



Message from the President

Rick Oakes

My first year as President of the Livestock Marketers of Saskatchewan (LMS) has gone by very quickly. It has been a learning experience and a good opportunity for me to work closely with our individual marketers in the best interest of the cattle industry. I appreciate the members of our board of directors who have voluntarily stepped forward to provide guidance, support and expertise to me and the Livestock Marketers of Saskatchewan. I would also like to extend my gratitude to our administration group and the entire membership of LMS.

We continue to see a consolidation in our numbers with the loss of a market in the south and an additional market in the north. However, our dedicated and hard-working membership is committed to the cattle industry and our board continues to advocate and provide an important voice for the marketers at both provincial and national levels. There have also been some recent changes in ownership around the province and we would like to extend a warm welcome to these new individuals. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Late in 2023, there was discussion around the board table regarding the collection of check-off fees and whether the existing compensation structure was sufficient. This was presented to the membership for discussion and direction at the January 2024 annual general meeting. The membership gave the board clear directions to advocate for an increase in collection fees. Further, the membership was also collective in their direction to the board that LMS members are not prepared to provide their customer lists to the SCA. However, it was also noted the membership was very willing to work collaboratively with the SCA to help them collect contact information. That began a series of meetings with the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association where we went back and forth to negotiate an increase and the terms. I am happy to report that the Livestock Marketers of Saskatchewan was successful in getting an increase from 5 cents to 10 cents per head for all markets and other collection points across the province of Saskatchewan. Further, it was noted that the SCA will no longer expect the customer lists to be provided, rather, efforts to work together will be agreed upon and arranged with each market. We are pleased with both the results of our discussions and the process and outcome resulting in a stronger relationship with the SCA.

We have also been in discussions with Jim Barbondy of NBI/Heartland about their continued effort to build an Occupational Health & Safety program that will be available to all of our members. For more details, please read his update on page 3.

For a second consecutive fall, producers have enjoyed record calf prices. Livestock Marketers of Saskatchewan are proud to have played a part in this market by promoting competitive bidding in the ring. (CONTIINUED...)

Livestock Marketers of Saskatchewan look forward to working with our industry partners – The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Saskatchewan Cattleman’s Association, VBP Plus, Livestock Services of Saskatchewan, Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Livestock Marketers of Canada – in 2025 in the best interest and betterment of the cattle industry.

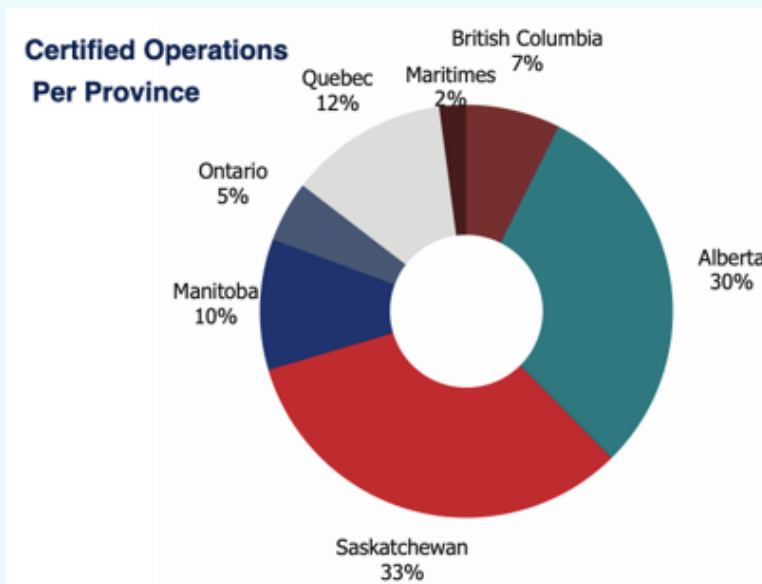
Have a great year!



Saskatchewan
Verified Beef
Production Plus
Erika Stewart,
Provincial Coordinator



The VBP+ program continues to grow in Saskatchewan and continues to lead Canada in the highest number of certified operations. This year brought its own unique set of challenges with prolonged drought, high cattle prices and many producers exiting the industry. Sask VBP had to pivot to find new ways to reach producers. This past year a lot of time was spent attending different events and trade shows to connect with producers and provide information about the program and the potential benefits. In addition to attending events there were also multiple in person training workshops organized around the province to provide the VBP+ training to producers, which is the first step in the program. These changes saw workshop attendance increase and new producers reached.



Over the course of 2024, there have been a significant number of audits and reaudits. I think this is a great sign, especially the number of reaudits because that means producers are finding value in the program after their initial five years of certification and wanting to continue with certification for another five years. Providing value to certified producers is something we have been working diligently on. There are multiple ways certified producers can access financial incentives for their efforts.

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture has the Animal Health and Biosecurity Program where certified producers can receive a 50% rebate on eligible equipment up to \$15 000.

Farm Credit Canada has the Sustainability Incentive Program, where payments are calculated as a portion of your lending with FCC, to a maximum payment of \$2,000 per year. You can reapply annually throughout the life of the program. The last incentive is Cargill’s Qualifying Cattle Credit where cattle that move through an entirely certified supply chain and harvested at one of Cargill’s processing facilities are eligible for the qualifying cattle credit, which are \$20/ head. Cattle must be born on a certified operations and be age verified

Saskatchewan Verified Beef continues to work hard to provide producers with information about the program and appreciates working with your organization.

Livestock Services of Saskatchewan

Jason Pollock



It is my pleasure to provide a brief overview of LSS operations. Overall cattle inspection numbers were up slightly over the previous year by 2.19% which is below the five-year average by 1.4% and ahead of the ten-year average by 2.91% with a total of 1,673,056 hd inspected in the fiscal year.

Staff turnover has increased in recent years due to retirements as well as the gradual decrease of qualified candidates who are interested in seasonal work. LSS is actively recruiting across the province throughout the year. We are continually improving our safety system and workplace quality to attract the best candidates.

Inflationary pressures continue to press operating costs higher primarily due to travel and negotiated salary increases. Efficiencies in operations remain a top priority while providing the best level of service to our stakeholders. Inspection numbers have remained consistent but the overall increase of country work outside of auction marts has increased costs. LSS staff are classified as permanent part-time which allows us to manage our cost structure more

efficiently only requiring labour when inspections are needed. This adds to the difficulty of recruiting employees as there is no consistent guarantee of work for them.

A modest surplus of \$290K was achieved due to the small increase in inspections as well as efficiencies gained in operations. This is up from the small surplus of \$82K the year prior. The Board set up an internal operating contingency fund to manage shortfalls in costs and provide a clear indication of when LSS will request a fee increase. It is anticipated that point will be reached in the current fiscal year due to projections of inspection numbers and operating costs.

Significant work has been completed on the online tool MyLivestock (mylivestock.ca). It is available for use for non-inspected movements and is currently being piloted for sale to dealer terminal movements. LSS will continue to roll out this tool across all inspection types in the coming year. The final inspection type will be the market inspection as that is the most complex and affects the most stakeholders.

Safety Program Set to Launch in 2025

Submitted by Jim Barbondy, Health and Safety Manager, HLS/NBI

Heartland Livestock Services (HLS)/Nilsson Brothers Inc (NBI) continue to work on developing an Occupational Health and Safety program that is targeted for completion in 2025.

During 2024, HLS has undertaken a thorough update of their health and safety manual and program. With the valuable assistance and collaboration of Occupational Health and Safety and WCB, new initiatives have been implemented. These include the development of a new orientation package and a PowerPoint presentation focusing on violence in the workplace. Additionally, in 2024 numerous supervisors and management team members have completed the Occupational Health and Safety Supervisors Training, further enhancing HLS's commitment to a safe working environment. This could not have been completed without the support and leadership of HLS senior management. HLS is looking at completing the entire package in 2025 at which time it will be available to all LMS members.

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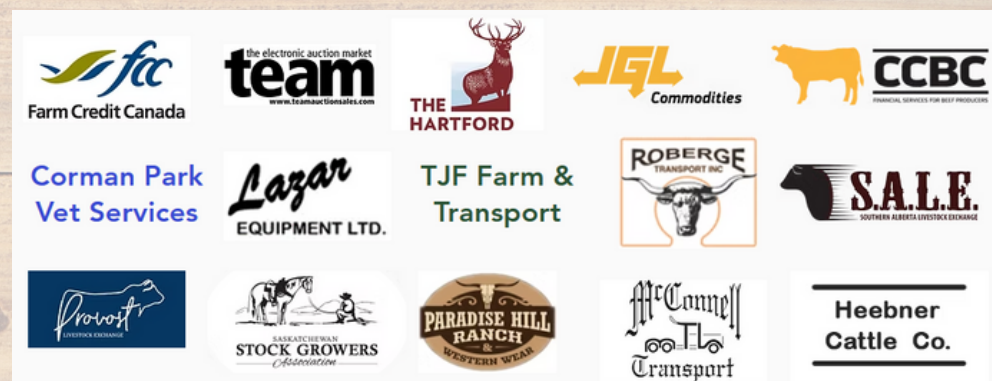
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