, such as more vaccine handling and injection technique information provided. The NSCP encourage producers to have a vaccine discussion with their veterinarian, to ensure administration is being done effectively and efficiently.



**FOUR BREEDS - ONE SALE**

**Atlantic Alliance** ONLINE PRODUCTION SALE

**TIMED ONLINE SALE WITH DLMS FARMGATE**

**Starts: OCT 16, 2020 - 9 AM AST**  
**Ends: OCT 17, 2020 - 6 PM AST**

**Featuring:**

- MARITIME HEREFORD SALE**  
Contact: Kelsey Siddall (902) 694-6036 - Leonard Allen (902) 694-8026  
siddall.davidkelsey@gmail.com
- ANGUS IN ACTION SALE**  
Contact: Ronnie Ford (902) 394-0059 - ronnie.ford@bellaliant.net
- AUTUMN CLASSIC SHORTHORN SALE**  
Contact: Adam Fraser (902) 759-6862 - newviewfarm@hotmail.com
- SALTWATER SIMMENTAL SALE**  
Contact: Kerwin Delong - karkerdelong@gmail.com

**FIND COMPLETE SALE LISTING, PICTURES & VIDEOS AT:**  
**WWW.DLMS.CA**

## CCA Farm Visits



*Above: MP Sean Fraser visits with Danny and Alicia King at Six Maples Farm, August 2020*

Throughout the last few months, the NSCP have coordinated with the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and the Nova Scotia Government to schedule provincial beef farm visits for local Members of Parliament (MP's) and Senators.

By these government officials having the opportunity to visit local beef operations, they are able to become more educated on the Canadian beef industry, as well as the environmental stewardship practices that producers have adapted on their farms.



*Above: MP Kody Blois visits with Dean Manning & Victor Oulton (not pictured) on their farms, September 2020*



*Above: Senator Colin Deacon visits with Larry Weatherby on his farm, September 2020*

## Fall Feeder Sale Dates

Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> (10AM)

Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> (10AM)

Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> (10AM)

Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> (10AM)

Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> (10AM)

Producers are encouraged to pre-register all feeder cattle as early as possible. Atlantic Stockyards Limited (ASL) will be listing pre-registered cattle on their website.

Vaccinated cattle must be accompanied by a vaccination declaration and a receipt for the vaccine used. Vaccinated cattle will be uniquely identified; all cattle will be sold by order of arrival.

There will also be a Breeding Stock Sale on Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 12PM

## Call for Nominations

The NSCP are seeking nominations for three positions to be elected in 2021 for Zone 1, Zone 4 and Dealer Director. The Zone Directors will be elected at their respective Zone meetings, with the Dealer Director being elected at the NSCP Annual General Meeting in March 2021.

The nomination period will be open from November 1 to 30, 2020, with nominees being announced in the December 2020 NSCP newsletter.

Please contact the office for a nomination form.

## **Dairy-Beef Focus – Bidalosy Farm Ltd.**

Realizing his barns were reaching capacity and to diversify his farm while meeting consumer demands, Bidalosy Farm Ltd. owner Andrew McCurdy started crossbreeding dairy with beef semen in July 2019. A quick calculation proved the crossbred animal would generate more income than just dairy alone. He knew he had the space and feed available so weighing the risks with the benefits he figured why not try this out. Since this time, the farm raises all animals for either dairy replacements or for the beef feedlot.

Initially, Andrew was breeding 30-40% of his dairy herd with beef-cross genetics of Angus and Hereford. In one year, he has since increased that to over 60% bred with Angus, Hereford, Limousin and Speckled Park breeds. He is currently calving out, on average, five replacement heifers and seven beef-cross monthly. Beef sires are selected based on rib eye and muscling characteristics.

Buying a neighbouring farm in 2018 helped with the transition into starting the crossbred enterprise, as it gave the opportunity to increase livestock numbers, although it was not a requirement. An additional barn was also built this year, allowing for additional spacing requirements to be met. The only other items purchased to begin this endeavour, were two scales, a handling system, a few silo blocks and a skid steer. Therefore, there was low additional overhead over what was already being done on the farm.

Bidalosy's breeding strategy is quite simple: voluntary 55-day waiting period, then breed everything. This has not changed since the crossbred enterprise has been added, as this was already how dairy breeding was being orchestrated. Once the cow has reached 200 days of milk and if she has been bred five to six times already, she will get bred between the months of July-November because they are always short on milk in the fall, however, if in between January-May, she will likely not get bred.

The cows calve out in a large pen within the newest barn. At this time, calves are given Inforce, giving the young cattle a healthy start to life. Andrew says it is not uncommon for cows to go over in their gestation by a couple days, indicating they are quite comfortable in their living quarters.

Calves are placed within individual pens for the first week, bottle fed until they are placed on an automatic feeder. The sensors within the feeder are alerted when calves approach by an ear tag which is inserted once the calf is old enough to begin using the automatic feeder. Each calf is inputted individually into the system, ensuring their daily allotted milk replacer quantity is specified for them based on weight, size, age, etc. At three-weeks old, calves are castrated and dehorned by veterinarians who are on-site every two weeks performing pregnancy checks.

Once they reach eight weeks of age, the cattle are moved into group pens where they co-mingle with replacements. They are now switched from milk replacer to replacement or beef stream and vaccinated with Pyramid 5.

The cattle are next moved to the milking barn, where they remain for approximately 100 days. Until reaching 200-300lbs, they are fed feed refusals and haylage. Once reaching 250-300lbs, they are fed roughly five pounds of grower daily, until reaching 550lbs. All cattle at Bidalosy Farms Ltd., regardless of dairy or crossbred, are treated the same to 450-500lbs, although they do try to separate before then if possible. The approximate cost put into a 550lb calf is \$650-\$700, based on valuing feeds at opportunity costs at market value. Andrew says this gives marketing ability for not only the cattle, but also the grains as high value crops.

Next, the cattle are moved to their final location until sold: the finishing barn. They remain here until are 14-16 months of age and are considered finished. Here they will eat corn silage, although haylage will also be added if needed, as well as barley, rye and roasted beans. They are fed approximately two kilograms per day, adding minerals and proteins to their diet. In Andrew's first year doing this enterprise, the finishing crossbred cattle gained an average of 2.2-2.5lbs daily.

All meat products from Bidalosy Farm Ltd. are processed and sold locally. To date, Andrew has sent three shipments to Atlantic Beef Products Inc. in PEI. These were graded mostly AAA, with a few AA and a few Blue Dot (top tier AAA grade). These carcass weights were all within 870-910lbs and yielded 53-54% dressing percentage, based on Bidalosy Farms Ltd. scales. Andrew has also made sales through the Atlantic Stockyards Inc., as well as directly to local producers and meat markets.

Since Andrew has nearly 900 acres of cultivated land, he has the ability to grow his own crops, such as native and improved forages, barley, corn and soybeans. As a Nutrient Management Planner, he also knows the importance of regularly testing soil and manure and does this in three-year cycles.

Andrew says there are four requirements dairy producers should consider prior to introducing a dairy-beef cross into their herd: adequate barn space, willingness to learn and adapt, approach to risk and availability to feed. At one year in and once again reaching full capacity, Andrew now asks himself if he should be keeping the Holstein steers, as current markets have crosses selling high priced. He is currently looking into options to increase space once again. He said he has always believed that lower animal density equals higher animal productivity. At Bidalosy Farm Ltd., the primary focus is animal care innovation.

By having both dairy and beef offspring, Bidalosy Farm Ltd. has been able to diversify the two distinct market areas. This has created synergies for animal care, feed production and efficient usage of the farm's resources. "We are constantly learning from our mistakes and successes" says Andrew, in a 2018 interview with the Environment Farm Plan staff at the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, "at Bidalosy Farms Ltd. we have been fortunate in being able to develop our business by adopting best practices and new technologies".

## Maritime AgCast

Maritime producers are now able to catch local, regional and national guests discussing industry topics on *Maritime AgCast* – the industry's newest podcast! The Agri-Commodity Management Association (ACMA) began airing episodes early September 2020:

- Episode 1: Agri-Commodity Management Association (ACMA) Staff
- Episode 2: Costs and Benefits of Vaccinating Feeder Cattle



On each bi-weekly episode, host Brad McCallum chats with guests regarding important livestock topics, as well as providing a market report, upcoming industry events and Nova Scotia Programs available. Topics range from disease management, bull selection, forage and pasture management, cost of production and many others!

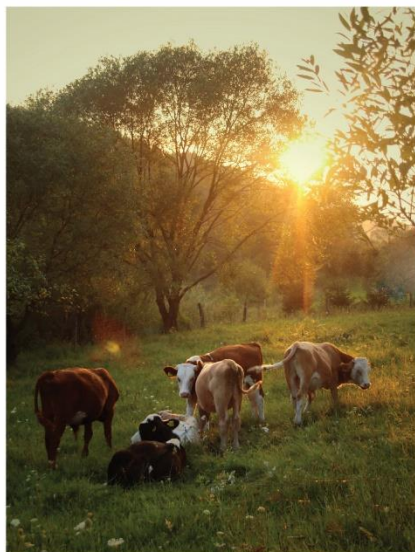
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