

2014

Annual Report

National Cattle Feeders' Association



The Voice of Canadian Cattle Feeders



NATIONAL
CATTLE FEEDERS'
ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION
NATIONALE DES
ENGRAISSEURS DE BOVINS

Message from the Chair

Jeff Warrack | Board Chair



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Warrack', written in a cursive style.

This year was an active and exciting year for the National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA) as we launched the implementation of our new strategic plan and strengthened our organizational capacity to effectively represent Canadian cattle feeders on national issues that impact our sector.

As the one organization that represents all the major cattle feeding provinces and regions in Canada, NCFA is the vehicle through which cattle feeders join together and speak with a unified voice. Throughout 2014 both government and the larger beef industry have increasingly turned to NCFA to hear our voice—a voice I believe is critical to the successful pursuit of a more prosperous future for Canada's cattle industry.

NCFA began the year with a successful Annual General Meeting that produced two key outcomes. First, a new set of by-laws were approved. These streamlined by-laws are designed to operate NCFA under the new Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations (NFP) Act. Second, a new strategic plan was approved. This plan will guide our research and advocacy efforts over the next five years and serve as a critical touchstone to drive member value.

NCFA's strategy is simple and straightforward, and is organized around the three pillars of growth and sustainability, competitiveness, and industry leadership. On this foundational platform, NCFA is well positioned to continue providing constructive input on key government policies affecting Canada's cattle feeders, strengthening relationships with influential government decision-makers, and effectively collaborating with industry stakeholders. In 2014, several elements of this plan were put into play and are already yielding results.

NCFA's activities and advocacy efforts in 2014 were diverse and wide-ranging. NCFA plugged into the comprehensive regulatory modernization initiative underway at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency by submitting a number of briefs on proposed regulatory changes that impact cattle feeders. During 2014, NCFA directors and staff also met twice with CFIA President Dr. Bruce Archibald and key members of his executive team to discuss issues of mutual concern and convey the views of cattle feeders.

The issue of labour was a high priority for NCFA in 2014. As a result of our advocacy, NCFA helped secure changes in the federal Temporary Foreign Workers' Program (TFWP). Feedlots were designated as primary agriculture under the TFWP and were exempted from the new program fee and the cap on the number of foreign workers allowed at each farm.

As chair of the NCFA, I was proud to join with the chair of the CCA and issue a joint letter to the Government of Canada calling for hearings at the Canadian International Trade Tribunal on potential trade retaliation against the U.S. because of discriminatory "country-of-origin" labelling (COOL). We also urged the federal government to put in place now all of the domestic machinery required for an effective retaliatory response, and to set a firm date for this response. In connection with this, NCFA also contributed \$165,000 to the CCA to continue the fight against COOL.

I am proud of the work the NCFA Board and staff have accomplished in 2014, and thank them for their outstanding dedication. With their commitment, NCFA continues to serve as a highly focused organization that delivers value for our members, promotes their interests, and serves as a credible and respected voice for cattle feeders across Canada.

"Throughout 2014 both government and the larger beef industry have increasingly turned to NCFA to hear our voice—a voice I believe is critical to the successful pursuit of a more prosperous future for Canada's cattle industry."

Message from the General Manager

Bryan Walton | General Manager

Developments in the cattle industry in 2014 were both numerous and fast-paced as Canada signed new trade deals with South Korea and the European Union, the WTO issued yet another favourable decision upholding Canada's position on U.S. mandatory "country-of-origin" labelling, and important changes were made to the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program. A new e-certification pilot project for cattle exports was also launched, a new national beef industry strategy was crafted, and cattle prices soared to new highs.

As these developments rolled across our industry, NCFA and the cattle feeders we represent were there playing an active role—advising and informing governments, supporting producers, and collaborating with industry stakeholders to manage the issues and capture benefits for our members. The rapid pace of 2014 is almost sure to continue into 2015 as we look to implement key components of our strategic plan.

To grow and sustain Canada's cattle feeding sector, NCFA will focus on a number of research initiatives and program priorities. NCFA has agreed to support a new modernization initiative at the Canadian Beef Grading Agency. We will also finalize and pilot our new Feedlot Animal Care Assessment Tool. This protocol—a companion to the new Beef Code of Practice—allows cattle feeders and beef processors to sign-off on an agreed-upon standard of animal care. NCFA will also continue to be an active participant and funder of the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef.

A key strategic priority is to facilitate conditions for increased competitiveness. To this end, NCFA helped launch a new pilot project using e-signatures to expedite two-way trade in live animals across the Canada–U.S. border, and has also been involved in the creation of a new National Beef Strategy. NCFA will continue to engage in this process via the National Beef Strategic Planning Group and the new Canadian Beef Advisors. NCFA served as the first host chair of the CBA in 2014, and continues to provide leadership to industry as we move forward. In 2015, NCFA will also explore a comprehensive regulatory reform initiative to better position our sector for competitive success.

Building political champions for the cattle feeding sector and establishing NCFA as an industry leader remains a key priority. In November, we held another successful advocacy week in Ottawa. While this intensive lobby effort was a highlight of 2014, it built on advocacy and communication activities that were ongoing throughout the year.

NCFA continues to build awareness among government leaders, ensure a strong voice at the policy table for cattle feeders, and serve as a highly focused and respected representative for our sector. In 2015, we anticipate launching our new NCFA website to raise awareness and allow for strengthened communications with our members, our consumers, and our public.

It has been my distinct pleasure to work with a diverse and professional team that includes the NCFA Board of Directors, a small but dedicated staff, our consultants in Ottawa, and each of our provincial member organizations. I look forward to another busy and productive year in 2015.

"As developments rolled across our industry, NCFA and the cattle feeders we represent were there playing an active role—advising and informing governments, supporting producers, and collaborating with industry stakeholders to manage the issues and capture benefits for our members."



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bryan Walton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Year in Review

Report on Strategic Pillar #1:

Growth and Sustainability

Throughout 2014, NCFA lobbied governments and partnered with industry stakeholders to create a business environment more conducive to long-term growth of the cattle feeding sector, achieve better terms of trade and expanded export opportunities, and invest in research and development projects.

- NCFA maintains membership in the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA), and in 2014 actively engaged the Market Access Secretariat (MAS), the Beef Cattle Trade Advisory Group (BCTAG), the Beef Cattle Policy Advisory Committee (BCPAC), the Beef Value Chain Roundtable (BVCRT), and government officials within Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and International Trade. Working within this government and industry network yielded significant dividends in 2014.



Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement (CKFTA): In March, the new CKFTA was announced. This agreement will see Korea's 40% tariff on Canadian beef fully eliminated over the next 15 years and the 18% tariff on offals fully eliminated over the next 11 years. These tariffs have been the primary barrier to the Korean market since the border was reopened following BSE. While it will take 15 years for all tariffs to be fully removed, Canada's beef industry will steadily and consistently realize competitive benefits under the agreement.

Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA): In September, the new CETA with the European Union was signed in Ottawa. This agreement eliminates the 20% tariff on the Hilton Beef Quota (15,000 tonnes annually) and will provide duty free access for an additional 50,000 tonnes of Canadian beef per year. While full implementation of CETA is two years down the road, NCFA will continue working with government and industry to ensure Canada is well positioned to take advantage when the agreement comes into force.

- NCFA continued to push back on U.S. "country-of-origin" labelling (COOL) in 2014. In October, the WTO issued its third ruling on COOL, once again voting in favour of Canada. NCFA has urged the government to remain firm on retaliation, and also contributed \$165,000 to the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) to continue the fight against COOL. In May, the chairs of NCFA and CCA sent a joint communication to the federal Minister of International Trade, urging him to initiate hearings at the Canadian International Trade Tribunal on potential retaliation and to publicly announce a date for retaliation pending WTO authorization. The communication urged the federal government to put in place now all the domestic processes and procedures required for retaliation so Canada can act swiftly when authorized by the WTO to do so.





- Going forward, NCFA will continue pressing for expanded export opportunities, particularly unrestricted access to Japan and a comprehensive free trade agreement with the emerging economies of Southeast Asia. NCFA will continue sounding the message that these should be the top priorities of the federal trade agenda.
- One of the keys to long-term growth and sustainability of cattle feeding involves investing in research and development initiatives that will improve the profitability and efficiency of beef production. NCFA is contributing and conducting numerous projects.

Feedlot Animal Care Assessment Tool: NCFA is guiding the development of a single protocol for animal care that can be used by all Canadian feedlots. NCFA's \$35,000 contribution to the project has levered an additional \$290,000 in government and industry funding. The protocol will be completed and tested in 2015.

Beef Grading: NCFA is contributing \$20,000 over the next two years for a modernization initiative at the Canadian Beef Grading Agency, and also has a seat on the CBGA's technical committee.

Emergency Preparedness: Developing an emergency preparedness plan for the cattle feeding sector has been on NCFA's strategic priority radar for some time. A \$273,300 project is currently underway for the sector in Alberta. When completed, this plan will be offered by NCFA as a template for cattle feedlots in other Canadian provinces.

Feed Grains Research: NCFA invested \$7,000 (\$2,000 in 2014, \$5,000 for 2015) to become a member of the new Barley Council of Canada, and is also engaged with the Feed Coalition, which brings the grain and livestock sectors together to build a feed industry that is profitable, sustainable, and competitive. NCFA continues to advocate for bringing beef industry goals into grains research in Canada.

Report on Strategic Pillar #2:

Competitiveness

NCFA supports a regulatory regime that “works” for cattle feeders and positions our sector for growth, prosperity, and enhanced competitiveness.

- In August, NCFA organized a tour of Highland Feeders in Vegreville, Alberta with Dr. Bruce Archibald, President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and officials from the CFIA's Western Regional Office (Alberta North). NCFA directors and staff also met with the CFIA President and his executive team at their headquarters in Ottawa during our annual Ottawa advocacy week. Through these types of activities, NCFA seeks to maintain a positive working relationship with the CFIA, and other government regulators of the cattle feeding industry.
- NCFA is also plugged into the CFIA's comprehensive regulatory modernization initiative. In 2014, NCFA provided input on numerous regulatory proposals, including the Product of Canada label, new regulations for feed ingredients and labelling, and proposed changes to livestock transportation regulations. NCFA has also urged the CFIA to consider the regulatory changes that can be made when Canada secures “negligible” risk status for BSE. This will allow cattle feeders to maximize the competitive advantages that come from this status.
- To expedite two-way trade in live animals across the Canada-U.S. border, NCFA helped devise a pilot project using e-signatures at the Sumas, Eastport, and Sweetgrass border crossings in July. At last count, over 200 loads of cattle have been shipped using e-signatures. NCFA will advocate for an expansion of the pilot and continue lobbying government for a full e-certification system.
- In the latter part of 2014, NCFA started the process of developing a new project designed to identify the most problematic and costly regulations facing cattle feeders, build the business case for reform, and devise a strategy to secure necessary changes.



Year in Review

Report on Strategic Pillar #3:

Industry Leadership

NCFA meets regularly with government officials to build bridges, strengthen relationships, and increase understanding of the cattle feeding sector. We also work with other industry associations to develop strategies, sponsor training and educational programs, and collaborate on industry initiatives.

- In 2014, NCFA lobbied vigorously for changes in the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) to reduce red tape and resolve ongoing labour shortages that continue to plague feedlots and beef processors, particularly those in western Canada. As a result of NCFA advocacy, feedlots were designated as primary agriculture under the TFWP and were exempted from the new program fee and the cap on the number of foreign workers at each farm. NCFA continues to work with the Canadian Agricultural Human Resources Council (CAHRC) to advance the recommendations of the National Labour Action Plan that was developed by Canada's eleven agricultural roundtables.
- NCFA also worked to identify practical and workable solutions that will resolve agriculture's labour challenges in a meaningful way across the long-term. Not only is tackling this issue critical for the efficient production of beef, it is a prerequisite for cattle feeders and the agri-food processing and meat packing sectors to take full advantage of the new free trade agreements that have been signed.
- Throughout 2014, NCFA was actively involved in the development of the new National Beef Strategic Plan, serving on both the National Beef Strategic Planning Group (NBSPPG) and the new Council of Beef Advisors (CBA). While



the plan was developed with input from all national and provincial beef industry organizations, the new Council of Beef Advisors will guide its implementation. In 2014, NCFA chaired the first two meetings of the Council. NCFA is well positioned to take the lead on several aspects of this plan, particularly those that align with our own strategic priorities. Examples include regulatory reform, communications, and building inter-industry cooperation.

- Creating political champions for the cattle feeding sector remains a key strategic priority for NCFA. In November, NCFA held another successful advocacy week in Ottawa. During the course of the week, the NCFA lobby team met with over 40 officials, including MPs from all parts of Canada, two federal Cabinet Ministers, several Ministers of State and Parliamentary Secretaries, and more than a dozen key public servants in the departments of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the CFIA. NCFA also hosted an MP Breakfast and jointly sponsored an MP reception with the Grain Growers of Canada and the Canadian Grains Council. NCFA will continue to steadily build awareness among government leaders, ensure a strong voice at the policy table for cattle feeders, and serve as a credible and respected voice for our sector.
- In 2014, NCFA also dedicated resources to redesigning our website at www.nationalcattlefeeders.ca. This redesign is part of our new communications plan, and we anticipate launching the site in 2015. As more Canadians become more removed from agriculture, it is imperative that we effectively communicate the high value that cattle feeders place on animal care, environmental stewardship and protection, and food safety. Canada's cattle feeders are responsible not only for feeding Canada, but increasingly, the world.



NCFA Directors & Staff

NCFA Board of Directors

Chair:	Jeff Warrack (Alberta)
Vice-Chair:	Larry Schweitzer (Manitoba)
Officer-at-Large:	Dale Pallister (Ontario)
Past Chair:	Bill Jameson (Saskatchewan)
Directors:	Bill Freding (British Columbia)
	Herb Groenenboom (Alberta)
	John Lawton (Alberta)
	Ryan Thompson (Saskatchewan)
	Michel Daigle (Québec)

NCFA Contracted Staff

Communications Manager:	Shannon Lyons
Government Relations Consultant (Ottawa):	Cathy Jo Noble
Government Relations Consultant (Ottawa):	Peter Brackenridge
International Trade Consultant (Ottawa):	John Weekes

NCFA Staff

General Manager:	Bryan Walton (Alberta)
Manager, Policy and Research:	Casey Vander Ploeg (Alberta)
Provincial Staff Representatives:	Dimity Hammon (British Columbia)
	Craig Douglas (Saskatchewan)
	Melinda German (Manitoba)
	Jim Clark (Ontario)
	André Roy (Québec)

NCFA Representation to Industry and Government

A key function of NCFA directors and staff is to participate in and represent the interests of cattle feeders on a wide array of beef industry organizations, government departments, and government-industry committees. In 2014, NCFA actively participated with the following:

- Ag and Food Exchange
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)
- Barley Council of Canada (BCC)
- Beef Cattle Market Advisory Committee (BCMAC)
- Beef Cattle Policy Advisory Committee (BCPAC)
- Beef Cattle Trade Advisory Group (BCTAG)
- Beef Value Chain Roundtable (BVCRT)
- Canada Beef Inc. (CBI)
- Canadian Agricultural Human Resources Council (CAHRC)
- Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA)
- Canadian Beef Advisors (CBA)
- Canadian Beef Grading Agency (CBGA)
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)
- Cattle Implementation Plan (CIP) Committee of the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA)
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)
- Department of International Trade
- Employment and Social Development Canada (ESRD)
- Market Access Secretariat (MAS)
- National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC)
- National Beef Strategic Planning Group (NBSPG)

Back row left to right: Michel Daigle (Québec), John Lawton (Alberta), Ryan Thompson (Saskatchewan), Herb Groenenboom (Alberta), and Bryan Walton (General Manager).

Front row left to right: Larry Schweitzer (Manitoba), Jeff Warrack (Alberta), and Bill Freding (British Columbia).

Missing: Bill Jameson (Past Chair) and Dale Pallister (Ontario).



Who We Are

The National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA) was established in 2007 to represent Canadian cattle feeders. NCFA's membership is comprised of provincial beef organizations from all major cattle feeding regions of Canada. Representation on NCFA's Board of Directors and funding contribution levels are based on provincial fed cattle populations. NCFA membership includes:

- British Columbia Association of Cattle Feeders
- Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association
- Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association
- Manitoba Beef Producers
- Ontario Cattle Feeders' Association
- Fédération des producteurs de bovins du Québec

Our Vision

The National Cattle Feeders' Association is a business-oriented organization dedicated to the advancement of the national fed cattle value chain focused on three pillars:

- Growth and Sustainability
- Competitiveness
- Industry Leadership

Our Mandate

The National Cattle Feeders' Association was established in 2007 to represent Canadian cattle feeders on national issues and to work in collaboration with other cattle organizations to strengthen and improve the cattle feeding sector.



Contact Us

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