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May/June 2015

Meat Business

The Beef, Pork & Poultry Industry Magazine

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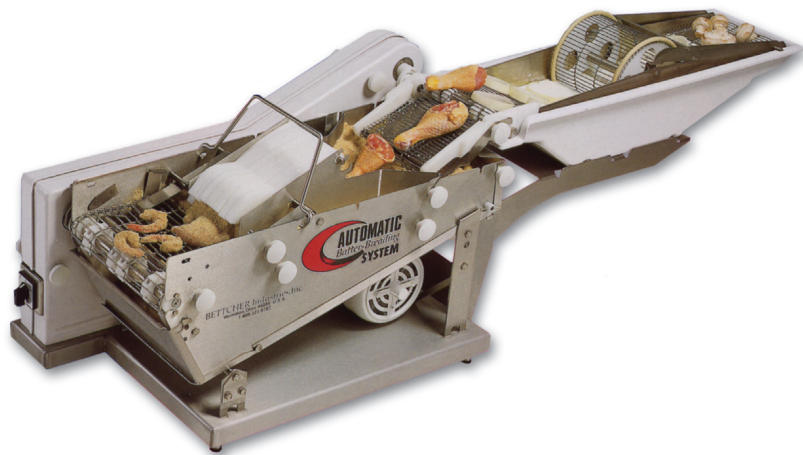
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WHERE'S THE MEAT – SERIOUSLY?

by Cam Patterson

When we sit down and start planning each new issue of *Canadian Meat Business*, the talk around the table usually begins by asking what is relevant and pertinent to the industry now, what topics are newsworthy, and more importantly, what is the theme of the feature article that will shape subsequent copy. This issue is based on “Promoting our Meat!” This is a theme of real interest to our publication and to this industry as a whole. And it seemed to open up a whole other question.

Canadian Meat Business has paid close attention to the PEDv, BSE, Avian Flu outbreaks over the last year as well as the political issues of trade bans, countless trade missions, new trade programs and most contentiously, COOL. Those are a lot of issues to deal with and it seems that our industry has been doing a lot more reactive, defensive work rather than proactive promotion. Yes, we have multiple active industry organizations and trade associations as well as Agri Ministers all out there standing up for this industry and touting the requisite benefits. They all do great work and they all have sincere creative campaigns to promote the industry, yet it feels like the message just isn't getting out there like it used to and the image of 'meat' seems to be suffering as a result.

Scott Taylor, our Managing Editor, has written a great feature article in this issue delving into these issues that at the same time, planted a thought in my head. What ever happened to those slogans we all remember so much? Modern marketing might be part of the problem here.

By coincidence, the popular TV series *Mad Men* recently came to an end. It was the most celebrated TV show that centered around our very theme - market driven advertising. It's not just ads, but the kind of huge campaigns back in the days of television and magazines that became pop culture and saved industries. Maybe our industry is not the only one trying to figure out how to stand out in this social media world where the good ol' TV ad campaign is so far in the past we don't know how to advertise anymore.

The way we advertise, market, promote and brand has to change and many industries are still struggling to come to these new terms and reach their target audiences. It should be easier one would think but in a world of personalized, hyper self-serving devices best used for texting and selfies, how do we spread the word?

How do we promote our meat products as the best in the world? Our product screams it, our infrastructure stands behind it and our bio security proves it. All we need to do is find the way to have our voices heard in today's marketing world.

The fault may very well lie with the simple assumption that if we populated our web sites with our messages, that would be enough. All we've done is put the onus on our audience to come to us. That's the very nature of the internet and why most campaigns fail to attract the attention and results promised and web sites are rapidly becoming the past with the speed of iPhone and Smart Phone apps. This is the new technology that is supposed to get you your audience, but it is expensive and must be tailored to deliver your message in a cost effective and efficient manner.

Here we are, wondering where our meat is and missing the old days when all you had to do was watch TV commercials.

We all remember that slogan “Where's the Beef” that went on to pop culture fame. In today's wireless world it would never be more than a hip hashtag gone viral one week and dead the next. So the problem remains, what do we do?

I don't remember the last time I saw an ad for Canadian meat while watching those *Mad Men* episodes or NHL hockey or Canada AM or any prime time programming that I actually sit down to watch. Oh yeah, that's right, I have Netflix now and can binge watch my favorite shows.

PROMOTING “WHAT’S FOR DINNER” IN CANADA

WE JUST DON’T BRAG
ABOUT THE GOOD
THINGS OFTEN ENOUGH

by SCOTT TAYLOR



It's hard not to appreciate the enthusiasm of Fawn Jackson, the Manager of Environment and Sustainability for the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA). She comes by her position at the CCA honestly. She grew up on a purebred Charolais, Simmental and seed farm in Inglis, Man., near the Saskatchewan border. She gets it.

Jackson staffs the CCA's environment committee and is part of a handful of research initiatives involving industry, government and international federations. She represents Canadian cattle producers at the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, the International Meat Secretariat Sustainable Meat Committee and the Five Nations Beef Alliance Sustainability Committee. In fact, she actually has played a lead role in setting up the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef.

Her love of the Canadian Beef industry is infectious. She is committed to the ranchers, the product and the passion of the people who make beef "What's for Dinner."

However, as the anti-meat forces – especially the anti-red meat forces – continue to get louder and louder all over Canada and the United States, I wonder if it isn't time that the beef, pork and poultry industries went on the offensive. We need to harness the enthusiasm of people like Fawn Jackson, people who believe in the product and the story that should be told and shouted out to the world.

Maybe it's time to bring back a campaign similar to "What's for Dinner?"

For those who have forgotten or who might be too young to remember, "What's for Dinner?" was a classic campaign of successful international advertising.

Created by the legendary ad men at Chicago's Leo Burnett Company, it was developed at the behest of "The Beef Council," the promotional group associated with the Chicago-based National Livestock and Meat. The campaign began the week of May 18, 1992 and according to Leo Burnett Co.

history, "The 'Beef. It's What's For Dinner,' campaign was established through television and radio ads that featured actor Robert Mitchum as its first narrator (and later Sam Elliott and on radio, Matthew McConaughey) along with the tune from Hoe-down, part of the Rodeo Suite by Aaron Copeland." The TV ads were followed by a large magazine campaign that was rolled out in late July and early August of 1992.

The initial campaign ran for 17 months at a cost of \$42 million and if you recall, the ads featured the tag line: "Nothing satisfies so many people in so many ways."

It was stunning. The campaign was so impressive, it actually made your mouth water. It has been called "one of greatest campaigns in advertising industry history," and it helped create a generation of people who adored beef. And, just to be different on occasion, chicken and pork.

Well folks, it's time to do it again.

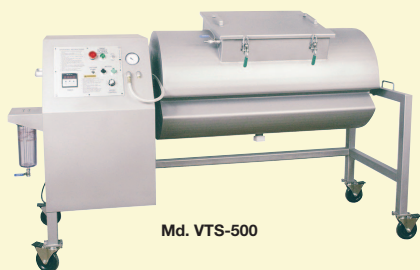
Sure there have been some minor ad campaigns -- "Beef. Real food for real people" or "Discover the Power of Protein in the Land of Lean Beef" but there has never been anything like: "Beef. It's What's for Dinner."

It's time to start promoting all of North America's wonderful meat industry products again.

"Beef is already a product that people love and the more we can tell our story, the better it will be for the entire industry," Jackson said. "And it's a wonderful story. It should be told. And I also believe that consumers want more information about this product they love, so why not tell the story as often as we can?"

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“As I see it, the CCA and Canadian beef producers have a great story to tell.”

Absolutely true. But for reasons known only to the people inside the beef, pork and poultry industries in North America, no one seems to want to say how great our products taste and why they should be on every table in the land.

For instance, most of the provincial pork associations have terrific websites that tell warm, wonderful stories about the way pork is produced in Canada, but you would have to be interested enough in the product, without any coaxing, to go to the websites to actually read the stories. Today, advertising these products is weak. In Manitoba, there has been one television commercial running that seems to apologize for the wastewater from pork farms. There are no commercials running telling me how great (or how relatively economical) a pork tenderloin tastes right off the BBQ.

Just for fun, why not try this?

Top 10 Things Required to Promote Canada's Meat Industry

- 1. Quit worrying about your product.** As Fawn Jackson says – and while she said it about beef, it goes for pork and chicken, too – “I believe that consumers want more information about a product they already love.” They do. Tell the world about it and tell the world without fear. OK, so there have been a couple of cases of PEDv, BSE and Avian Flu, but they were contained and today, consumers have absolutely nothing to fear.
- 2. Create a new sales pitch.** “What’s for Dinner?” was wonderful back in the day. But this is a new day. There are advertising people all over Canada ready to come up with the next great sales pitch.
- 3. Pick a target market.** I personally believe young athletes and active men and women in the 20-to-40 demographic is the market. Most people over-40 in North America are either committed vegetarians or committed meat lovers. They are not going to change. Chase young people and chase them hard. Don’t pander and don’t talk down. Tell them exactly what you sell and tell them how good it tastes and how good it is for them.
- 4. Advertise.** Do not be afraid to tell the world what you produce. But advertise intelligently. Don’t go too new – nobody is on social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) to buy products despite what Google wants you to believe. Don’t go too old – newspapers are dead and the people reading them are already committed to your products or else they never will be. Niche advertising directed at young people and their families is the only way to go – current magazines, billboards, popular websites, hot live TV (especially live sporting events) and buses. Heck, only recently advertising has turned chocolate milk into a better alternative than Gatorade.
- 5. Pick a strong spokesperson.** Choose somebody people know and respect. Respect is everything. Remember, they already love your product. You just need somebody that people respect to sell it for you. In Canada, a hot young hockey player or players (both male and female). In the United States, a male football or basketball player or players or a female basketball or soccer player or players. Pick the

right spokespeople and you can’t lose.

- 6. Build your image.** “What’s for Dinner,” built up the romance of the cowboy, the cattleman. Example? Building an image around respected athletes who eat meat for nourishment can be a big step toward success.
- 7. Get out and meet your audience.** Create a “Street Team,” and as part of your promotional campaign, be sure to get out there and meet the people you’re trying to reach. Summer fairs, musical events, sporting events – both amateur and professional – hockey tournaments, pro football games, whatever. Get out there! Show them how wonderful your product really is. And never forget that it is wonderful.
- 8. Don’t be afraid to promote high-end cuts and other expensive products.** Everything has levels. Whether it’s whiskey, clothing, beer, wine or artichokes, there are high-end products and there are economical products. Don’t be afraid to promote your high end, more-expensive cuts as if they were vintage wine or single malt scotch.
- 9. Use all of your resources.** From fast-food joints, to high-end steak houses, from the best BBQ spots to the classiest restaurants in town, use the people who use your product to help sell your product. It sounds simple, but even during the “What’s for Dinner?” campaign, you never heard mention of McDonald’s, or A & W or Oklahoma Joe’s Kansas City BBQ in Kansas City (named by Anthony Bourdain as one of “13 Places to Eat Before You Die” in Men’s Health Magazine). You have great products sold by popular restaurants and bars, so bring them along. By the way, did you know that Bourdain’s 13 Places to Eat Before You Die features 13 restaurants from around the world and three were seafood joints while the other 10 proudly served meat dishes as their specialties? There was not one vegetarian restaurant on the list. Be proud.
- 10. Sure, prices for beef and bacon are going through the roof, but so is the price of the latest Mercedes Benz.** Use popular people to sell quality, nourishment, taste and enjoyment and you can’t lose.

Now, let’s be fair. For the past 1,200 words I’ve been pressing our meat-industry NGOs to start selling their goods. We need to communicate, tell the world how good these great Canadian products really are. After all, here in Canada, A&W Restaurants and McDonald’s are not afraid to tell everyone how great Canadian beef, pork and chicken really is, why can’t the industry shout it from the roof tops? Is it fear? Is it some kind of self-imposed secrecy? Maybe it’s just the way the industry does business. Are we so modest about what we do that we don’t want to tell anyone?

After all, we have another, perhaps bigger problem in Canada. Our government agencies have trouble communicating with each other, let alone the public, and because of it, the meat industry is often left out in the cold, fending for itself against all kinds of charges – both real and imagined.

As a long standing source for the dissemination of food related industry news, we can cite many examples where provincial and federal government agencies fumbled the ball badly in communicating with the media, the industry and other key stakeholders.

Granted, none of this has anything to do with selling products. Or does it? This lack of proactive communications or the appearance of a united front has forced leading government agencies into taking a reactive approach to dealing with national or international crises.

But that's just part of our own echo chamber. Inside the industry, we hear all the talk, but outside, my neighbors don't hear anything.

And yeah, I get it. Trade is the absolute most important marketing vessel in the industry. If we tried to operate within Canada's boundaries there wouldn't be enough business to sustain the industry. I get that.

And I understand that Canada Beef has a big push going on right now on how we can package the product better so that we can sell it abroad. Back in 1992, The Beef Council and National Livestock and Meat got together and created a memorable ad campaign. And even today in the United States, the North American Meat Institute has enough clout to make that happen again.

But here in Canada none of the mandates of our government agencies or NGOs coalesce with each other. The Beef Council and the Cattlemen's Association don't seem to talk and if they do, they talk to each other, not the public.

It's almost as if every part of the meat industry in Canada is at odds with every other. Then again, isn't that the classic Canadian identity crisis? We' always seem to be staring into the looking glass to see if there is any lint in our collective navels. We're always too worried about the next outbreak of BSE, PEDv or H5N2 to stop and say, "We have a great product, why doesn't everyone buy more of it?"

Make no mistake, when McDonald's decided that it was going to Canada and specifically Alberta to find its "Sustainable Beef," didn't that tell us that we have something going for ourselves? Did it, or is it just naïve to think that we have a wonderful product produced in the best possible conditions on earth? Really? Is that it?

Here in Canada, we have a preoccupation with exports and rightly so. But we produce chicken, pork and beef products better than anyone on earth. As an example, we have the best containment regulations in the world and we're good at containing both viruses and the diseases that result. We contained PEDv and we're containing BSE and H5N2. McDonalds knows we do it better than any other country on the planet. McDonald's knows that our products are unmatched. Why don't we? Or, better put, why don't we tell everybody?

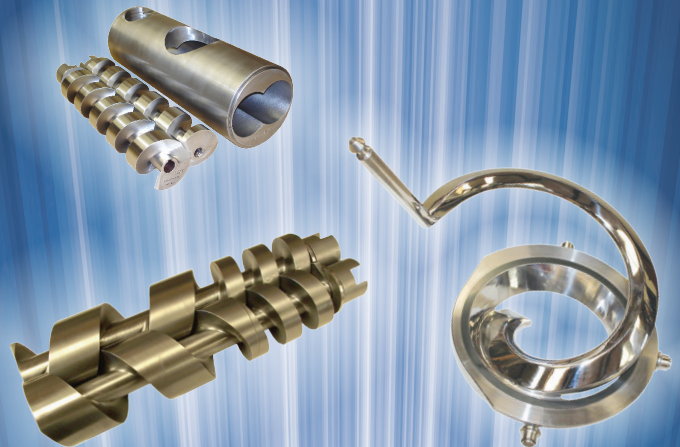
Why are we so reluctant to stand on the world stage with a megaphone and shout that out?

What's for Dinner? The beef, pork and poultry produced in Canada IS what's for dinner and we shouldn't be afraid to tell the world about it.



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TPP: THE TIME IS NOW

by CLAIRE CITEAU, Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance

For Canada's agricultural and food exporters, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is the biggest game in town. And after five years of negotiations, a deal is finally in sight.

The recent commitment by U.S. President Barack Obama and Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe showed that a deal is close. With Japan and the U.S. at the epicenter of this mega-regional free trade agreement, once they agree the remaining dominoes will fall into place.

And while some have highlighted what others are seeking from Canada, the importance of the deal for Canada – and Canada's agri-food exporters in particular – should not be underestimated.

Canada's agricultural industry is one of the most trade-dependent agricultural sectors in the world. As a country, we export \$50 billion a year in agricultural and agri-food products – over half of everything we produce. It means that over 90 per cent of Canada's farmers are dependent on exports as well as about 40 per cent of our food processing sector.

For Canada, the TPP will preserve and maintain our place in an integrated North American economy, and boost access to the rapidly growing Asian-Pacific economies such as Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore.

And then there's Japan, the crown jewel of the TPP and a premium market that demands \$4 billion per year in Canadian agri-food products – about 10 per cent of Canada's total agri-food exports. Japan is the largest predictable market for Canadian canola seed, the second largest market for Canadian malt and Canadian pork, the fourth largest market for Canadian beef and an important high-value market for Canadian wheat and pulses.

Can you imagine an export-based country like Canada being outside a trade agreement where our global competitors could get preferred access to one of our highest value and most stable markets?

With all of these possibilities, it is clear that this trade deal

has broader benefits than any before it. It includes an unprecedented number of Asian-Pacific countries, could expand disciplines to cover 21st century trading realities and set the tone for a regional trading block that other countries are already lining up to join.

But we're not there yet. We still need the 12 member nations to come to a final agreement that will allow Canadian agri-food exporters the ability to secure and grow a market of 800 million customers that take 65 per cent of our exports.

As talks near conclusion, Canada must act quickly to secure comprehensive and equal market access to TPP countries. It's a historic opportunity that is more important than any country's domestic political timelines. We cannot miss this critical window of opportunity.

Being left on the sidelines of a trade deal that covers 40 per cent of the world's economic output is not an option. To remain a significant contributor to the economy, Canadian agriculture needs the TPP. And most of all, as a country we need to be fully engaged in the negotiations to ensure that Canadian exporters attain the same access to markets as exporters from other TPP countries.

The signal is clear. The world is moving towards a future of free trade, and the time is now to take a step forward. Canada must actively champion this now or we will lose a once in a generation opportunity.

We owe our farmers, ranchers, producers and exporters the chance to freely compete and grow markets, on an equal footing, with our international competitors.

There is no more time for waiting, and no such thing as the status quo. Now is the time for governments to be bold and stand up for the future of Canadian agriculture.

The opportunity is here. The time is now.

TROY MEDIA SPECIAL REPORT: IS THE TPP A GOOD DEAL FOR CANADA?

by ROBERT MCGARVEY

Is the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) a bulwark of freedom as proponents claim or is Canada about to be shoehorned into another free trade deal that will continue the hollowing out of our economy?

It depends on your perspective.

The TPP, championed by U.S. President Barack Obama as an important addition to the world's free-trade zone and as a means of extending U.S. influence in Asia, is nothing if not ambitious. It's being negotiated between 12 countries with Pacific Ocean connections, including the United States, Canada and a notoriously protectionist Japan.

Canada's position on TPP seems to swing between hot and cold. At the same time Prime Minister Stephen Harper was calling TPP "the biggest game on the planet," our own trade negotiators were balking, holding their ground on provisions for free access to Canada's tightly controlled beef, dairy, poultry and egg markets.

It should be pointed out the U.S. president is facing considerable domestic opposition to the deal. The Republicans in Congress oppose TPP because it's an Obama initiative, but the president is also facing opposition from within his own party.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren has pointed out that, while she's in favour of trade, all of the free trade deals since the 1970s, including NAFTA, have contributed to the erosion of middle-class wages and standards of living. She insists free trade deals are poorly constructed, biased toward corporate interests and against the best interests of workers and the public.

There appears to be some truth to this assertion. Consider wages: while workers' wages in the U.S. tracked productivity gains for three decades after the Second World War, from 1973 onward wages have basically straight-lined while productivity has almost tripled.

Something is obviously wrong.

The economic logic behind free trade is that "a rising tide lifts all boats." But many also see free trade as a vital necessity for world peace. That idea was evident at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference, where the victorious Allies made their plans for a freer post-war world.

However, despite committing to freer trade, Bretton Woods also attempted "to reconcile liberal international trade policies with high levels of domestic employment and growth."

The problem is that ensuring this balance is maintained requires political oversight of market forces and the supremacy of state sovereignty. Regrettably, both of these principles have been sacrificed in recent free-trade negotiations.

Consider the chilling impact of NAFTA on public policy making in Canada. A few years ago, it came to light that New Brunswick drivers were paying some of the highest auto insurance rates in the country. The provincial government convened a committee to study the matter and it concluded that a public insurance plan could reduce premiums by 20 per cent across the board.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



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Obviously, this was popular with the driving public. However, enter the Insurance Bureau of Canada. They reminded the government that if it went ahead with its plan, under NAFTA foreign insurers could sue the province for “lost profits” from the expropriation of their market share. Bottom line, it never came to that. Even the threat of litigation was enough to kill the plan. As a result, New Brunswick continues to pay some of the highest auto insurance rate in the country.

There is also the notorious case of tobacco giant Philip Morris suing the government of Australia for attempting to regulate cigarette packaging. Philip Morris argued that Australia’s tobacco Plain Packaging Act would discourage smoking; therefore the Act constitutes an expropriation of its investments. Philip Morris maintains the act was an “unreasonable and discriminatory measure” in violation of the company’s rights under a “free” trade deal Australia signed with Hong Kong.

You can hardly blame critics of free trade when there is such

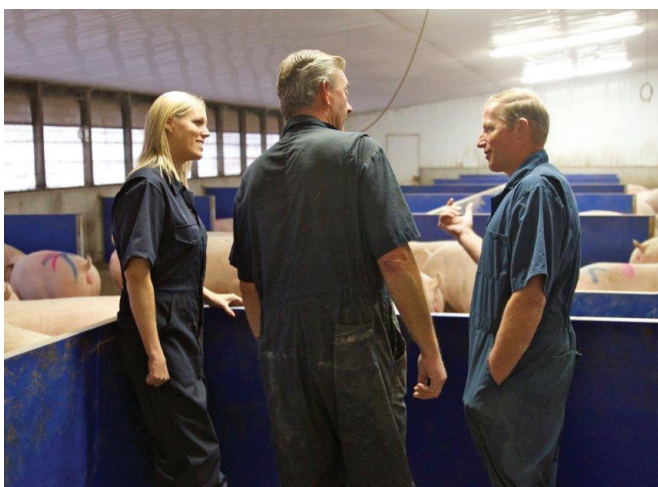
an alarming gulf between free trade theory and practice; it reminds me of “free” market theory, which only seems to work in economic textbooks.

Popular support for free trade has declined precipitously over the past few decades. But, in theory, the TPP is a good thing for Canada; it could increase the economic pie for all Canadians and create opportunities for Canadian business.

The difficulty lies in making TPP work for average Canadians. That means negotiating terms in the partnership that put the public horse back in front of the trade cart. This ensures business serves the communities in which they operate and not the other way around.

Robert McGarvey is an economic historian and co-founder of the Genuine Wealth Institute, an Alberta-based think tank dedicated to helping businesses, communities and nations build communities of wellbeing.

Article Courtesy of Troy Media – www.troymedia.com



ONTARIO PORK RELEASES VIDEO SERIES

With home grown pride in mind, Ontario Pork launched a new video series aimed at demonstrating the level of care and commitment Ontario pork farmers make every day to raise healthy animals.

“Great tasting pork starts right from the beginning on our member’s farms,” says Mary Jane Quinn, Communications and Consumer Marketing Manager for Ontario Pork. “They produce fresh, local pork products grown on 1,524 family farms in Ontario.”

The purpose of these videos is to dispel some of the myths about farming practices, showing real farmers answering common questions about why they do what they do.

Ontario’s pork farmers follow strict on-farm food safety protocols which are combined with an animal care assessment for producers to monitor, manage and document animal husbandry practices. These programs together with the Pig Code of Practice (https://www.nfacc.ca/pdfs/codes/pig_code_of_practice.pdf) are the provincial pork industry’s commitment to consumers that pork products meet the highest food safety standards.

“We’ve had a very good response especially from the agriculture, academic and processor industries,” Quinn said.

“One of our processing partners said that they were going to use the videos for training both internal and sales staff to increase their knowledge base on general hog farming practices.”

Getting the message out to consumers through social media plays an important role in getting the videos promoted in phases through Google Adwords, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter throughout the year.

To date 3,102 combined YouTube views for all seven videos have been calculated since posted on March 27th. The Google Adwords run May 11 to June 7 featuring the videos “What Pigs Eat” and “Sow Housing”. They are also posted on a variety of channels for consumer engagement

“We are also looking to utilize influencers including bloggers to help us promote the videos and the Ontario Pork farming story,” Quinn said. “In terms of if we want to do more videos, we will be evaluating the topics that we chose so far and see what else consumers will want to know about our farming practices.”

The Video series can be found on the Ontario Pork website at <http://www.ontariopork.on.ca/communications>.

CCA URGES CANADA TO JOIN 12 COUNTRY TPP DEAL

After attending a meeting of the Five Nations Beef Alliance (FNBA) on the margins of the Beef Australia Exposition last week in Rockhampton, Australia, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) reconfirmed its view that Canada must intensify negotiations in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) to ensure that it is a part of a 12-country deal.

At the meeting, it was understood that FNBA beef cattle producer organizations are expecting a TPP agreement to be reached this spring. While the common FNBA position remains intact, it is clear that if Canada lets the opportunity pass, the other beef producer organizations intend to move forward regardless, to tap the opportunity in the TPP.

Time is of the essence for Canada. The trade policy division of Meat and Livestock Australia made it known that it is benefitting greatly from the recent implementation of the Australia-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA). That agreement has now twice cut the Japanese tariff on Australian beef to 31.5 per cent on fresh beef and 28.5 per cent on frozen and is already paying dividends in the form of increased Australian beef exports to Japan (up 13% on volume and up 42% on value). By contrast, Canadian beef remains subject to a 38.5 per cent tariff and it will be difficult to maintain our position in the Japanese market.

The U.S.-based National Cattlemen's Beef Association and Beef & Lamb New Zealand are pressing their respective governments to complete a TPP agreement so that lost ground in Japan can be regained. The CCA believes it is absolutely critical that Canada adopt the same sense of urgency as its beef trade competitors in shaping the conditions of access in Asia for the coming decades. There should be no excuse for Canada to miss this opportunity.

Another consequence of being left out of the TPP could be the missed opportunity to set the conditions for new entrants. Both Korea and Taiwan have indicated that they want to be admitted into the TPP. As soon as Canada is in the TPP, it can insist that those countries have to remove any barriers to Canadian beef as part of their price of admission. Since neither Korea nor Taiwan are currently allowing Canadian beef imports, this could be a valuable lever. If Canada were in the TPP it could also insist that Korea agree to accelerate the tariff elimination on Canadian beef to match the rate enjoyed by U.S. beef. The Canadian Meat Council (CMC), which represents Canada's federally inspected meat processing industry, agrees Canadian participation in a TPP free trade agreement will be crucial to the future sustainability of Canada's livestock and meat sector.

"The only avenue that will permit continued Canadian competitiveness in vital trans-Pacific markets is equivalent access and this can be achieved only through full participation in the TPP negotiations and ultimate agreement," CMC

Executive Director Jim Laws said in a news release issued at the industry's 95th Annual Conference in Ottawa.

"Maintaining market access parity with TPP competitors will allow the livestock and meat sector to expand production and profitability for Canadian farmers, strengthen exports and international competitiveness for the meat industry, and increase jobs and economic growth for Canadians," he said. "Conversely, the loss of market access parity would immediately place at risk not only more than \$1 billion of current Canadian meat exports, but also the producer revenues, the many thousands of jobs, and the local economic wealth that they create," added Laws.

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COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

IT'S TIME TO PUT COOL IN THE DEEP FREEZE

by CHUCK JOLLEY

In February, Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz and representatives of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the Canadian Pork Council and the Canadian Meat Council traveled to Washington, D.C. to forcefully restate Canada's opposition to the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) rule.

Facing yet another U.S. appeal in an insanely long, drawn out battle, Ritz wasted no time and minced no words. "Canada continues to call upon the U.S. to comply with the WTO ruling and eliminate COOL's discriminatory treatment against Canadian hogs and cattle. Our government will always stand with our farmers and ranchers, and we will not shy away from taking whatever steps may be necessary, including retaliation, to achieve a fair resolution."

To use a diplomatically polite phrase that disguises harsher undertones, Ottawa made it 'abundantly clear' what those steps will be when it directed their Washington embassy to publish a list of products that would be slapped with punitive tariffs. Trade worth over half a trillion dollars was put on the table.

On Monday, May 18, the WTO Appellate Body ruled

again in favor of Canada and Mexico, finding COOL to be discriminatory. It was the fourth time the organization was forced to repeat itself.

Immediately after the ruling, U.S. House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Collin Peterson (R-MN) said, "I am disappointed in today's ruling and will oppose efforts to fully repeal COOL. There are still several steps in the WTO process that must be met before any retaliation could go into effect so we should take the time to thoughtfully consider how to move forward."

Disagreeing with Peterson, Rick Bergmann, CEO of the Canadian Pork Council, noted that it was the WTO's fourth, final and comprehensive judgment. "There is no wiggle room," he said.

The National Farmer's Union and R-Calf USA continued their objections. Joining them was Friends of the Earth. Lisa Archer, director their Food and Technology program, who said, "The United States should refuse to comply as it has in the past, when WTO decisions are totally unacceptable."

Calmer American voices were heard, though, and they were from positions of greater influence. Hours after Peterson rattled his light saber, a weapon effective only in the hands of imaginary Jedi masters, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-TX) announced he would introduce legislation to repeal COOL. He followed through the very next day.

In a press release explaining his quick action, he said, "Retaliation by Canada and Mexico will soon become a reality, meaning economically devastating tariffs on a broad spectrum of U.S. exports, from meat and fruit to jewelry, furniture and biofuels. Ripple effects will be felt in nearly every industry, every state and every consumer's wallet. This is why COOL for beef, pork and chicken — nothing more than a failed government experiment — must be repealed."

The usually soft-spoken Barry Carpenter, CEO of the North American Meat Institute, a group that takes a wider view of how trade issues effect all three North American countries, gaveled the discussion closed, saying, "If there ever was any question that mandatory country-of-origin labeling is a trade barrier that violates our international agreements, the World Trade Organization's ruling against the United States today should lay those doubts to rest. The WTO has spoken not once, not twice, not three times, but four times in panel and appellate body decisions. All four rulings found against the US."

In other words, it's time to stop lollygagging and get on with it. COOL should be accepted for what it is; a voluntary marketing tool, not a mandatory government directive. If a packer or processor thinks there is an advantage in labeling his beef, pork or poultry as a 'Product of the U.S.' it has always been his right to do so. If it gains him more shelf space and more sales, then he is serving a market need. Hopefully, he will recoup his added costs.

COOL has never been important for most consumers, though. Price, taste, and food safety usually win the day. Whether or not their beef or pork came from an animal born, raised and/or harvested in Mexico, the U.S. and/or Canada or some combination of the three just doesn't register.

The newest International Food Information Council Foundation research placed COOL ninth on a list of eleven pieces of labeling information consumers use when choosing a food product. In fact, the percentage has declined by almost half, from 29 percent in 2013 to just 15 percent in 2015.

Let's finally say, "Stick a fork in it. It's done."



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CMC: MEAT INDUSTRY ADDRESSES IMPORTANT ISSUES



The Canadian Meat Council (CMC) held its 95th Annual Conference in Ottawa from May 6-8 under the theme “*Step Up to the Plate-Time to Play Ball for the Canadian Meat Industry*” with more than 200 industry representatives in attendance.

The meat industry accounts for \$24 billion in sales, \$5.7 billion in exports, and 65,000 jobs and is the largest segment of the food processing sector. The industry provides sales opportunities for livestock producers, an indirect market for grain growers, and employment and economic activity for local municipalities.

Consistent with being the most intensely regulated segment of the food processing sector, the Conference was highlighted by key-note presentations from the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Health, Dr. Bruce Archibald, President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Steven West, Director, Temporary Foreign Workers Program and Dr. Joe Schwartz, Director, McGill University Office for Science and Society. International perspectives were offered by Philip Derfler, Deputy Administrator, United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service and Barry Carpenter, President and CEO, North American Meat Institute. National Post and Globe and Mail journalists Andrew Coyne and Barrie McKenna offered insightful and frank presentations on Canada’s economic and political future and the challenges that Canada must address to remain competitive in the world market.

The 2015 conference was highlighted by three recurring themes: regulation and inspection modernization; international trade; and, shortage of labour. All are related to the critical importance of competitiveness.

Typically viewed through a food safety lens, regulation and inspection are important not only for ensuring the confidence of Canadian consumers, but also that of regulatory officials in the 120 countries to which Canada exports. Food safety cannot be “inspected into” meat. Food safety is best ensured through proven technologies and validated processes that are reflected in every kilogram which enters the marketplace.

The meat industry supports the adoption of outcome based regulation and inspection and has participated actively in the consultation processes that contributed to the draft new Safe Food for Canadians Regulations. While welcoming the new regulation and inspection frameworks, the Canadian Meat Council regrets that this country will continue to be characterized by a two-tiered food safety and meat inspection system.

Accounting for more than 50% of beef production and 60% of pork production, international trade is indispensable to the viability of Canada’s livestock and meat sector. The industry

hailed the long-awaited Canada-Korea Free trade Agreement (CKFTA). While the Canadian negotiations with Korea had stalled, the EU and the US completed and implemented agreements. The reduction in Canadian market share was immediate and severe. Canadian exports tumbled from \$234 million in 2011 to \$84 million in 2013. After falling three tariff cuts behind competitors, the Canadian industry is beginning the challenge of reclaiming market share. South Korea provides a textbook lesson on what occurs when Canada loses competitive access to a foreign market. It is a lesson that must not be repeated.

Negotiation of the Canada-Europe Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) was completed in September. Equally critical were the red meat “side letters” that call for the recognition of equivalency between the Canadian and European meat inspection systems. For the meat industry, these discussions are far from being completed. The industry is consulting with the government to ensure that it will be possible for Canadian meat packers and processors to take advantage of the quotas that were negotiated in the CETA.

Canadian participation in a Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade agreement is crucial to the livestock and meat sector. The only avenue that will permit continued Canadian competitiveness is equivalent market access. This can be achieved only through full participation in the TPP negotiations and ultimate agreement. The loss of market access parity would immediately place at risk more than \$1 billion of current Canadian meat exports. Canada must be on the podium when the final deal is signed.

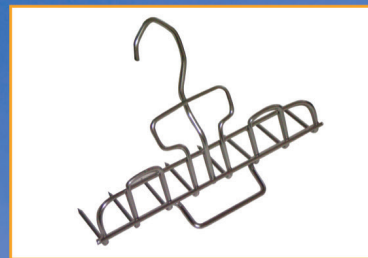
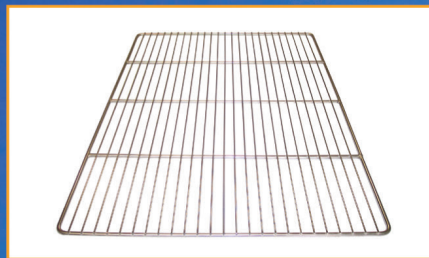
The livestock and meat sector is threatened by a chronic and critical shortage of workers. Unable to operate plants at a satisfactory level of capacity, the industry must: purchase fewer animals at lower prices; curtail value-added production; divert specialty products to waste; relinquish international trade opportunities; forfeit competitiveness; and, export investment, value-added production, jobs, and economic growth to other countries. In these circumstances, it will not be possible to take advantage of opportunities offered by the Canada-Korea, Canada-Europe and Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade agreements. Livestock producers, meat packers and workers are united in seeking support for measures that would alleviate the current constraints that the government places on access to workers.

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UPPER CANADA HERITAGE MEAT: THE ROAD TO FARMING REWARDS

by CAM PATTERSON

When Barbara Schaefer decided to try her hand at free range hog farming, she had no way to know the journey would be quite so hard. From the perfect world ideas of a pro-active environmentalist who spent much of her career life working government offices, she was suddenly thrust into the arduous life of the heritage pig farmer. But she'll tell you no matter how hard it had gotten at times, the rewards far outweigh the down side.

Now seven years in she is a seasoned producer of free range, natural hogs, whose innovative ideas have not only helped her grow her farm exponentially, but developed a community shared farm model that harkens back to the way it used to be done. Today she can be found at farmer's markets around Ottawa, and one of her greatest joys is actually dealing with her customers in person. It is farming how it used to be, and her Upper Canada Heritage Farm brand is gaining a wide reputation right along with it.

Canadian Meat Business (CMB) had the opportunity to talk with Barbara Schaefer (BS) in detail about her operation – how it got started and the lessons learned along the way.

CMB: Can you give us an overview of your background and your farm history, what is grown and raised, and what events brought you to Heritage farming from your career at Nature Canada.

BS: I had virtually no farming experience prior to 2007. Though I had a great interest in the farming life and had aspired to someday leave the city, there had never been the opportunity. My career for the previous 16 years was focussed on environmental program and policy development. My work included the creation of the recycling program at the University of Toronto, where I also completed a degree in Environmental Studies. In 2003, I took a position with the

Canadian Environmental Network in Ottawa and moved back to my roots in Eastern Ontario. Then in an exchange with the federal government, I spent a year working as a Senior Policy Advisor on the Sector Sustainability Tables within Environment Canada. And my final pre-farmer position was as National Education and Outreach Manager with Nature Canada.

During that final year, I partnered with a friend on an endeavour to bring pigs to his farm near Prescott, Ontario. This transpired in a round-about fashion. He was simply looking for weaners to raise for his family's consumption but could not find any farmers in the area who were raising pigs. I did some research and found a farmer in southwestern Ontario who was dispersing his herd of Large Black Pigs. We purchased four breed sows and picked them up in a U-Haul. During the 8 hour trip home on a cold November day, one of the sows began to farrow. We discovered this when we arrived home and opened the truck to the sound of what seemed like meowing kittens. It was a trying night to say the least. We were plunged head first into pig farming, and thanks to the help of a neighbouring farmer, John Ashby of Stonehedge Farms, we learned how to handle the animals.

In a twist of fate, I was to be laid off within a week from my job at Nature Canada which had just lost a large chunk of its federal funding. So it seemed like a great opportunity to take a business course offered through Employment Ontario to start to raise hogs for meat.

CMB: How has your farm grown and practices changed since you started regarding expansion, machinery, herd size, etc.

BS: It did not take long for me to become completely engrossed in pig farming. I enjoyed every aspect of taking care of the animals. My learning curve was very steep and I received a lot of help from many people. With the guidance I received in my business course, I prepared an extensive business plan and was convinced that I could ultimately succeed in both developing a viable market for the meat as well as a breeding program to sell registered breeding stock. The Large Black Pig is a rare heritage breed that came to Canada from England in the 1890s. It was an important and prolific breed until pig farming moved indoors. Large Blacks do not adapt well to confinement and were bypassed for other breeds. As well, they are slower growing than Yorkshire, Duroc and Landrace. So from a business perspective, they fell behind.

By the time that I chose to raise Large Black Pigs in 2007, there were only about 200 females registered annually across Canada. My decision to raise this breed was based on several factors. They are a fairly docile and known to be very good mothers. They are less likely to try to breach the fences than other heritage breeds (like Berkshire and Tamworth) possibly because their sight is restricted by their large, pendulous ears. And they are hardy – able to withstand the heat of summer and the cold Canadian winters.

My decision to make a business with a heritage breed was influenced by my previous activities in environmental issues. Knowing that the general pulse of the public was heading toward more holistic practices in all areas,

including agriculture, I gauged that the timing was good. The consumer was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with eating meat from industrially raised animals. So I felt that a market was there to supply an alternative. I use no antibiotics and I raise the pigs outdoors. I don't use gestation or farrowing crates. I don't dock their tails or clip their teeth. I keep litters together from farrow to finish. All this to say that I give my pigs the best life they can possibly have as animals destined for the table.

By the end of my first year of farming, the partnership dissolved and I purchased my own 100 acre farm near Brockville, Ontario. By this time, I had 80 pigs. It was a lot of work to make the place suitable for raising pigs outdoors. The existing page wire fences were overgrown and more suited for cattle so I had to clear the brush and install electric fencing. Thankfully, Large Blacks can be successfully contained with only two strands of fence wire. Bit by bit, I fenced off more area and by the end of the first year on the new farm, I had 9 separate paddocks across 20 acres. The existing barn was fairly basic and had housed perhaps 20 dairy cattle. It required a lot of repairs and reinforcement. I use it mostly for farrowing and have built large open stalls into which I put the sows about a week before they are due.

Thankfully, some farm machinery was included with the farm. A big old Ford tractor worked for about a month and then I traded it for a new Kioti 40S, which is about all I need to do most of the heavier farm chores. I also found a bush hog, bale spike, discs and cultivator, lots of chains, rolls of barbed wire and various useful bits and pieces. I procured a used grain grinder and gravity box, and I purchased wheat, barley and corn from local farmers. It would take me most of a day each week to drive around picking up feed. And the grinder was very unreliable. I now have over 300 pigs on the farm and thankfully, have graduated to taking a weekly delivery of 3 tonnes of custom feed from Willows Agriservice in Delta, Ontario.

CMB: What are the pros and cons of heritage farming from your experience and what are the personal rewards that make it all worth while for you?

BS: Raising the Large Black Pig outdoors is a definite challenge and I often wonder, if I'd had a farming background, would I have done this? As an idealistic environmentalist from the city, I had a vision but no experience to support it. However, I was determined to make it work no matter what. Now in my eighth year of farming, I feel that I have put the most difficult years behind me.



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During the first winter on my new farm, young pigs started dying. I would come out to feed in the morning and find one or two dead in the huts each day. I took them for autopsy to Kemptville College and brought in a pig vet from Prince Edward County (there were none in Eastern Ontario). The problem was mycoplasma bacteria. I lost over 40 pigs out of my herd of 200. Thankfully, there is a vaccine so I've been vaccinating every piglet born ever since.

The worst time was during the drought of 2012. My pastures were dried up and I lost all that I had reseeded. Feed almost doubled in cost. Though pork sales were good, I did not have enough resources to provide a full ration for each animal. My well was running dry and I had to bring in water. In the end, I turned to the CBC and the Canadian public to help pull me through, creating Sponsor-A-Pig whereby folks could either purchase meat vouchers to be cashed in later or donate the cost of feeding a breeding animal.

These problems seem so long ago. Nowadays, the farm runs fairly smoothly. I have 2 or 3 live-in farmhands and have been able to expand my pastures. More than half of the farm will be fenced by the end of this year. Sturdy new field huts have replaced my old round bale huts. The pigs are very well fed and it has made a world of difference in their growth rate and condition. It is an absolute joy to wander through the fields, interacting with the pigs, scratching their backs, rubbing their bellies and watching them enjoy their lives.

CMB: How do you market your meat and other products?

BS: Bringing a few transferrable marketing skills from my previous career, I focussed originally on restaurants and butcher shops. In my second year, I joined the Ottawa Farmers' Market and found that selling my pork directly to the people who would be eating it was much more rewarding, though more labour intensive. I became increasingly frustrated with restaurants that could and would change or cancel an

order at a moment's notice. There was no loyalty there. One particular restaurant asked me to ramp up production, only to go belly up 8 months later, leaving me with extra hungry mouths in the year of the drought. As I became more and more known at the Farmers' Market, I no longer pursued the larger customers. Now, my business is almost exclusively with the end consumer through farmers' markets and my Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) program.

An early marketing initiative that continues to work well for me is an adaptation of the CSA model – meat rather than vegetables. CSA is an approach to growing and purchasing food in which the farmer and consumer are working cooperatively. I offer 30 shares annually that include 60 lbs of heritage beef, half a pig, and 10 chickens. The customer pays 50% down and then receives meat over a period of about 6 to 9 months. I grow the pork and chicken and my good friend, Robert Lynch of Lansdowne, Ontario provides beef from his herd of Lynch Lineback cattle.

Customers find me either at the farmers' markets, which now run year round in Ottawa, or through my website and Facebook page. I have built a large customer base of over 1,000 people and referrals are a big contributor to my business's growth. Social media has not been a major contributor but rather an accessory.

When I began this business 8 years ago, I was one of only a few farmers in Eastern Ontario that were producing pork by raising heritage pigs outdoors. Now, there are at least 3 times that number, though most do not focus exclusively on pigs as I do. I sell breeding pairs across the country and the demand for them peaked in 2011. Lately it has been very low.

In my opinion, consumer awareness and demand for meat from animals that are raised naturally outdoors, that are treated humanely and with as few interventions as possible, is increasing steadily.





BE PREPARED FOR HIGHER MEAT PRICES THIS BBQ SEASON

By SYLVAIN CHARLEBOIS, Troy Media

Consumers should expect a shock at the meat counter this year when they pick up meat for the BBQ.

And as food retailers have been refusing lately to engage in price wars to win the contents of consumers' wallets, get used to the higher prices.

Depending on where you are, beef and pork products are up at least 18 per cent to 20 per cent on average from last year. In some cases, products like striploin steaks have increased by more than 20 per cent in one year, and ground beef by more than 25 per cent in many regions.

The good news is that these jumps in prices are decreasing. Both cattle and hogs prices at farmgate rose due to depressed inventories, but they are gradually levelling off. As a result, hikes in retail in recent weeks have been marginal in comparison to last year.

Meat prices are close to peaking, and this is good news, since the last thing a food retailer wants to do is to annoy consumers. They are painfully aware of what the market can tolerate, and major food chains don't want consumers to give the very lucrative meat counter a pass.

Grain prices remain at proper levels, which make producers of staple product such bread, pastries, and pasta immune

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

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to higher input costs. Livestock producers looking for reasonable feed prices are also pleased these days as reasonable prices place less pressure on meat prices, dairy and eggs for the near future. Soybeans, corn and wheat prices are currently lower than their five year average. Even the price of rice is lower, which helps consumers in emerging markets.

However, prices remain high enough to provide good returns to farmers. Commodity prices have reached what many would call the market sweet-spot; everyone wins.

Of course, what doesn't help is our weaker currency. Pasta is up more than 10 per cent, and nuts and many other imported products are more expensive. This trend is likely to continue for some time. The drop of the loonie over the past few months was so sudden that it was almost impossible for any food importers to hedge against our currency. Many vegetables, fruits, processed and grocery products are likely to continue to increase for some time. Unlike meats, it is more challenging to find substitutes for these products, so consumers will have to cope with higher prices.

Since 2008, when prices spiked by more than 9 per cent in one single year, the mindset of Canadian consumers has changed; many are starting to realize that food in Canada has been disproportionately cheaper in comparison to global prices for a long time. Now, the real cost of food is slowly catching up to all of us.

In Europe, where food is much more expensive than in North America, food prices are barely a subject of conversation. Because of their proximate link to agriculture, Europeans better appreciate the value of nutrition and the necessary

ecology in order to support functional food systems. Children in elementary school are actually taught how to shop for food, and farm visits are included in the curriculum. Europeans are simply in a different state of mind, food-wise.

For Canadians, the benchmark has always been the United States, the land of the cheapest food basket. Canada can't, and shouldn't, compete with the overly generous Farm Bill and state-supported food programs in the U.S. The average American household spends barely 6 per cent of its budget on food. Europe is close to 18 per cent, even 20 per cent in some cases.

As for Canada, it is a little over 9 per cent, but that ratio is increasing, and thankfully so – as we ask consumers to invest more in food, their expectations are increasing. Consumers who pay more will expect more; this is simple economics. It's no wonder so many corporate food giants are revisiting their procurement strategies and divesting themselves of antibiotics and ingredients consumers feel are a detriment to their health. Higher expectations will only push such changes further.

As you pay more to slap your favourite steak on the BBQ this spring, keep in mind that price points in Canada are starting to reflect what the actual cost of food is. And because of that, we may enjoy better, higher quality food products in the future.

Troy Media columnist Dr. Sylvain Charlebois is a Board Member with the Food Institute at the University of Guelph's College of Business and Economics. He is currently on leave at the University of Innsbruck in Austria.

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CANADA DODGES A BULLET - IS THE U.S. POULTRY FLOCK MORTALLY WOUNDED?

by CHUCK JOLLEY

You could say Canada has dodged a bird flu bullet, maybe a heavy artillery shell, with just a few reported cases; three farms in Ontario and a wild bird found in British Columbia. Just across the southern border, though, the American poultry flock has been hit hard with millions of birds culled as of mid-May and only a hoped-for seasonal end to the outbreak standing between bankruptcy and survival for many large farms in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) confirmed the B.C. bird had been infected with the H5N8 virus. The real damage to Canadian and American poultry businesses has been done by the more widespread and deadly H5N2 strain. To help stop the spread, on April 20, the CFIA announced the establishment of a second Avian Influenza Control Zone covering a 10km radius from the infected premises. The zone spans a portion of Oxford and Waterloo Counties in Ontario. Humane depopulation of all susceptible animals was completed on April 26.

In the U.S., the H5N2 strain has been reported in Arkansas, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin.

As of May 11, according to the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) data, more than 156 detections were reported, and 32,622,473 birds had been affected, an increase of about 50% in just 10 days. Iowa and Minnesota reported the highest numbers of bird deaths at nearly 16 million and 4 million respectively. Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin have declared states of emergency.

Let's get a very important fact about Avian Influenza (AI) straight and reduce consumer panic. Its effect will be deadly only to flocks and corporate bottom lines; it has no food safety implications. Here are two important quotes:

Angela Shaw, assistant professor in food science and extension specialist in food safety, Iowa State University: "Consumers should feel safe to eat properly cooked and prepared meat and eggs from poultry, Avian influenza is not a foodborne pathogen. It cannot be contracted from eating properly cooked poultry meat and eggs."

Jeffrey M. Ettinger, chairman of the board, president and CEO, Hormel: "We are experiencing significant challenges in our turkey supply chain due to the recent HPAI outbreaks in

Minnesota and Wisconsin. While Jennie-O Turkey Store has delivered strong financial performance so far in the first half, tight meat supplies and operational challenges will pressure earnings in the back half of our fiscal year."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has had \$60 million in bird flu indemnity claims nationwide at the end of April but it has a total budget of just \$84 million to cover all claims. "That probably isn't going to be enough," said Steve Olson, executive director of the Minnesota Turkey Growers Association. He predicts "We will see some serious repercussions for turkey farmers and the state of Minnesota," if additional funds aren't granted by Congress.

The American responsibility belongs to the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), a federally funded organization that must test thousands of samples from poultry farms all along the Mississippi corridor to help identify hot spots and stop the spread of AI. Running national laboratories around-the-clock requires increased staffing and an integrated communications systems, impossible without full funding from Congress.

Urging the American Congress to act immediately, the American Veterinary Medical Association sent a letter to Congress asking for full funding. The letter was co-signed by every major U.S. meat industry trade association and most of the other affected animal agriculture groups.

A similar letter was written by Agriculture Committee chairmen Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS), and Rep. K. Michael Conaway (R-TX), and members Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), and Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN) who asked that Secretary of Agriculture Thomas Vilsack be authorized to use additional emergency Commodity Credit Corporation funds to combat the virus.

A word of warning: It's obvious that the disease is spread by migratory wildfowl and, if it does mitigate during the late spring or early summer, expect it to flair up this fall when the flocks are on the move again. It is critical that the NAHLN be fully funded and work co-operatively with the CFIA to find a solution to AI and why it is suddenly much more contagious before North American poultry and egg businesses suffer huge setbacks that might be deadly, not just to the birds, but to a critical mass of the industry.

ONTARIO CREATES BEIJING- BASED TRADE ADVISOR POSITION

The province of Ontario is creating a new Beijing-based agri-food trade advisor position with a goal of further expanding Ontario's agri-food sector reach into the Chinese market. The new in-market trade advisor will be a seasoned food industry professional with business experience in global markets, says the Ontario government. Funding for the position is through Growing Forward 2.

Currently, Ontario has two agri-food in-market trade advisors in the United States, covering the North East and Central U.S.

The announcement was made during the 2015 Ontario Agri-Food Trade Mission to China, happening this week, where Ministers Jeff Leal and Michael Chan are working to connect Ontario exporters with Chinese buyers, sales brokers, distributors, agents and importers.

The new agri-food in-market trade advisor, to be in place by June 1, 2015, will open up even more opportunity for Ontario producers in the Chinese market by providing them with strategic advice and guidance, according to the Ontario government.

Ontario also has two International Marketing Centres in China to promote the province's investment and business opportunities. The Shanghai office opened in 2002 and the Beijing office opened in 2007. The Chongqing office opened this year.

China is currently Ontario's second-largest agri-food export market. In 2014, Ontario's total agri-food sales to China, including exports to Hong Kong, reached \$832 million.

Courtesy of RealAgriculture.com

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NAMI HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF NUTRIENT DENSE FOODS

Comments to USDA and HHS on 2015 DGAC Report Question Inconsistent Scientific Review of Nutrition Evidence

Nutrition guidance recommending nutrient dense foods such as meat and poultry products, including red and processed meats, should be the foundation of government nutrition policy according to the North American Meat Institute (NAMI) in comments submitted to the Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS) regarding the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) Scientific Report.

The comments emphasize the variety of nutrition benefits of meat and poultry products as convenient, direct, and balanced dietary sources of all essential amino acids and rich sources of many micronutrients. The comments also are critical of lean meat's relegation to mere footnote status in the DGAC report.

"Lean meat's inclusion in a healthy dietary pattern is supported by the scientific evidence demonstrating its high nutritional value, and the Report's handling of lean meat represents a sharp, unsubstantiated departure from findings presented in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010. A review of scientific research reveals that the DGAC's findings on lean meat conflict with the preponderance of the evidence, which affirms the healthful role lean meat and poultry, including red and processed meats, play in dietary patterns," the comments state.

NAMI also highlighted the benefits of red and processed meats, noting that 17 of the 25 most popular cuts of beef and seven pork cuts meet the definition of lean by USDA and many lean, lower in saturated fat and lower sodium processed meats can be purchased. According to a NAMI menu model analysis using the recommendations of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which had previously been shared with the DGAC, a diverse array of processed meats, even when consumed twice daily for one week, allow consumers to stay within daily calorie and nutrient goals, while also helping individuals meet or exceed recommended nutrient intakes.

NAMI also takes issue with the DGAC's recommendation to reduce consumption of "mixed dishes" with foods from a variety of groups, asserting that these foods often drive consumption of foods and nutrients encouraged by the DGAC, such as vegetables, whole grains, fiber, protein and more.

SCIENTIFIC INCONSISTENCIES

NAMI's comments also highlighted several inconsistencies in the way science was evaluated by the DGAC. Overall, more than 70 percent of the DGAC recommendations were not based on the reviews of the Nutritional Evidence Library (NEL), which is designed to reduce bias in scientific analysis by serving as a primary resource to inform the committee

about the best available scientific research and answer important food and nutrition-related questions. Conversely, the 2010 DGAC used the NEL for approximately 70 percent of its recommendations.

The inconsistencies were particularly glaring in the DGAC's evaluation of red and processed meats. The DGAC ignored its own analysis that the intake of red and processed meats in Mediterranean-style diets was approximately twice the recommended intake of the USDA Food Patterns, and also ignored the result of a study it heavily relied on to make its conclusions on dietary patterns and cardiovascular disease (CVD), which found that red meat consumption did not significantly increase the CVD risk.

"The scientific evidence did not fit the bias of the DGAC, which instead recommended against including red and processed meat as components of a healthy diet. The DGAC reinterpreted the Mediterranean diet to be more "healthy" and based on the description "healthy" does not include the consumption of red and processed meats. Because the recommendation to limit intake of red and processed meat is not based on robust scientific evidence, HHS and USDA should not develop dietary guidance recommending limiting the consumption of red and processed meats," the comments say.

The inconsistencies extend to the DGAC's evaluation of sustainability. The Sustainability and Food Safety Subcommittee deviated from the evidence review approach used by all other subcommittees because its review depended on lower-quality study designs, and the subcommittee only reviewed a small proportion of the available modeling data, resulting in an underpowered review. NAMI also reiterated its concern that the committee acted outside its authority the scope of its expertise with its recommendations on sustainability and tax policy, stating "Just as it is not appropriate for the person designing a better light bulb to tell Americans how to make a better sandwich so too is it inappropriate for nutrition experts to wander into sustainability recommendations."

Finally, NAMI recommends that HHS and USDA develop the final Dietary Guidelines for Americans with the guidance of food scientists and consumer behaviorists, which were each missing from the DGAC.

"Food scientists and behaviorists provide a translation perspective that would have provided biological context resulting in the final DGAC recommendations being more robust and likely achievable. Instead, many of the recommendations lack the scientific rigor to be utilized in developing the final policy document," the comments say.

To view a copy of the comments, visit www.meatinstitute.org



CARGILL LAUNCHES 'TOGETHER WE THRIVE' CONTEST

Cargill is celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2015 and has launched the 'Together We Thrive' contest for rural and farming communities. The Together We Thrive contest will award six grants of \$25,000 to community organizations in one each of Ontario, Manitoba, North Saskatchewan, South Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Peace Region that share one of Cargill's core values: food security and nutrition, education and environmental stewardship.

"Canada's rural communities are a big part of Cargill's heritage," says Jeff Vassart, president and business unit leader, with Cargill Limited. "There are countless organizations that make our communities wonderful places to live and work, and we want to support them."

"This is one contest in which everyone can participate – whether you are nominating an organization or voting for a cause that is meaningful to you. Help us invest this money where it's needed most," says Vassart.

The contest runs from April 15 until June 30, 2015. Winners will be selected by a panel of Cargill judges based on financial need, the quality of submission, the impact the project will have in the community, how well the applicant shares Cargill's values and the number of online votes received by the applicants.

Winners will be announced in August 2015.

To learn more about the Together We Thrive contest visit www.togetherwethrive.ca

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IAFP ELECTS TIM JACKSON TO EXECUTIVE BOARD

Members of the International Association for Food Protection (IAFP) have elected Dr. Tim Jackson to the Executive Board as Secretary. Dr. Jackson will take office at the conclusion of IAFP 2015 in Portland, Oregon and will fulfill a five-year commitment to the Association, serving as President beginning in July 2015.

Dr. Jackson is Director of Food Safety for Nestle USA, Nestle Canada and Nestle Professional North America. In this role since 2009, he leads food safety programs in hygiene and sanitation; management and monitoring of microbiological, chemical and physical hazards; thermal processing; and food safety management. He joined Nestle in 1995 and has served in many roles with the company, including a research scientist; head of the Microbiology Laboratories at the Nestle Quality Assurance Laboratory for the U.S. and Canada in Dublin, Ohio; Member of the Research Center in Lausanne, Switzerland; and Chief Industrial Microbiologist for operations in Vevey, Switzerland.

Dr. Jackson has been an IAFP Member since 2001, during

which time he has participated in numerous Professional Development Group (PDG) activities, including service as Vice Chair and Chair of the Applied Laboratory Methods PDG. He has volunteered on several committees throughout his Membership, including the IAFP Program Committee, and both the Black Pearl Award and the International Leadership Award Selection Committees. Dr. Jackson has presented at many IAFP meetings and chaired a key workshop at the IAFP European Symposium on Food Safety in 2006.

Dr. Jackson received his B.S. in Biology from Abilene Christian University and his M.S. and Ph.D. in Food Technology – Microbiology from Texas A&M University.

For more information, visit www.foodprotection.org

CANADIAN WESTERN AGRIBITION SIGNS MOU WITH BEEF AUSTRALIA

Canadian Western Agribition (CWA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Beef Australia in a ceremony held May 6th in Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia. The MOU outlines the opportunity for the two parties to cooperate in international marketing and promotion, as well as exchange best practices in the areas of livestock management and event planning.

“Agribition is Canada’s premier livestock show. Australian cattle producers have been attending our show for years and they always buy high valued Canadian genetics. This partnership is intended to build on the success of both of the show’s international reputations,” explains Marty Seymour, CEO of CWA.

The Australian Beef cattle show features 4500 cattle from over 30 breeds in a 6 day event similar to CWA’s annual show hosted in Regina each year. International visitors from around the world attend the show to source high quality Australian beef cattle genetics, attend seminars, and participate in a

trade fair with more than 500 businesses.

“Beef Australia shares many common interests with Canadian Western Agribition. This partnership will help both of us better the beef industry,” notes Denis Cox, CEO of Beef Australia. To consummate the MOU agreement, Seymour and a group of delegates traveled to Queensland. The CWA-lead trade mission consisted of 8 Saskatchewan based cattle producers seeking opportunities to expand the reach of their purebred beef interests and increase trade between the countries.

A portion of the trade mission was funded through Growing Forward 2, a cost-shared partnership between federal, provincial and territorial governments designed to support an innovative, competitive and profitable Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector.

For more information, visit Beef Australia 2015 at <http://beefaustralia.com.au/> or the Canadian Western Agribition at <http://www.agribition.com/>

GE CAPITAL REPORT: CANADIAN RESTAURANT REVENUES GROW TO NEARLY \$60 BILLION IN 2015

Canadian consumers continue to spend more and more at chain and branded restaurants, according to GE Capital's annual Canadian Chain Restaurant Industry Review, an extensive research report on the state of chain foodservice in the country.

The report's findings will be premiered at the sixth annual Canadian Restaurant Investment Summit May 5-6 in Toronto.

Foodservice industry sales are expected to increase 4% to \$59.8 billion in 2015. Diners spent more than \$57.5 billion at commercial foodservice establishments in 2014, an increase of 4.9% over 2013 and equal to approximately 4% of the national gross domestic product.

Ontario and Quebec have the largest commercial foodservice sales at \$22.2 billion and \$10.5 billion, respectively, driven

primarily by their larger populations. Per capita, Alberta has the largest commercial foodservice sales (\$2,137), followed by British Columbia (\$1,920). Quebec has the lowest commercial foodservice sales per capita (\$1,278).

Nearly two-thirds (63.2%) of restaurant expenditures take place at chains, which include local, regional, national or international businesses. Those in Atlantic Canada spend the most at chain restaurants at 70%. Quebec has the greatest percentage of independent restaurant expenditures at 44.6% in 2014, down from 48.4% in 2013.

BEEF: CONSUMER DEMAND

Canfax Research Services is reporting that beef supplies are tight, across North America and globally, and are supporting beef prices at record high levels. Deflated retail beef prices were relatively flat from 2001 to 2011 before spiking sharply higher over the last three years. Deflated retail beef prices in 2014 averaged 21 per cent higher than 2011.

Herd expansion is underway in the U.S. and Canadian cow and heifer marketings are down about 24 per cent and 12 per cent in the first quarter of 2015. As the industry moves into the next expansion phase, beef supplies will tighten even further as heifers are retained for breeding. Therefore, retail prices can be anticipated to remain strong over the next 2-3 years until larger production is available or there is a change in consumer demand.

How consumer demand holds up, both domestically and internationally, in the face of higher prices will determine

the magnitude of the coming expansion phase. While beef demand has been strong in recent years, there is increasing uncertainty moving forward.

Current prices can only be maintained if demand stays strong. This fact sheet reviews the major factors influencing beef demand, both domestically and globally, examining both overriding long term trends and short term market impacts. The full document is available at <http://canfax.ca/FactSheets.aspx>

BIG TAX CUTS FOR FARMERS

FEDERAL BUDGET GETS AN 'A' FROM CFIB

by MANDY D'AUTREMONT

We know agri-business owners are busy and don't have time to lobby government officials. That's why the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) takes the views of 109,000 small- and medium-sized enterprises (SME) and presents them to federal and provincial governments to ensure policies help entrepreneurs' bottom line.

In my last column, I wrote about CFIB's list of federal pre-budget priorities. I'm pleased to now report back to you on what was in the budget that may affect your business.

The 2015 Federal Budget was delivered in April and Canadian entrepreneurs will be thrilled to see many of CFIB's recommendations were included - particularly that the budget is balanced and delivers several tax measures for SMEs.

Today's deficits are tomorrow's taxes, so we're pleased the 2015 Budget is balanced with a projected surplus of \$1.4 billion. The federal government went one step further and outlined their intent to introduce balanced budget legislation to protect taxpayers in the future.

Among the tax measures introduced, the one that will help most SMEs is a reduction of the small business corporate tax from 11 to 9 per cent over the next four years. CFIB has been leading the push for this measure because reducing the total tax burden was identified as the top priority for 78 per cent of Canada's small businesses leading up to the budget. This measure will save small firms \$2.7 billion over four years (\$1.2 billion per year when fully implemented).

This tax relief builds on earlier announcements of Employment Insurance (EI) premium relief - small firms will save \$550 million in lower EI rates through the Small Business Job Credit before even larger premium cuts start in 2017.

Manufacturers will also see a continuance of the Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance (CCA) for the next 10 years; it was set to expire this year.

There was a big boost for farmers looking to retire. To allow farm and fishing entrepreneurs to maintain more of their capital for retirement, the 2015 Federal Budget increased the Lifetime Capital Gains Exemption (LCGE) to \$1 million. CFIB's agri-business members have called for such a measure for many years. This important tax relief will reduce capital gains taxes on owners of farm and fishing businesses by about \$50 million by 2020.

The LCGE is not just an important measure for farmers and fishers, it's also important that the LCGE limits reflect the reality of capital gains for other businesses, including food manufacturers. CFIB has already begun lobbying for an increase to the LCGE to \$1 million for all business owners.

On top of the various tax announcements, there were also other measures introduced in the budget that will help cut red tape for agri-businesses such as legislating a plan to cut a regulation for every new one (1:1 rule).

There will also be several big changes at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), including less frequent remittances for new firms, expanding the use of plain language, and improving the information to help small businesses prepare for a CRA audit. CRA also committed to honour all written advice, including content posted their website. On this front, it was great to see CFIB's hard work recognized in the Budget: "Stakeholder organizations that represent small business owners, such as the CFIB, are playing a vital role in helping the CRA improve its service offerings to small and medium-sized businesses."

Anytime a government lets you keep more of your hard earned money it's a good thing. That's why this was a terrific budget for small businesses and that's why CFIB gave the 2015 Federal Budget an "A".

Not a member of CFIB yet? JOIN CFIB today for more help and information – www.cfib.ca.

Mandy D'Autremont is a Senior Policy Analyst, Agri-business with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. She can be reached at mssask@cfib.ca

Established in 1971, CFIB is Canada's largest association of small- and medium-sized businesses, CFIB is Powered by Entrepreneurs™. CFIB takes direction from more than 109,000 members (including 7,200 agri-business owners) in every sector nationwide, giving independent business a strong and influential voice at all levels of government and helping to grow the economy.



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