

# WHAT WE DO TODAY IMPACTS TOMORROW

**C**olorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is prepared for another year of opportunities for advancing the cattle industry, but also recognizes that our operating landscape has become increasingly challenging. In 2021, CCA expects the following list of issues to come to the forefront of our industry, some by our making and some by others. Regardless, beef producers cannot stand by and must lead from the front and take charge of setting their own destiny. To

this extent, CCA through its leadership is developing ongoing strategies to protect our industry's heritage while advancing the legacy of beef production. However, the direct engagement of membership is necessary to continue to propel CCA forward as the collective voices from our industry are a powerful force. Involvement and engagement may look different for individual members, but below CCA has outlined ways to **get involved** in CCA and the industry.



## Ag Labor

CCA and a coalition of ag organizations were successful in leading an effort to mirror state labor regulations in a similar fashion to supported federal ag labor laws. This was a huge success, but was unfortunately recognized by labor activists as a threat to their agenda.

In the coming months, the industry expects litigation and legislation from these activist cells, but even worse, these activists are seeking to dismantle components of our supply chain and consumer trust and preference for our product.

CCA is actively organizing industry information and coalitions to battle this attack against the agriculture industry and its workers. Part of a strategic plan to combat these attacks includes telling the true story of the ag workforce and the benefits of this type of work. Other actions include stopping an egregious bill at the Capitol this year and shedding light on the misrepresentation of agriculture labor by certain members of the state's Food Systems Advisory Task Force.

## Get Involved

- Join CCA's Ag Policy, Tax, and Finance committee.
- Open a line of communication with your employees about their employment, their value to your business, and awareness of activists posing as advocates for ag workers.

## Get Involved

- Join CCA's Beef Improvement committee or CCA's Marketing committee
- Attend CSU and CCA's Ranching Legacy Lecture-ship: "Beef University" to learn more about all aspects of beef processing and production. Details will be released soon.



## Direct to Consumer Marketing of Beef

One positive outcome from the pandemic in 2020 was a revived sense of interest in direct to consumer marketing of beef. Many consumers that had only purchased product from stores were actively seeking locally produced beef. Additionally, these consumers wanted to learn more about the production of their beef and the families that produce it.

Many of these first-time local beef purchasers have adapted their buying habits and are interested in continuing to purchase their beef directly from producers.

To accommodate the increase in locally produced beef and to support local processors, CCA is seeking the development of grant opportunities to help expand and modernize facilities. CCA is working on state and national legislation related to enhancing local processing capacity. CCA is committed to defending the trust and safety of our product is paramount regardless of any regulatory or legislative actions connected to processing. For those individuals that want to directly market their beef to consumers, CCA has assisted in providing resources to better understand proper labeling and marketing programs for selling direct to market beef.

## Get Involved

- This is a broad topic, join any of the following committees to give your input in this discussion: Ag Policy, Tax, and Finance; Beef Improvement; Marketing; and Property Rights and Resource Stewardship
- Explore risk management opportunities in CCA's Risk Management and Lands Membership Center
- Engage at the local level to develop policy that defines beef industries priorities for the next Farm Bill
- Market issues should not be forgotten or dismissed as the industry has done in the past. We must stay vigilant and focused until we have the solutions that deliver the markets that we all deserve.



## Markets, Diversification, and Risk Management

As the operational landscape has changed for beef producers, including increased cost of production and increased volatility of markets, the ability to be profitable is increasingly challenging in our industry. For these reasons, among others, the beef industry requires the development of diversified revenue streams and enhancement of risk management strategies. Furthermore, the assurance of fair cattle markets.

There are no guarantees that natural disasters, market disruptions, or governmental overreach won't continue to impact beef producers' bottom line. Beef producers are accustomed to risk, but need more opportunities at their disposal. Efforts are underway to ensure price discovery in cattle markets along with exploration of regulatory frameworks, like Packers and Stockyards modernization.

CCA has policy and has been working to develop payment for ecosystem service markets, such as Colorado's Habitat Exchange and the potential for other environmental markets. Similar to the Pasture, Range, and Forage Insurance program, the development of other market risk mitigation tools will be evaluated as a component of the Farm Bill and private enterprise offerings. CCA is pursuing private enterprises solutions to equitable price discovery throughout our supply chain. Additionally, CCA supports Packers and Stockyards looking beyond anti-trust regulation to also include business standards that ensure one sector of the industry isn't taking advantage of another.



## Beef Production Benefiting the Climate

Inaccurate information and the threat of regulation has damaged beef production's image in society, particularly when discussing environmental impacts. Beef production not only creates resilience in our resources, but contemporary research is illustrating that beef production's impact is nearly negligible and has the potential to benefit the climate.

These inaccuracies have propelled supply chain pressure without compensation for change in production practices, societal perceptions that beef is bad for the environment, and ultimately harmful, expensive regulation of the industry.

CCA is partnering with research institutions and the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef to promote, develop, and share accurate information about beef production's beneficial role (i.e. grazing management plans, the use of new technologies, upcycling, etc.). CCA is advocating for the beef industry to lead with our science, messaging, and solutions surrounding climate and began this discussion at CCA's Mid-Winter Conference and will continue in the interim until CCA's Annual Convention, where membership will have the opportunity to vote on the final position on our industry led climate objectives.

## Get Involved

- Join CCA's Property Rights and Resource Stewardship committee
- Take the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef "Self Assessment" and share your contributions as a responsible steward of land, water, air, and biodiversity.
- Stay engaged with CCA and the beef production value chain to document and communicate, to policy makers and others, the regenerative benefit of cattle and their role in effectively stewarding our natural resources.

## Get Involved

- Join any of CCA's 10 steering committees
- Continually insist on two-way engagement with the administration and provide support to agency representatives who are supporting the beef industry
- Regardless of invitation, our members' voices must be heard. Make your comments publicly, with respect and accuracy, and share in any opportunity that is presented.



## It Takes Two: Colorado Administration and the Beef Industry

Colorado agriculture is consistently the second or third largest industry in the state, with the beef industry representing 68% of agriculture's contributions. Additionally the industry provides open space, recreation, and food and fiber that benefit our state's economy, environment, and communities. Sadly, the members that contribute so much to our state have had their voices stifled.

Conventional agriculture believes that it doesn't have an advocate in the state for their industry. Historically, we have always been engaged in discussions leading up to decisions. While we have always supported a diverse group of voices on issues important to the beef industry, we now find the core of agriculture being excluded.

Even with diminished accessibility, CCA has stayed diligent in representing the beef industry's perspectives. We are nominating and assisting members with securing board and commission seats, submitting comments related to legislation and regulations in the state, and monitoring and responding to actions taken by the administration on a state and federal level. Administrations come and go, but beef producers and the citizens of Colorado live on. We owe it to our state and to our members to have transparent communication on issues important to Colorado.

do. To this end, CCA and like-minded partners will be initiating a public service announcement approach on behalf of those whose voices have been forgotten.



## Freedom to Operate

As with our country, the core principles that the beef industry was built on are based on the freedom to operate. Beef producers embrace their responsibilities as stewards of the land, animals, and resources around them and abide by a high standard of care. However, beef producers face plenty of challenges that present themselves in extreme regulatory and litigious burdens that are both unnecessary and restrictive to our ability to grow food in this county.

Common sense should dictate that Colorado needs more water storage, dependable state and federal lands grazing, responsible species management (wolf, grouse, etc), recognition of private property rights, etc., but implementation is impeded by those who stand to gain more through litigation and donations than a prosperous Colorado. The greatest offense of all is discounting those whose livelihoods are spent working with the land.

CCA is an identity that brings together the collective voice of beef producers through grassroots policy development to accomplish what no single beef producer could accomplish alone. CCA has a 154 year track record of responsible and ethical representation of Colorado's beef industry that is second to none, and because of this, our members have a long history of success on their policy priorities. This is our association's lifelong commitment that we have delivered on successfully over time and will continue into the future.

## Get Involved

- Join any of CCA's 10 steering committees
- Join one of CCA's local affiliates to be part of developing the grassroots policy that guides the association.
- Help grow CCA's influence by growing CCA's membership and recruit members.

Image attribution: designed using resources from Flaticon.com