

Beef—It's Bigger Than One Ranch

Our industry is similar to a revolving door. Not only in the sense that it is always changing, creating turnover, and utilizes a circular method of production; but also because the goal is nearly always the same. With the door, the task is as simple as getting in or out of a building. In the beef business, the task is to promote a healthy, well managed product to feed the mouths of all social classes across our country and others around the world and to do so in an efficient and humane manner. This goal is no secret to those of us who have made a livelihood in agriculture. Unfortunately, it may as well be a secret to the general public. The consumer's eye has become a trained laser focusing on any one negative aspect that it can target, and often times, the laser acts as a magnifying glass—blowing many false statements and opinions into predicaments that harm our industry and the reputation of the product that we strive to grow and serve every day.

Beef producers: I urge you to brag on your production systems. We have come so far in herd health management, cattle handling facilities, and operation sustainability. I venture to say, if the general public knew of the strides we're taking to build healthy environments that play home to top notch animal nutrition and care, they would have a much greater appreciation of the healthy product on plates around the world.

The key will be to give yourselves a platform to stand on. The BQA certification can be just the platform many of us are looking for. As stated on their website, "Beef Quality Assurance is a nationally coordinated, state implemented program that provides systematic information to U.S. beef producers and beef consumers of how common sense husbandry techniques can be coupled with accepted scientific knowledge to raise cattle under optimum management and environmental conditions. BQA guidelines are designed to make certain all beef consumers can take pride in what they purchase – and can trust and have confidence in the entire beef industry." Becoming BQA certified will not only serve as a refresher course for the most respected animal husbandry practices but it will also inform us, as producers, of new concepts and data that has impacted the beef business.

Once in a while a producer may grumble about the checkoff dollars they paid in the fall after selling calves. Well, it's your turn to get the maximum return out of those dollars. The Beef Checkoff is currently paying for all producers to engage in the certification process. All there is to do is to sign up online and start your refresher on aspects of health, cattle handling, and animal husbandry practices. Organizations like the Kansas Beef Council and Kansas Livestock Association are here to join forces with producers from across our state and are looking to provide these beneficial opportunities to all. Don't forget the KLA Convention coming up November 29th through December 1st. This is the perfect time to start building your platform!

For more information or to begin BQA certification, contact your local extension office or visit www.bqa.org.

Upcoming Livestock Meetings:

Mark your calendars for upcoming extension events that may offer value to your operation. Beef Cow Supplement Strategies will take a look at various options of feeding bred cows through the winter. Body condition score, nutrient requirements, and different feedstuff availability will all be discussed. These meetings will be held December 15th at the Hunter Café at 9:30 AM and December 18th at the Gaylord Community Building at 5:30 PM. Come grab a cup of coffee and talk through options available for managing your herds nutrition program.

- Beef Cow Supplement Strategies – Hunter & Gaylord – December 15th & 18th
- Calving School – Concordia – January 3rd, 2018
- Post Rock Burn Workshop – TBD – January 11th, 2018
- Corrals, Calcium, Costs, & Cows: Management & Profit Strategies for 2018 – Beloit – February 6th, 2018

Post Rock Extension District of K-State Research and Extension serves Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Osborne, and Smith counties. Barrett may be contacted at Barrett8@ksu.edu or by calling Mankato 378-3174, Smith Center, 282-6823, Beloit 738-3597, Lincoln 524-4432, or Osborne 346-2521. Join us on Facebook at “Post Rock Extension” along with our blog site at postrockextension.blogspot.com. Follow us on Twitter @KSRE_PostRock. Also remember our website is postrock.ksu.edu