Nevada Cattlemen’s Association Springtime Update

By Kaley Sproul, NCA Executive Director

It has been a very busy month at the Nevada Cattlemen’s Association office! The Fallon Bull Sale that was held in February was a great success this year. We have just finished closing up everything from the sale and we would like to once again give thanks to all of our consignors, buyers, sponsors and volunteers for your support this year. Please mark your calendars for next year’s sale which will be held February 17th, 2018.

As I am writing this NCA update I am also getting ready to attend the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and Public Lands Council Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. for the week of March 27-30th. Also attending this conference from Nevada will be David Stix Jr., Joe Guild, JJ Goicoechea, Ron Cerri and Shane Bell. In DC we will have the opportunity to represent members of the Nevada Cattlemen’s Association by meeting with key congressional and agency influencers to talk about certain industry policies that affect the state. I will provide a follow-up of this event within the next issue of this publication.

In January NCA hosted some Permittee Outreach Workshops throughout Nevada. Due to weather the workshop in Ely had to be canceled. The workshop has been rescheduled to April 7th from 2:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Bristlecone Convention Center (150 W 6th St., Ely, NV 89301). There has been a location added to the workshops which will be in Austin on April 8th. It will be from 12:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Austin Courthouse conference room (122 Main St. Austin, NV 89310). These workshops are to provide updates about the implementation of the Greater Sage Grouse Land Use Plan Amendments in regards to livestock grazing programs in Nevada and Northeastern California.

Two other workshops are being held in April that will demonstrate how to use the Wyoming Ranch Tools website using real ranch situations. The Wyoming Ranch Tools website was developed to help producers make marketing and economic analysis decisions (www.uwyo-extension.org/ranchtools). The workshops, “Making Everyday Decisions to Manage Your Beef Cows,” will be held in Fallon at the Fallon Convention Center on April 18th and repeated in Elko on April 19th at Great Basin College. The workshops will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at each location, and a meal will be provided. Please register by April 14th by contacting Bridger Feuz at masterstockman@outlook.com or 307-799-8740. The cost of the workshop is $15 and will be collected at the door. The workshops are offered in partnership with Nevada Cattlemen’s Association, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and Master Stockman Consulting. Funding for this workshop is provided through USDA Risk Management Agency grants.

The NCA will be hosting a Legislative Breakfast at the Carson City Legislative Building in room 3100, Tuesday, April 25th from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. This breakfast brings Legislators, NCA members, and other agricultural friends together to get acquainted and discuss issues important to agriculture. Though this breakfast is sponsored, reservations are encouraged by calling the NCA office.

Lastly, the NCA is seeking graduating seniors interested in pursuing an

Continued on page 2
### Calendar

**APRIL 7, 2017**
Permittee Outreach Workshop  
2:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
Bristlecone Convention Center,  
150 W 6th St., Ely, Nevada

**APRIL 8, 2017**
Permittee Outreach Workshop  
12:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Austin Courthouse Conference Room,  
122 Main St., Austin, Nevada

**APRIL 18, 2017**
Making Everyday Decisions to Manage Your Beef Cows Workshop  
2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Fallon Convention Center  
Fallon, Nevada

**APRIL 19, 2017**
Making Everyday Decisions to Manage Your Beef Cows Workshop  
2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Great Basin College  
1500 College Parkway  
Elko, Nevada

**APRIL 25, 2017**
Nevada Cattlemen’s Association Legislative Breakfast  
Carson City, Nevada

**JUNE 15 & 16, 2017**
Ecological Site Description Workshops  
Ely, Nevada  
More information coming soon.

**JULY 12-15, 2017**
NCBA Annual Summer Conference  
Hyatt Regency Hotel  
Denver, Colorado

**AUGUST 22-24, 2017**
Grazing Management for Riparian-Wetland Areas Training Course  
Winnemucca Convention Center  
50 W Winnemucca Blvd, Winnemucca, Nevada  
More information coming soon

**DECEMBER 5-7, 2017**
Annual NCA Convention  
Elko Convention Center  
700 Moren Way, Elko, Nevada

### NCA News

**Happenings:** Continued from page 1

Education in an agricultural related field to apply for the Nevada Cattlemen’s Association Annual Scholarship. The NCA will be giving this year’s outstanding graduating senior a $1,000 scholarship to attend any junior college or four-year University to study in any agriculture related field.

Eligibility requirements for the Scholarship include:

- Student must be a senior graduating from a High School in Nevada
- Student must plan to attend a Community College or a 4-year College or University
- Student must be seeking a degree in an agriculturally related field
- Student must have at least a 2.5 GPA

In addition to completing an application, candidates must also submit:

- A typewritten essay of 1,000 to 1,500 words on any current issue involving the beef industry including references cited
- A copy of the student’s official transcripts
- Three letters of reference

Scholarship application forms can be downloaded from the NCA’s website at www.nevadacattlemen.org, or applicants can call the NCA office at 775-738-9214 or send a request to nca@nevadabeef.org for a copy. Completed application form and all required information must be postmarked by Monday, May 1st, 2017.

If you are not currently a member of the Nevada Cattlemen’s Association, I encourage you to join. Become part of an Association that is working hard to protect and promote the future of ranching in Nevada. To learn more about the association or to become a member, please call the NCA office or visit our website. We look forward to hearing from you! If you are currently a member, we thank you for your continued support. Without your membership, the voice of the Association wouldn’t be as strong as it is today.

### Membership Update

**We would like to thank the following people for joining or renewing their membership with Nevada Cattlemen’s Association between February 24, and March 23, 2017.**

*New members are in bold.*

- High Desert Cattle Co., Aron Hansen

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David Stix, Jr., President  |  Sam Mori, Pres.-Elect
Tom Barnes, 1st Vice Pres.  |  Hanes Holman, 2nd Vice Pres.
Making Everyday Decisions to Manage Your Beef Cows

Ranchers face many challenges each day that require their attention. These challenges include things like dealing with and preventing disease, getting cows fed or moved to the right pasture, getting cows bred, getting calves on the ground and started out right, and many others.

These daily challenges require a lot of time and effort to get them done right. Because of this time commitment on these essential tasks often things like marketing, economic analysis and risk management get put on the back burner. With this in mind, the Wyoming Ranch Tools website was developed to help producers make those marketing and economic analysis decisions (www.uwyoextension.org/ranchtools).

The tools on the website are designed to help producers answer the question “will I be better or worse off if I make a change to my operation.” Example questions that ranchers are faced with are:

- Should I use a cross breeding program that would increase production, but reduce efficiency?
- Should I consider marketing my calves early or later to take advantage of market trends?
- Does it make economic sense to market yearlings instead of calves?
- What can I afford to pay for replacement cows or heifers?
- Is it better to market my calves direct, at an auction barn, or should I use a video auction?
- Is the price slide in my calf contract fair?

Two workshops are being held in April that will demonstrate how to use the Wyoming Ranch Tools website using real ranch situations. The workshops, “Making Everyday Decisions to Manage Your Beef Cows,” will be held in Fallon at the Fallon Convention Center on April 18 and repeated in Elko on April 19 at Great Basin College.

Topics to be covered at the workshops include:

- Economic Ranch Tools: Budgeting and cow valuation tools for making decisions on a ranch - Bridger Feuz, Livestock Marketing Specialist, University of Wyoming Extension
- Range Management: Tools for building a range management plan and strategy - Barton Stam, Area Extension Educator, University of Wyoming Extension
- Cow Herd Nutrition: Tools for monitoring and managing nutrition in the cow herd - Hudson Hill, Area Extension Educator, University of Wyoming Extension
- Risk Management: Tools including Livestock Risk Protection for mitigating risk in volatile markets - Bridger Feuz, Livestock Marketing Specialist, University of Wyoming Extension
- How to Utilize USDA Programs in Nevada: Insurance, Loan and Conservation Programs (USDA, Risk Management Agency; USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service; USDA, Farm Service Agency) - Staci Emm, Extension Educator, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and USDA Agency Staff.

Ranchers who have attended this workshop in the past, throughout the Western United States, have consistently found it to be useful and directly applicable to their ranches. When asked if they would recommend this workshop to other producers, 100% of the respondents have indicated they would.

The workshops will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at each location, and a meal will be provided. Please register by April 14 by contacting Bridger Feuz at masterstockman@outlook.com or 307-799-8740. The cost of the workshop is $15 and will be collected at the door.

The workshops are offered in partnership with Nevada Cattlemen’s Association, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and Master Stockman Consulting.

Funding for this workshop is provided through USDA Risk Management Agency grants.

For more information please contact Bridger Feuz at masterstockman@outlook.com.
Scours can be a Big Problem

by Stephen S. Foster, Extension Educator, UNCE, Pershing County

Every day as I drive to work, I see a few more new born calves running around. Besides being a little damper that normal, because of some much needed rain this past month, the weather has been favorable for calving. However, ranchers still need to be monitoring their new calf crop for any problems, such as calf scours or calf diarrhea. Actually, Calf scours is not a disease—it is a clinical sign of a disease which can have many causes. In diarrheas, the intestine fails to absorb fluids and/or secretion into the intestine is increased. However, it should be noted that calf scours or calf diarrhea causes more financial loss to cow-calf producers than any other disease-related problem they encounter.

According to the most recent national survey on beef cattle health, diarrhea is the disease with the highest morbidity among pre-weaned beef calves. About 2.4 percent of calves younger than 3 weeks old are reported to suffer from diarrhea. This figure likely underestimates the problem because large producers cannot monitor calves closely enough to detect all cases of diarrhea.

According to the same report, about 1.7 percent of unweaned calves more than 3 weeks old suffer diarrhea. Thus, younger calves are at higher risk of having diarrhea.

The known causes of scours are grouped into two categories: 1) noninfectious causes and 2) infectious causes. The “noninfectious” causes are often referred to as “predisposing” or “contributing” factors because there is a proven interaction between noninfectious causes and infection. Any effort to prevent infectious causes is usually fruitless unless serious control of contributing “noninfectious” factors is part of the overall program.

Noninfectious causes are best defined as flaws or gaps in management. Inadequate nutrition, exposure to severe environment, insufficient attention to the newborn calf, or a combination of these are often involved in scours outbreaks. The most commonly encountered noninfectious problems include: Inadequate nutrition of the pregnant dam, particularly during the last third of gestation. This affects the quality and quantity of colostrum. Inadequate environment for the newborn calf, mud, overcrowding, contaminated lots, calving heifers and cows together, wintering and calving in the same area, storms, heavy snow, cold temperatures and rainfall are all stressful to the newborn calf and increase its exposure to infectious agents. The calf is born without most antibodies, including those that fight the infectious agents which cause scours. The calf will acquire these antibodies only from colostrum. Because of this, any effort to prevent scours by vaccinating cows is wasted unless the calf actually receives colostrum, preferably before it is two to four hours old.

Infectious causes of calf scours may be grouped as follows: Bacteria: Escherichia coli, Salmonella spp., Clostridium perfringens, and other bacteria, Viruses: coronavirus, rotavirus, BVD virus, IBR virus, Protozoa: Cryptosporidium, coccidian.

Most newborn calves are exposed to E. coli from the environment, particularly when sanitation is marginal. Manure from healthy cows and stools from scouring calves provide a source of E. coli for calves as young as 16 to 24 hours. The younger the calves, the greater the chance for death from severe dehydration.

Viral Causes of Calf Scours include: Coronavirus and Rotavirus. Both of these viruses possess the ability to disrupt the cells which line the small intestine, resulting in diarrhea and death in young calves. Erosions and ulcers on the tongue, lips, and in the mouth are the usual lesions found in the live calf.

Protozoan Causes of Calf Scours include: Cryptosporidium, Cryptosporidium is a protozoan parasite much smaller than coccidia. It has the ability to adhere to the cells which line the small intestine and to damage the microvilli, Coccidiosis, Coccidiosis can be a very serious disease in weaned calves, but is seldom a problem in young calves. Most outbreaks were associated with stress, poor sanitation, overcrowding, or sudden changes in feed.

Under range conditions, a calf adapts a pattern of nursing that fills its needs. Nutritional scours can be caused by anything that disrupts this normal habit. A storm, strong wind, or the mother cow going off in search of new grass disrupts the normal nursing pattern. When the calf eventually nurses, it is overly hungry and the cow has more milk than normal. Consequently, the calf may over consume milk, resulting in nutritional scours. This is usually a white scours caused by undigested milk passing through the intestinal tract.

This type of scours usually presents little problem. Many of these calves, if they are still active and alert, do not require treatment. If the calf becomes depressed or quits nursing, treatment should be initiated.

Because calf scours can result from a combination of noninfectious factors and infectious microorganisms, it is essential to use more than injections and medications in any effort to control scours successfully.

There are managerial as well as medical requirements which must be met. They must complement each other, such as: cow nutrition, environment and sanitation and attention to newborn calves.

A well-planned and consistent vaccination program is an effective tool to prevent scours if the management aspects are taken care of. Different regions, even different herds in the same region, may vary in the type of infectious agents present.

There is no such thing as a universal vaccination program.

The immediate and most important treatment for all scouring newborn calves is the same, regardless of cause. They must receive fluids, electrolytes and energy. The fluid is essential in order to allow the body organs such as the kidneys, liver, etc. to continue to function. However, the fluid cannot be absorbed from the gut unless it contains electrolytes (salts) in the proper proportions. If you can keep the calf hydrated, its own body defenses will usually be able to control the infectious agents involved. The exception to this occurs when there is an immune deficiency (lack of absorption of antibodies from colostrum).

Consult your veterinarian for electrolyte powders to be given orally. There are dry electrolyte powders available that can be mixed with water for oral administration. If electrolyte powders are not available, a solution for oral administration can be prepared on the ranch by using one tablespoon baking soda, one teaspoon salt and 250 cc (eight ounces) of 50 percent dextrose. Do not use table sugar!

Calf scours is a preventable and treatable condition. However, if the noninfectious causes of calf scours are ignored or receive inadequate attention, the subsequent infectious causes of calf scours can and will cause serious hardship for the calf and subsequently the producer.

Sources:
- CALF SCOURS CAUSES • PREVENTION • TREATMENT, Charles L. Stoltenow, DVM Lori L. Vincent, DVM, NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
- Scours in Beef Calves Causes and Treatments, A. Villarroyel, EM 8977-E • April 2009
- CALF SCOURS SIMPLIFIED, Clell V. Bagley, DVM, Extension Veterinarian Utah State University, Logan UT
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President Trump and Interior Secretary Zinke have made promises about moving federal agency decision making back to the local level, putting Americans back to work and ensuring that the public lands are managed for “multiple use.” While that sounds wonderful, making those promises means more than a directive from Washington D.C., it means that your local governments have to take the lead in dealing with the federal agencies. Local decision making is not just for counties with federal lands, but federal decisions can impact the use of private property as well.

There are three major ways that a local government can influence federal agency decisions; the type of process used by a local government will depend on the type of decision to be made and the time constraints of the local government. One type of local participation is not “better” or “worse” than another type, again, it depends on the type of decision to be influenced and the preference of the local government.

So, again, I would pose the question, is your local government prepared for local decision making? The following should help:

I. CONSISTENCY REVIEW

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) mandate that federal agency actions be as consistent as possible with local land use policies or plans (LUP) and that the federal government must attempt to reconcile its federal decisions with the local LUP. Those provisions are key in implementing the President’s promises, but there is a catch. In order to require this “consistency review,” a local government has to have a written local LUP, otherwise there is nothing for the federal agencies to be consistent with.

In my view, first, a local government should start with a review of the federal actions that the local government thinks will happen within the area. For example, are there threatened or endangered species or species of concern that will impact your constituents’ private property; is the BLM or Forest Service revising its land use plans or implementing their land use plans; was a local area included within a National Monument meaning that a management plan will have to be prepared; are there any special designation lands that have been proposed like wild and scenic rivers, wilderness or conservation areas; or are there other federal decisions that may impact the private property of your constituents and/or the public lands?

Second, the local government should determine its processes for dealing with the federal agencies. When do you want to update the federal agencies regarding the local government’s activities and when does the local government want updates from the federal agencies? How do you propose transmitting the local LUP to the federal agencies and offices? What is the local government’s view of “early consultation”? How does the local government want “coordination” to occur? These processes should be carefully articulated in the local LUP.

Third, the local LUP should discuss the “custom and culture” of the citizens, the history of the area, and the environmental features important to the local government. This information can come from historical accounts, personal stories, and environmental descriptions such as state wildlife habitat maps, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil descriptions, forage surveys, and other
data. I do not believe that a local government has
to gather new data or participate in new studies,
but it is important to compile existing data from as
many sources as possible to support your policies.

Fourth, your local LUP should include economic
data and analysis. This should be more than just
gathering employment statistics, rather, the eco-

nomic data included in the local LUP should sup-
port the local governments’ policies. For example,
if agriculture is important to the local economy,
the local LUP should describe the economic det-
riment of a federal decision that would reduce
Animal Unit Month (AUMs) on public land or
restrict grazing on private land. Most land grant
universities have good statistical data that can as-
sist you with this analysis. You should also include
information like circulating dollars, job numbers
for the various economic segments, etc.

Finally, once the data is gathered, the local LUP
should include the policies that the federal agen-
cies should use for consistency review purposes.
I believe that these policies are always stronger
and provide a good basis from which the local gov-
ernment can work, if they are based on the data
described above regarding custom and culture,
economic stability and environmental protection.

I do not believe a simple “wish list” from the local
government is a strong basis for protecting your
constituents. Additionally, in making decisions in
compliance with NEPA, the federal government
must use the “best data and information avail-
able.” The best available information about the lo-
cal effects of a federal decision on the local custom,
culture, economy and environment should come
from the local government itself.

Note that your local LUP has to be compliance
with federal statutes and regulations with the
“full force and effect of law.” However most federal
statutes are very broadly written and allow for
the survival of the local citizens, businesses and
economies; the local government just has to assert
those requirements.

II COORDINATION

FLPMA and the National Forest Management
Act (NFMA) also require “coordination.” Coordi-
nation is a process; not a result. Additionally, while
your local government should “coordinate” with
the federal agencies to protect their constituents
and influence federal decisions, there is no statute
dictating the specifics of the coordination process.
Because the elements or steps of coordination are
not statutorily defined, local governments should
use their local LUP to define what coordination
means and how it should work.

III COOPERATING AGENCY STATUS

NEPA also allows local governments to partici-
pate in agency decision making process as “coop-
ering agencies.” An applicant for cooperating
agency status must both (1) be a locally elected
body such as a conservation district board of su-
pervisors or a county commission; and (2) possess
“special expertise.” A local government’s special
expertise is defined as the authority granted to
a local governing body by state statute. Being a
cooperating agency allows the local government
to participate in the “identification team” with a
federal agency. It is just another tool that a local
government should consider when dealing with
federal agencies.

IV FINAL THOUGHTS

Local governments can have a major impact on
federal agency decisions if they are prepared and
willing to take on the challenge. There are over
1000 counties in the U.S. with a population less
than 10,000 citizens. Each one of these rural coun-
tries should have a voice in federal decisions that
impact it. Is your county prepared?
Wet Winter Means More Noxious Weeds

By Sean Gephart, Noxious Weed Program Coordinator

It’s no secret northern Nevada received heavy precipitation this winter. While that’s great for our agricultural crops, rangelands and restoration efforts, the wet weather also means increased noxious weeds.

Noxious weeds are plant species that can be detrimental and destructive to Nevada’s landscapes, property value and wildlife habitat. Some species, like Yellow starthistle, can even be toxic to livestock, while many others create a fuel source for wildfires. Our program coordinates resources and efforts focused on proactive prevention, control and management of invasive weed species in Nevada to benefit all land users.

Now is the best time to control noxious weeds on your property

Per statute, all landowners are responsible for control of noxious weeds on their property. This is going to be an aggressive season for noxious species, so it’s important to get a head start on treatment now. As young weeds begin to emerge, spring is the best time to control noxious weeds, whether manually or chemically. A strategy of integrated weed management, combining multiple control methods, is the most effective approach. As you prepare, consider these valuable integrated weed management recommendations.

• Continuous monitoring and early detection are key.
• Control methods may require multiple applications in one growing season or over several growing seasons.
• Plant desired competitive species to reduce recurrence of weeds.
• Follow label instructions when using pesticides.

Species to look for

Perennial pepperweed (often referred to in Nevada as “white top”) is widely known and one of the most widespread noxious weed species in the state. This invasive species grows best on moist sites, and is often found in floodplains, pastures, meadows and along waterways. With incidents of flooding across northern Nevada this winter, expect to see Perennial pepperweed infestations spreading to new locations. Early detection is vital in fighting further spread in all Nevada counties, as mowing, tilling, burning and grazing are not effective. Spring is also a great time to remove any dead material to help curb new growth of this invasive species.
Medusahead is a winter annual and should be visible very soon if it isn’t already. Medusahead will show up early as a bright green, thick patch among other dormant or immature plants. Similar to cheatgrass, it likes to grow on clay soils and often infests rangeland. However, unlike cheatgrass, Medusahead is often less desirable for grazing animals. Many other control methods, including tilling, mowing, burning and herbicides are effective in fighting this weed, which is not yet widespread in Nevada.

**Things to remember**

- Clean your vehicle, clothes and pets if you have been in an infested area.
- Use certified weed free seeds, forage and gravel materials on your property to ensure you are not bringing noxious weed infested materials onto your land.
- Use the online complaint form to notify the NDA of areas near you where statute enforcement is needed to prevent treated areas from becoming re-infested or populated by seeds.

**Resources**

If you’re not sure what treatment to apply or if you need help identifying a plant, there are many resources available to you:

- NDA, for help with weed management planning, including the complaint form and identification quick guide – agri.nv.gov/NoxiousWeeds
- Find a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) that serves your area – agri.nv.gov/cwma
- UNR Cooperative Extension (UNCE), for help with identification –unce.unr.edu
- Download the EDDMapS app (available for iPhone and android) to monitor treatments and help the NDA manage throughout the state
- UNR College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources (CABNR) – cabnr.unr.edu
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – nrcs.usda.gov
- BLM Nevada – blm.gov/nv
- Nevada Division of Forestry – forestry.nv.gov

**Contact us for additional resources**

- Sean Gephart: sgephart@agri.nv.gov
  (775) 353-3717
- Jake Dick: jdick@agri.nv.gov
  (775) 353-3673
- agri.nv.gov/noxiousweeds

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Session Better Acquaints State Beef Leaders with Workings of National Beef Checkoff Program

Annual State Beef Council Orientation Illuminates Programs for State Directors, Staffs

Trust, knowledge and understanding are the foundations on which strong partnerships are built. That’s the central idea behind an annual orientation for state beef council directors and staffs coordinated by the Federation of State Beef Councils.

About 70 directors and staff from 28 state beef councils from across the country attended the 2017 orientation, held March 13-14 at the headquarters of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association in Centennial, Colo. NCBA is the home of the Federation of State Beef Councils, and a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program.

“It’s important for our state partners to know the big picture of the Beef Checkoff Program, and where each piece fits,” according to Todd Johnson, NCBA senior vice president of Federation Services. “The producers who designed the national program back in 1985 worked hard to create a program that not only could be effective and efficient at building beef demand, but respected the state and national framework that existed at the time. We have found that the better our leaders and producers at all levels understand how it works, the more they can get behind it.”

On tap for attendees at this year’s session were presentations on beef checkoff history, collections and the Beef Promotion and Research Act and Order by executives of the Cattlemen’s Beef Board; as well as explanations by NCBA staff of the checkoff-related role of the Federation and the NCBA and how checkoff and non-checkoff dollars are kept separate. Checkoff programs in research, information and promotion conducted on behalf of beef producers and managed by staff at NCBA were also outlined, as were the services available to state beef councils from the NCBA graphic design, information technology, and other teams.

Lucy Rechel, a board member of the Nevada Beef Council, attended the recent orientation, but says this wasn’t her first experience with the event. The first time she attended was about a dozen years ago. She says both times the experience was helpful to better understand the “nuts and bolts of the checkoff, as well as what’s being done with the dollars.” More than that, though, she thinks the information presented might help state board members to “think outside of the box.”

“It’s often difficult to decide what to do with checkoff dollars,” Rechel says. “That’s especially true in these times of limited funds. But while we might not have enough dollars to do some big programs, maybe there are some smaller efforts we can make. These kinds of sessions help us identify and better understand those options.”

Nevada’s beef checkoff effort at the state level is actually staffed by the California Beef Council under a contract arrangement. Rechel says the decision to rely on a staff of a neighboring state to conduct programs in Nevada was a good one, because with a limited budget they have been able to take advantage of a larger staff with a broader skill range. At the same time, the Nevada Beef Council can still be represented at the national level through the Federation of State Beef Councils. “Having that seat at the (national) table is important,” she says.

Part of the orientation was a tour of the NCBA offices, including the Beef Culinary Center, the studio of the NCBA Cattlemen to Cattlemen television program and a digital command center that helps monitor the attitudes and trends of consumers across the United States.

“As beef producers, we have no idea how fast technology has been running away from us,” according to Rechel. “Our checkoff-funded beef industry effort has definitely become more sophisticated.”

Despite the time commitment to attend the orientation, Rechel says the
trip was worthwhile. “It was certainly valuable,” she says. “I wish everybody on my council could come to this.”

Tracking the Dollars

Among the presentations valuable to Andy Berry, executive director of the Mississippi Beef Council, were ones that described how checkoff dollars were managed at the national level. “The information about all of the areas the checkoff is doing work on our behalf was very helpful,” Berry says. “Just as helpful, though, was learning more about the firewall that keeps checkoff money going where it should.”

Berry said he joined five Mississippi Beef Council directors in gaining knowledge from the orientation. “I picked up some new ideas,” he said. “I also learned how state councils in other parts of the country handle their checkoff work and how it compares to how we do things in Mississippi.” Berry said that he was also able to enhance his relationships with the Mississippi producers on his board while sharing the many elements of the programs and structure presented.

“It’s a lot of information to be thrown at you at one time, but it’s useful,” says Berry. “Given the same circumstances, I would definitely do it again.”

“We truly appreciate the producer leaders who step up to help direct the programs being conducted through the checkoff at both the state and national levels,” according to NCBA’s Johnson. “They take time away from their operations to serve on these boards – then take additional time off to come to meetings like this to better understand their responsibilities and how the actions they take have an impact throughout our industry. It’s a commitment that doesn’t get nearly the respect and thanks it deserves.”

The Beef Checkoff Program is administered by the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, with oversight provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The checkoff was established as part of the 1985 Farm Bill, and assesses $1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products.

States retain up to 50 cents of the dollar and forward the other 50 cents per head to the Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion and Research Board. In addition to conducting in-state programs, state beef council boards may choose to forward additional funds from their 50 cents for use in national and international education, promotion and research programs.
Beef Checkoff Wraps Up Successful Online Retail Test

On both a national and state level, there are multiple checkoff-funded efforts to engage with and provide educational resources to retailers. These efforts include education on beef cuts, point of sale displays and marketing, in-store promotions, and consumer research that helps inform the industry and retailers about what moves beef at the retail level.

Along these lines, the Beef Checkoff Program recently worked with Amazon – one of the world’s largest online retailers – to provide materials and web content for the company’s “Beef Category Page” as part of its Amazon Fresh Prime Program. Amazon Fresh is a subsidiary of the popular online storefront, offering grocery items available for home delivery in key metropolitan markets.

During the last three months of 2016, Amazon Fresh utilized the checkoff’s investment in consumer videos, recipes and photography in a test to motivate more online steak, roast and rib sales. Overall, there was a 16 percent increase in beef units sold during this period, thanks in part to the checkoff’s content and placement. A combination of seasonal message banners, education about meat cuts and meal inspiration via recipe videos were tested to help better understand the types of content shoppers use to make their purchasing decisions.

Results showed that online grocery shoppers first want help finding the right fresh beef products and then more information about the beef – including tips for cooking it. The recipe video received higher engagement than the top banner, indicating the opportunity for more video engagement and recipe inspiration. Another key finding was that messages focusing on product qualities and sensory details rather than the potential meal experience, were more effective with online shoppers. This is a key insight that helps address the challenges of selling beef online, where the consumer can’t see or touch the package, and something to continue to test in the future with additional digital supply chain partners.

Engaging with Retailers at Annual Meat Conference

The Annual Meat Conference recently took place in Dallas, bringing together more than 1,300 retailers and retail influencers from across the country, with the Nevada Beef Council’s Director of Retail and Foodservice Marketing, Christie Van Egmond, among those in attendance.

During the event, the checkoff sponsored a panel discussion, The Farmer’s Perspective and Industry Transparency. Given the increased desire by consumers to know and understand where their food comes from, this candid conversation allowed attendees to hear firsthand from the daily decision-makers about the challenges that exist. Producers on the panel were Masters of Beef Advocacy graduates, including Joan Ruskamp, Nebraska feedyard operator and CBB vice chairman; Gary Price, Texas cow-calf operator; and Matt Byrne, California rancher. Approximately 200 people attended the session.

It was also an opportunity to address hot topics like antibiotics, animal welfare and sustainability with this important audience. The trend of shoppers seeking transparency and more information about the production process of meat was highlighted throughout the conference. The beef checkoff will continue to work with the beef supply chain to help them understand how beef is raised, and is in the process of developing more resources that can be used specifically to show this to retailers to help them capitalize on the transparency trend.

For more about the Nevada Beef Council and Beef Checkoff, visit www.nevadabeef.org or www.mybeefcheckoff.org:

American Heart Association® Heart-Healthy Recipe Collection

The American Heart Association’s® Heart-Check logo is used by 72 million adults to make decisions about selecting healthy foods and beverages, making it among the most established and trusted nutrition icons on food packaging today.

The checkoff has been working with the American Heart Association® to develop Heart-Check certified recipes as part of a new certification program. The collection of 10 easy beef recipes features American Heart Association® Heart-Check Certified beef cuts and is now available on BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com. Four of the recipes have already been incorporated into a health professional brochure on the topic of lean beef in a heart-healthy lifestyle. The brochure will be extended through state and national checkoff programs reaching health professionals, including registered dietitians, medical doctors and nurse practitioners.

What are the AHA Certified Beef Cuts?

Nine fresh beef cuts are certified to display the coveted Heart-Check mark, signifying they meet the American Heart Association’s® criteria for heart-healthy foods as part of an overall healthy dietary pattern, including:

- Extra lean ground beef (96% lean, 4% fat)
- Bottom round steak
- Sirloin steak
- Sirloin tip steak
- Top Sirloin Petite Roast, Boneless
- Top Sirloin Strips
- Top Sirloin Filet
- Top Sirloin Kabob
- Top Sirloin Steak, Boneless, Center Cut

*USDA Select grade