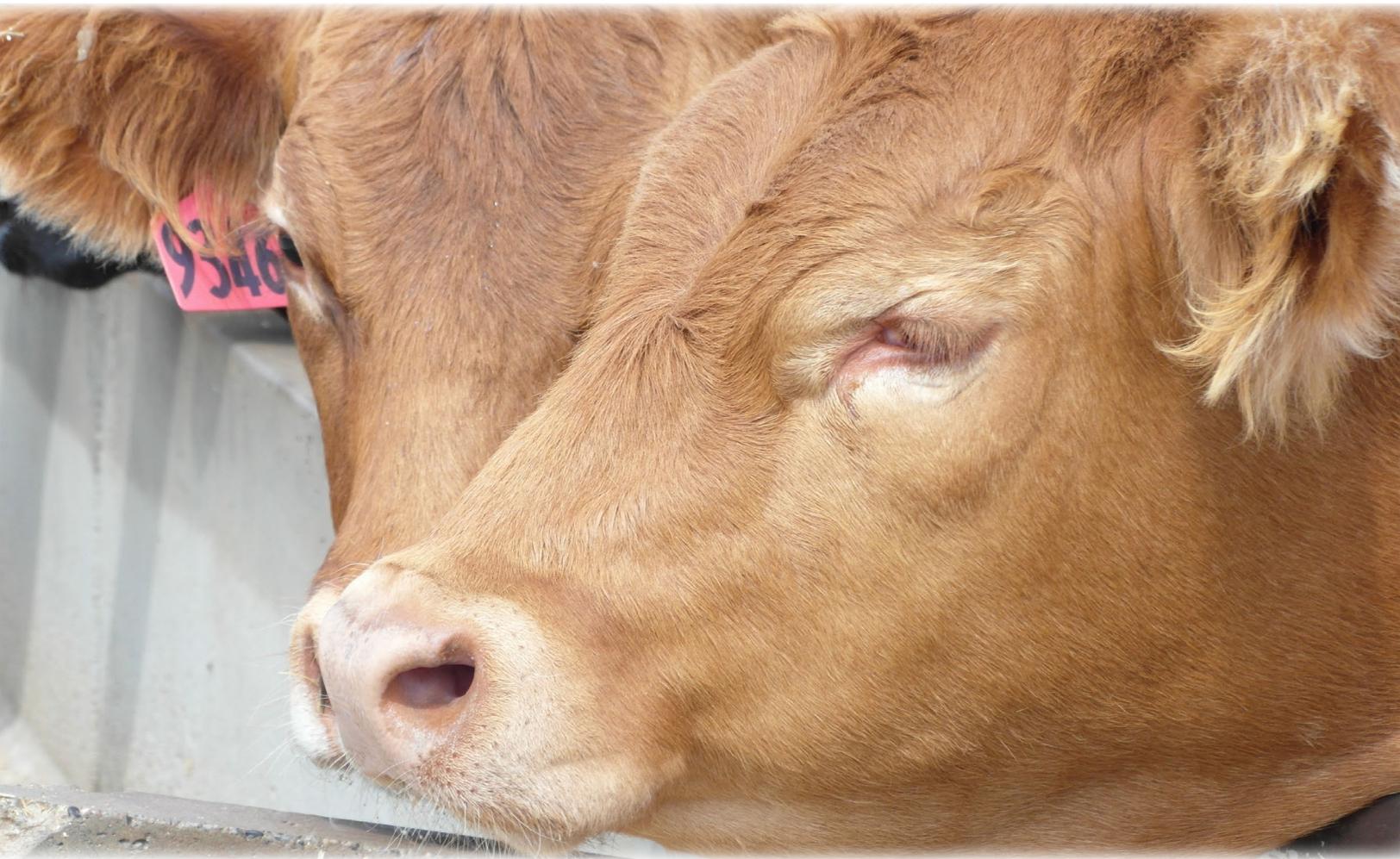


2014

Annual Report

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association



The Voice of Cattle Feeders Since 1973



Message from the Chair

Page Stuart | Board Chair



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Page Stuart'.

This proved to be a prolific year for the Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association (ACFA) as we actively built our social licence to operate, which is supported by four foundation pillars: Animal Care; Animal Health and Production; Environment; and People & Communities. The ACFA Board and its members are committed to environmentally sound, socially responsible, and economically viable practices that are efficient and sustainable. To this end, we continue to work proactively with our industry partners, regulators, and government decision-makers.

Our year started with a packed January AGM, attended by ACFA members, MPs, MLAs, and provincial cabinet ministers, followed by another successful Alberta Beef Industry Conference in February. Following through on our commitment to social licence, the ACFA held its third Big on Beef Gala dinner, where our People and Communities pillar was leveraged to raise \$16,600 for the Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta. Thanks to our generous sponsors, the 11th Annual ACFA Golf Tournament was another sold-out event supported by our members, associate members, and government representatives.

We have made a concerted effort this year to reach out to our partners. This effort included hosting Dr. Bruce Archibald, President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, on a feedlot tour in August. As well, farm safety is an area in which we've made significant progress and I would like to make special mention of all of the organizations represented on the Intensive Livestock Working Group for their tireless efforts to establish a province-wide agricultural safety network. Overarching all four of our pillars, we're pleased to be working with groups like the Canadian Round Table for Sustainable Beef and McDonald's Canada on their sustainability initiatives.

Our members continue to benefit from seeing the ACFA Strategic Plan in action through continuation of our research projects. These projects bring tangible and practical results for cattle feeders and are being conducted in partnership with other beef organizations and strategic partners to effectively move cattle feeding forward within a sustainable framework.

The industry experienced a number of important shifts over the last year, most notably record cattle prices. While this strengthens profitability across the beef value chain, the dramatic increase in equity requirement unquestionably creates additional business risk. To address this, we are establishing partnerships to increase educational opportunities in risk management for industry members.

This year's annual report demonstrates the wide range of ACFA activities that are strengthening Alberta's cattle feeding sector, including our work on labour and regional wage disparity, exemptions from changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, our participation in the Labour Action Plan, and taking the lead on implementing the recent Alberta Agriculture Labour Summit. We have also contributed to our sector through hosting a Feedlot Emergency Preparedness workshop and a C. Bovis symposium.

It is our intent to be active and engaged with issues affecting our members. This includes encouraging and listening to the next generation of cattle feeders . . . and we are listening. Please engage with me on Twitter @PageAlberta, and help me negotiate the social media learning curve!

I would like to extend a special thanks to the ACFA staff for their continued hard work and diligence, and to the ACFA Board for their commitment and time. To all our ACFA members and industry partners: I welcome your feedback and encourage you to reach out anytime at (780) 603-7872 or at LPageStuart@gmail.com. Thank you to everyone across our industry for joining me in the same conversations, in the same room, at the same time; I appreciate your shared commitment to our industry.

“Our members continue to benefit from seeing the ACFA Strategic Plan in action...this year's annual report demonstrates the wide range of ACFA activities that are strengthening Alberta's cattle feeding sector.”

Message from the CEO

Bryan Walton | Chief Executive Officer

The Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association is looking forward to working with our partners in industry to implement projects and initiatives outlined in our five strategies. We are putting increased emphasis on communications as we describe our industry, based on the four pillars of our social licence: Animal Care; Animal Health and Production; Environment; and People & Communities.

ACFA continues to advocate for its members with government and industry organizations. We have set the pace in industry for 42 years, and anticipate implementing a full agenda of initiatives and projects throughout 2015.

Two of these initiatives are the Feedlot Awareness campaign and the Recruitment campaign. These two will work together to educate the public about intensive livestock operations and the array of job opportunities and career growth that the cattle feeding sector offers. Collaborating with stakeholders, ACFA's Recruitment campaign will assist our members and others in the industry to advertise and recruit more effectively, and secure a sustainable workforce.

ACFA was instrumental in establishing a coalition called the Agriculture Industry Labour Council of Alberta (AILCA). This coalition brings all the major agriculture organizations in Alberta together in an effort to amplify our voice on labour and employment issues. We will continue advocacy efforts in urging the federal and provincial governments to respond to our chronic labour shortages by implementing the Labour Action Plan.

Completing the Feedlot Animal Care Assessment Tool, the Feedlot Emergency Preparedness Plan, and the development of a new Histophilosis vaccine are all projects that ACFA will be focusing on in 2015. Work will also continue on the Feed Coalition and the ACFA-supported Barley Straw Project in order to provide cattle feeders with options for enhanced feed and production efficiencies.

ACFA is the vanguard for our industry in several areas including business risk management. With the high price of cattle, feeders are assuming ever-increasing financial risk that requires prudent planning. We are working to find risk mitigation solutions to ensure ongoing financial viability and profitability for our sector. To this end, ACFA is developing a new business risk management curriculum in conjunction with Lethbridge College and the new Cor Van Raay Southern Alberta Agribusiness Program.

We are also working to ensure that government compensation and disaster assistance programs reflect the current financial realities of the beef industry.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our engaged and committed Board of Directors, members, staff, and contractors for their continued efforts on behalf of the beef industry and the cattle feeding sector in Alberta.

“ACFA continues to advocate for its members with government and industry organizations. We have set the pace in industry for 42 years, and anticipate implementing a full agenda of initiatives and projects throughout 2015.”



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan Walton". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Year in Review

Strategy 1

Work with partners to access and develop markets that maximize value for our members

ACFA engages a network of industry and government partners to secure new export opportunities and a more advantageous environment for trade. This work yielded significant dividends in 2014 through new agreements with the EU (CETA) and South Korea (CKFTA).

- ACFA, through membership in the National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA) and the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA), engaged with a number of partners to achieve a more advantageous environment for trade. Examples include the Market Access Secretariat (MAS), the Beef Cattle Trade Advisory Group (BCTAG), the Beef Cattle Policy Advisory Committee (BCPAC), the Beef Value Chain Roundtable (BVCRT), the federal departments of Agriculture and International Trade, and the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA).
- In March 2014, the new CKFTA was announced. This agreement with South Korea will see the 40% tariff on beef eliminated over the next 15 years and the 18% tariff on offal eliminated over the next 11 years. The CKFTA is on track for implementation by January 1, 2015.
- The new CETA with the European Union – signed in Ottawa in September 2014 – eliminates the 20% tariff on the Hilton Beef Quota (15,000 tonnes annually) and provides duty free access for an additional 50,000 tonnes per year. While full implementation may take another two years, ACFA is working with government and industry now to ensure Canada is well positioned to take advantage when the agreement comes into force.
- Hitting back on US “country-of-origin” labelling (COOL) is a top priority for ACFA. In 2013, the federal government requested a WTO compliance panel on the latest version of COOL, and also published a list of potential retaliatory tariffs. In 2014, the WTO again ruled in favour of Canada. ACFA has urged the government to remain firm on retaliation, and via NCFA, contributed \$165,000 to the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) to fight COOL.
- ACFA will continue working toward expanded export opportunities, with unrestricted access to Japan being a priority. We will continue advocating for the changes required to access these markets, especially improved labour policy and increased packer capacity.



Strategy 2

Enhance competitiveness by reducing regulatory burdens

Government regulations touch all aspects of beef production. In 2014, ACFA worked to reform and reduce the regulatory burden by advocating for alternatives that reflect the business realities of cattle feeding and building a positive relationship with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

- In July, ACFA Chair Page Stuart hosted CFIA President Dr. Bruce Archibald and members of his team from the western regional office (Alberta North) to a tour of Highland Feeders in Vegreville, AB. Through these types of activities, ACFA maintains an ongoing connection with the CFIA in Ottawa and its regional and area offices.
- The participation of the CFIA was also secured in a number of important ACFA activities in 2014. For example, the CFIA is an active participant on the advisory committee tasked with overseeing the development of a Feedlot Emergency Preparedness Plan. The CFIA was also a key partner at ACFA's May 2014 symposium on C. Bovis prevention in feedlot cattle.
- Through NCFA, Alberta cattle feeders are plugged into the CFIA's comprehensive regulatory modernization initiative. Cattle feeders provided input on the Product of Canada label, regulations for feed ingredients and labelling, and the transport of livestock. ACFA has also urged the CFIA to consider now the regulatory changes that can be made when Canada secures “negligible” risk status for BSE. This will allow cattle feeders to maximize the competitive advantages that come from this status.
- Cattle feeders can continue importing veterinary pharmaceuticals for their own use as a result of work with the Beef Cattle Policy Advisory Committee and CFIA's Veterinary Drug Directorate. The December 2013 CFIA final report satisfies the interests of our sector. Securing simultaneous approvals of veterinary pharmaceuticals in Canada and the US will continue as a priority.
- To expedite two-way trade in live animals across the Canada-US border, ACFA and NCFA helped devise a pilot project using e-signatures at the Sumas, Eastport, and Sweetgrass border crossings in July 2014. At last count over 200 loads of cattle have been shipped using e-signatures. ACFA will advocate for an expansion of the pilot and continue lobbying for a full e-certification system.



Strategy 3

Identify and advocate for research priorities and programs that support our vision and mission

ACFA supports research and development projects that strengthen Alberta's beef industry and generate value for our members. In 2014, new projects were created to enhance communications, connect with consumers, and cement the four pillars of our social licence to operate. Our message is clear – cattle feeders play a vital role in Canada's beef production and are committed to providing safe, healthy, and high quality food in a socially responsible way.

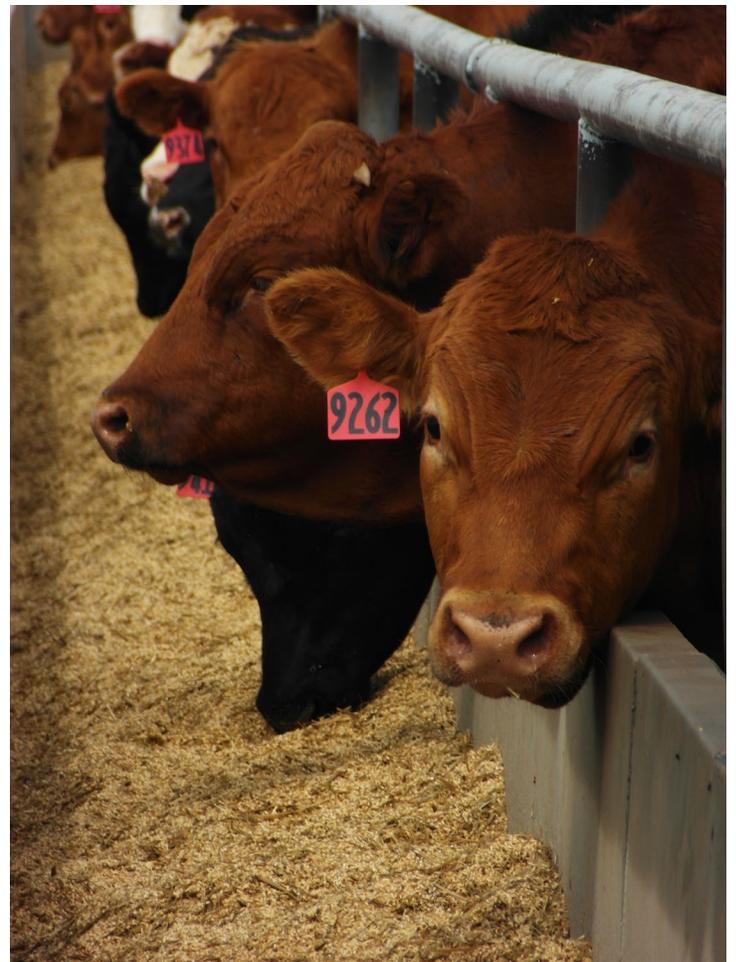
- Pillar #1: Cattle feeders follow recommended and recognized standards of animal care. ACFA helped develop the national Beef Code of Practice and is now working with NCFCA on a new Feedlot Animal Care Assessment Tool. ACFA works with important animal care organizations like Alberta Farm Animal Care and participates in related programming such as the Canadian Livestock Transport Certification Program.
- Pillar #2: Cattle feeders employ best practices in animal health and production. ACFA is heavily invested in the development of a new Histophilosis vaccine, forage and feed grain research, the Barley Straw Project, and the Feed Coalition. ACFA works with groups such as the Canadian Animal Health Coalition, the Canadian Animal Health Institute, and the Animal Nutrition Association of Canada.
- Pillar #3: Cattle feeders enhance environmental stewardship. ACFA led the drive for a Feedlot Emergency Preparedness Plan to protect animals, the environment, and human health in case of a disease outbreak or natural disaster. Cattle feeders also participated in several environmental impact studies such as AARD's Livestock Impact on Groundwater Quality in Alberta. We interact regularly with the Natural Resources Conservation Board on environmental initiatives, and are tied into the Intensive Livestock Working Group and Agri-Environmental Partnership of Alberta.
- Pillar #4: Cattle feeders invest in people and their communities. In 2014, ACFA's golf tournament and Big on Beef festival raised \$16,600 for Kids Cancer Care. Another \$26,000 was raised with Cattlewomen for the Cure at the Alberta Beef Industry Conference for STARS Air Ambulance. Our new Feedlot Awareness and Recruitment campaigns will link the local labour market with career opportunities in the sector. In 2014, ACFA introduced the concept of a Business Risk Management curriculum at the Lethbridge College. ACFA also recognized the significant career contribution made by Dr. Stephen Morgan Jones to Alberta's cattle feeding industry by granting to him the ACFA Honorary Life Member award for 2014.

Strategy 4

Work to improve industry relations, governance, and funding

ACFA is committed to working with other beef organizations to strengthen the industry and improve both governance and funding.

- When the provincial check-off was made refundable in Alberta, ACFA and ABP subsequently signed a Memorandum of Agreement to make \$1 of the \$3 check-off non-refundable. The MOA calls for quarterly meetings between the executives of the two organizations. Meetings were held throughout 2014 with a special facilitated discussion on industry governance and funding held in October. These exchanges continue to build a spirit of cooperation, respect, and collaboration.
- ACFA suggested that industry governance and funding be addressed in ABP's 2014 Statutory Review, and also urged ABP to consider the full range of options that might be considered for the future. A higher level of agreement around industry governance and funding would strengthen the working relationship that exists between ACFA and ABP.
- ACFA continued to advocate for improved governance and accountability from Canada Beef Inc. ACFA appointed a representative to serve on the CBI Board and also sent a full slate of delegates to the 2014 Forum in Toronto. ACFA and ABP have worked cooperatively to resolve a number of shared concerns with CBI.



Year in Review

Strategy 5

Build our membership by delivering value

As a voluntary and membership-driven organization, ACFA is committed to providing our members with benefits from our advocacy, research, events, and activities.

- In 2014, ACFA was chosen to chair the Agriculture Industry Labour Council of Alberta (AILCA). This coalition sponsored a highly successful Agriculture Labour Summit in Red Deer in October. The summit drew over 170 people and generated ideas on how the labour challenges facing agriculture might be better addressed.
- ACFA's work on the provincial labour challenge was complemented by NCFAs effort to secure changes in the federal Temporary Foreign Workers' Program (TFWP). As a result of advocacy, feedlots were designated as primary agriculture under the TFWP and were exempted from the new program fee and the cap on the number of foreign workers at each farm.
- It has been suggested that the province place agriculture under Occupational Health and Safety regulations and the Workers' Compensation Board. ACFA responded with a policy brief demonstrating the ineffectiveness of a legislative approach to farm safety, and urged adoption of the recommendations of the Alberta Farm Safety Advisory Council. AFCA chair Page Stuart served as the industry chair of the Council, and the industry lead on the Work Safe Alberta Joint Strategic Advisory Body. An outcome of this effort was the strong recommendation for a provincial farm safety coordinating body.
- Environmental concerns continue to touch every economic sector, including cattle feeding. ACFA supports industry's efforts to develop and adopt new technologies, as well as lead by example. Cattle feeders adhere to all regulations – often exceed them – and value the environment just as much as other stakeholders. As stewards of the environment, ACFA will continue to sound this message.



- ACFA connected with rural municipal leaders, municipal associations, and provincial officials to begin addressing rural infrastructure issues, particularly the funding required for roadways and the rehabilitation and replacement of bridges.
- ACFA communications took a leap forward in 2014 by retaining the services of a new Communications Manager and the publishing of opinion editorials in the media on issues such as farm safety, foreign workers, and production enhancing technologies. A new ACFA communications plan was drafted and a complete redesign of the association's website is underway.
- Embracing youth and grooming a new generation of cattle feeders is integral for our sector's future. This is the purpose of ACFA's "Young Producers" initiative, where youth are invited to ACFA Board meetings and events. The Feedlot Awareness campaign, the Recruitment campaign, and the new Business Risk Management project will sharpen ACFA's focus on the next generation.
- The 2014 Alberta Beef Industry Conference was held in Red Deer in February, and attracted over 430 delegates. For the third consecutive year, ACFA sponsored a festival to celebrate Alberta beef. The Big on Beef festival featured a gala dinner, a celebrity chef, and a top-of-the-line gourmet menu. An added feature for 2014 was the Producer's Day held on location at Save-On-Food stores. Once again, ACFA's ever popular Annual Golf Tournament sold out again in 2014. Given the multitude of industry activities these days, the sustained support for ACFA's events demonstrates the value we deliver to our members and the industry at large.

ACFA Directors & Staff

ACFA Board of Directors

Chair: Page Stuart, 1141516 Alberta Ltd
Vice-Chair: Leighton Kolk, Kolk Farms
Past Chair: Brent Chaffee, Strangmuir Holdings
Directors: Jason Hagel, Hagel Feeders
Ryan Kasko, Kasko Cattle Company
John Lawton, AJL Farms
Lyle Miller, Highway 21 Feeders
John Schooten, Schooten and Sons Custom Feedyard
Mike Sears, Mesabi Ranches
Curtis Vander Heyden, Grandview Cattle Feeders
Jeff Warrack, Bruce Farms
Keith Ypma, Sunset Feeders
Martin Zuidhof, Zuidhof Feeders

ACFA Staff

Chief Executive Officer: Bryan Walton
Manager, Policy and Research: Casey Vander Ploeg
Administration and ALPS Coordinator: Kimberli Nummi
Manager, Events and Member Services: Jennifer Brunette
Financial Manager: Joe Novecosky

ACFA/NCA Contracted Staff

Communications Manager: Shannon Lyons
Government Relations Consultant (Ottawa): Cathy Jo Noble
Government Relations Consultant (Ottawa): Peter Brackenridge
International Trade Consultant (Ottawa): John Weekes



Back row from the left: Bryan Walton, Jason Hagel, John Schooten, Leighton Kolk, John Lawton, Martin Zuidhof, and Keith Ypma.
Front row from the left: Curtis Vander Heyden, Ryan Kasko, Page Stuart, Brent Chaffee, and Lyle Miller.
Missing: Mike Sears & Jeff Warrack.

Who We Are

Since 1973, the Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association (ACFA) has represented the interests of cattle feeders in Alberta on a broad range of policy and economic issues that affect their competitiveness. ACFA continues to develop strategies to achieve long-term success for Alberta's cattle feeding sector. Our organization is a leader in guiding the industry to become more sustainable, profitable, and competitive in a challenging global marketplace.

Our Vision

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association — creating the opportunity for the world to enjoy high-quality Canadian beef.

Our Mission

To aggressively pursue innovative and collaborative solutions for a thriving Alberta beef industry on behalf of Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association members.



Contact Us

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