



BC MEATING NEWS

Welcome to the BCFPA's BC Meating News, providing information towards increasing livestock harvest and sales of high-quality, safe, BC-produced-and-processed meat products. This is a monthly publication of the Meat Industry Enhancement Strategy (MIES).

MIES continues work on waste issues

The MIES Team continues to hear from abattoir operators regarding significant challenges related to management of slaughter waste. These challenges include the cost of collection, difficulties with processes for handling Specified Risk Materials (SRM), availability and cost of composting facilities, and access to landfills. We are particularly concerned that the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands' SRM Management program is to be wound up by the end of March 2010 with approximately \$4M still unspent: pre-existing deadlines do not acknowledge the ongoing need to develop better SRM solutions for BC abattoirs. We are also concerned that the Ministry of Environment has not yet dealt with the question of composting slaughter waste in a manner appropriate for small on-farm abattoirs or mobile docking stations. The MIES, as well as continuing dialogue with the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the Agricultural Land Commission, has contracted with a law student to assist us with some focused research to help advance some of the above concerns.

CIPPA to open new poultry mobile and host 2nd annual Poultry and Rabbit Forum

The Cariboo Central Interior Poultry Producers Association is hosting its 2nd Annual Poultry and Rabbit Forum on 26 and 27 March, 2010 at the College of New Caledonia North Cariboo Campus in Quesnel. The Forum is open to non-members. On March 26 the Canadian Farm Business Management Council will host a Value Plus workshop. The workshop will show how to add value to products, secure new markets and boost financial results. For March 27, the CCIPPA has designed a one-day workshop that includes presentations on Farm to School Lunch Programs, poultry and rabbit information sessions, and a keynote address from farmer and author Joel Salatin (www.polyfacefarms.com). A key feature of the day will be the official opening of the new poultry mobile that CCIPPA will be operating out of Quesnel.

Please see the CCIPPA website for registration form, agenda, speakers' bios etc.: <http://site.ccippa.ca/Forum.html>
Tel: 250-992-1511 | Fax 250-992-3544
E-mail info.ccippa@gmail.com

Finding customers for your meat business online

Work with abattoirs has always involved work with livestock producers, butcher shops, restaurants and others in the livestock and meat value chain. A session on Social Marketing at the Pacific Agriculture Show on 27 January featured the Director of Social Marketing for Small Potatoes Urban Delivery (www.spud.ca), an organic foods delivery business that originated in Vancouver. She outlined how the company uses online tools such as Facebook (self promotion: www.facebook.com),

[facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)), Twitter (<140-character messages: <http://twitter.com>), YouTube (video: www.youtube.com), Flickr (photos: www.flickr.com) and blogging (journaling: www.blogger.com/start as one example) to boost its business and interact with its customers. SPUD! devotes 2/3 of one full-time position to social media, which includes checking and responding to messages daily and posting information every two days on Facebook and each week on its blog. This pays off: SPUD! gets 30% of its new customers online, about three a week just from Twitter. Social marketing will be most useful to those farm and food businesses which have, or can create, a community online.

BC Farm Knowledge Network

Got questions and issues about small farm and food businesses? Come and share them online! The FARM Community Council is a member of the BC Agriculture Council (BCAC). It represents the community agriculture sector, including small lot farms, mixed farms, niche market farms, organic farms and more. In 2008, BCAC supported a study regarding ways to increase participation in the FARM Community Council and its work. On-line networking was one of the tools suggested; and with support from FARM Community Council, BCAC and the Investment Agriculture Foundation, Dennis Lapierre has set up a social networking platform called the BC FARM Knowledge Network. It includes not only an online discussion forum, but also a blog section and classifieds. Please visit: <http://forums.bcac.bc.ca/forum.php>

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Change regarding delisting of bar code dangle tags for cattle

In the October 2009 Meating News we reported that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) intended to phase out bar code dangle tags effective 1 January 2010. This decision has been reversed (due in part to traceability concerns): bar code tags will now not be de-listed from the list of approved ID tags. As long as the bar code tag remains an approved tag, producers applying the new RFID tags are required to leave the old tag in, cross reference it and retire it. Producers are not legally required to apply RFID tags, though it is recommended. As bar code tags have not been commercially available since 2006, it

is expected that they will simply become obsolete over time.

The US NAIS program is dead

After years of protest by independent livestock farmers, food security advocates and many others supporting sustainable, decentralized, diversified agriculture, the US government has decided to abandon its National Animal Identification System. Cost, as well as privacy and other issues, were deemed by many to make the program unworkable. The US Department of Agriculture is now planning to develop a new system in consultation with livestock producers that will address their concerns while still enabling the

rapid tracing of livestock in case of animal disease outbreaks. The new system may only apply to interstate movement of livestock, while it will be left up to individual states to implement regulations for the traceability of animals within a state.

For further information and access to more on-line resources, visit our Web site at www.bcfpa.ca/mies.html

Acknowledgement



Funding for key programs is provided by the Province of British Columbia.

Report Released by the Provincial Ranching Task Force:

The Ranching Task Force has released its first report which represents several months of intense work by both industry and government to review and address the challenges facing the beef cattle industry. Both the BCFPA's President (Robin Smith) and CEO (Nico Human) were active contributors. The Task Force, established at the request of the Premier after the election, identified 45 regulatory changes that government can implement by removing regulatory barriers for BC's ranching family businesses. Over 95% of British Columbia ranches are small to medium-size family-run businesses with small operating margins. Removing these unnecessary hurdles can help strengthen these businesses and position the sector for the future. The 45 recommendations fall under the priorities set out by the Task Force which are to: secure access to water; secure access to sufficient rangeland and forage; implement low cost, regional animal waste disposal options; and make improvements to the Agricultural Land Reserve.

The economic crisis ranchers have been experiencing for the past six years continues to worsen. Many ranchers have gone into debt and borrowed against their equity, and taken off-farm jobs in order to carry their families through these hard times. Others, as a last resort, have had to sell out and leave the business that has been in their families for generations. British Columbia's beef cattle inventory has shrunk by one third, the sharpest decline in all of Canada. Without government intervention, it is difficult to say how many more ranchers will decide to exit the industry. The suggested changes should help the Province and ranchers work together to sustain the industry.

The complete report can be found at:

http://www.ranchingtaskforce.gov.bc.ca/attachments/ranching_task_force_2009.pdf