

# GRASS ROUTES



**RICH SMITH**  
Executive Director

## ADDRESSING INDUSTRY FUNDING

There is wide recognition among cattle and beef producers, as well as their industry organizations, that we do not have a sufficient level of industry funding to remain sustainable and competitive in the global beef market. This issue has been a major topic of conversation at producer and industry organization meetings for many years. It has been discussed extensively at Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) fall producer meetings and in the pages of this newsletter. Now, we are excited by the prospects that next year could bring substantial changes to the level of industry funding available, both nationally and in Alberta.

There are two elements of increasing industry funding for which ABP has received direction from producers and our delegates through resolutions at fall meetings and our Annual General Meeting. In the current Alberta check-off on cattle marketings, we collect a \$1 non-refundable national levy that is forwarded to the Canadian Beef Check-Off Agency as part of the national check-off, now called the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off. This supports national and international marketing, research, and issues management activities of Canada

Beef, the Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC), and the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA). ABP also collects a \$2 refundable provincial service charge that supports the policy, advocacy, communications, marketing, research, production, and education work of our organization, as well as the major policy, trade advocacy, and environmental activities of the CCA.

We have heard clear messages from producers at fall meetings and from our delegates at our Annual General Meetings that ABP should seek an increase in the national check-off and try to deal with the substantial losses of industry funding through service charge refunds. The national check-off increase requires an amendment in the ABP regulations to change the amount of the national levy portion of the check-off. Elimination of service charge refunds would require an amendment to the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act (MAPA) to allow non-refundable service charges, followed by steps to convince the Government of Alberta that producers want a non-refundable service charge.

The basis for the increase in the national check-off is the National Beef Strategy that was developed in 2014 by industry leaders from virtually all national and provincial cattle and beef organizations. For many years, we have been told that the industry needs to get together and needs a plan. The National Beef Strategy represents a positive response to both of these recommendations. It is the result of an unprecedented level of collaboration among a large group of organizations and sets ambitious goals for 2020 in the key areas of beef demand, competitiveness, productivity, and connectivity.

PAGE 2

**Addressing industry funding continued...**

PAGE 3

**bTB case update**

PAGE 4

**Marketing takes a new direction**

PAGE 5

**Creating wildlife resolutions**

PAGE 6-7

**Articles continued...**

BACK PAGE

**Young Guns contest**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

165, 6815 – 8 Street NE  
Calgary, AB Canada  
T2E 7H7

tel 403.275.4400  
fax 403.274.0007

albertabeef.org

famoustaste.albertabeef.org

continued on next page

continued from cover page

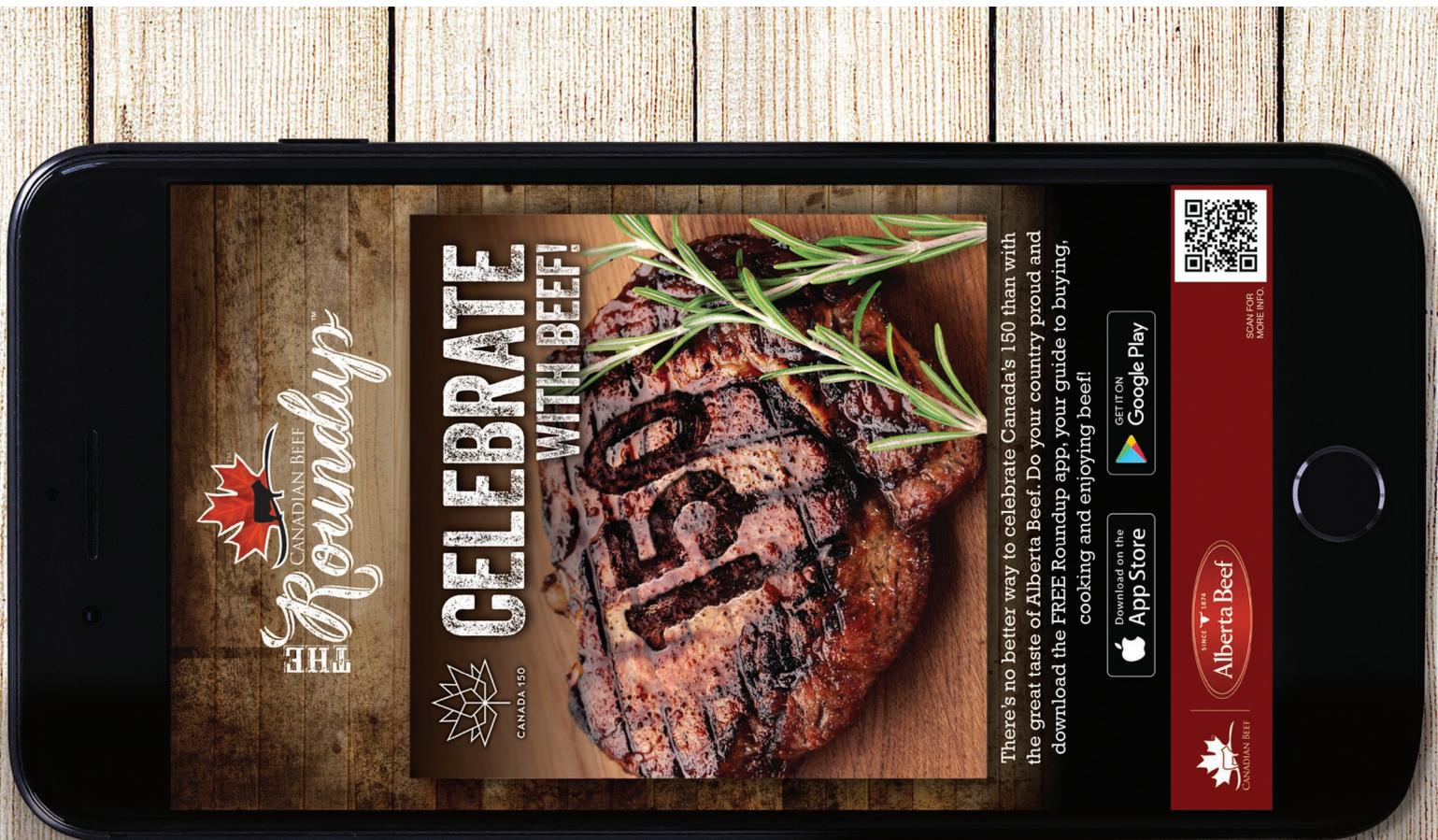
The national organizations that have the greatest responsibility for implementing the National Beef Strategy (Canada Beef, BCRC, and CCA) have recognized that the objectives in the strategy could not be reached with current levels of industry funding based on a \$1 Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off. After careful consideration of budget requirements, these organizations requested an increase from \$1 to \$2.50 per marketing, which ABP is seeking in our regulation amendments this year. Other provinces have implemented the national check-off increase already and we are aiming to have the increase come into effect in Alberta on April 1, 2018.

On the matter of the provincial service charge, ABP has been involved in ongoing discussions

with the Alberta government and industry partners such as the Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association (ACFA) on a possible return to a non-refundable service charge. We have asked the government to take the legislative actions needed for a non-refundable service charge and we have been working with the ACFA to find conditions under which that organization could support a non-refundable service charge. ABP is proposing that the implementation of a non-refundable service charge would include the creation of a fund, tentatively called the Alberta Beef Industry Development Fund (ABIDF), that would receive a significant portion of the service charge revenue, mostly from retained service charge refunds. The ABIDF funds would be invested solely in research, marketing, and industry collaboration activities and the allocation of the funds would be

determined by a steering committee comprising representatives from ABP, ACFA, and possibly other organizations.

We are pleased by the progress we are seeing now on the provincial service charge issue. This spring, Agriculture and Forestry Minister Oneil Carlier introduced a bill amending the MAPA to allow for non-refundable service charges. If the bill passes the legislature during the spring session, he has said that service charges can become non-refundable based on a plebiscite of producers. Clearly, the legislative amendments are just the first step in a difficult journey, but ABP is hopeful that there will be a path to having this challenging and divisive issue resolved by April 1, 2018. This could mean that producers will see long awaited and welcome solutions to both national and provincial industry funding issues in the next year. ▾





**KARIN SCHMID**  
Beef Production  
Specialist

## bTB CASE UPDATE

In September 2016, the discovery that a Canadian cow tested positive for bovine tuberculosis (bTB) at a slaughter plant in the U.S. prompted a disease investigation by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). For the producers in southeastern Alberta and southwest Saskatchewan affected by the investigation, this news was devastating and had serious impacts on their operations. Fortunately, this discovery did not impact Canada's bTB free status, nor were the overall cattle markets affected. Currently, there are six confirmed cases, all from the same herd, and all six cases are the same strain of bTB.

Mycobacterium bovis is the bacteria that causes bTB. It is infectious, and while contagious, it does usually require frequent and extended nose to nose contact or extended contact with bodily secretions to spread. It is also sensitive to heat, dry conditions and sunlight. bTB is a slow, progressive disease that usually doesn't cause any outward symptoms until the disease is extremely advanced. While cattle are the preferred host for M. bovis bacteria, it can infect a large range of warm blooded animals, including humans.

bTB is a reportable disease in Canada, and there has been an eradication program in place since 1923. Canada is one of only a few countries that is certified as bTB free by the World Organization for Animal Health, which provides some significant trade advantages. The bulk of surveillance in Canada for bTB relies on slaughter surveillance

where inspectors look for lesions consistent with bTB.

The disease investigation involves tracing the movements of animals introduced to the positive herd (trace-ins), animals that left the herd (trace outs), as well as any animals that had opportunity for direct or fenceline contact with positive animals over the past five years.

Epidemiology is the science of analyzing patterns and causes and effects of disease conditions in a population. This analysis attempts to quantify the risk of disease transmission by looking at factors like degree of potential contact, length of contact, types of animals involved, etc. Herds with confirmed infected animals pose the highest risk, followed by direct contact herds, trace-out herds, fenceline contact herds, and finally, trace-in herds pose the least risk.

In this case, the involvement of community pastures introduced a high degree of complexity. Essentially, all herds that had direct contact with the original infected herd had equal opportunity to come into contact with an infected animal and potentially become infected, which is why there is reference to one infected premise and 17 presumed infected premises. As more data was gathered and preliminary laboratory results became available it was possible to limit tracing activities to the original infected herd. Other animals such as dogs, cats, and horses were deemed to be low risk and released from quarantine with no further action.

An outstanding question is the source of the infection. While the strain found in Alberta most closely resembles one first identified in cattle in Mexico in 1997, this does

continued on page 6



**UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY**



UCVM  2017

**Beef Cattle** CONFERENCE

JUNE 22 - 23, 2017 CALGARY, ALBERTA

**RAISING HEALTHY BEEF CATTLE IN A  
CHANGING WORLD**

**PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP:**  
University of Calgary, Clinical Skills Building, Spychill Campus  
Body Condition Scoring and Applied Pathology

**CONFERENCE:**  
Deerfoot Inn & Casino

**Conference Topics:**

- Identifying the Challenges When Raising Beef Cattle with Restrictions on the Use of Antimicrobials
  - Improving Diagnostics and Treatments
- The Future of Beef Production without Metaphylaxis and Growth Promotants

**REGISTER TODAY!**

Visit [vet.ucalgary.ca/beef](http://vet.ucalgary.ca/beef) for more information and registration details

**FIND US ON...**  UCV M Beef Cattle Conference  @UCVMbeef

Photo Credit: Elizabeth R Homerosky



**BRAD DUBEAU**  
Marketing and  
Education Manager

# MARKETING TAKES A NEW DIRECTION

I entered the position of Marketing and Education Manager at Alberta Beef Producers in mid-December of 2016. In my first four to six weeks, I spent most of my time familiarizing myself with Alberta Beef Producers policies and procedures. In that time, I also met with Calgary advertising agency, Woodruff Sweitzer now known as WS, headed up by Jeff and

Susan Groeneveld, and their team. I shared several years of research compiled from different groups which was analyzed by the agency. After analyzing the research, the WS team presented their insights to ABP staff. We decided to move forward with WS using their firm to develop, along with myself, a multi-year campaign to promote "Alberta Beef". We are currently in the creative stages and are planning to kick off the first year of the multi-year campaign in the summer of 2017.

Our plan is to collaborate with venues that host large and smaller audiences to give ABP the greatest opportunity to hit the most people at one time. Although, the main target audience is urban, we hope to find venues with crossover to rural cattle producers, giving those who support ABP an opportunity to see their dollars in action. We will announce

those collaborative partnerships when they are confirmed in the near future.

As we develop ABP's new marketing campaign, we have looked at opportunities and entered partnerships to keep Alberta Beef at the forefront and one I'm excited to announce is our partnership with Rocky Mountain Smokers. Rocky Mountain Smokers competes in BBQ competitions using beef, poultry and pork across Canada with a few competitions in the United States. Alberta Beef Producers sponsored the briskets for their 2017 competitions. In 2016, Rocky Mountain Smokers was the highest ranking Canadian team for beef brisket, using certified AAA Alberta Beef brisket at all their competitions. There are four competitions in Alberta with others in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario. These competitions offer the potential to have over 150,000 total consumer impressions. Significant coverage for an investment of \$1,500. ABP is pleased to be associated with Rocky Mountain Smokers and we wish them the best of luck in their competitions throughout the summer.

ABP has also committed to sponsor major events such as:

The Canadian Centre for Food Integrity Public Trust Summit being held in Calgary, September 19-21. This is the second summit with the first being held in Ottawa, ON. For more information go to: [FarmFoodCare.org/Canada](http://FarmFoodCare.org/Canada)

The UCVM 2017 Beef Cattle Conference hosted by the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Calgary on June 22-23.

The 6th Annual SCORE! for the Houses Hockey Tournament, presented by Cargill in support of Ronald McDonald House Charities held April 7-9 in Spruce Grove.

While our new campaign look and feel is still in the creation stages, we are confident in the WS team we have aligned with to help guide us in

continued on page 7

**SHARING  
COMMON  
GROUND**

**CANADIAN BEEF INDUSTRY  
CONFERENCE  
2017**

**AUGUST 15 TO 17, 2017 AT THE BMO CENTRE ON  
STAMPEDE PARK, CALGARY, ALBERTA**

canadianbeefindustryconference.com  
 twitter @CDNBeefConf  
 facebook.com/canadianbeefindustryconference

BCRC CANADIAN BEEF CCA CANADIAN CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Images courtesy of Canadian Cattleman's • The Beef Magazine Cattlemen



**FRED HAYS**  
Policy Analyst

# CREATING WILDLIFE RESOLUTIONS

During the past few years Alberta Beef Producers has been working to address the ongoing concern from some producers about the cost of wildlife to their business operation. This has included damage from both predators and ungulates. The area taking the most time has been dealing with predators and coyotes. This direction has come from ABP Annual General Meetings in the form of resolutions and other requests for assistance from producers.

To get a grasp of the overall problem ABP initiated a study done by the Miistakis Institute a few years ago. A lot of work went into this study, both by the ABP producers on the Wildlife Committee developing a directional plan, by the producers who participated in the effort and by Miistakis themselves.

Overall, losses from predation in Alberta was projected at about \$2 million per year with 75 percent potentially from coyotes, mostly dealing with calf losses. Because coyotes are not on the predation list the cost of cattle deaths from them is absorbed by the producer. Coyotes have not been part of the predation loss support in Alberta for a few reasons: other government financial support already dedicated for agricultural losses, and producers in some areas want to be allowed to continue to hunt coyotes without government interference. Cattle need to be managed to reduce damages from coyotes. Calving yards should be close to farm buildings to deter

coyotes and any dead cattle need to be disposed or hauled away, and cow-calf units need to be observed.

Other predators such as wolves, cougars or grizzly bears have some wildlife protection, either through regulation or social licence relationships. Wolves can be controlled on a farmer's place by the farmer, but legally hunters can't use bait to hunt them. Cougar aren't usually much of a problem, and grizzly are a protected species.

Dealing with authorities can be complicated, although it should seem otherwise. It's not that the administration doesn't know about losses from wildlife or issues producers might have. The direction of government, as it has been for several years, is to have producers take on a management role for the protection of their own livestock. This is built into the Wildlife Act and Regulations.

There is limited wildlife management of predator numbers though wildlife biologists or officers in an extension role. At the same time species, such as wolves, are managed in the province through a designated management plan that focuses on maintaining a minimum number for optimal biodiversity of all species.

Like everything that's part of a regulation, rules are in place to be followed: the evidence, the situation, did the animal die first, and was it consumed by wolves later? Could it have been avoided? This is all happening at the local level and producers would like to have some reimbursement for supporting the crown's wildlife. Governments deal with wildlife legislation at an executive level, in this case the Ministry of Environment and Parks. Ministry executives take some of their cues from senior bureaucrats who help write the policy, but ultimately we're dealing with top level government.

The other issue might seem to be the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) that collect \$14 million



**IT PAYS TO DEMO A CAT.®**  
**Literally.**

It's as simple as:

- Schedule and attend a Cat Compact demo at your local branch.
- Buy from Finning and you could get \$750\*, and as a member of a participating association get additional machine discounts.
- If you buy from a competitor, present us proof of purchase\* and still get the \$750!

To schedule your demo, call 1-855-743-7979 or visit [finning.ca/DemoForDollars](http://finning.ca/DemoForDollars) today.

**BUILT FOR IT.™**



\*Must not have purchased a Cat machine in the last 36 months. See [finning.ca/DemoForDollars](http://finning.ca/DemoForDollars) for full offer details.

continued on page 7

continued from page 3

not mean that the bacteria came to Canada from Mexico. This strain has never been identified in Canada in either cattle or wildlife. There is no “smoking gun” pointing at a clearly identifiable source at this stage in the investigation. No lesions consistent with bTB were reported in over 1,250 hunted elk from the region, including a pathological examination of 400 heads submitted through chronic wasting disease surveillance.

While compensation for animals ordered destroyed by CFIA, and federal and provincial financial support help offset the unexpected costs of a prolonged quarantine, and assists in mitigating some of the challenges associated with a disease investigation, it does not alleviate the emotional stress of the situation. Producers have shown incredible

resilience, strength and patience throughout this process.

As of this writing (April 24, 2017), the depopulation of the infected and presumed infected premises has been completed. Approximately 10,500 animals have been depopulated – this number includes both reactor animals that underwent enhanced post mortems and the whole herd depopulations. Approximately 40 premises remain under quarantine, while 34 premises have been released, including all the fenceline contact herds. The bulk of trace-out herds have been identified and tested, and some of these have been approved for quarantine release based on initial laboratory results. As lab results become available more trace-out herds will be eligible for early or full quarantine releases. These cattle can be safely integrated into normal activities of the industry

(sold, moved, commingled, etc.), although owners that sell early quarantine release cattle have to maintain suitable sales records.

Cleaning and disinfection protocols have been distributed to those producers on infected and presumed infected premises, and some have begun the process. Restocking can occur after cleaning and disinfection is completed and a 45-day fallow period is observed (with average temperatures around 12 degrees). Restocked herds will be subject to two annual herd tests – one at approximately six months after restocking and another at approximately 18 months.

Given calving has begun, it is anticipated that trace-in testing will begin in the fall, thus, we can expect investigation activities to continue at least until the spring of 2018. ▼



Quantity? Quality?  
**Get both.**

**Put the pride back in your pasture with new Reclaim II.**

New Reclaim II gives you the ability to get more of what you need from your acres — more, high quality pasture and rangeland. This new formulation is highly-concentrated, so pasture-robbing weeds and brush, such as Canada Thistle and Buckbrush, can be managed more effectively. Cleaner pastures improve the efficiency of your grazeable acres, and reflect your commitment to stewardship. You'll never have to choose between quality or quantity when it comes to your land.

**Higher quality pasture. More grazeable acres. Get it all, with new Reclaim II.**

1-800-667-3852 | [www.dowagro.ca](http://www.dowagro.ca)

**Reclaim II**  
HERBICIDE

**Dow** Dow AgroSciences

*Solutions for the Growing World*

\*The Trademark of The Dow Chemical Company ("Dow") or an affiliated company of Dow. 12/16-929-18

## CONNECT WITH ABP ONLINE

Alberta Beef Producers is constantly working towards better communications with producers. You can sign up for our weekly news updates online at [albertabeef.org/page/news/](http://albertabeef.org/page/news/) or by contacting [katelynl@albertabeef.org](mailto:katelynl@albertabeef.org).

ABP is on twitter and you can find us [@albertabeef](https://twitter.com/albertabeef). Our twitter account is connected to a strong community of ag-minded people who are continuously sharing information. You can also like our facebook page at [facebook.com/ABBeefProducers](https://facebook.com/ABBeefProducers) and be sure to comment on and share our posts. ▼

continued from page 4

developing a multi-year strategy that will have a positive impact on the consumer. I believe in trying to find ways to work together with other industry organizations to help make that impact. Myself and the folks at Canada Beef have recently developed an advertisement that co-branded the Alberta Beef and Canada Beef logos in a celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary. The advertisement will be placed in the consumer issue of GrainsWest magazine which will be circulated to over 65,000 urban consumers through Edmonton and Calgary food publications the Tomato, and City Palate, respectively. You can see it on page two of this newsletter.

The ad is promoting the Round Up phone app which is available on both Android and Apple devices at no charge. It is filled with recipes and information regarding all cuts of beef. The Round Up app is a perfect tool to help consumers with purchasing and preparing recipes for all cuts of beef that can fit any budget. Helping consumers understand the different cuts and the variety of preparation methods that comes with beef opens the beef industry to an expanded world of new customers. Canada Beef has provided an excellent tool for the consumer and ABP is committed to help in its promotion. We encourage you to download it... you never know what you might learn.

As you can imagine, Alberta Beef Producers receives a great deal of sponsorship requests every week. I go through them each individually and score the event using a sponsorship opportunity evaluation. Depending on how the event scores determines if we should sponsor and at what level. In some cases, it is determined that an event would best be sponsored by the zone where it is taking place. We then work with the delegates in that zone and follow their lead on how they wish to proceed. ▼



continued from page 5

annually in fishing and hunting licences. Through government agreements, ACA collects these fees to sponsor provincial wildlife and conservation programs. Disrupting this funding could create some animosity between producers and the ACA community even if, ideally, some of the licence fees could support producers for predation losses. They have terms outlined through the Government of Alberta and are audited for accountability.

Issues with wildlife officers may not be looking at the big picture as they have rules and guidelines to follow. Not being aware of the policy structured by civil servants can be an issue, but producers need to understand the structure and process of the system. Being frustrated with the government or politicians who offer to do something

differently is probably futile. The former government put the policies and regulations in place, and the present government continues to support them.

For any real change in predator or pest management to occur local communities will need to be involved. Producers need to engage government at the municipal level and work to develop solutions. Producers as a coordinated group will need to be an integral part of resolving the problem with municipalities, and provincial biologists, field officers and wildlife policy makers. The government's Alberta Game Policy Advisory Committee, of which ABP is a member, is one vehicle to make change but this relationship needs to be managed strategically. ▼



Ranchers and farmers from across Canada have put their trust in La Capitale to provide **affordable insurance solutions to protect their business**. Our customized income replacement plans provide **first day benefits and are paid to you in full**, regardless of any other benefits you receive.

**With La Capitale your income is protected:**

- 24 hours a day
- 7 days a week
- On or off the job
- Anywhere in North America

To find out more about our individual income protection, including our **Return of Premium**, contact us at **780 438-2420** and we'll come see you at your convenience.



# ATTENTION YOUNG GUNS: TELL US YOUR STORY CONTEST SUBMISSIONS DUE JUNE 2

Are you between the ages of eight and 21, and are involved in Beef 4-H, junior cattle shows or beef production? This is your opportunity to win one of three prizes in the ABP Young Guns Contest. What a year – Canada is turning 150 and 4-H Alberta is 100! With all the celebrations taking place we want to celebrate your beef story. Tell us your favourite memory or story that connects you to Alberta's beef industry. An entry may be submitted as an essay, video, advertisement, audio segment, social media campaign, blog post, press release or any other form of communication.

**Be creative. Three prizes available:**

**1st Place - \$1,000**

**2nd Place - \$500**

**3rd Place - \$250**

Send your entry form, available on the [albertabeef.org](http://albertabeef.org) homepage, and contest submission to:

Katelyn Laverdure  
Communications Manager  
Alberta Beef Producers  
165, 6815 8 Street, NE  
Calgary, AB T2E 7H7  
E-mail: [katelynl@albertabeef.org](mailto:katelynl@albertabeef.org)

We must receive your entry by midnight, June 2, 2017 to be eligible to win. The winners will be determined by a panel of judges at the Alberta Beef Producers Semi Annual Meeting in June and will be contacted by June 23, 2017. ▼

© 2017 Alberta Beef Producers. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form, or by any means whatsoever, without written permission from Alberta Beef Producers. Made in Canada. April, 2017. For further information contact Alberta Beef Producers at 403.275.4400.



[www.albertabeef.org](http://www.albertabeef.org)

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:  
Alberta Beef Producers 165, 6815 – 8 Street NE, Calgary, AB T2E 7H7  
PM 40069160