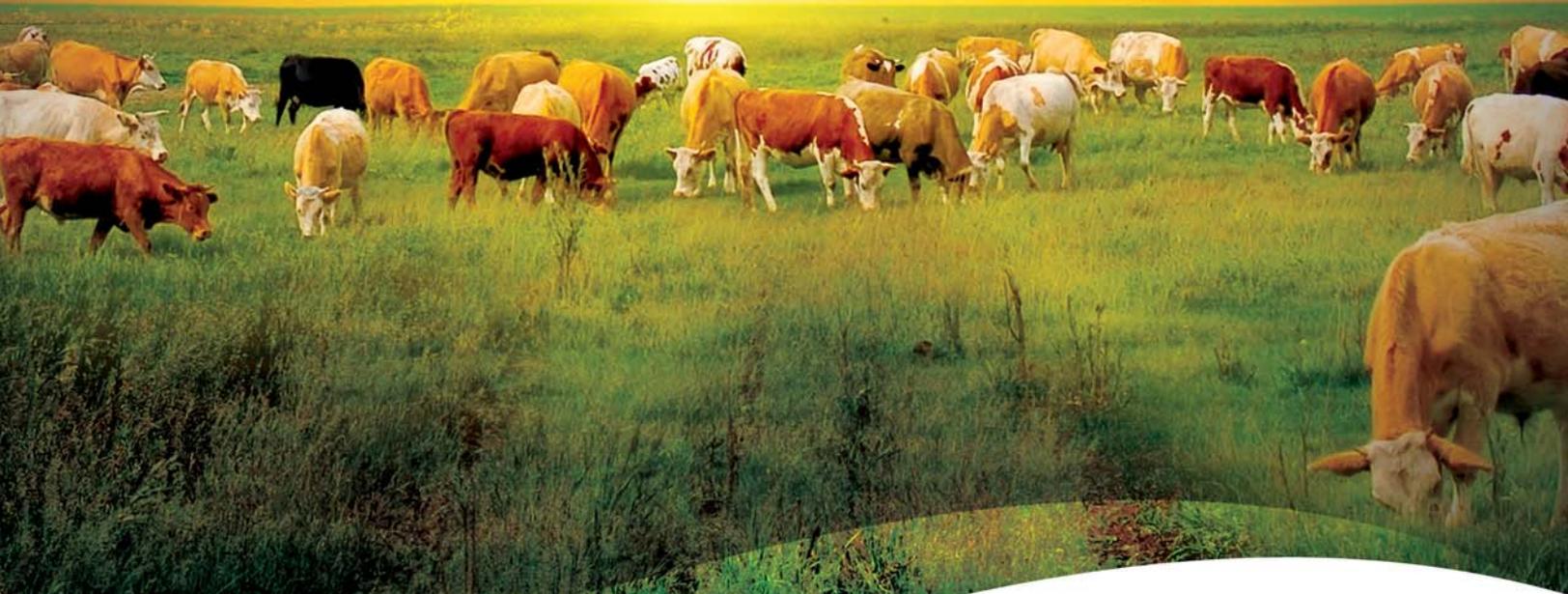




April 13, 2012

# NEWSLETTER

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## Focussing on Animal Welfare

By Cam Dahl, General Manager, Manitoba Beef Producers

Animal welfare. These two words often evoke a strong response from livestock producers across the country who feel that their way of life is under siege by those who don't understand them and don't grasp what they do for society.

One just has to look at a few headlines to understand why farmers may feel this way. Animal rights groups are focussed on agriculture and they are calling on the public to support their efforts. Often our response has been to be dismissive of the concerns raised. But animal agriculture needs to take a step back from the traditional defensive responses to these issues.

Activist groups like to portray our producers as heartless exploiters of their animals. But that is simply not the case. All of the farmers I know care very deeply about the welfare of the livestock under their care. Producers go to extraordinary measures, sometimes at significant personal sacrifice, to protect the health of their animals.

Activists do have it wrong, but that is not a reason to dismiss, out of hand, concerns from civil society. Consumers in Canada and throughout our key international markets are demanding to know more about their food. Where does that steak come from? Who produced it? How was it raised?

Governments are responding to these questions. After all, the people asking are the same ones that elect politicians to office. If we, agricultural producers, don't answer these questions the only people left to provide information are the activists.

Governments are not the only ones who are paying attention to the question "where does my food come from?" Our customers are paying attention as well. Large purchasers like McDonalds and Walmart are developing contracts that specify how the meat they sell must be produced. Our customers are not developing these codes because it makes them feel good, they are taking these steps in response to consumer demand. [Continued: READ MORE HERE](#)

### Upcoming Events

#### SAVE THE DATE!

**February 7 & 8, 2013:** MBP's Annual General Meeting, Victoria Inn, Brandon, MB. More details to come!

**April 26:** Agriculture in the Classroom – Manitoba's 23rd Annual General Meeting. Visit [www.aitc.mb.ca](http://www.aitc.mb.ca). MBP is a proud member of Agriculture in the Classroom – Manitoba.

### Trust Fund Donations

Memorial donations may be made in memory of Major Jay Fox to a trust fund for his children Devon, Charlee, Porter and Major. Donations may be made at any branch of TD Canada Trust.

### BIXS Provider

Did you know that MBP is a [Third Party Service Provider](#) for the [Beef InfoXchange System](#) (BIXS)? MBP will provide workshops on the system in the near future. Contact MBP for more information on upcoming learning workshops at [info@mbbeef.ca](mailto:info@mbbeef.ca).

## MBP Bursaries: Apply Today!

Each year Manitoba Beef Producers is pleased to offer four \$500 bursaries for MBP members or their children attending a university, college or other post-secondary institution or pursuing trades training.



Preference will be given to students pursuing a field of study related to agriculture or to those acquiring a skilled trade that would be beneficial to the rural economy.

**Completed applications must be submitted by June 1, 2012.** A selection committee will review the submissions. Winners will be notified by August 31, 2012.

### Eligibility:

- must be at least 17 years of age as of January 1, 2012
- must be an active Manitoba beef producer or the child of an active Manitoba beef producer
- must use the bursary within two years

Read the [full requirements here](#).

*\*Bursary winners will be published in the MBP newspaper Cattle Country.*

### Note to Auction Marts and Producers:

MBP's former Field Rep, Tara Fulton, has moved on to a new position (we miss her already!) and MBP will not have a rep at auction marts for the next few weeks.

Please contact the MBP office with any questions or issues we can assist with.

### Need to age verify your cattle?

Help is available through Manitoba Beef Producers.

Please call Lacé at 1-800-772-0458.

\*Please submit your age verification information to Lacé a minimum of 24 hours prior to the sale. Thank you.

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