



Western Stock Growers' Association

Newsletter

June 2018



WSGA Summer General Meeting—July 27 & 28

This year's Western Stock Growers' Association **Annual Summer Meeting will be held July 27 & 28, 2018** hosted by Dave and Cherie Foat of Diamond F Ranching by Cremona. It's a great event to network with other ranchers, WSGA directors and governors.

We are changing the usual itinerary format this year with the first day being tour day. This day we will start by congregating at our host ranch at 9:30 am to start the tour.

The second day is an open meeting with invited guests and speakers at the Dave and Cherie's place starting at 9:30 am. We will update the membership on what we are working on and initiate discussion about what is going on in the industry. It's a great way to keep in touch with the organization and exercise your membership privileges through participation in the discus-

sion. We will have a presentation from the James Hargrave Legacy Foundation as well as a succession workshop from Merle Good.

Merle Good has built a strong reputation in the area of succession planning. With a background in ag-economics, Merle focuses on unique business structures and tax strategies to facilitate intergenerational Succession. This expertise combined with his practical experience of owning and operating a multi-generational farm has created a unique combination of skills and insights to enable clients to meet their business and personal goals. You won't want to miss this workshop.

For more information on the meeting and to register, contact the WSGA office at 403-250-9121 or office@wsga.ca.

In this issue...

- Summer Meeting 2018
- Refundable or non-refundable?
- Get on board!
- Check-off refund deadlines
- CAP
- Upcoming events



Refundable or non-refundable — that is the question

The refundable / non-refundable debate is rolling forward with Alberta Beef Producers submitting an official request for a plebiscite in fall 2018. Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) and Alberta Cattle Feeders Association (ACFA) have built a proposal proclaimed the New Era of the Beef Industry in Alberta. The Agreement includes the return to a non-refundable service charge (provincial check-off) that will be voted on in a plebiscite that both ACFA and ABP hope to see take place this fall. The agreement proposes a return to non-refundable would see the creation of the Alberta Beef Industry Development Fund (ABIDF). The Fund will see the strategic investment of check-off dollars in:

- Research and technology
- Market development
- Education
- Consumer advocacy
- Industry collaboration

The return to a non-refundable service charge will provide an estimated \$1.4 million in funding for the ABIDF. The Fund will be governed by a council of industry partners appointed by both organizations.

Last year WSGA polled the membership on what our position would be on this issue. The response was loud and clear: 65% opposed the change back to non-refundable. We are operating on the results of that poll and the direction of the Board of Directors and the Board of Governors.

ABIDF is a great idea and represents a great opportunity for the industry. But there are very little details available on ABIDF to base a decision on and the organizations do not seem to be working on developing the idea further before the plebiscite. ABP is using this idea as the carrot to entice beef producers to vote to make the checkoff non-refundable. But what if this half-baked idea doesn't cook up well?

The structure of the current 'New Era' as proposed has cattle feeders being given the option to direct their checkoff either to ACFA or to ABIDF. That option is not given to the cow/calf guys and maybe it should be. This would capture the benefits that exist with a non-refundable model.

WSGA feels the proposal needs more time to be flushed out and developed to the satisfaction of the whole industry. The New Era proposal and the plebiscite are being rolled out very quickly. ABP and ACFA have already wrapped up a series of information sessions despite the fact that Marketing Council has not yet drafted the regulation that will govern the plebiscite. This coupled with the lack of true details and asking producers to "take a leap of faith" to support non-refundable is truly unnerving. Let's not take a leap of faith – let's make sure what we are proposing is sound.

We do know the only ones on the council for ABIDF are ABP and ACFA, with the exception of three seats that can be filled with organizations or representatives of ABP's and ACFA's choosing. The new ABIDF should be developed in consultation with ALL cattle industry representatives and positions on the board of ABIDF should not be limited to or controlled by those accepting checkoff dollars.

Please consider joining us at the Summer General Meeting on July 27 and 28 for more discussion on this issue. As a membership organization that takes it's direction from it's membership, it is important we hear from you.

GET OUT TO VOTE! A truly successful plebiscite would see the majority of producers voting and the results be an unquestionable reflection on the desires of beef producers in Alberta.

SUBMIT YOUR REFUND

For now beef producers in Alberta can still request a refund for a portion of their check-off dollars. Refund requests for the period of January 1 to June 30 have to be submitted to the ABP office by July 31. You can find a link to the refund form on the ABP website at www.albertabeef.org and also on the WSGA home page at www.wsga.ca.

Get on Board; Reap the Benefits

As an industry organization, we are constantly on the lookout to recruit good board members. And it is hard to ask ranchers to take time out of their business and lives to serve on the board but the benefits do not flow only one way. Serving on the board can be rewarding on many levels for board members.

You meet amazing people who sit on boards. They are populated by people who are passionate about the industry and want to help the industry succeed and grow. Boards are a fantastic venue for networking and good experiences.

In an industry that is getting progressively global and less localized, more tech-savvy and less populated, building a network within the industry is paramount to success. The outside-of-meeting discussion and opportunity to make contacts throughout all levels of the industry while serving on the board should be a

inviting prospect to any beef producer. The potential benefits a board position has for the individual ranching business should be capitalized on more.

Established before Alberta was a province, the WSGA is the longest running agriculture organization in western Canada. A voluntary membership has made WSGA a strong and effective organization able to advocate on behalf of livestock producers in an independent fashion.

Following a constitution ratification at the AGM, WSGA has several director-at-large positions up for grabs as well as Zone 6 and Zone 9 vacancies.

For more information, join us at the summer meeting to learn more OR contact a WSGA director or the office at 403-250-9121 or office@wsga.ca.



Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) is the successor of the 2013-2018 Growing Forward 2. CAP is a five-year, \$3 billion federal-provincial-territorial agreement for the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. In Alberta, the Canadian Agricultural Partnership represents a federal - provincial investment of \$406 million in strategic programs and initiatives for the agricultural sector.

The roll-out of the CAP program suite in Alberta began in April 2018 and the 15 programs will be phased over the spring, summer and fall of 2018. Applications and program details consisting of cost-shares and eligible activities and/or items will be released with the opening of each program. The

criteria for eligibility will be made available along with the program details.

In Alberta, the Canadian Agricultural Partnership will deliver programs developed in consultation with stakeholders, and is organized under five themes: Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change; Products, Market Growth and Diversification; Science and Research; Risk Management; and Public Trust.

There have been some changes made in this new roll-out including a less intensive all online process for application. For more information, check program eligibility and possibilities, go to www.cap.alberta.ca.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CANADIAN BEEF INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

Canadian Beef Industry Conference — Theme: Driving Demand

August 14-16, 2018; London Convention Centre, London, Ontario

For more information, go to <http://canadianbeefindustryconference.com>



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Box 179, #14—900 Village Lane
Okotoks, AB. T1S 1Z6

P: (403) 250-9121
E: office@wsqa.ca