



# MONTANA FARM BUREAU *News Brief*

*We Care for the Country*

February 2020

## TOP STORIES



*The Montana Farm Bureau delegation at the 101st American Farm Bureau Federation Convention and Trade Show in Austin, Texas.*

### ***MFBF members experience exciting convention***

A delegation of 38 Montana Farm Bureau members had the opportunity to experience the American Farm Bureau Convention which included seeing President Trump and Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. The convention ran January 17-22 in Austin.

This was the second time Carla Lawrence has been to the convention, and the first time to attend as Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Chair.

MFBF Young Farmer & Rancher Discussion Meet winner Rocky Forseth participated in the national YF&R competition, which he said was an outstanding opportunity and he enjoyed meeting other young agriculturalists from across the country.

Jules and Bonnie Marchesseault, who ranch in Dillon, have been to 15 national conventions. "People come from all

facets of agriculture, and it's interesting to visit with them and learn what they do and their concerns about their farms and ranches," said Jules. "The feeling of this convention was very optimistic. We were impressed by all of the young people attending. Of course, having the President of the United States come for three years in a row is truly impressive."

In addition to its notable speakers, MFBF members attended workshop tracks including Public Policy & Advocacy, Member Engagement, Consumer Engagement, Business & Rural Development and Technology.

Along with President Hans McPherson and VP Cyndi Johnson, Bernie Evans, Ken Johnson and Tom and Lillian Ostendorf served as alternates during Tuesday's Delegate Session.

For more AFBF Convention press releases and news visit [www.mfbf.org](http://www.mfbf.org).

### **Legislative Week review**

In January, the Montana Legislative Council held Legislative Week for all legislators to attend breakout session and interim committee meetings as well as having the opportunity to work together during the interim year. One of the largest overall focuses was SB 310, the study of the Legislature and Budget Process; more specifically, the option to hold an annual legislative session in Montana instead of the current bi-annual one. The studies are far from a conclusion regarding how an annual session would work and how the changes would be made for implementation. Ultimately, the decision will be made by the voters of Montana.

Other topics came from the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) and the State Lab Advisory Committee meetings. In the EQC meeting, experts from Colorado, Wyoming and the Center of Disease Control discussed Chronic Wasting Disease and how it is properly tested and managed. This was a great introduction for the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Lab and learning about the changes that will come with building a new State Lab in Bozeman.

For more information on Legislative Week or for any questions in regards to the Montana Legislature, contact Rachel Cone, 406-587-3153, [rachelc@mfbf.org](mailto:rachelc@mfbf.org).

---

*Thinking about running for office in 2020? Plan to attend Montana Farm Bureau's Victory Montana: A Campaign Management Seminar March 2-3 at the Delta Colonial Hotel in Helena.*

*Visit [www.mfbf.org](http://www.mfbf.org) for registration information.*



## Welcome new Farm Bureau members

Chouteau County - Bart Ohara;  
Dawson-Wibaux County - Guy Kolberg; Front Range County - Colleen Gustafson; Gallatin County - David & Melanie Crist; Hill/Liberty/Blaine - Alexander & Jessi Billmeyer and Casey & Katie Billmeyer; Judith Basin County Farm Bureau - Clayton & Misti Annala; Northwest Counties - Taylor & Tiffany Firestone and Matthew & Shauna Stickney; Phillips County Farm Bureau - James Murdock; Richland County - Mario Thorsen; Southwest Counties - John & Belinda Price and James Carey; Sweet Grass County - James & Amy Moore; Valley County - Myles & Faith Kittleson; Wheatland/Golden Valley - Gary Harlow; Yellowstone County - Amy Shryock

## State Fund Ag

Montana's agriculture industry deserves a comprehensive safety program to develop a thriving safety culture for today and tomorrow. Members of the Montana State Fund Agriculture Group will benefit from the partnering of safety professionals at Montana State Fund as well as Montana Farm Bureau Federation. Be safe on your farm and ranch. Check out [safemt.com](http://safemt.com) for resources, [www.mfbf.org](http://www.mfbf.org) for the flyer or call Jim Larsen, 406-860-6129.

## Johne's disease

In response to feedback from the veterinary community and buyers of Montana dairy and beef cattle, the Department of Livestock (DOL) has developed a state program to reduce the spread of Johne's disease through animal sales and movement. Johne's is a contagious and usually fatal bacterial disease that primarily affects the small intestine of cattle. The Johne's bacterium is spread between animals through feces.

Prevent and report Johne's. Questions can be directed to the State Veterinarian's Office at 406-444-2043 or contact your local veterinarian.

## Farm Bureau scholarships available

The Montana Farm Bureau Foundation and the Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee are offering several scholarships for students pursuing a higher education.

**2019 MFB Foundation CYF&R Scholarship.** The Montana Farm Bureau Foundation will award one \$1000 scholarship to a current member of the Collegiate Chapter of Young Farmers and Ranchers at MSU Bozeman, UM Western or Miles Community College.

**2019 Bernard Greufe Honor Scholarship.** This \$1500 scholarship assists Montana high school students to pay for higher education.

**2019 Future of Agriculture Honor Scholarship.** This \$1500 scholarship, administered by the Montana Farm Bureau Foundation, is made available through generous donations from Seed Source, Inc. of Toston, MT and is for students towards the completion of a degree in a field pertaining to agriculture.

**Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Scholarships.** Two \$1500 scholarships are available through the sponsorship of the MFB Women's Leadership Committee. The applicant must be an incoming college freshman and parents must be a paid Montana Farm Bureau member.

For more information, deadlines and scholarship applications, visit [www.mfbf.org](http://www.mfbf.org) or call 406-587-3153.



## Support ag literacy on your 2019 tax form

Want to help kids learn more about agriculture? Whether you are using a tax preparer or completing the tax form yourself, check line 69c on the long tax form or 18c on the EZ form. Donating \$5, \$10 or another amount will benefit the agricultural knowledge of our youth.

Montana Farm Bureau Federation is working with the Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana Office of Public Instruction and Montana Farmers Union to rejuvenate Montana's Ag in the Classroom Foundation and to encourage support for agricultural literacy for students.

This tax season, help keep agricultural curriculum in the classroom for Montana students.

For more information on ag literacy efforts contact Rikki Swant, 406-231-4422, [rikkis@mfbf.org](mailto:rikkis@mfbf.org).

## Calendar

February 20-21

AFBF Issues Advisory Committees  
Washington, D.C.

March 2-3

Campaign Management Seminar  
Helena

March 2-4

ACE Training  
Bozeman

March 5-6

MFBF Board Meeting  
Bozeman

March 13-16

AFBF YF&R Conference

June 8-11

MFBF Summer Conference  
Fairmont Hot Springs

## Other Meetings

**CANCELLED - Energy Summit:**  
Things to Know Before You Sign a Surface Agreement, Feb. 13, Billings Hotel and Convention Center. Contact Linda Brander at Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, [LLbrander@mt.gov](mailto:LLbrander@mt.gov) or (406) 444-0520.

## Book of the Year

The newest American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture Book of the Year is 'Full of Beans: Henry Ford Grows a Car' written by Peggy Thomas. It's an educational, fun book with wonderful illustrations.

The "Book of the Year" award springs from the Foundation's effort to identify "Accurate Ag Books," a collection of nearly 500 books for children, teenagers and adults.

See the selection at [fb.org](http://fb.org).

## Ford Sweepstakes

Thinking about how much a Ford truck will get the new year off to a great start on your farm or ranch? Montana Farm Bureau members receive \$500 bonus cash on the purchase of selected Ford trucks as well as other selected Ford vehicles. In addition, don't forget to enter the Built Ford Proud Sweepstakes for a chance to win a 2-year lease on a new Ford vehicle! Visit [FordFarmBureauAdvantage.com](http://FordFarmBureauAdvantage.com) or text the word SWEEPS to 46786. Sweepstakes ends September 30, 2020.

## MFBF receives awards

During the American Farm Bureau Convention, the Montana Farm Bureau Federation received four Excellence in Ag Awards, an Apex Award and the Scholar Award, which is achieved when a state has donated 10 percent more to the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture than during the previous year.

The donation total includes gifts from individual members, Silent Auction purchases and investments from state Farm Bureaus.

Way to go MFBF members!

## MFBF applauds USMCA ratification

Montana Farm Bureau President Hans McPherson praised President Donald Trump's signing of the U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement this morning.

"Montana Farm Bureau has worked very hard, along with American Farm Bureau, to get the USMCA ratified and we're thrilled with President Trump for standing with farmers and ranchers and signing this extremely important agreement. We'd like to thank our Congressional delegation for their support and realization that this agreement is vital to Montana agriculture," McPherson said. "Agriculture is Montana's number-one industry, and these excellent trade deals increase the demand for our agricultural products. Everything good for agriculture is good for Montana. The signing of this important agreement is truly a highlight for the ag community as well as for consumers, and it points to a bright future."

"Right now, Montana has \$731 million in exports to Mexico and Canada combined. It will be good to see an increase in these numbers as USMCA goes into effect," McPherson said.

USMCA comes on the heels of a string of trade successes. The China Phase 1 Agreement signed last month goes into effect in mid-February. The U.S.-Japan Trade Agreement signed last fall went into effect this month, which was especially important to Montana's cattle ranchers and wheat producers.



## Trump speaks at convention

President Donald Trump assured farmers and ranchers that a top priority of his administration is fighting for the farmers and ranchers who grow our food. In his address at the American Farm Bureau Convention Sunday in Austin, Trump listed numerous victories of his administration in trade, regulatory reform, rural connectivity and ag labor.

"Our recent trade deals are just the beginning of a really incredible story," Trump told more than 5000 enthusiastic farmers and ranchers. He pointed out that farmers and ranchers deserved a level playing field in trade and now they have it and more with China, the U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement, the trade agreement with Japan and others in the works.

Trump covered regulatory reform including the withdrawing of Waters of the U.S. Rule. "This president will never micro-manage America's farms," he said. "There are no better stewards of our precious natural resources than the American farmers who depend on the land and the environment for their very livelihood. You love your land."

"I think it's marvelous that we had thirty-eight Montana Farm Bureau members hearing President Trump. The fact we actually saw the president speaking gives us more validity when we go home and point out what's not being reported," said MFBF President Hans McPherson. McPherson noted that Trump is a true supporter of agriculture. "He understands that farming and ranching are over-regulated. We especially enjoyed hearing about the introduction of the Clear Water/Clear Rules to replace the detrimental Waters of the U.S. It was worth three hours waiting to hear him."

## Delegates set AFBF policy for 2020

Resolutions originating from Montana Farm Bureau's grassroots policy process were voted on during the American Farm Bureau Convention in Austin. Three-hundred and forty-six voting delegates from across the country spent January 21 discussing and voting on what will become American Farm Bureau policy for 2020.

One Montana-originated policy that passed supported euthanizing any apex predator that had been trapped by any agency because the animal had been deemed a problem animal. Another MFBF policy passed that supported the USDA implementing a comprehensive educational system for producers as they transition from a national uniform ear-tagging system to a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) system.

Two policies that passed regarding animal care that weren't from Montana, but held interest to farmers and ranchers: One opposed any effort to ban the use of horses in rodeos, agriculture, transportation, entertainment or exhibition; the other supported making it a criminal offence to willfully harass livestock with a drone.

For the full story visit [www.mfbf.org](http://www.mfbf.org).



MONTANA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION  
502 S. 19th Ave., Suite 104  
Bozeman, MT 59718

**ISSN: 1555-788X**

The Montana Farm Bureau Federation News Brief is published monthly except for January, April, July and October by the Montana Farm Bureau Federation at 502 S. 19th Ave., Suite 104, Bozeman, MT 59718. Subscription rates are \$4 per year, covered by annual dues to the Montana Farm Bureau Federation. Non-member subscriptions are \$25 per year. Mail at periodical postage rate in Bozeman, MT and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Montana Farm Bureau Federation News Brief, 502 S. 19th Ave., Suite 104, Bozeman, MT 59718. 406-587-3153.

PERIODICAL  
POSTAGE  
PAID  
Kalispell, MT

**News Brief Plus**  
**More News. More Details.**  
[www.mfbf.org](http://www.mfbf.org)  
**Check it out.**

## COUNTY NEWS

### County Farm Bureaus have busy winter with meetings, socials

County Farm Bureaus had a busy January with meetings and socials on the agenda. The **Sweet Grass County** board held a Program of Work meeting January 6, while the **Gallatin County** Board held a program of work meeting January 9. **Wheatland/Golden Valley County** held a membership social on January 10 at the new insurance location in Harlowton.

**Carbon/ Stillwater County** held a program of work meeting on January 14, the same day **Big Horn** held a meeting in Hardin to review resolutions. **Fergus County** held a board training for District 3 January 15 followed by a county open house at the insur-

ance office. **Park County** held a board meeting and preliminary program of work meeting on January 24. **McCone County** had a booth at Circle Ag Day January 25. **Meagher County** met January 30 for a Program of Work meeting. **Rosebud-Treasure County** held their annual spring meeting February 10.

The **Dawson-Wibaux County** YF&R Social will be held February 15 at Maddhatters in Glendive at 5 p.m. Members will enjoy drinks and pizza, with Jasmine Evans and Nicole Rolf talking about Farm Bureau and encouraging them to join. The new **Dawson Community College YF&R Club** has been invited to attend. Dawson-Wibaux will have a booth at the GATE Show in Glendive February 14-16.

District 4 will have a booth at the MATE February February 20-22 in Billings.

**Richland County** is hosting a social February 27 at the 1035 Brewery in Sidney. There will be chili, soup and corn bread served, and a dollar from every pint sold will be donated to the local food bank. There will be a panel

discussion about ways to diversify your farm with a speaker from American Harvest (a new hemp processor in the Sidney area) and a hops grower.



*Fergus County members visit at their Open House.*



*Chouteau County President Jess Bandel interviews with Randy Bogden, KMON, during the MAGIE. District 8 had a booth at the show.*



*Big Horn County members discuss resolutions at their meeting in Hardin.*



## Safety Matters

Montana's agriculture industry deserves a comprehensive safety program to develop a thriving safety culture for today and tomorrow. By offering a collaborative approach to safety, members of the *Montana State Fund Agriculture Group* will benefit from the partnering of safety professionals at Montana State Fund as well as Montana Farm Bureau Federation.

## Safety Pays



Members of the associations listed above are eligible to join the Montana State Fund Agricultural Group Program (MSFAG) offered through Montana State Fund (MSF) and administered by Montana Farm Bureau Federation. As a program member you may be eligible for a dividend on your State Fund Workers' Compensation Insurance premium. The MSFAG program is comprised of MSF agricultural policyholders who are committed to improving the safety culture for their employees. If the overall experience of the group is favorable, the participating policyholders may realize a return of premium.

Contact one of the participating associations listed above for more details and to obtain an enrollment form.

## Specialized ServiceTeam

We provide a dedicated team for your workers' compensation insurance needs allowing you to focus on the future of Montana.

## Safety Consultants

- Professional safety managers with a proven history of increasing jobsite safety
- Onsite personalized safety training
- Free Regional Safety Workshops
- Visit [safemt.com](http://safemt.com) for resources

## Policy

- Dedicated insurance experts to support your needs
- Onsite visits and coordination with your independent agent - whatever works for you
- Easy online access to your policy information

## Claims

- Online claim filing to quickly initiate a claim - should that unfortunate event happen
- No extra hidden costs. All claim management resources are included in your coverage
- Expert in-house certified claims resources
- Resources on-demand - including nurses, medical peer review, a medical director and attorneys

## **Department of Livestock announces Johne's Control Program for Montana Cattle and Dairy Producers**

In response to feedback from the veterinary community and buyers of Montana cattle, the Department of Livestock (DOL) has developed a state program to reduce the spread of Johne's disease through animal sales and movement.

Johne's is a contagious and usually fatal bacterial disease that primarily affects the small intestine of cattle. The Johne's bacterium is spread between animals through feces. Signs of the disease include diarrhea and weight loss, despite a normal appetite. Signs are rarely seen until two or more years after the initial infection, which usually occurs within 6 months of birth. As a result, animals such as replacement females or bulls, may be infected when purchased, despite appearing healthy.

The goals of the Montana Johne's Control Program include:

1. Minimize the spread of Johne's disease through animal sales and movement.
2. Identify positive animals/herds and implement management practices to eliminate the disease.
3. Support non-infected herds by identifying biosecurity practices to prevent the introduction of the disease into their herds.
4. Create a market opportunity for participating herds to advertise their involvement in the program.

Participating producers work with their local veterinarian to develop a herd health plan addressing biosecurity, herd testing, and management of high-risk animals. Producers then obtain a "level of certification" based on the health status of their herd, and their testing plan (whole herd testing vs. individual animal testing). Higher levels of certification suggest a herd is lower risk of being infected with the disease.

MDOL encourages producers to mention their participation in the program while marketing their cattle to show their dedication to minimizing the risk of Johne's transmission within the industry. Likewise, customers should inquire about the health status of the source herd, or at a minimum, the status of the dam of the purchased animal. It is important for those buying cattle to understand that a positive, managed herd is lower risk than a herd with an unknown/non-advertised status.

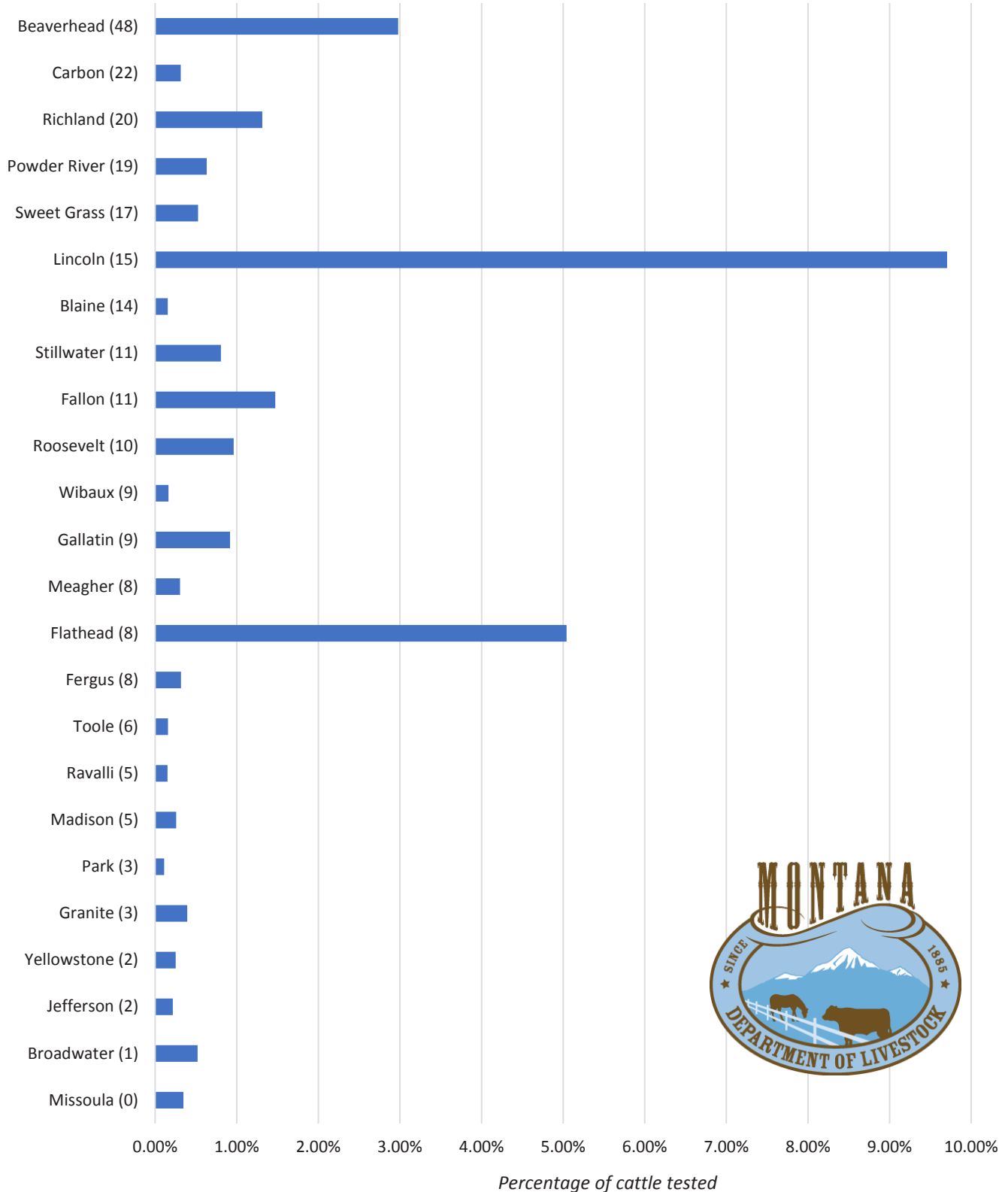
Johne's is a reportable disease in Montana and there are federal restrictions on the movement of positive animals across state lines. Additionally, there have been civil litigation cases brought against producers that have knowingly sold Johne's positive animals into non-slaughter channels, including for breeding purposes.

MDOL recognizes the significant time, effort and expense necessary to manage a herd for Johne's disease; however, all livestock producers have a responsibility to prevent the spread of infectious disease.

Questions can be directed to the State Veterinarians Office at 406-444-2043 or your local veterinarian.



## Percentage of Cattle Tested for Johne's by County (2017-2019)



The graph represents the number of animals tested as a percentage of the total number of animals per county. Counties testing less than 0.1% of total cattle numbers have been excluded. The data source for number of cattle per county is 2019 Per Capita Data.

(#) - Total number of positive Johne's tests per county from 2017-2019



# Montana Beef Council 2019 Annual Report



## A note from the president...

Cattle are king in Montana and the Montana Beef Council (MBC) Board of Directors continually works to make sure beef stays that way! Through the support of the Montana ranchers that have signed their annual consent form, the MBC was able to carry out a limited number of programs that were impactful and demand-building to keep beef the first choice on more plates and menus.

During my two years as MBC President, I had a number of in-depth and meaningful conversations about the beef checkoff. And despite the ongoing lawsuit, I found great pleasure in the opportunity to really visit with fellow ranchers about our marketing program. This program has been in place for over thirty years and I think some of us in the industry may have grown a little complacent about it. Don't forget, you can easily find out what your checkoff dollars are

doing by simply visiting with your fellow ranchers that are on the board, the MBC staff or the MBC and Cattlemen's Beef Board websites. I take for granted how informed I have become over the last eight years on the board and wish everyone would make the time to attend one of our meetings; but if you can't and want to find out more, don't hesitate to ask. We are here to serve the industry.

I personally see great value in our beef export market and with ninety-seven percent of the world's population outside the United States, our focus on beef promotion and education efforts there is a logical choice to me. We also have a number of great programs that the MBC invests in domestically and right here in Montana, with the goal of getting great information about beef into our local consumers hands. The following beef promotion and education programs are just a few ways the consented beef checkoff dollars were invested in Montana for your benefit.

Sincerely,  
Jim Taber, President

## Hello, My Name is Chuck



Meet Chuck, the only all-knowing beef expert powered by Google Artificial Intelligence. He has the know-how of a rancher, the skills of a chef...and the sense of humor of a dad. In the past year, MBC staff and partners have utilized the technology of Chuck and shared the experience with partners like the Montana CattleWomen for their use at tradeshow and in classrooms. Chuck was also active at the Montana Fair in Billings where fair-goers could ask away with a wide variety of questions like, "How are cattle raised?" and "What can I make with ground beef?" Try it out for yourself at [www.ChuckKnowsBeef.com](http://www.ChuckKnowsBeef.com).

## Beef is Back...on TV



advertisements aimed to build awareness of the Montana Beef Council amongst Montana cattle ranchers, as well as share information about how to sign the annual consent form to allow for half of the beef checkoff dollars to remain in Montana.

The Montana Beef Council invested in television advertising this year with thousands of ads being played all across the state at all times of day. The

*continued on back page*



## Dedicated to Quality



The mission of the Montana Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program is to promote best management practices for cattle

producers in an effort to strengthen consumer confidence in beef as a wholesome food product. As a rancher, your livelihood depends on securing the consumer's trust. It doesn't matter whether your herd is large or small. Meat science research at Texas A&M University estimate there are 542 potential consumers just for the steaks and roast of a single beef animal.<sup>1</sup> Your management at the cow-calf and stocker level makes a significant difference in whether or not those 542 consumers have a good, wholesome eating experience. BQA is not about spending more money or buying into a here-today, gone-tomorrow trend. These proven beef quality practices are just better methods of doing the same jobs you're already doing. The main focus of the program is food safety. Eliminating residues, blemishes and foreign objects is critical to maintaining consumer confidence and acceptance of beef as the protein of choice in their diet.

<sup>1</sup>Harris, J.J. & J.W. Savell. 1993. *Impact of carcass maturity on the tenderness of beef from young cattle*. Table 1. Texas A&M.

## Man Your Stations!



For nearly 30 years, the Fourth Grade Farm Fair has been held in Ravalli County, and for twenty-three years the Montana Beef Council has been

there to support the busy day, making sure all the fourth graders that attend enjoy a delicious cheeseburger for lunch while they learn about agriculture and beef production. This concept has spread to other counties and communities and provides experiential learning for local fourth grade classes, their teachers and chaperones. The students will rotate through upwards of 20 stations in a day as they take in all that agriculture provides to nourish and clothe them throughout their day.

## Cattlemen's Beef Board Representatives

Lynda Grande, Columbus  
Turk Stovall, Billings  
Katie Cooper, Willow Creek

## Federation Representatives

Kathy Creighton-Smith, Florence  
Andy Kellom, Hobson  
Shane Flowers, Billings  
Kiley Martinell, Dell

## Montana Beef Council Staff

Chaley Harney, Executive Director  
Sue Broyles, Business Manager  
Tammy Bridges, Director of Collections and Compliance  
Lisa Murray, Collection Specialist

## Montana Beef Council Board of Directors\*

\*The board is comprised of 12 appointed volunteers, representing various segments of the beef industry. Top Row: Jimmy Taber (President), Kiley Martinell (Vice President), Brett Dailey, Kathy Creighton-Smith. Middle Row: Corey Schultz, Bill Cok, Gary Wold, Travis Choat. Bottom Row: Andy Tuss, Andy Kellom, Shane Flowers, Heather Fryer.



## Montana Beef Council

Detailed Statement of Revenues & Expenses  
October 1, 2018-September 30, 2019

### REVENUE

Net in-state revenue.....	528,138
Interest and other income.....	348
<b>Total Revenue .....</b>	<b>528,486</b>

### EXPENSES

International Marketing Programs .....	3,130
Domestic Marketing Programs .....	17,557
Retail Programs .....	0
Food Services .....	0
Promotional Programs .....	29,118
Advertising .....	995
Beef Safety.....	9,500
Education .....	9,690
Producer Communications .....	76,390
Administration* .....	345,159
<b>Total Expenses.....</b>	<b>491,539</b>
<b>Excess of Revenue Over Expenses.....</b>	<b>36,947</b>

### FUND BALANCE

<b>Beginning of Period .....</b>	<b>\$367,207</b>
<b>End of Period.....</b>	<b>\$404,154</b>

\*Administration includes: four MBC staff, office leases, utilities, telephone, internet, accounting fees, legal fees, postage, office equipment, insurance, program implementation, collections, department of livestock administration, MBC vehicle maintenance and board member travel.