

CANADIAN

July/August 2015

Meat Business

The Beef, Pork & Poultry Industry Magazine

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GETTING CLOSER
EVERY DAY

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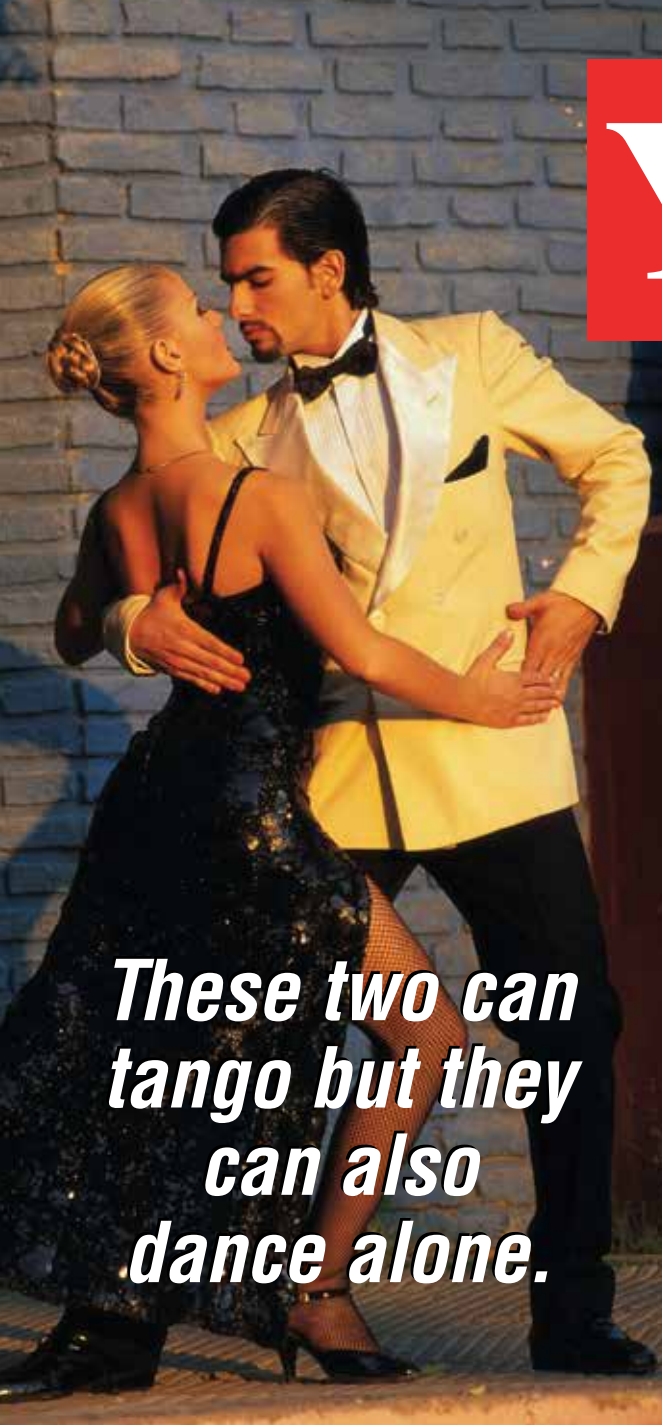
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CANADA MUST NEGOTIATE TO BE PART OF THE TPP

By Rick Bergmann
Chair, Canadian Pork Council

Canada is one of twelve countries negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) with other major trading countries like the United States, Australia and New Zealand. The prospects of a TPP agreement being reached, and soon, appear favourable and can happen with or without Canada's participation. As discussions near the finish line, the Canadian Pork Council wishes to point out how crucial it is for our industry that Canada be a part of such an agreement.

Canadian pork exports to Japan - one of the major players in the TPP - could very quickly grow by 10% given the improved access provided by the deal to the Japanese market. That alone adds up to an additional 1,000 jobs and \$87 million a year for the Canadian economy. Our exports will continue to grow over the phase-in period of the agreement, easily reaching, in our view, \$300 million in sales and another 4,000 jobs.

The TPP also would open doors for us to countries like Vietnam and Malaysia, and give Canada an opportunity to negotiate improved terms of trade with potential new entrants in the TPP like South Korea and the Philippines.

However, Canada missing out on being a part of the TPP would create enormous challenges for us. We would quickly see a deterioration in our ability to compete within the market composed of TPP member countries, which collectively make up almost 40% of the world's gross domestic product.

As a trade-dependent sector - exports are well over 65% of Canada's total pork production - we cannot afford for Canada to be left out of an important deal. Our industry has already been there, done that.

In 2007, Canada left unfinished FTA negotiations with South Korea that had begun in 2004. Soon after that, we saw our competitors, including the United States, complete trade deals with Korea. Canada's pork exports to South Korea plummeted by more than two-thirds within just two years of the implementation of the Korea-United States Free Trade Agreement, falling from a quarter-billion dollars in 2011 to only \$76 million in 2013. Thankfully, Canada and South Korea last year resumed talks and we were very pleased that the Canada-Korea FTA was implemented at the start of this year.

However, it will take several years for Canada to catch up with its competitors on access to South Korea. If a Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement is reached which includes the U.S. and Japan, but not Canada, the impact on the Canadian pork industry would be much worse and our lost competitiveness likely would be much longer lasting. That's because the Japanese market is several times larger for Canadian pork exports - close to \$1 billion annually - and our exports to Japan are more concentrated in higher valued products for which no ready alternative markets exist that offer comparable returns. Independent analysis performed for the Canadian Pork Council estimates that if Canada was left out of a TPP that includes Japan, Canadian pork producers would lose about \$5 per animal and the volume of pork exports to Japan would in short order decrease almost 40% - that's \$330 million in sales. Furthermore, 4,500 jobs would be in jeopardy.

The long-term results would be even more serious. The diminishing economic viability of Canada's pork sector would lead to permanent cutbacks and closures for Canadian pork producers, processors and exporters.

We learned from our experience with South Korea how quickly we can lose a market when our competitors gain tariff advantages through comprehensive trade deals. Canada must negotiate to be part of the TPP.



REPEAL OF COOL GETTING CLOSER EVERY DAY

by Scott Taylor

Perhaps the best thing that the supporters of the repeal of Country of Origin Labeling in the United States has going for them is the fact that in today's polarized world of American politics, agriculture isn't sexy.

Necessary? Yes. Important? Absolutely. But if one votes Yay or Nay on a particular Ag Bill, it's unlikely it will get you on MSNBC, Fox News or the Sunday Morning political shows. After all, the big corporate media in the United States is all based in New York and the stuff we worry about in the Midwest and West isn't even a blip on the Big Eastern Media's radar.

That's why, now that a repeal of COOL has passed the United States House of Representatives – quite easily, in fact – passing the Senate will now be more likely than was originally thought. And once this soon-to-be-proposed bill passes the Senate, it's quite unlikely that President Obama is going to waste the political capital he's recently banked in order to veto a bill that passed both Houses with some degree of bi-partisan support.

The repeal of COOL is not upon us yet, but it's getting closer.

The trouble with that, of course, is how much the long

delay will cost Canadian producers? In the United States, legislation can move at a snail's pace and legislation that isn't sexy often gets sent to the back burner of the summer barbeque.

However, for those of us who remain optimistic, COOL's jingoistic days are just about over.

For those who haven't paid attention -- and I can't imagine there are very many people reading this magazine who have not been paying attention -- back in 2013, the World Trade Organization (WTO) officially rejected the United States' mandatory Country of Origin Labeling rules. The decision meant that to avoid a potentially wide-ranging trade war, the U.S. would to repeal its law that mandates special grocery-store labels that identify meat by its country of origin.

At the time, the United States knew that failure to pull the meat-labeling requirement would lead to tariffs on a wide range of U.S. products, including wine, chocolate, cereal and frozen orange juice.

According to the WTO, it "has almost always upheld rulings against an American requirement to identify meat by where it was raised and slaughtered." To the WTO, it is a clear violation of international trade law.

Proponents of COOL have long argued that consumers "have the right to know where their food comes from." Beef, pork and poultry producers in Canada and Mexico argued at the WTO that these labels were protectionist and merely designed to keep foreign meat off the grocery shelves, while offering no benefit for food safety.

And that's basically where Canada won its argument. In international trade, this is not about country of origin, but about how the products were fed and the nutritional information required by the consumer. For Canadian producers, and studies have long proven it to be true, consumers aren't necessarily concerned about where their meat originates, but about how that meat was produced and how safe it is to eat.

And make no mistake, American meat is not pristine. In fact, American producers have poisoned people all over the world with their products, and as a result, they believe they can use a jingoistic, protectionist law like COOL to keep international products that might be safer than American goods, off U.S. grocery shelves.

In fact, while 90 per cent of Americans tell pollsters that they want country-of-origin labeling, that demand is not verified at the checkout line.

"Analysis of scanner data from grocery stores shows essentially no impact of mandatory country-of-origin labeling, when people are buying meat," Jayson Lusk, an agricultural economist at Oklahoma State University, told Politico.

"Despite this, there are real and demonstrable costs to processors and retailers. Thus, the totality of evidence suggests that COOL does not pass a cost-benefit test."

Still, because of COOL, supermarkets must tell their customers where their meat, fish, and nuts are produced and often in a variety of particularly egregious

degrees. For instance it could involve a label that reads: "Born in Canada, Slaughtered in the U.S." Or "Farm-Raised in Vietnam." Or simply a laundry list of all the countries the product has passed through.

COOL was passed in 2002, but wasn't fully implemented until March 2009. Since then, Canadian producers have made it quite clear that the COOL requirement has created unnecessary overhead and even logistical issues for an internationally integrated industry in which animals often cross borders on multiple occasions. In fact, according to The Canadian Press, "The measure was blamed for a drastic decline in meat exports to the U.S. in recent years, and the other North American countries repeatedly



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threatened to retaliate if successful at the WTO.”

In 2013, the WTO arrived at its decision and declared COOL contrary to international trade law. Since then, Canada has done everything possible to force the United States to repeal COOL. The first step has been taken.

In May of 2015, House Agriculture Committee Chair K. Michael Conaway, R-Texas, introduced H.R. 2393, a bill to repeal the labeling requirements for ground and muscle cuts of beef, pork and chicken.

“Retaliation by Canada and Mexico will soon become a reality, meaning economically devastating tariffs on a broad spectrum of U.S. exports,” Conaway wrote in Roll Call. “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.”

To their credit, Conaway and his colleagues know for certain that tariffs will be placed on American goods if the U.S. government doesn’t act. In fact, Canada and Mexico have only two options. Either the U.S. government dumps the law or punitive tariffs get placed on a range of U.S. agricultural products.

So where do we stand today?

The Canadian government has officially applied for permission from the WTO to place punitive measures on U.S. goods. According to Agriculture Canada, “this

involves setting a dollar value on the retaliation, and identifying targeted goods for tariffs.”

The federal government told The Canadian Press that it estimates the U.S. legislation costs the Canadian pork and beef industries “about \$1 billion annually and the retaliatory measures, if imposed, could set tariffs at a similar amount. Canada has already announced possible targets for a 100 per cent surtax.”

Canada’s choice of products was directed at states where lawmakers voted to support COOL. The preliminary list that was released by the Canadian government hits California, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Minnesota and Illinois the hardest. Statistics show that Canada imports hundreds of millions of dollars of wine, frozen orange juice, chocolate, ketchup, pasta and cereals and that California and Pennsylvania are key producers of almost every item.

“The United States has used and exhausted all possible means to avoid its international obligations,” said a statement from Canada’s agriculture and trade ministers. “In light of the final ruling, Canada will be seeking authority from the WTO to use retaliatory measures on U.S. agricultural and non-agricultural products.”

Since the WTO ruled in favor of Canada and Mexico, American business and agricultural organizations have, almost unanimously, agreed that COOL should be dumped:

“We flaunt our country’s obligations under the rules-based trading system at our peril,” John Murphy, a senior vice-president at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said in a written release. “American farmers, workers, and companies will not be able to sell their goods and services to those (non-U.S.) consumers if we fail to live up to these rules ourselves.”

“While we were hopeful that the WTO would have found COOL to be legal, it is now clear that we are far better off with no mandatory labeling for beef, pork and chicken,” said American Farm Bureau Federation President Bob Stallman. “That should end threats of retaliation by our two closest trading partners.”

“If there ever was any question that that mandatory country-of-origin labeling is a trade barrier that violates our international agreements, the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) ruling against the United States should lay those doubts to rest,” said North American Meat Institute (NAMI) President and CEO Barry Carpenter in a written statement. “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 U.S.”

With Conaway’s Bill presented to the House of Representatives, there was some concern that the House might side with the likes of the National Farmers Union (NFU) and the U.S. Cattlemen’s Association, which both remain supportive of the labeling rules. That

didn’t happen.

On June 10, the House passed the repeal bill, thanks to a bi-partisan vote, of 300-131. That’s virtually a landslide in this divided Congress. A full third of House Democrats voted in favor of Conaway’s Republican-backed bill.

But that doesn’t necessarily mean a repeal will be smooth sailing through the Senate. The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry held a hearing back on June 25, to discuss COOL and the effects of trade retaliation. That hearing arrived one week after Canada submitted a request to the WTO’s Dispute Settlement Body seeking retaliatory trade measures against the U.S. Canada is seeking retaliatory tariffs worth approximately \$3 billion CDN but the United States won’t take that request lying down.

The U.S., has objected to the amount proposed by Canada and has formally requested arbitration. The WTO cannot take action on Canada’s retaliation request until the arbitration process is complete.

This is not a Trade War yet, but unless the Senate decides to act and vote on its version of the House bill, it could reach the point where tariffs are Canada’s only answer.

“The WTO has been clear - the United States administration must end its discriminatory COOL policy that is causing hurt to beef and pork industries on both sides of the border,” said Canada’s Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz late last month. “Our Government is now seeking authority from the WTO to impose retaliatory measures against United States exports. We will continue to defend the interests of our cattle and hog sectors while protecting all hardworking Canadians through this process.”

According to Ritz’s office: “The United States has used and exhausted all possible means to avoid their international obligations, damaging the highly integrated North American supply chain, hurting producers and processors on both sides of the border.”

Those, one might suggest, are fighting words.

And perhaps Canada will need to declare war. As we suggested earlier, the delay in the Senate, is costing Canada millions, if not billions, of dollars. In order to wake up the Upper House, Ritz and Co. might have to push the fight at the WTO and start placing tariffs on American goods.

“The politics are going to be much,

much more difficult in the Senate,” said Victoria Guida, a trade reporter for Politico. “Part of the reason this passed the House so easily is because so many other industries, outside of the meat world, are freaked out about retaliation. But the Senate tends to be a little more big-picture about policies, and straight repeal is expected to have a tough time.”

That’s true, but after the hearing in the Senate on June 25, Chairman Pat Roberts, R-Kan., called for repeal. Top Democrat, Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, proposed a voluntary labeling system. That’s something that might be supported by some producers in the United States, but it won’t wash in the rest of the world. Stabenow’s position is political, not practical.

COOL’s days are probably numbered. Especially with a Republican majority in the Senate and with Sen. Roberts already calling for repeal. Politically, supporters of COOL can call for voluntary labeling, but that’s unlikely to have any effect outside the United States.

In the meantime, COOL’s presence is still costing Canadian producers millions – if not billions – of dollars. Ultimately, the Senate needs to act, Obama needs to sign and Canada needs to abandon threats of tariffs.

But when something is politically and not necessarily economically motivated, that’s a lot easier said than done. Isn’t it?

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WILDFIRES AND YOUR LIVESTOCK: ARE YOU PREPARED?

By Cam Patterson

This year has seen a staggering number of wildfires in western Canada, with over 300 burning in BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan. According to the Saskatchewan environment fire website, there have been 644 wildfires so far this season compared to 235 in 2014.

Evacuations have been a common occurrence this summer with volunteer firefighters coming from all over Canada, the upper U.S, even as far away as the UK and Australia. Canadian military forces have also been added to the fire line – something the military has not had to do in the last 10 years. While the wildfires rage out of control through forested areas, displacing towns and in some cases, surrounding farmland, it is miraculous that none of the provinces have reported loss of livestock – yet.

For the most part the fires have kept to the northern forested areas but in BC it is a different story and some in the industry caution it's just a matter of time unless the out of control blazes can be brought under control or Mother Nature starts lending a hand with more rain and less lightning.

"Alberta has actually been pretty lucky so far, in that with all of the wildfires that we have there has been little direct impact on the agriculture sector," says Brad Andres,

Director of Emergency Programs for Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. "The majority of the fires we currently have are located in the forested regions of the province and we have not had any reports of fire impacting on livestock or grazing lands. The continuing dry conditions in large parts of Alberta will keep the risk of fire high, but so far we have been fortunate."

"We haven't had any domestic livestock evacuations reported in Saskatchewan," states Bill Jameson, president of the Saskatchewan Cattleman's Association. "We've had one significant grass fire, but so far we've been lucky."

And what he means by lucky is Saskatchewan differs from Alberta in one significant way that may help – as odd as that sounds – with wildfires threatening livestock in the northern regions where the highest concentration of fires are burning. Alberta has more grassland mixed with the north forestry as opposed to Saskatchewan where it is

more rock outcrop and forest – otherwise known as the Canadian Shield. It does mean that farms and ranches in Saskatchewan are mostly concentrated in the grasslands in the central and south regions, where the fire alerts are lower – so far. Basically there are more farmlands in forested areas in Alberta and B.C.

Regardless, the more pertinent question remains. When faced with wild fire threat, depending on whether you're a cattle, pig, chicken, turkey, bison, goat, large or small heritage farmer; are you prepared when the call comes to evacuate your farm?

When it all comes down to it, despite the guidelines and tip sheets posted on government agricultural websites, or how much agricultural insurance or association memberships a farmer has, they are on their own to prepare, prevent, plan, and execute their livestock evacuations. This could be as simple as opening gates and letting the animals fend for themselves but in the heat of the moment, its how you're prepared that will make all the difference in the minutes you have to leave.

All provinces have municipal emergency management plans that come into effect when evacuations are required. Although there are livestock provisos to facilitate animal evacuations, domestic, large herd livestock operations are a major logistics undertaking and all too often farms cannot rely on evacuation help due to the exorbitant cost of turning plan into action, the time to carry it out, and the bio-security threats that could prove worse than loss of farm to fire.

Bottom line is there is just too many animals to move in such a short time.

Brad Andres advises, "If you are a farmer and a lightning strike sparks fire, or someone drives a quad through tall grass, your first response should be to call 911 or the number for reporting wild fires in your province. Your second response should be you and your family and your livestock."

Farmers should know the

emergency fire numbers for their provinces, as well as have the wildfire advisory websites bookmarked on their computers. Many government emergency services have phone apps that can be downloaded free as well as Twitter accounts farmers can follow to receive up to the minute, critical messages as to the state of wild fire threats in their vicinity.

Typically, local authorities operating under municipal jurisdiction are the first responders and owners of the local problem," says Andres. "If the fire is in the forestry protection area, forestry takes the lead, sizes it up, scopes it out, and determines the fire area in relation to surrounding habitat and farmlands, and initiates

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their priority matrix based on the fire and their satellite imagery.”

Basically every province’s wildfire prevention and responses are divided into two categories, forest protection areas and non-forest protection areas. Fires in the forest protection naturally fall under the jurisdiction of the forestry departments whereas non-forest protection area fires which includes – more often than not - farmlands which are the responsibility of the local municipality.

“The wildfire prevention teams will connect with the municipalities governing that threat area because they may have to coordinate firefighting and/or evacuations if the call comes to displace people and/or livestock,” says Andres.

Let’s not forget the simple truth is the departments responsible for fighting wildfires never have enough people to fight every fire burning, hence the priority matrix must happen. First consideration is risk to life, followed by risk to manmade infrastructure (pipelines, oil and gas sites, homes and buildings) and property (including value to forest - good timber that lumber companies determine to be high valuation areas), prioritized right through to protection and response. Satellite imagery will pinpoint farms in the vicinity of the fire area or burn path, and the wildfire prevention team coordinating efforts with the local municipality, will determine and execute the action plan in the event an evacuation is ordered.

That takes care of the priority matrix but the problem is still manpower. With the unusually high amount of fires burning in B.C, Alberta and Saskatchewan this season, and anywhere from 100-200 firefighters on each, that is a lot of volunteers to wrangle, so picking and choosing which fires to fight increases the odds of extinguishing those fires that present the most danger to surrounding inhabited areas.

This is all good to know for the farmer and his family, but with all these emergency measure operations in place, the responsibility of evacuating livestock still falls largely to themselves, so the farmers and ranchers must have a plan to protect or move their livestock to a designated safe area.

“When we talk about emergency preparedness on a personal level, we are all responsible to ourselves to ensure we have an evacuation plan,” says Andres. “Emergency response will work together with farm organizations and local news and information services to info residents of a fire threat, but the best process is to come up with your plan based on the risks that you face in the event a fire evacuation is ordered.”

Emergency services has guidelines and ‘best practices’ tips to help farmers formulate their own plan, with the emphasis on knowing what the risks are to their farm. For instance a farmer with 5000 hogs in a barn has to ask themselves ‘can I even evacuate them if I have to?’ Depending on the fire scenario, the best practice is usually better on farm protection. Build fire breaks into your farmyard design. Grass fires are a good example where farmers will cultivate dirt fire breaks, preventing grass fires from jumping into their yards, but wildfires with surrounding forest require more permanent, preventive measures.

An effective evacuation plan for family and livestock is key to the success of any plan and, depending on the number and type of animals, actions could be something as simple as opening the gates and chasing them out into a big pasture. That may sound over simplistic but the truth is animals instinctively know how to avoid the threat of fire. This is more the case in BC as wildfires channel down the valley, so there is no place to go but downwind so ranchers in interior BC have good odds with letting herds find their own way and wrangling them later when the fire threat is put out.

But what about pigs and chickens – barn confined livestock.

The chief issue is finding enough trucks to accommodate flocks and litters and then there is the task of organizing a destination – which is impossible to forecast since one has no way of knowing from which direction the threat will be originating and what the path of the fire will be. In most cases a full, trucked evacuation is a hopeless exercise. Great in theory but not practical when evacuation is the only recourse and human lives could be the cost.

This is where the onus is all on the farmer unfortunately. Provincial pork and chicken councils – likewise for cattle and more exotic livestock breeds - have no real program in place to assist in the event of large scale emergency measures livestock evacuations. The barn farmer with their livestock - in many cases their quota regulated livestock - are on their own.

“The big issue always comes down to time,” says Andres. “A fire typically, depending on wind and terrain, but on average moves roughly 25 km an hour. So, if you think of even a small animal operation, and then consider how many trucks are moving animals on any given day, there is not a lot transport sitting around empty, so this will become your major issue in the event evacuation is eminent. When the farmer takes this down to the farm level, practically, they must ask themselves; what are my realistic options.”

Then there is the bio-security concerns, shuffling hogs and chickens from one barn to the other, could by very nature of disease contamination, pose more of a threat than the fire itself.

“And that is why we typically don’t see an opportunity for moving a large number of animals in an evacuation plan,” Andres adds. “There just aren’t a lot of available space to feed and water relocated livestock appropriately.”

So it all comes back to prevention when the risk is high like it is this season. Farms and ranches should have drums of water at the ready to put out spot fires and fire breaks should be built - especially those farms within designated forest areas. Keep long grass down and make sure underbrush is cleared. And come up with that evacuation plan. What are and are you not going to do because in the heat of the moment a forethought out plan will help a calm and organized evacuation.

“What you do in that twenty minutes, what would you grab?” Andres says. “If you thought that out in advance then your reactions and actions are going to be amazingly better, with the best chance of protecting your family, and secondly your farm.”

Remember following the worst case scenario is always the insurance phase after, so keep in mind your farm financial records and documents are pertinent papers that will help you with insurance claims after the fact, so make sure your plan includes important docs and papers.

It has happened,” adds Andres. “People can overlook those important docs in the rush of the moment, opting to usually grab trinkets and photos of personal importance, and paying the price.”

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WINNERS AND LOSERS AND THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

By Chuck Jolley

It started as an agreement between Brunei, Chile, Singapore and New Zealand, four small players on the world stage, to streamline their trade issues. Called the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPSEPA), it seemed to work well, at least well enough to pique the interest of a few of their larger and more influential trading partners.

In 2008 Canada, the U.S., Mexico, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Peru and Viet Nam asked about participating. A relatively minor agreement had suddenly become the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), dominated by the economic power of Japan and the U.S.

Although negotiations were begun by George Bush, implementation of the TPP became one of the primary goals of the Obama administration. It was presented as a way to “enhance trade and investment among the TPP partner countries, to promote innovation, economic growth and development, and to support the creation and retention of jobs.”

As with any trade agreement, we know there will be winners and losers. The losers would be the industrial base of the most advanced nations among the signatories. The winners would be those nations with a large agricultural base.

Translation: The highly industrialized economies of Canada and the U.S. would lose out as the cheaper labor afforded by the less developed countries lures away production. Those two nations, with their important agricultural base, would find lower tariffs for grain and protein production, leading to important new market opportunities.

To prove those points, spokespeople for the working classes in Canada and the U.S. have fought hard to kill

the ‘evil and secretive’ Partnership. America’s big Ag, on the other hand, has stood tall and applauded the genius of the agreement. Response by Canada’s Ag interests has been mildly cautious, tending toward the outright negative.

Expressing the concerns of many of the groups fighting the agreement, American Presidential candidate Senator Bernie Sanders (Independent - Vermont), wrote: “Let’s be clear: the TPP is much more than a “free trade” agreement. It is part of a global race to the bottom to boost the profits of large corporations and Wall Street by outsourcing jobs; undercutting worker rights; dismantling labor, environmental, health, food safety and financial laws; and allowing corporations to challenge our laws in international tribunals rather than our own court system.”

Speaking as witnesses for the defense were North American Meat Institute CEO Barry Carpenter and Philip Ellis, President of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association. Carpenter said Senate approval of fast track authority for President Obama, which essentially means the agreement will have Congressional approval, is “a major step forward that sends a message to the world that the U.S. is serious about trade.”

Ellis said, “The value is not just from increased demand, but also from adding value to variety meats that have very limited value here at home. As the demand for U.S.

beef continues to grow around the world, the future success of the beef industry rests in our ability to meet foreign demand without inference of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers.”

The Canadian Cattlemen’s Association (CCA) agrees with Ellis, applauding “Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s recent comments in Quebec City that it is essential for Canada to be included in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). . .that Canada will become a founding member.”

But the Harper administration has always moved cautiously on the Partnership. Canada didn’t become an official observer until 2010 even though several pro-business media outlets were concerned that not actively participating was a missed opportunity. Wendy Dobson and Diana Kuzmanovic, of the University of Calgary’s School of Public Policy, called the TPP an economic necessity.

Chasing that necessity, Canada finally announced it was joining the TPP negotiations two years later. The cost could be supply-management which has always given artificial shelter to its dairy and poultry industries. The Montreal Gazette warned joining the TPP would lead to “a surge of dairy and poultry imports from abroad.”

Brian Crowley, managing director of the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, says Canada’s dairy, poultry and egg sectors are under increased scrutiny as the deal nears completion. Talking with The Western Producer, he said if Canada is left out of the TPP, the impact on livestock will dwarf the impact of U.S. country-of-origin labeling laws.

“(TPP) is absolutely vital to Canada’s interest and we simply cannot allow supply management to stop it,” he said.

The price of the TPP could have serious political implications for Prime Minister Stephen Harper who wants a fourth term as Prime Minister. Staying with the spirit of the agreement and putting the almost untouchable concept of

supply management on the table risks painful losses of poultry, egg and dairy interests in Ontario and Quebec.

A decision by Harper about sacrificing supply management will determine whether or not Canada remains the twelfth partner in one of the world’s largest and most lucrative trade agreements. It might also mean historic changes in the way Canadian agriculture competes in the world market.

Chuck Jolley is the President of Jolley & Associates and is a respected and accomplished writer, editor, publisher and public relations expert with more than 25 years experience in the meat and poultry industry.



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DOUGLAS LAKE: CANADA'S OLDEST WORKING RANCH

Few ranches in Canada have a history like the Douglas Lake Ranch. It has the distinction of being one of the oldest working ranches in the country as well as one of the largest.

Originally founded in 1886 during what is known as the "golden age" of B.C. cattle ranching during a time when interior farms supplied the bulk of the beef demand for a booming Vancouver. By 1907 the CPR line laid the tracks and the rest as they say is history.

Today the ranch spans from Kamloops to Shuswap Lake, stretching northeast to the Thompson Plateau. The ranch has expanded into a resort but at its core, it is and will always remain, one of Canada's largest working ranches.

Canadian Meat Business (CMB) had the opportunity to speak with Phil Braig (PB), Douglas Lake Cattle Company Assistant Manager, about the ranch steeped in the traditions that built it while having a firm grasp of the future and our changing industry.

CMB: Can you tell us about Douglas Lake Ranch and what a typical day is like on the largest ranch in Canada?

PB: Douglas Lake Cattle Company is currently comprised of 248,000 deeded acres and over 800,000 crown grazing acres, totaling well over 1 million acres under management.

This includes our Alkali Lake Ranch located 45 minutes southwest of Williams Lake, BC which was acquired by our present owner in 2008 and expanded in 2013 with the addition of the Circle S Ranch. These ranches are now fully integrated and are run as one operation with management decisions being made from our head office at Douglas Lake. In 2014, Quilchena Cattle Company, our neighbours here at Douglas Lake, were also acquired and integrated with existing operations as well as adding a heritage hotel, golf course and RV park to our recreation business which includes Stoney Lake Lodge, Salmon Lake Resort and various other camping and fishing lakes. In total, the ranch can accommodate over 700 guests on the property at any given time. Our personal numbers fluctuate throughout the year depending on the season but we generally go from a summer high of around 140 employees to around 100 during the winter months. This is due to seasonal positions in our farm and recreation divisions.

Our cattle operation consists of approximately 10,000 mother cows of which 70% are run at Douglas Lake and the remainder at Alkali Lake Ranch. Our Alkali Division is operated independently on a day to day basis but is

closely integrated with our Douglas Lake operations in terms of genetics, marketing, animal health and overall management strategies.

CMB: That is an impressive operation. What breeds does the ranch typically raise and why?

PB: At all operations we raise Hereford and Angus cross cattle consisting of a straight Hereford base herd from which we cross heifers with Black Angus bulls for our Black Baldie cow herd. We then cross these Black Baldies with Charolais bulls for a terminal cross calf which we market in the fall. We background our Hereford calves here at the ranch to be turned back out on grass in the spring and sold as long yearlings in the fall. We have found this breeding system to be well suited to our climate and terrain conditions and it has proven to be a profitable system for us.

CMB: With a herd of this size and the push for non-hormone meat and sustainable cattle programs, has this changed the way DLR manages the herd today?

PB: That's a good question. Given our over 130 year history it is apparent to us that we are a sustainable agricultural operation. We strive day to day to be good stewards of the land and have been recognized for this through Environmental Stewardship awards and we participate in various verification programs such as Verified Beef. We continue to strive to further our conservation efforts and work closely with Fisheries and organizations such as Ducks Unlimited to progress in this regard.

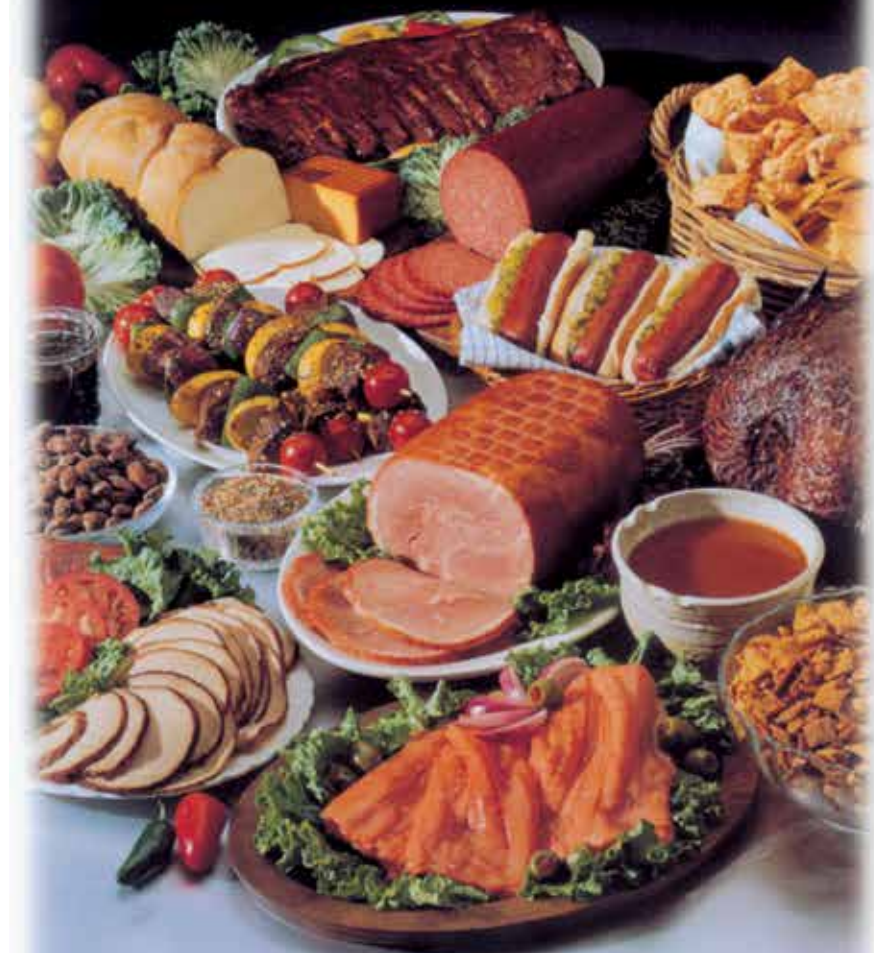
CMB: Being a ranch and a resort, what is the regime to promote animal health and what bio-security measures do you follow?

PB: Well, given our volume of tourist traffic on the ranch we take bio-security very seriously and closely monitor and keep records of those that have visited the property. We are fortunate that most of our tourist attractions and accommodations are well away from cattle operations and are not in the vicinity of processing barns and handling systems.

CMB: With such a vast acreage and large herd, how DLR manages grazing?

PB: Aside from being able to take advantage of our economies of scale, our single biggest advantage as a cattle operation is the amount of high producing deeded grazing land we have available to augment our crown grazing tenures. We

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have the ability to turn our cattle onto grass as early as mid-March before we are able to utilize our crown grazing permits and again in the fall when cattle must be off of crown range. We again have the ability to utilize our own grass before winter drives the cattle onto feed. Most years we can get away with a 60 to 90 day feeding period. Every day that we can avoid mechanically feeding cattle is a significant savings!

On the farm side, we produce approximately 30,000 tonnes of silage and 8,500 tonnes of baled hay annually. This is adequate for our backgrounding operations and no extra feed is purchased except some GSP's or barley to supplement our feed rations.

CMB: What are some of the pros and cons of operating a ranch this size and how would you say the ranch has changed and/or used technological advancements in the industry?

PB: As an organization we are keenly interested in taking advantage of technological advancements in all aspects of our operations. This includes variable rate technology on the farm side, electronic ear tags for cattle tracking and animal health on the cattle side and the use of UAV's for weed spraying and monitoring crop conditions. I believe technology utilization in the ranching industry is the low hanging fruit that is yet to be fully utilized both in terms of technology to assist in day to day operations and biotechnology in terms of genetic improvements in selecting for economically relevant traits.

CMB: What would you say is the average head sent to market and has your operation felt the impacts of such issues as COOL, trade bans, BSE outbreaks, etc.?

PB: In terms of our marketing strategy, a majority of our calves are sold via satellite auction to feedlot buyers in southern Alberta with the remainder going through our local livestock auction. We do not commercially finish any calves of our own except a limited number that we finish and process for our recreation division and for staff consumption.

As most readers are aware, BSE and COOL have had a significant impact on cattle prices over the years which have negatively affected the bottom line of most cattle operations and we are no exception. We have been able to weather such storms by our sheer size and sound management practices. As an organization we are optimistic about the future and look forward to strong prices holding steady at least in the medium term.

CMB: Being located in the BC Interior, has the wildfire situation put you on high alert?

PB: During the summer months where day time temperatures can reach as high as 40C degrees, we are constantly on fire watch and are regularly called upon to fight fires on ranch property throughout the summer months. We are fortunate that the BC Forest Service has become quite adept at fighting these fires and are quite sophisticated in doing so and are able to respond quickly to fires on or adjacent to our operations.

CMB: What is the most rewarding part of running a ranch like Douglas Lake for you and why?

PB: As a manager of an organization as large as ours I am constantly challenged by such a wide variety of problems and opportunities in a single day that not a dull moment seems to pass. The most rewarding aspect of this job is being able to facilitate the ongoing improvement and development of a legendary ranching company that to this day continues to grow and evolve, continuously adapting to changing conditions. This is being made possible by a team of individuals who are extremely dedicated to their jobs, all sharing an interest in the ranch that in turn inspires those that are new to our organization. We are fortunate to have a long history of employees who have spent their entire careers working for the ranch and regularly give out service awards at our Christmas party for employees that have been with us for 15, 20, 25 years with one last year for 36 years of service!

For more information, visit www.douglaslake.com

CANADA BEEF'S GLOBAL BRAND STRATEGY SETS SIGHTS ON CONSUMERS

Canada Beef President Rob Meijer launched Canada Beef's next strategic road map in April with a series of videos and online materials highlighting the organization's primary objectives for the next three years - 2015-17.

The entire supply chain and beef producers coast to coast were a part of the thought process and final plan which will enable Canada Beef's drive toward brand loyalty with customers.

"We consider ourselves a catalyst for the entire value chain," stated Meijer from the Canada Beef headquarters in Calgary. "Over the next three years the Canadian beef brand will become emotionally embedded into the minds of our partners and we will connect with consumers more directly on our own. Our desired state is to capture, grow and sustain mind share."

Canada Beef's strategy also calls for enhanced cooperation with international trade commissioners in priority markets. This allows Canada Beef to maximize and leverage existing resources in-market to engage consumers, retailers and foodservice providers through the Canadian Beef experience.

Canada Beef strives to stay ahead of the communication trends and continually adapts to new ways that consumers wish to engage. This is done through their online and social media capabilities, blog sites, The Roundup app, and other communication avenues.

Creating venues to converse and then offering points for discussion is a way toward loyal advocates. Word of mouth is the most potent communication and marketing device in building a brand.

Canadian Beef Branding Series

The Canadian Beef Branding Series has proven to be one of their more creative ways to build advocates to the brand.



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The Branding Series originally started with the establishment of offices in Japan and China. This year, the Branding Series was introduced in United Arab Emirates and Qatar in the Middle East in February and in Mexico City in April.

The Branding Series is built around an event hosted for industry and media that touches all of the senses. Importers, food distributors, business partners and both social and traditional media all converge on the celebrity red-carpet event to experience Canadian beef through smell, touch and taste. All leave believing in Canadian beef. Often the feature of celebrity chefs as well as key government officials combine to give a star studded feel to this one day event, a 'full immersion' Canadian beef event. The events promise to build on the emotional connection while solidifying confidence in the technical aspects of Canadian beef.



(from left to right) Rob Meijer, President, Canada Beef, Andrea Lyon, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Polly Zhao, Director, Business Development in China, Canada Beef

Canadian Beef Festival - China

Canada Beef was pleased to have Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Andrea Lyon attend the Canadian Beef Festival and consumer culinary event in Shanghai on June 13.

"Deputy Minister Lyon's endorsement and in-person support of our branding efforts in China, and the ministry's support of ongoing efforts is nothing short of extraordinary," said Canada Beef Chairman, Jack Hextall. "This enhancement was all about us connecting with the growing Chinese middle class and the culinary media. We are working to bring our Canadian beef brand to life."

Based on the Canadian Beef Branding Series, the Festival highlights the four pillars of the Canadian beef brand – The Producer, The Product, World Class Standards and Sustainability. By engaging consumers, the event aims to create and sustain strong brand loyalty to Canadian beef through a direct go-to-market consumer channel.

Chinese consumers, food media and bloggers experienced the Canadian beef brand, joining Deputy Minister Lyon, as well as Canada Beef President Meijer, and Directors John Schooten of Alberta and Arden Schneckeburger of Ontario, and the Canada Beef team from China.

The event included a cooking demonstration of two premium Canadian beef cuts, followed by the opportunity for the consumer audience to cook and experience their very own Canadian beef meal. This allowed the attendees to learn how to prepare, cook, and moreover, enjoy Canadian beef.

"This event was an excellent example of how Canada Beef and the Federal Government continue to partner globally to build and strengthen loyalty to Canadian beef and veal," said Meijer. "Our strategy to create and sustain a relationship with consumers has only started. We intend to earn their loyalty and trust in what we consider world class, high-quality beef."

For more information about Canada Beef's Strategic Plan, visit www.ourlandourbeef.ca

MCDONALD'S SUSTAINABLE BEEF PILOT READY TO GO

By Scott Taylor

Michele Banik-Rake, director of sustainability for McDonald's worldwide supply chain, is on a mission. She and her colleagues at the fast food giant want to begin purchasing verifiable sustainable beef in less than a year.

With that in mind, McDonald's moved into a new phase for its sustainable beef project in July.

In fact, the company offered up to \$20,000 in funding for organizations and members of the Canadian beef community "for projects that help prepare ranches and feedlots to successfully participate in the McDonald's Verified Sustainable Beef Pilot Project."

Qualifying applicants were veterinarians, genetics providers, feed companies and associations. The funding, up to \$20,000 per project, will be used to "support efforts focused on Canadian beef producers successfully running through an on-site third-party verification and continuous improvements in the future," according to McDonald's.

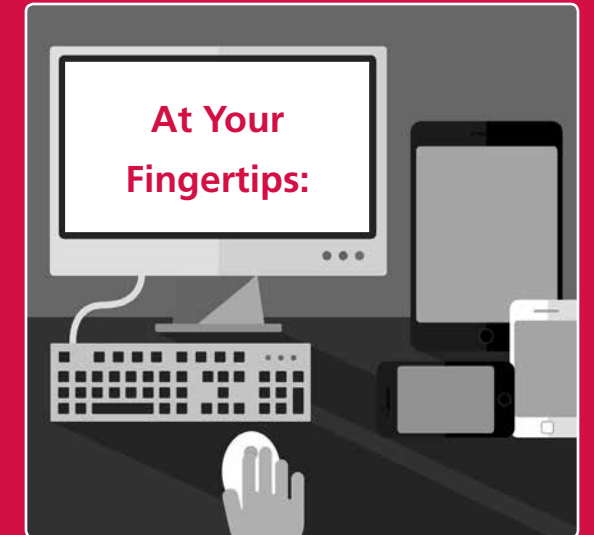
It's the next major step toward creating a legitimate sustainable beef program in Canada, a program that will be used by McDonald's to purchase the sustainable beef to which it committed back in 2012.

There will be two rounds of project applications. The first deadline came and went during the opening week of July and half the total funds will be made available to each winning project by mid-August or early September. The balance will be paid upon completion of deliverables, submission and acceptance of each project director's final report.

This is a huge step. It is, in fact, McDonald's putting its money where its mouth is. The largest buyer of Canadian beef has already developed a set of 40 'indicators' that will assess sustainability. It has also created a scoring system to grade ranches, feedlots and others in the beef value chain. And it has chosen an American verification company to oversee the process.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

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“This is not a certification regime — this is a verification opportunity,” said Jeffrey Fitzpatrick-Stilwell of McDonald’s at the recent Alberta Beef Industry Conference. “It’s about information sharing, not policing. It’s about producers demonstrating how they meet the criteria. It’s not an audit and it’s not pass/fail.”

Last year, McDonald’s chose Canada, for its global sustainable beef pilot project last year. We already have the best safety measures in the world and for most ranchers and producers, creating a place on McDonald’s world-wide sustainable supply chain was not going to be a particularly difficult undertaking.

But McDonald’s does want verification. Until now, the fast-food giant has given few details as to how that verification will work, but by consulting with an advisory board from across Canada – the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef – the company now has an idea as to how the verification system will operate.

In fact, thanks to its meetings with the Roundtable’s advisors, the company has developed indicators in order to score each producer’s practices on animal care, environmental stewardship, and food safety.

The third-party verification firm is the Colorado-based Where Food Comes From, Inc., “a global leader in agricultural verification.” Where Food Comes From Inc., will collect information that producers will provide in order to show how they meet the indicators, along with animal identification data that will track cattle from its date of birth to the day it’s served as a hamburger in a McDonald’s Restaurant.

As we’ve reported in the past, the program will employ an enhanced version of the Verified Beef Program and the Beef InfoXchange System. BIXS is currently being updated and rebooted after the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association partnered with Edmonton-based ViewTrak Technologies.

“We need to get out on farms to establish our baselines,”

said Banik-Rake, who also spoke at the Alberta Beef Industry Conference. “We already view beef production in Canada as sustainable. This program is about documenting that in order to assuage consumer concerns.”

Fitzpatrick-Stilwell made the conference’s attendees completely aware of the goals of the program.

“You wouldn’t be in business if you weren’t operating in a sustainable way,” he said. “But customers don’t trust us to tell them that. They don’t trust Cargill to tell them. So we need to develop some way of verifying the good work that is already happening.”

Banik-Rake said the program must be meaningful for consumers. She also said McDonald’s will definitely begin purchasing Sustainable Beef in 2016.

According to Banik-Rake, “from the Global Roundtable on Sustainable Beef, it’s been made clear that sustainable practices include the ways ranchers manage and maintain the land, animal health and welfare, food safety, efficiency and innovation.”

“The company is committed to meeting our target of 2016,” said Banik-Rake, whose employer has more than 1,400 restaurants in Canada and 36,000 world-wide. “When we hit our 2016 target — and we firmly believe we will — we’ll also set a target for quantity.

“We know we won’t be able to say next year that this hamburger is a sustainable hamburger, but we will be able to say that X per cent of all the meat that was processed in Alberta came from verified sustainable sources. And our plan, over time, would be to continue to grow that number.

“We’re a hamburger business first and foremost and it’s very important for us that we have a source of high quality beef for the long-term. Beef still represents a large portion of our sales. That’s why this project is so important to our future. We are committed.”

\$9.8 MILLION IN NEW FUNDING TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY IN PORK PRODUCTION

Canadian pork is exported to more than 100 countries and it is consumed throughout the world more than any other source of animal protein. It is big business and managing disease in pork populations is one of the most costly and difficult challenges for pork producers.

Dr. Michael Dyck of the University of Alberta, Dr. John Harding of the University of Saskatchewan, and Dr. Bob Kemp of PigGen Canada Inc. are leading a team that has received almost \$10 million in funding to develop genomics tools to help producers manage disease, reduce costs, and increase product quality. These genomics tools can be used to select pigs that are more genetically resilient due to increased tolerance of and or resistance to multiple diseases as opposed to resistance to one particular disease. The tools will also permit producers to manage the nutritional content of pig feed to ensure that pigs stay healthier, grow more efficiently, have more successful litters, and reduce the need for antibiotic use in pig production.

The research is important at home and abroad because as Genome Alberta’s President and CEO Dr. David Bailey notes, “Canadians and our international clients want access to quality pork that has been raised in a healthy, sustainable, environment while still being an affordable source of nutrition for a high protein diet”.

The involvement of industry partners in this project means that within five years of its completion, the rate of genetic



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improvement and productivity will have an impact on pig production of more than \$137 million, further improving the international competitiveness of the Canadian pork industry.

The funding story behind this project shows what can be done when researchers, organizations, companies, and universities pool their resources.

The \$9.8 million dollar funding package is made possible by approximately \$3.9 million through the Genome Canada Large Scale Applied Research Project competition, and the balance from a diverse collection of funders:

- Genome Canada
- Genome Alberta
- PigGen Canada

- Swine Innovation Porc
- Alberta Meat and Livestock Agency
- Saskatchewan Ministry Agriculture and Food (Sask Ag Development Fund)
- Iowa State University
- PigGen Canada
- French National Institute for Agricultural Research - EU Framework Program for Research and Innovation
- Alltech Inc.
- U.S. National Pork Board
- UK Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council- Functional Annotation of Animal Genomes
- Genome Prairie
- Ontario Genomics Institute

For more information, visit www.GenomeAlberta.ca

CANADIAN MEAT INDUSTRY WELCOMES SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF CANADA-UKRAINE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

The Canadian meat industry welcomes the successful completion of the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement negotiations. The conclusion of the negotiations was announced following discussions between Prime Minister Harper and Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseny Yatsenyuk.

"I am very pleased that the Canadian government has completed the negotiation of a free trade agreement with Ukraine," said Canadian Meat Council President Joe Reda.

"A survey of Canada's meat processors has confirmed the existence of a long term interest in trade with Ukraine, not only as a supplier of high quality protein to Ukraine's 45 million citizens, but also in the context of Ukraine's access to the European Union and its trade with the countries of eastern Europe," added Reda.

"The maximization of carcass value requires admission to the particular market in which a specific meat product is in greatest demand at a given time. For this reason, a strategic priority of Canada's export-dependent meat industry is competitive access to every country in the world," said Canadian Meat Council Executive Director Jim Laws. "The eventual entry into force of a free trade agreement with Ukraine will represent another concrete step toward the realization of this important industry

objective," added Laws.

When fully implemented, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement will provide duty-free access to Ukraine for an unlimited quantity of beef and veal, duty-free access for 20,000 tonnes of frozen pork, and duty-free access for an unlimited quantity of fresh chilled pork. In 2014, Canada exported to Ukraine 25 tonnes of beef and veal products valued at \$ 47,000 and 2,031 tonnes of pork valued at \$ 4.4 million.

Canada's meat processing industry includes some 400 federally registered establishments, providing safe, high quality protein for Canadian consumers as well as adding jobs and contributing to economic activity in both rural and urban communities across Canada. With annual sales of \$23.6 billion, beef exports of \$1.9 billion, pork exports of \$3.7 billion and 65,000 jobs, the Canadian meat industry is the largest component of this country's food processing sector.

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HERE'S THE BAD NEWS: RUSSIA EXTENDS BAN

By Scott Taylor

Not long ago, Olymel's senior vice-president of sales and marketing Richard Davies, used an analogy that should be clearly understood in both Canada and Russia.

"We might be in the penalty box for a little longer than we should," said Davies. He was right.

Davies was referring to a Russian ban on Western food imports that began in August of 2014. It was originally a one-year ban. Then, on June 22, 2015, it was extended another six months. Under the circumstances, that ban could easily be extended indefinitely.

The ban, which prohibits food imports -- worth \$9 billion so far -- from the United States, European Union, Australia, Canada and Norway, was imposed for a year in retaliation to Western sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine crisis. Russia banned imports of fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, fish, milk and dairy.

Meanwhile, Canadian exporters who have been hurt by a combination of Russia's retaliatory sanctions and the subsequent currency crisis that has developed due to European and American sanctions, have done their best to understand a bitter political world.

The bans have been especially difficult for Canadian pork producers. Many companies that expected 2014 and 2015 to be banner years -- after Russia purchased \$563 million worth of Canadian agricultural exports in 2012 -- have now been wiped off the Russian market completely. And the ban could go on indefinitely.

Davies, whose company did \$250 million a year in business with Russia -- mostly through frozen pork products -- has seen those sales evaporate.

A senior executive for one of Canada's biggest exporters to Russia said his company did about \$250 million in

annual business there in recent years, mostly selling frozen pork products. But when the ban was originally established in August of 2014, no one thought it would last as long as it has. Now, no one has any idea when it will end.

"We were in Russia for more than two decades," Davies recently told the Globe and Mail. "We knew (the ban) was potentially going to come, but we certainly didn't expect it to unravel as quickly and as strongly as it did. Obviously, the embargo (last) August had a significant impact on us and basically the Canadian and North American pork market, for that matter."

This mess all started in March of 2014 when Canada and some of its allies decided to punish Russia for its annexation of Crimea and its decision to take military activity in Eastern Ukraine. The Harper government, members of the EU and the United States imposed a number of sanctions against Russia and its supporters.

Russia struck back by banning meat, seafood, milk and dairy products, fruit and vegetables from Canada, the U.S., the European Union.

As a result, Statistics Canada reported that exports of fresh, chilled or frozen pork to Russia totalled \$7 million for the months of August, September and October 2014. Compare that to the same three-month stretch in 2013 when Canadian firms send \$64 million worth of those products to Russia and it's obviously become a hardship for Canadian pork producers.

Grant Lazaruk, the chief executive of LaBroquerie/Neepawa-based pork producer HyLife Ltd., -- the largest hog production operation in Canada -- said that Canadian pork producers usually claim a year-round market in Russia a market that is especially good at Christmas time. However, it certainly wasn't good in 2014.

"If Russia was open today, it would probably represent 25 per cent of our sales," said Lazaruk. "We have maintained good relations with our Russian clients so that HyLife's ready for the market's reopening -- whenever that might be."

Like most Canadian producers, Lazaruk and HyLife have no idea when that might be.

TMX GROUP LAUNCHES PLATFORM TO CONNECT NORTH AMERICAN CATTLE PRODUCERS

The TMX Group owns and operates stock exchanges in Canada including the Toronto Stock Exchange and the TSX Venture Exchange. Their subsidiaries operate cash and derivative markets and clearinghouses for multiple asset classes including equities, fixed income and energy.

In mid-June, the TMX Group announced a new initiative that will further expand the reach of its operational capabilities. AgriClear, an online platform designed to provide U.S. and Canadian cattle buyers and sellers with an efficient, cost-effective transaction and payment service opens today.

"The launch of AgriClear represents an important opportunity for TMX Group to apply the depth of expertise we have across our business lines to address client needs in a new market," said Lou Eccleston, CEO TMX Group. "We are pleased to be at the forefront of major evolutionary steps in the U.S. and Canadian cattle markets."

AgriClear offers cattle producers a new way to do business with important benefits for both buyers and sellers, including assured payment for cattle delivered at the terms negotiated. By joining the AgriClear community, marketers will now be able to securely list and execute cattle transactions from their computer.

With offices in Calgary, Houston, Bowling Green (Kentucky), and Greeley (Colorado), AgriClear operations will benefit from the financial support and clearing expertise of NGX, a wholly-owned subsidiary of TMX Group that offers trading and clearing services for natural gas, crude oil and electricity contracts.

AgriClear features are designed to deliver multiple benefits to U.S. and Canadian cattle buyers and sellers, including a lower cost structure, an expanded market with a broader network of verified members, and financial certainty for transactions, with NGX acting as administrator of AgriClear's back-office payment and settlement services.

"AgriClear is an exciting initiative that will expand NGX's reach into the cattle business," said Jim Oosterbaan, President and CEO, NGX. "We are excited to provide buyers and sellers with choice, efficiency and transparency as well as the opportunity to conduct business on their terms.

AgriClear leverages our proven capabilities in facilitating delivery and providing payment solutions."

For more information, visit our <http://agriclear.com/>



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PROTECT YOUR SHEEP FROM MODERN DAY RUSTLERS

The Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency (OSMA) is urging producers to keep a close watch on their sheep and lambs as strong prices can cause an uptick in sheep rustling incidences.

Stock is at risk in pastures and in barns and farmers are encouraged to take some extra time to deter thieves which may include:

- Limiting access to barns or paddocks by installing locks on main access gates (gates at the road or driveway);
- Making sure animals are tagged with RFID tags and/or other forms of identification;
- Keeping record of the number of animals in each pen or area and checking on them frequently;
- Counting the number of animals in each pasture or pen often to keep tabs on any missing animals;
- Have a livestock guardian dog or farm dog present to discourage entry;

- 'No Trespassing' signs may also discourage unauthorized vehicles from entering your property.

If you think your sheep or lambs have been stolen you should immediately notify the Ontario Provincial Police and your insurance company about the theft, OSMA says. Be sure to give a description of the sheep and/or lambs (quantity missing, approximate size or weight, RFID tag numbers or other identification, if possible).

For more information, contact the OSMA Office at 519-836-0043. Courtesy of RealAgriculture.com

SUMMER MARKETING TIPS FOR THE MEAT DEPARTMENT

By Ronnie P. Cons

Every marketing expert knows about the importance of leveraging the tools of seasonal marketing to enhance the sales of their products during particular seasons. What is seasonal marketing? It is basically recognizing that sales of products vary according to season, going up in one season and down in another, and then devising a strategic marketing plan that is geared to maximize sales during those seasons where extra opportunities exist.

Seasonal marketing is especially relevant to the manager of a grocery store meat department as the nature and quantity of meat sales shift dramatically in the summer months when meat barbecues are popular among many. The following will provide five innovative kinds of advice that will help the meat department manager develop a marketing plan of action that will enable his department to get the biggest share of this summer's barbecue market.

AFFILIATIONS WITH BBQ VENDORS

This plan would have the meat department affiliate itself with the barbecue grill vendor or supplier in the same mall. The arrangement would be simple and mutually beneficial for both parties. The meat department would supply to the store selling BBQs stickers or flyers offering every buyer of a BBQ purchased in that store \$10-\$20 of free meats that they can

use on their next barbecue. The flyer or sticker would be attached to the store barbecues and encourage their sales. The cost of the promotion can be shared by both parties as they both benefit. The net result is that the user of the flyer will probably make a bulk meat purchase as he just bought a barbecue with the obvious intent of making a barbecue meal. One can also expect new clients.

SPONSORING A LOCAL BARBEQUE

This concept would include an annual event by the meat department whereby they would organize and sponsor a large barbecue for all the local citizens where the departments staff would be on site barbecuing the meats. This event would be a good opportunity to develop that "feel good sensation" that every vendor wants his customers to feel about their store or product. On site department personnel would be there to



talk to old and new customers offering barbecuing and meat purchasing advice.

The program would cost some \$2000-\$4000 but would likely bring in many new customers especially if the program is leveraged to its maximum use. Some ways to maximize its potential to drive new sales and get new customers would be: onsite meat sales at the barbecue; onsite department meat experts to give advice on how to prepare meats for a barbecue; an onsite barbecue party planner that will give advice on how to organize a nice barbecue party for their friends or family. These party planners would then be there to offer their services at a discount for the clients' next barbecue which would use meats from this grocery store. Promoting the event could be done in their local grocery store flyer, by e-mail or by postcards promoting the event placed in the neighbourhood's mail boxes.

TARGETING THE NEW NEIGHBOUR

This plan would entail contacting the new residents who moved into the neighbourhood during the busy summer moving season. They would appreciate a phone call welcoming them to the area and inviting them to the summer barbecue. Ads a discount voucher for their first purchase and you have an easy way to get new customers who are in a transition phase who have not yet decided where to purchase their meats.

BARBEQUE PACKAGES AND SERVICES

A little bit of thought leads one to realize that an organizer of a successful barbecue needs more than just meats. He needs drinks, disposable cups and table clothes, sometimes charcoal for the barbecue and other condiments such as salads, ketchup and mustard that go with the hamburgers. In addition some people are needed to do the work of barbecuing and serving and cleaning up. With all this in mind it becomes clear that some planners of barbecues would prefer to have a service organize the event. Thus the meat department can advertise in store: LET US ORGANIZE YOUR NEXT BARBEQUE.

The promotion would entail having the MEAT DEPARTMENTS BARBEQUE PLANNER take care of all the details mentioned above from delivering all the drinks, side dishes, meat and poultry, to giving them the option of having him actually be on site to barbecue the meats. The customer would just have to select one of the barbecue packages which vary according to number of expected guests and tastes (meat or poultry). The expected bulk sale plus a moderate extra price to pay for the onsite employer would be affordable and

attractive to the client and lead to great PR and enhanced summer meat bulk sales for the meat department.

NETWORKING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CAMPS

The plan would include contacting the local city organizations and camps that offer barbecues to the citizens and campers respectively and offering them to take care of all their meat barbecuing needs. Camp managers, for instance, are busy and looking for discounts, so they should be contacted, especially since all camps offer large barbecue events to their campers.

Seasonal marketing for the summer barbecue season. Putting a sizzle in meat sales as well as in delicious meats.

Ronnie P. Cons is EVP of C&C Packing Inc., a leading Canadian meat and poultry distributor and can be reached at rcons@ccpacking.com. Visit their web site at www.ccpacking.com

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AN SOS FOR IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

By Richard Truscott

Canada's immigration system is broken; there is little question about it. Unless you are a skilled tradesperson, engineer or scientist, pretty much forget about coming to become a permanent part of our country.

That's not how it used to be. Canada was built by people coming here in search of a better life, often working in factories, on farms, or whatever job needed doing, with the hope that the next generation would have a brighter future. But in 30 years, we have gone away from that ideal. Now the message to the world seems to be: Send us your best and brightest, but nobody else.

Nowhere is this more evident than the expulsion of thousands of temporary foreign workers (TFWs). As of this past April, tens of thousands of TFWs across Canada were forced to leave. The impact on our communities, including many small businesses, is enormous, and will only get worse, as each passing day means more expired work permits.

According to a change to federal rules back in 2011, TFWs are only allowed to stay a maximum of four years, after which they must leave the country for at least another four. As a result, a large number of work visas expired in April. These are people who came to our country, worked hard, adjusted to life in Canada — and are now being shown the door. What a sad and unproductive shame.

Perhaps it isn't surprising. Myths, misconceptions and controversy have continued to plague the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and resulted in ill-advised changes announced by the federal government last June. The changes, coupled with the four-year rule, have cut a vital lifeline for many employers and essentially barring them from utilizing the program in the specific sectors where not enough Canadians are available to fill low-skilled and semi-skilled jobs.

There continues to be a major mismatch in Canada's labour market. Although the economy may have slowed a bit, labour and skills shortages still exist in many sectors and regions. Employers are raising wages, improving work flexibility and looking harder than ever to find enough qualified people. But there still aren't enough Canadians available and willing to work in certain jobs. The challenge is particularly daunting in smaller and more remote communities.

Through the new Express Entry immigration system, the federal government, to its credit, is trying to help employers retain TFWs who are filling more skilled positions and allowing them a pathway to become permanent residents, and eventually Canadian citizens. Provincial immigrant nominee programs also help bring in more skilled immigrants. Unfortunately, for the most part, no such pathway exists for TFWs with more junior skill sets.

We need immigrants who are aligned with the needs in the economy at all skill levels. That is exactly how Canada was built. In response to these chronic challenges, the Canadian

Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) has developed a longer-term solution to these challenges that makes better sense for employers while honouring Canada's immigrant tradition. CFIB is calling for the TFW program to be replaced with a new "Introduction to Canada Visa."

Instead of a temporary program, the visa — targeted to workers with more junior skill sets — would be the first step toward citizenship. CFIB's proposed visa would simultaneously address critical shortages for small businesses while providing a clear path for immigrant workers to become a permanent part of both our economy and our communities.

CFIB's proposed new visa would allow immigrant workers in more junior-level categories an opportunity to work with an employer for two years while they integrate into the Canadian economy and adjust to their local environment. At that point, the worker would become eligible for the permanent residency track.

There would, of course, need to be strict national and provincial enforcement of the rules, including: paying the same wages for the Intro Visa worker as are being paid to Canadians in each business, requiring employers to have at least one Canadian employee for every one Intro Visa worker at same wage rate, and allowing workers to switch employers (but not sectors or regions), if commitments to them are not met.

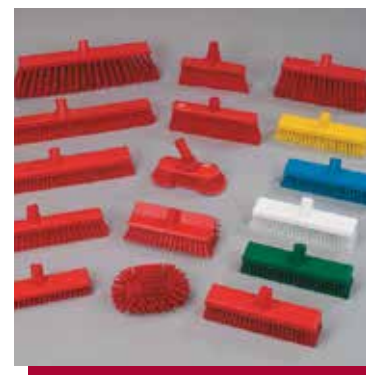
Hopefully, more and more Canadians will realize the TFW program isn't really the problem, but rather a symptom of a bigger malady: an immigration system that is not fully aligned with the needs in the economy, and not positioned to support our country's long-term growth.

The Introduction to Canada Visa proposal makes sense for all regions and sectors of the economy, and will support our communities, especially in a place like Alberta. While broken, Canada's immigration system is certainly not beyond repair.



Richard Truscott is vice-president, Alberta and B.C., with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. He can be reached at msalb@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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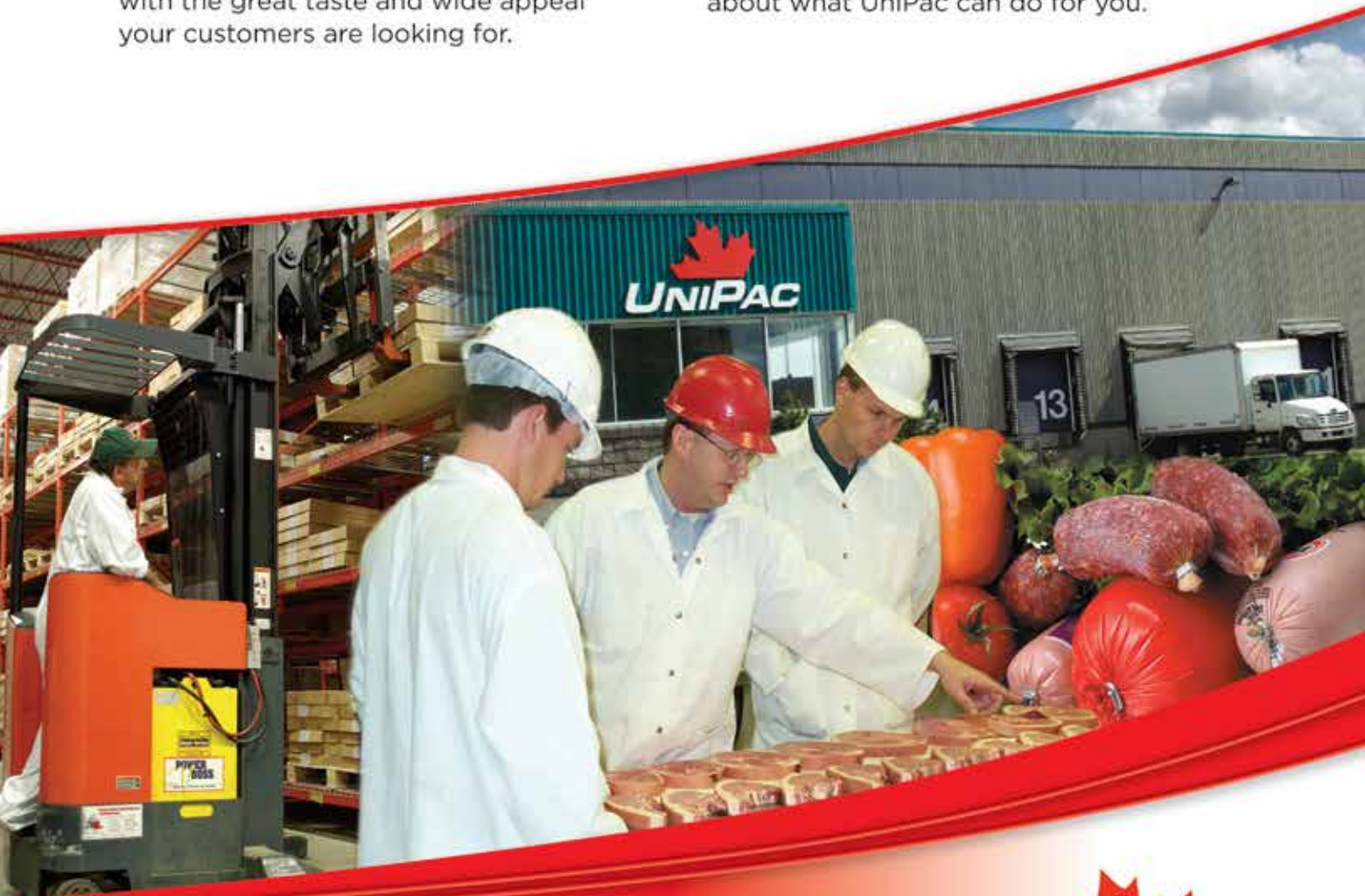


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