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Issue #369: February 28, 2018

ACFA AGM 2018 Highlights

More than 100 people attended this year's AGM that was held on February 21 at the Red Deer Sheraton. A moment of silence was observed to remember John Vander Heyden Sr., who recently passed away. John was a pioneer for cattle feeders in Alberta and will be greatly missed.

Chair Martin Zuidhof gave highlights of the past year's activities, such as our 2017 strategic plan. Implementation of recommendations from the governance review, launch of the Alberta Feedlot Safety Program, strategic engagement with the AgCoalition and AgSafe Alberta Society, funding the Lethbridge livestock "head tax" appeal, improving the Western Livestock Price Insurance Program (WLPIP), and funding the new Beef Research Cluster (III) with a \$150,000 commitment over the next five years, were other notable 2017 accomplishments covered by Martin.

CEO Bryan Walton provided a summary of ongoing and future activities anticipated for 2018. These include engaging the province on the new K-12 education curriculum, participation with ABP at an MLA reception, hosting our annual November MLA Dinner and working with the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group on improved recycling options and solutions. ACFA's position statements will be renewed and we will continue to ensure new OHS regulations, employment standards, and the labour code work for cattle feeders.

On the labour front, advocating for changes to the AINP and TFWP programs is also on the agenda, including meeting with Deputy Minister Jeff Parr on March 12 in Edmonton. ACFA sits on the new AgSafe Alberta Society's board, and recently secured Alberta Labour funding to create training and education videos to reinforce our Feedlot Safety Program.

Vice Chair Ryan Kasko reported on the new model agreed to by the ABP and ACFA boards on industry governance and funding. ACFA members approved the following resolution:

Whereas ACFA and ABP have worked in good faith to create a New Era Beef Industry (NEBI) agreement; and

Whereas the board has approved in principle the NEBI agreement;

Be it resolved that ACFA accept the agreement as proposed and direct the Board of Directors to finalize the NEBI agreement on or before January 1, 2019.

Four other resolutions were made from the floor, and all four were subsequently approved by vote of the membership:

1. That ACFA lobby the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta to reduce total corporate taxes for business by 6% so that businesses in Alberta remain competitive with those of the US.
2. That ACFA lobby the Government of Canada to eliminate supply management in the dairy and poultry industries.

3. That ACFA partner with any cattle industry group provincially and nationally that will support a more efficient and transparent traceability program by lobbying the CCIA, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and the CFIA to open up information on all RFID tags to any participant in the beef value chain.
4. That ACFA study and propose a better RFID tag that can be scanned at high speed and greater range.

Director Jacob Bueckert went over several amendments to the ACFA by-laws, which were subsequently approved by the membership. As Chair of the Governance, Finance, and Audit Committee, Jacob also reported on the 2016/17 financials and Catalyst was appointed as the Auditor for the 2017/18 fiscal year.

An election was held to fill six positions on the ACFA Board. Jacob Bueckert, Karleen Clark, Ryan Kasko, Greg Schmidt, John Schooten, and Jeff Smith were all elected.



Bryan Walton, who is retiring in 2019, was thanked for his significant contributions to ACFA in his role as President and CEO over the past 11 years and was then presented with ACFA's *Honorary Life Membership Award* by past Chair, Jeff Warrack.

L-R: Martin Zuidhof, Bryan Walton, Jeff Warrack Photo credit: Tony Kok

Lastly, it was announced that the Annual ACFA Golf Tournament will take place on June 5, 2018 at Paradise Canyon in Lethbridge.

We would like to thank our special guests Melinda German, General Manager of the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-off Agency and Frances Andres, Executive Vice President of Canada Beef Inc. for their informative presentations.

ACFA looks forward to supporting you and the industry throughout the coming year.

Thank you,

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association