

THE Connection

Spring 2020 Volume 2, No. 1

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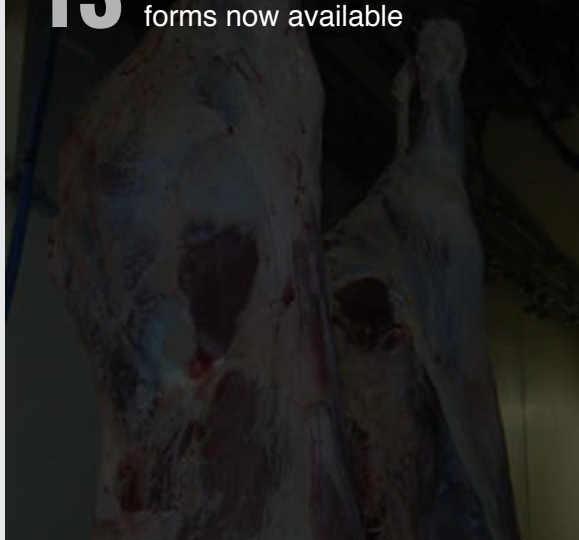
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Chair's MESSAGE



Tom Kroesbergen

Reflecting on the past five years

The past five years for Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) have been very busy for both our staff and Board. Starting a new producer organization takes more effort than I ever thought possible. This started with building the organization's mission statement and our core values; setting and reassessing our regulations with the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission (OFPMC); and building and maintaining relationships with our important industry partners. All these things have consumed a large part of our board and staff's time—but worth the investment.

As an organization, we have also refocused VFO; ending our partnerships with the goat organizations to focus fully on veal and veal issues. We are always in discussions with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) on our Risk Management Program as well as a host of other issues that involve OMAFRA.

The last five years have also been filled with completing our required regulation review with the OFPMC, establishing a licence fee sharing agreement with Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO), and having very productive discussions about national check-off with the Canadian Beef Check-off Agency. VFO has worked to improve relations with many of our industry partners, including BFO, Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Les Producteurs de Bovins du Quebec, Canadian Veal Association (CVA), Canada Beef, and many others.

VFO administers the CVA on behalf of Ontario and Quebec. Through the CVA, we have driven the process to increase the veal carcass weight limit to 190 kg or 419 lbs on the rail. This is a very exciting accomplishment for VFO and CVA, and one that has been discussed for years. Another great accomplishment for VFO is our *Ontario's Best Veal Sandwich* contest with celebrity spokesperson John Catucci. This contest has become a flagship program for us, working with restaurants and culinary schools to promote veal.

This list of accomplishments is just some of the highlights—of course there is so much more I could talk about. I would like to first thank our staff for the work they do. These files have been more than enough to keep them busy. There is so much time, detail, and work that goes into accomplishing these things. I would also like to thank the Board for their time and vision. These types of issues are not generally things that we as producers must deal with regularly, and at times it can be a lot to wrap your head around.

With this list of accomplishments completed or well on its way to being finished, VFO can now refocus again. Veal marketing and calf health are going to be very important going forward, as well as government and industry relations. I look forward to seeing the results of the continued efforts of VFO Board and staff as they work for the benefit of our industry.

And now, it is time that I hand the torch to the next person who will become VFO Chair as I complete my term on the board. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as a Director and Chair with VFO and would encourage all veal producers to consider becoming a Director—it is a great learning experience. I am proud of the work VFO has done and will continue to do on behalf of its members. ■

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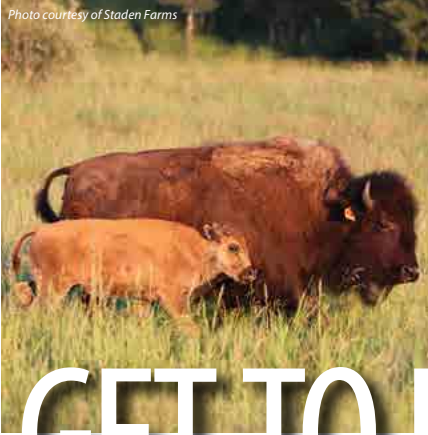
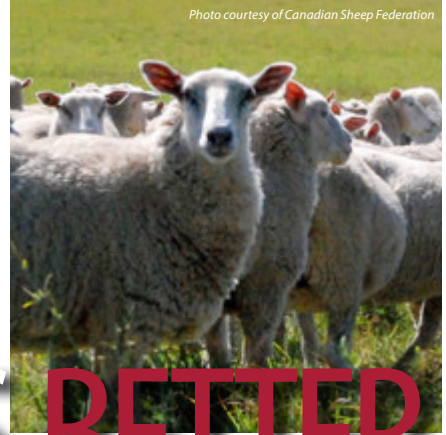


Photo courtesy of Canadian Sheep Federation



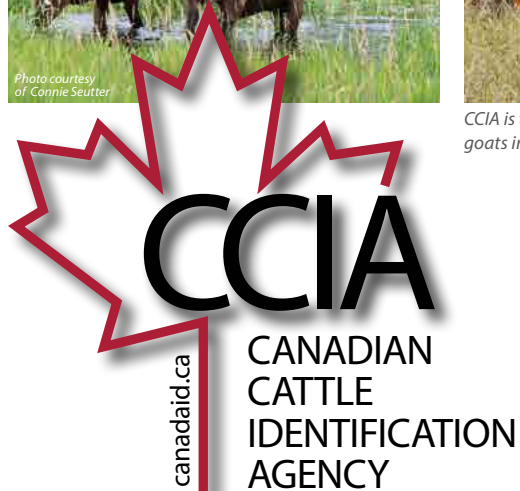
GET TO KNOW US BETTER



Photo courtesy of Connie Seutter



CCIA is the responsible administrator for beef and dairy cattle, bison, sheep and pending regulation cervids and goats in Canada (with exception of Quebec where CCIA only administers bison and goats.)



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Ask the Expert

Update on *Salmonella* Dublin in Ontario

Bovine Ontario Animal Health Network

Recently, the Bovine Ontario Animal Health Network summarized lab data for cases of *Salmonella* Dublin (S. Dublin) in Ontario. Before 2012, S. Dublin had never been found in Ontario cattle. Since then, the number of farms with a positive lab result have been increasing each year.

The most recent data available, up to October 2019, indicates 55 premises across the province have had a positive lab test. This data includes dairy, veal, and beef operations. The location of positive samples has been graphed by county in figure 1. Not surprisingly, counties with higher populations of cattle have a higher number of positive farms.

It's important to note that this data only represents cases where a veterinarian was contacted and samples from postmortem were submitted to the lab to make a diagnosis. There may be other undiagnosed cases in Ontario.

S. Dublin has been associated with severe outbreaks of respiratory disease. Typically calves between two weeks and five months are affected. S. Dublin bacteria enter the blood stream and circulate to organs such as the lungs, liver, spleen, joints, and stomach lining. Some calves may show a fever while others die rapidly with few signs, but generally cases do not respond to treatment and mortality is high.

One very concerning aspect of this disease is all the lab samples submitted between 2012 to 2019 show multi-drug resistance, including most antibiotics available for calf treatment. Since people can also become infected by S. Dublin, this is extra worrisome. As in cattle, infections in people can be serious due to the invasive nature of the disease and multi-drug resistance, often requiring hospitalization. On farms where S. Dublin could be present, everyone working with cattle should take basic biosecurity precautions to avoid infection. A diagnosis of S. Dublin should lead to a careful review of biosecurity practices around calf and people movement, hygiene, and manure management. Recommendations specific to each farm are necessary to respond to and manage S. Dublin.

For cattle operations that have not had cases of *Salmonella* Dublin, the goal is to keep it that way. Keeping out disease requires practicing strict biosecurity, including transport vehicles, and obtaining animals from reliable sources. ■

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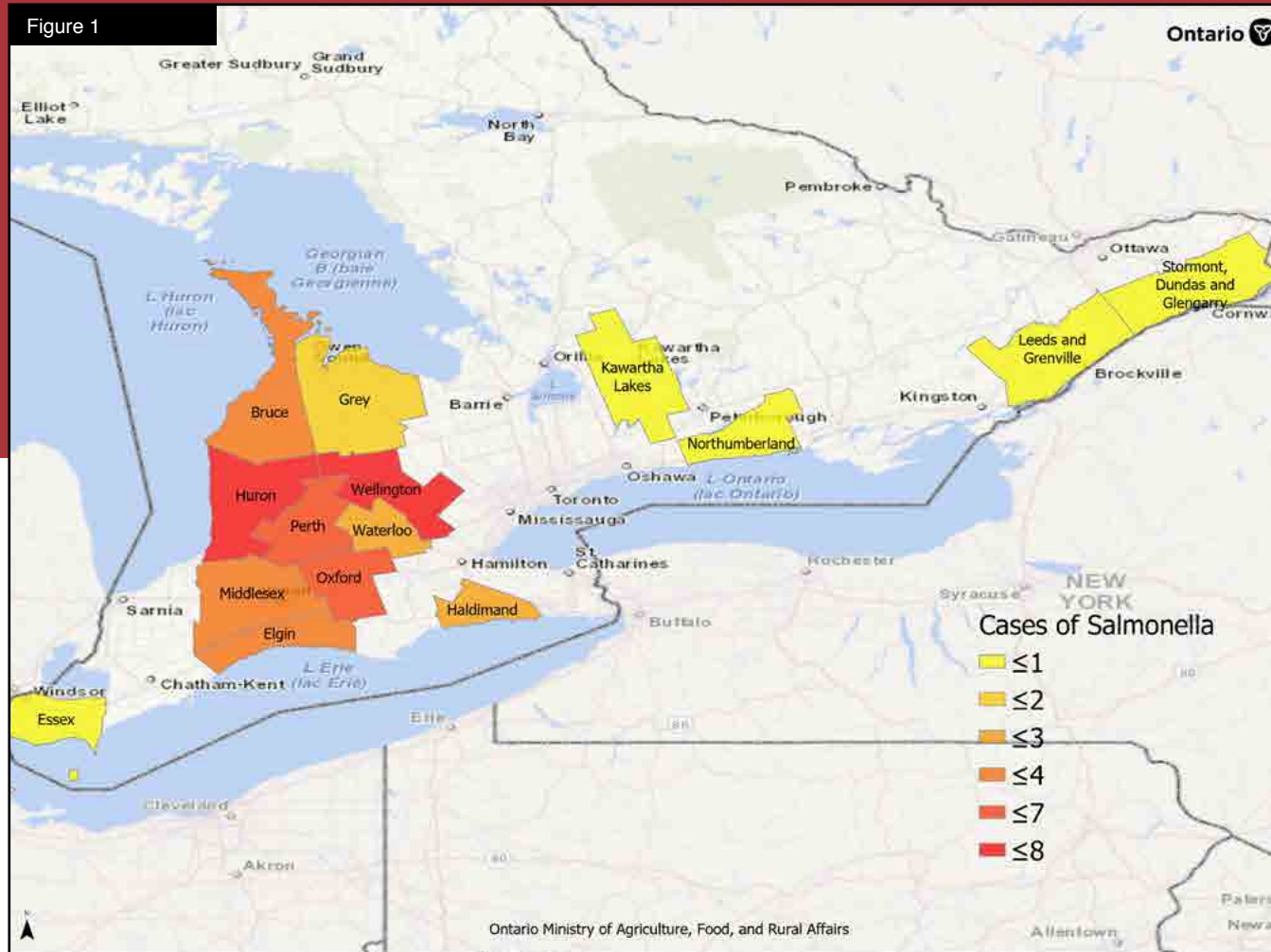
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The Bovine Ontario Animal Health Network is a group of veterinarians and specialists working in government, university research and laboratory, and in beef, dairy, and veal practice who meet regularly to monitor and discuss disease trends in Ontario. Our goals are to facilitate coordinated preparedness, early detection, and response to animal health and welfare in Ontario. For our recent reports or more information visit www.oahn.ca.

Figure 1



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Veal carcass weight increase now in effect



Increase provides some flexibility for producers and processors if properly managed

Jennifer Haley, Executive Director

Veal Farmers of Ontario/Canadian Veal Association

Together, Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) and the Canadian Veal Association (CVA), are pleased to announce that a new amendment to the Canadian Beef, Bison and Veal Carcass Grade Requirements is now in effect.

The issue of veal carcass weights—increasing the weights, overweight carcasses, and ungraded beef carcasses—has been something the veal industry has been grappling with for quite some time. Depending on your perspective, some might say it is about time, and some might say it is too little too late. Hopefully, most will say this is great news for the veal industry.

The process to change the upper weight limit is not a quick one. The last time the veal carcass weights were changed was in 2000, after much discussion between the Ontario and Quebec veal industries. At that time, the changes had to be made to legislation and regulations, involved the government, and was quite a lengthy process to complete.

With feedback from processors and farmers alike, VFO has raised the issue of increasing the weight of a veal carcass many times in the past, however, the regulatory process to make the changes were a barrier and the new process was not in place until recently.

Fast forward to 2019, the federal government finalized the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations* (SFCR) that incorporated by reference the *Beef, Bison and Veal Carcass Grading Reg-*

ulations Document. This meant that the grade standards were no longer part of a direct federal regulation. It also meant that industry could now manage grade standards and the Canadian Beef Grading Agency (CBGA) became responsible for the management and due process required to update them.

Once the CBGA developed their internal process for amendments they established a Livestock Grade Requirements Standing Committee (LGRSC), of which the CVA is a member (represented by Jennifer Haley), to review and recommend potential amendments to the grade standards document. This gave the Canadian veal industry the green light to move forward with proposed amendments and the opportunity to become the first industry group to partner with the CBGA and to test the 'incorporated by reference' system.

The CVA (supported by VFO) prepared a proposal for the LGRSC and from there the CVA was required to solicit support for the weight increase from Canadian retailers, and foodservice operators and distributors. Retailers, foodservice, processors, and our beef sector partners were in support of the amendment,

however, it was very clear that this was not something that the veal industry could take advantage of and keep coming back to amend. There is a line between a veal and beef carcass that must be respected and adhered to.

Once reviewed by the LGRSC, the CBGA approved the amendment and the consultation process began. And then...the federal election was called in September putting a halt to everything. Once the election was completed, the consultation period was restarted and completed in December.

The CBGA made the proposal official and this amendment now brings the maximum weight limit for a veal carcass from 180 kg to 190 kg (rail weight) and came into effect January 15, 2020.

"On behalf of the CVA, I would like to thank the Canadian Beef Grading Agency board and staff for their support of the veal amendment," stated Bob Wynands, CVA President. "Bringing the needs of the industry and matching that with the grade requirements for veal carcasses has been an important collaboration for the CVA and CBGA," he added.

The purpose of the amendment is to provide the

Canadian veal industry with the flexibility and opportunity to manage veal carcass weights throughout the supply chain.

The VFO and the CVA lobbied for this amendment because both organizations felt it was important to provide a 10 kg 'sleeve' that would give the veal sector some breathing room. The sleeve, if managed properly, could reduce the number of overweight carcasses that have no value to the veal sector, reducing the financial losses for both the producer and the processor.

Currently, a veal carcass is defined solely by its weight. Managing carcass weights can be a challenge for both veal producers and veal processors alike. Veal carcasses that go over the maximum weight limit are deemed ungraded beef carcasses. Often, this means that both the producer and the processor are forced to sell at a discount and not able to realize the full financial value of what a veal carcass would bring from the market.

Producers and processors are reminded that even with the new amendments in place, there is still an upper weight limit that will be enforced. Carcasses that exceed 190 kg will be labelled as beef and graded, if necessary, accordingly. Veal carcass quality and consistency are important to the success of the veal sector.

"It is important for veal producers to still target their maximum shipping weights for 180 kg so that there remains some flexibility within the system to manage the veal carcass weights, so that everyone maximizes the full value of the veal carcass," cautioned Wynands. "At the same time, it is also very important that processors send the appropriate market signals with the purchase of 'right-weighted' veal cattle. For this to work, we all need to be on the same page," he added.

This is great news for the Canadian veal industry, but if everyone just moves all their production up to 190 kg without giving any consideration to the overall impact on the Canadian veal sector, then we will be right back where we started. The sleeve is an important tool that can help producers and processors manage risk and will ensure there is some tolerance in the supply chain if the sleeve is properly managed and adhered to.

This process has been lengthy and time consuming. But it is clear, the Ontario veal industry has been given another tool to manage the veal carcass weights. It is now up to all of us to work together to use this tool wisely and work together to promote and sell high quality, consistent veal to our customers. ■



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Updated transportation regulations now in effect

What producers need to know

As Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) has communicated extensively over the last year, the new transportation regulations came into effect on February 20, 2020. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has spent 10 years revising the *Transport of Animals Health of Animals Regulations*.

As the new regulations were released and reviewed, it was made quite clear there were going to be challenges for male dairy calves across Canada. A consultation was commissioned by the National Farm Animal Health and Welfare Council (NFAMHWC) to review the marketing of male dairy calves in Canada and as a result, nine recommendations were put forwarded.

One of the recommendations highlighted that not all male dairy calves can make it to the final destination within 12 hours from many locations in Canada. From this report, and the work of the Canadian Veal Association (CVA) and VFO, a working group was formed with the CFIA and Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC). Through this working group, we have been able to highlight the challenges for male dairy calves with the new regulations.

In early 2020, CFIA announced they would implement a graduated enforcement approach specifically as it relates to the prescriptive times and Feed, Water, Rest interval provisions set out in the *Health of Animals Regulations Part XII: Transportation of Animals*, Sections 141(1)(e), 143(1) and 152.2.

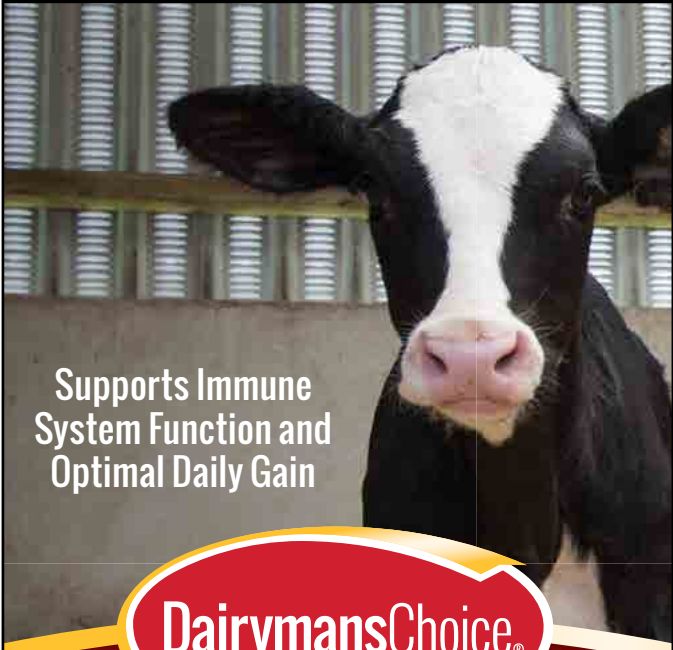
As a dairy farmer, you may not be aware of the destination of the calf. It is important to note the new regulations state the 12-hour transport time begins with the last feeding. Therefore, if a calf is fed at 7:00 a.m. it will need to be at its destination by 7:00 p.m. A record will need to accompany the calf indicating the last time it was fed.

This announcement does not affect the remainder of the regulations; they are outcome based to ensure that the animals are not likely to suffer, be injured or die during transport. It is important to note that male dairy calves going to a sale barn will need to be eight days or older, and if asked, proof of age will need to be provided. Also, it is important to note that calves with unhealed, wet navels cannot be transported (unless to your veterinarian). Those calves are considered unfit and the CFIA has the discretion to appropriately prevent and act on welfare situations.

The CFIA will focus on education and awareness initially, however, if there is a serious welfare issue enforcement will occur with issuing of-fense notices.

VFO will continue working with CFIA, CVA, DFC and the transportation committee on interpretation and guidance. If producers have issues or concerns, they are encouraged to contact the VFO office for clarification.

The new transportation regulations will be a learning curve for all those involved with transporting or causing to transport, and everyone is responsible. If in doubt, contact your veterinarian and don't ship. ■



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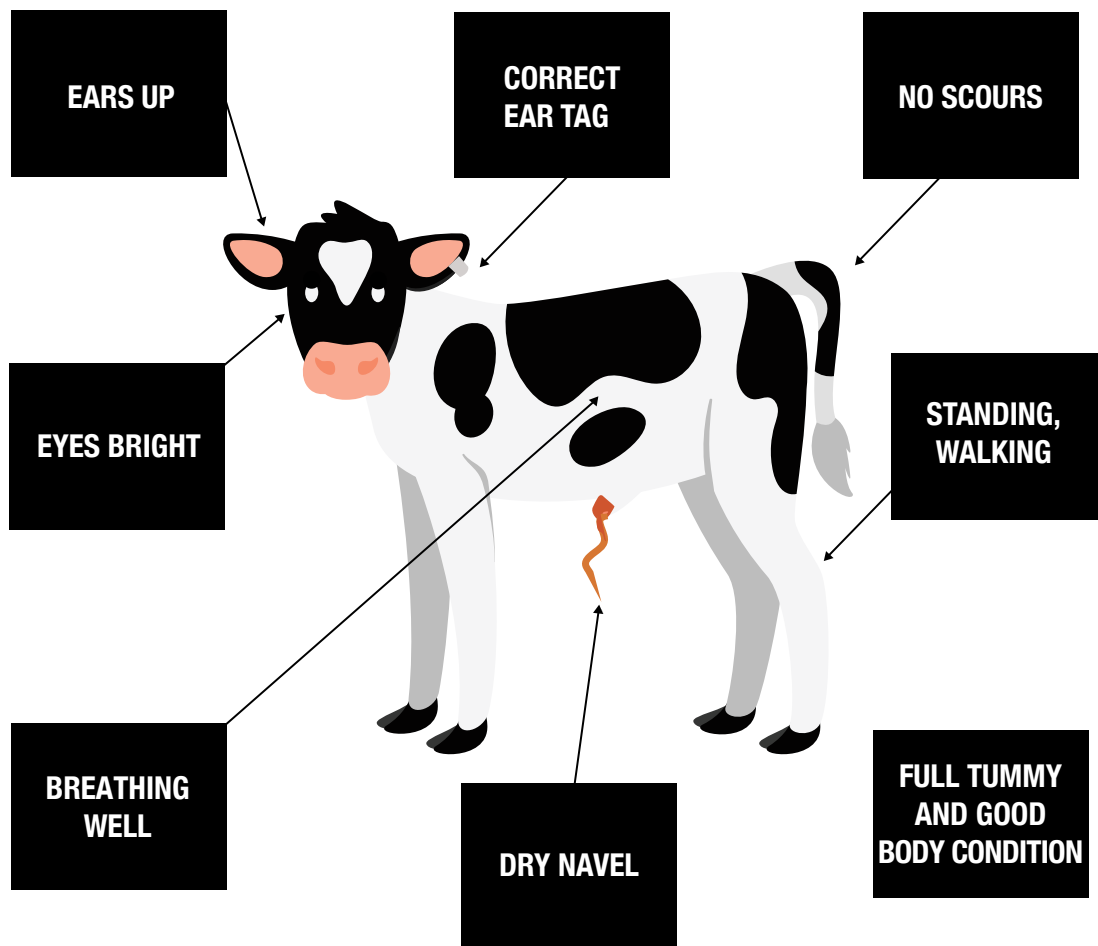
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NOTE

- Calves may be transported for up to 12 hours as long as dehydration, starvation and exhaustion are prevented. Once 12 hours is reached, they must be provided with feed, water and rest.
- Calves 8 days and under may only be transported once and are prohibited from going to assembly centres.

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Canada

Building an export market

Considering the right moves for the Canadian veal industry



Currently, the Canadian veal industry exports primarily to the United States, followed by the United Arab Emirates and a small amount to Saint Pierre and Miquelon (a self-governing territorial overseas collectivity of France, situated in the northwestern Atlantic Ocean near the Newfoundland and Labrador (Wikipedia)).

This graph below demonstrates the direction the Ontario veal industry has been going in since 2010/2011. There has been a steady decline in slaughter numbers in Ontario.

Country	Kg of veal
United States	19,951,422
United Arab Emirates	1,136,836
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	70,885



In Ontario, the veal market has been on a decline and the industry needs to decide what it wants. Does the industry continue this path of erosion or does it work together to develop an export market?

An export market will not be easy to develop, it will require work and commitment from producers and industry. Is this the direction the Ontario veal industry wants to go? If it is, now is the time to pull together and do what it takes to make it successful.

We have some challenges to consider as we move forward, including the lack of traceability system in place, lack of Ontario producers on the *Verified Veal Program*, Canada's On-Farm Food Safety program for the veal production, and lack of federal slaughter capacity. These are all being worked on.

It is not our goal to oversell the merits of an export market however, something needs to turn the Canadian veal industry around. Veal has been around since biblical times and will continue to be around, but to what capacity?

Through the creation of an export market, we hope to help stop the decline of our sector and both maintain and grow what we have. Currently, in Canada we have two federal plants, Montpak and White Veal; both processors are in Quebec. If this market develops as we hope, Quebec will not be able to fill the supply and will require additional finished veal from Ontario. The goal would be to grow demand for Ontario Veal while helping to stabilize the markets through the entire supply chain.

To date, Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) has been working with the Canadian Veal Associ-

ation (CVA) and the Canadian Meat Council (CMC) to address barriers for veal exports to the European Union (EU). Together, we have been working with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to develop protocols and programs that would provide an opportunity for veal to be exported from Canada to the EU. We hope to develop market access by promoting the attributes of Canadian veal and generating trust with our markets, which in turn will support our members with profitable sales, stabilizing the Canadian market.

This will not happen overnight. Creating a viable export market for Canadian veal is a big undertaking and one that will require effort and support from the entire industry. To learn more about the export market, call the VFO office. This is your industry to grow! ■

New versions of Form 4 and Form 5 are now available on ontarioveal.on.ca. These forms have been updated in response to requests, as we continually improve our reporting process to make it easier for producers and industry partners.

Form 4 Licence Fee Remittance Form

- Form 4 – Fillable
- Form 4 – Fillable with auto-calculation (Depending on your web browser, you may need to download/save the file to your computer, then open your computer version of the file for auto-calculation to work.)

Form 5 List of Veal Cattle Sellers Information Report

- Form 5 – Excel version (good for longer lists)
- Form 5 – Fillable

Form 4 and Form 5 should be completed together for every report/remittance and sent directly to Veal Farmers of Ontario each month.



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Corn test weight

Does it affect cattle performance?

Megan Van Schaik, Beef Cattle Specialist

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

The 2019 growing season presented challenges in many parts of the province. Delayed planting and variation in maturity at harvest resulted in variability in the grade of the corn crop in Ontario. When corn fails to reach physiological maturity (black layer) before a frost, there are potential consequences to test weight. This has left many livestock producers asking, "What is the impact of low test weight corn on the performance of my livestock?" Although research in finishing veal cattle is lacking, we can look to research that has been done on finishing beef cattle to help answer this question.

Corn is one of the more common energy sources for grain-fed veal in Ontario and feeding studies have shown that corn is a supreme energy source for finishing veal calves. A study out of Université Laval in Quebec looked at the feeding value of barley and corn in grain-fed veal

feeding programs, exploring straight comparisons between corn and barley as well as corn-barley blends, and studied the impact on animal performance. Although feeding barley in the starting phase of grain-fed veal production proved to be beneficial, calves fed corn over barley or corn-barley blends in the growing and finishing phases showed better average daily gain (ADG) and improved feed to gain (F:G) conversion.

Corn quality is assessed using standard measurements. If you take corn to the local elevator, your corn will be graded, and you will be paid accordingly. Test weight is one factor that is considered as part of the grading scheme and thus light test weight corn is often discounted according to elevator discount schedules. Minimum test weights are specified for each grade in the *Official Grain Grading Guide* by the Canadian Grade Commission. Test weight is a measure of grain density; it is measured by weighing a known volume of grain and in Canada it is assessed before removing cracked corn and foreign material. Samples are graded sample weight if the test weight is lower than the minimum test weight established for corn. In Canada test weight is expressed as kilograms per hectolitre (kg/hL) or grams per 0.5 litre (g/0.5 L), but test weight is also commonly referred to as bushel weight, expressed as pounds per bushel (lb/bu).

Is corn test weight a good predictor of feeding value of corn for cattle? Several studies have looked at the impact of light test weight corn on cattle performance, most of which found little to no performance differences in cattle fed moderately low test weight corn (59.3 kg/hL or 46.18 lb/bu) versus normal test weight corn. In a published study by Weichenthal et al. (1999), light-test weight corn (59.2 to 61.5 kg/hL or 46 to 48 lb/bu) and normal corn (72 kg/hL or 56 lb/bu) were fed to cattle consuming growing and finishing diets in a beef feedlot. The growing diet consisted of 32.9% corn silage, 22.3% alfalfa haylage, 37% dry rolled corn, and 7.8% protein supplement on a dry matter basis, and the finishing diet included 9.2% corn silage, 86.2% dry rolled corn, and 4.6% protein supplement on a dry matter basis. Average daily gain, feed efficiency, and carcass measurements were similar between treatment groups in both growing and finishing cattle. Birkelo et al. (1994) used metabolism facilities to study energy partitioning and net energy estimates of finishing diets that consisted of 77.7% light test weight (52.6 kg/hL or 40.8 lb/bu) or normal test weight (69.3 kg/hL or 53.8 lb/bu) whole corn. They found that low



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test weight corn was slightly greater in net energy for maintenance and gain due to reduced fecal losses associated with low test weight corn, and concluded that low test weight corn is not inherently lower in net energy content than normal test weight corn. A study out of North Dakota State University found slightly different results. The study looked at the impact of feeding high (68.5 kg/hL or 53.7 lb/bu), medium (60.1 kg/hL or 46.9 lb/bu), and low test weight corn (50.4 kg/hL or 39.1 lb/bu) to finishing steers, and while they found that test weight did not impact performance in terms of ADG, they did observe a response of increasing dry matter intake and F:G with decreasing test weight, suggesting that it may take more light test weight corn to achieve the same gains. The authors concluded that cattle feeders buying low test weight corn must assess the benefits of taking advantage of discounts on low test corn versus the potential for reduced F:G.

Collectively this research tells us that it is important to analyze and consider all nutrients and use current net energy equations when formulating rations and determining feeding rates. Although starch content tends to be lower in low test weight corn, low test weight corn often has higher protein, fibre, and mineral concentrations, and rate of starch digestion may differ between low test weight corn and normal test weight corn. These research outcomes also serve as a good reminder that it is important to add ingredients to the ration by weight rather than by volume.

Other quality factors to consider when feeding corn include level of fines and mycotoxins. Increased level of fines can predispose veal cattle to digestive upsets such as acidosis. Corn that did not reach maturity, was harvested at very high moistures, or mechanically dried at high temperatures and/or rapidly cooled may be brittle, fracture more easily and have higher potential for creating fines. Ear molds and mycotoxins are another quality risk to have on your radar with every new corn crop. Light, chaffy ear mold infected kernels can be a factor for low test weight corn. Although mycotoxins were not a widespread problem across the province last growing season, mycotoxins issues can be region-specific and therefore there is merit in looking out for mycotoxins when feeding out new crop corn every year.

In short, corn with moderately low test weight does not appear to impact performance of cattle. However, with every new crop commodity or ingredient introduced to your ration, it is important to understand the quality and nutritional attributes of your feed inputs and monitor the condition and performance of your veal cattle. Work with your feed advisor to balance your rations and identify and mitigate risks associated with quality issues. ■

References available upon request.



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The Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program

Erich Weber, Business Finance Specialist

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

The Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program (BCFPP) provides financial protection to Ontario cattle farmers when an Ontario licenced cattle dealer defaults on their payment. A licenced cattle dealer is a person or business who buys or sells cattle as a principal or as an agent. Examples of a cattle dealer for the BCFPP include an abattoir, auction market, or a country dealer. If an Ontario cattle farmer were to sell their cattle to a licenced dealer and does not receive payment, the farmer can then submit a claim to the Livestock Financial Protection Board to receive 95 per cent of the portion of the claim the Board recognizes as valid.

What is the Livestock Financial Protection Board?

The Livestock Financial Protection Board adjudicates any claims that are made under the BCFPP. The Board determines the payment (if any) from the fund and administers the compensation fund used to payout any claims. The members of the Board are appointed by the Minister of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, with nominations from cattle industry groups.

Why is it important to work with licenced cattle dealers?

All dealers must be licenced annually by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). By working with licenced cattle dealers, farmers know that they are working with buyers who are financially sound and have a good track record. For a cattle dealer to become licenced, they must pass a financial viability test (or post security e.g. a letter of credit). Dealer applications, along with financial statements, are reviewed by OMAFRA before the licence is granted.

Once the cattle dealer has met the requirements for the BCFPP, their name is added to the list of

all licenced cattle dealers in Ontario. This list can be found by going to the following website: bit.ly/omafra/licenceddealers. It is best practice to deal with a licenced dealer. When in doubt ask to see the licence or visit the website for a current list of licenced dealers. For farmers, using licenced cattle dealers can help reduce risks of late or no payments on cattle sales.

How do you access the program?

A claim may be made by a farmer if they are not paid according to the timelines in the regulation. The size of the transaction determines when a licenced cattle dealer has defaulted on the payment. If the sale of cattle is \$15,000 or less, the licenced cattle dealer has until 1:00 p.m. on the ninth business day after the sale to provide payment to the seller. If the sale of cattle is greater than \$15,000, the licenced cattle dealer has till 1:00 p.m. on the sixth business day after the sale to provide payment to the seller.

A claim can be submitted if a dealer has ceased operation or if a dealer's assets are placed in the hands of a trustee or receiver.

If one of these scenarios happens, the seller must immediately contact Agricorn (1-888-247-4999) to start the claim process with the Livestock Financial Protection Board. Sellers have up to 30 days after the day on which the earliest of any of the events described occurs to start the claim process. If the claim is not started within 30 days, it may be denied.

What compensation is available from the fund if there is default?

If the Board decides that a claim made in respect of a dealer is valid, the Board pays 95 per cent of the portion of the claim that it recognizes as valid.

Where an approved claim relates to a licenced dealer selling to a producer or feeder cattle finance co-operative who defaults on payment, compensation is 85 per cent of the portion of the claim that the Board recognizes as valid, up to a maximum of \$125,000. In these cases, there is no compensation for claims of less than \$5,000. Where an approved claim relates to a licenced dealer selling to another licenced dealer, the Board pays 95 per cent of the portion of the claim that it recognizes as valid. ■

How can farmers avoid nonpayment?

To avoid having a claim refused by the Livestock Financial Protection Board the following steps should be taken:

- Sell only to a licenced dealer
- Promptly notify the Director if a payment is not received on time
- File the claim within the prescribed timeline
 - For claims with respect to a default by a licenced dealer, no later than 30 days after the day on which the earliest of the following events occurs:
 - (1) The dealer's payment becomes due
 - (2) All or part of the dealer's assets are placed in the hands of a receiver or of a trustee
 - (3) The dealer ceases to carry on business
 - For claims made in respect of a default by a producer, the claim must be made within 30 days of the date of sale
- Do not extend credit to the buyer

For more information about the program, please visit the following websites:

Agricorp bit.ly/3dtVpRO

OMAFRA bit.ly/33JqT1A



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INDUSTRY

updates



VFO offers tips to an inquisitive crowd at Eastern Ontario Dairy Days

Eastern Ontario Dairy Days were held February 12 and 13 in St. Isidore and Kemptville. Kendra Keels, Industry Development Director, Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO), was invited to share VFO's recommendations on "Maximizing value in male dairy calves".

With changes in the male dairy calf market, producers are eager to learn ways to improve the value of their calves. The most important factors to earn top dollar include ensuring the calves are over 90 lbs, healthy, and have a dry navel. This may mean some calves stay a little longer on the dairy farm; if that is the case, ensure calves are fed four litres, twice a day.

Starting male dairy calves in the Maritimes

Kendra Keels, VFO Industry Development Director, was asked by the Maritime Beef Council to come to Moncton, New Brunswick to give a presentation to producers on starting male dairy calves. The Maritimes are challenged by the new transportation regulations, and the limit of 12-hour transport time from last feeding to final destination. Options are being explored for setting up barns to start calves to 300 lbs for transport to Ontario and Quebec.

VFO shares strategies for marketing male dairy calves in Tavistock

Yanti's Feed & Seed Ltd. invited Jennifer Bullock, VFO Projects and Communications Manager, to speak on "Maximizing value in male calves" at their 2020 Dairy Producer Meeting in late January. Producers offered positive feedback following the presentation, and expressed interest in learning more about their role in the veal industry.



South Western Ontario Dairy Symposium

Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) attended the South Western Ontario Dairy Symposium in Woodstock on February 20, connecting with our members, discussing industry issues, and promoting calf care resources. VFO encouraged producers to visit our booth, tweeting throughout the day and highlighting our location on both the VFO and Calf Care Corner social media channels.

Ontario Calf Health Improvement Program

This project began in late 2018 with the goal of improving dairy and veal calf health in Ontario. A toolkit was developed for veterinarians to educate Ontario dairy and veal producers on key calf health management practices. As part of the toolkit, www.calfcare.ca was updated to include a veterinarian portal.

The portal contains calf care protocols that can be downloaded and modified by veterinarians. This resource will help start conversations between veterinarians and their clients on calf management during their herd health visits. The protocols can be developed together with the producer and veterinarian, so everyone is on the same page when it comes to improving calf health.

The project wraps up in early 2020.

Dairy Code update

In the January *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle* (Dairy Code) meeting, several chapters of the Scientific Committee's research report were presented and discussed. These included cow-calf separation, pain control, and selected housing topics. The Dairy Code Development Committee also revised the husbandry chapter of the Dairy Code (e.g. stockmanship, milking, handling) and revisited certain sections of the feed and water chapter (e.g. milk feeding, weaning, feeding at pasture).

Transportation Code update

Progress continues in the development of the *Livestock and Poultry Transportation Code of Practice* (Transport Code). Species-Specific Working Groups are continuing their work under the leadership of Code Managers. Webinars have been held for Species-Specific Working Groups, hosted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), to help understand the amended Health of Animals Regulations. Efforts are currently underway to populate the Transport Code Development Committee.

Maximum weight increase for veal means increased flexibility for 2020 RMP

Beginning in 2020, there will be an increase to the maximum individual weight for veal coverage for the Risk Management Program (RMP). The update aligns with industry changes to offer farmers more flexibility when managing their cattle through the supply chain.

While overweight animals will no longer be eligible for payment, the maximum live weight for all calves is 769 pounds. This is an increase in coverage of 17 pounds for grain-fed cattle. The maximum rail weight is now 419 pounds, an increase in coverage of nine pounds for grain-fed cattle. ■

VFO joins Canadian Beef & Canadian Veal Pavilion at the Restaurants Canada Show

Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) was proud to be part of the Canadian Beef & Canadian Veal Pavilion at the Restaurants Canada trade show held in early March in Toronto. The show was a great opportunity to connect with restaurant operators and those in the foodservice industry to talk about Ontario veal on the menu and promote the 2020 search for *Ontario's Best Veal Sandwich*. As part of the contest promotion, our spokesperson John Catucci joined us for a 'meet and greet' at our booth and helped to create some buzz in the Pavilion about Ontario Veal! By partnering with Canada Beef, VFO was able to leverage important resources, drive added value from the show and make connections to promote and create awareness for Canadian Veal. ■



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New and young workers

Cheryl DeCooman, CHRL

People Management Group/Udderly Safe



According to the Ontario Ministry of Labour, workers new to a job are three times more likely to be injured during their first month at work. Young workers are anyone under the age of 25. New workers are any age and are either new to the job or new to a position within the last six months. New employees want to prove that they are capable of doing their job and may rush into completing a potentially risky task without knowing the proper safety protocols beforehand.

Employer responsibilities

Employers or owners have the most responsibility when it comes to the health and safety of employees, according to the Ontario Ministry of Labour. Employers must take every reasonable precaution in order to protect workers. This means that employers must do thorough training, so employees understand the risks and hazards associated with each task, as well as how to do each task properly. Additionally, employers must provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for their employees to minimize workplace hazards.

Supervisor responsibilities

Supervisors have similar responsibilities to employers when it comes to health and safety. Supervisors need to ensure that new employees have taken the proper training and understand how to do their job properly, and safely. Supervisors also need to ensure equipment, materials, and protective devices provided to the employee are in good condition and must ensure the employee has proper, fitted PPE. Finally, supervisors cannot force employees to complete work if it is unsafe, or if they are untrained or feel uncertain about their ability to complete the job.

When training new employees, it is a good practice to also retrain existing employees on their tasks and jobs. This ensures that the jobs are being completed properly and most importantly, safely.

Employee responsibilities

Employees also have a responsibility to ensure the environment they work in is safe. Employees must ensure they are trained on all job duties and equipment before operating. Employees should not operate machinery or do job tasks that they do not feel they are adequately trained on. Employees should be encouraged to be proactive, if they do not feel confident doing a task or operating machinery, they should ask to be retrained. Employees have the responsibility to ensure their PPE fit correctly and is worn properly. If an employee sees a workplace hazard or equipment issue, they have the responsibility to report it to their supervisor immediately.

Everyone's responsibilities

As previously mentioned, everyone is responsible for safety on the farm. The following are ways that can ensure everyone is responsible and safe.

- Correct a new worker if you see them make a mistake. Constructive criticism is helpful, as long as it is done correctly. Teach the new worker why they made a mistake, and show them how to correct it for future reference
- Ensure everyone is wearing their PPE properly
- Offer to observe a new worker as they complete a task
- Model safe work behaviour
- Keep your workplace safe. Be serious about safety and completing a job correctly, so the new worker can feel comfortable knowing the farm cares about the safety of their employees

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**How do you ensure that new employees are safe on the farm?
Follow these steps below:**

1) Write out how to do each task or job

This way you do not miss key steps in a task or job procedure when you are teaching a new employee how to do the job correctly

2) Create a training plan

Write out what tasks/jobs the new employee will learn how to do. Keep in mind it takes longer to do a job when you are teaching someone new how to do it, schedule your time accordingly

3) Provide proper PPE

4) Create a workplace culture that is based in health and safety

5) When training new employees or retraining existing employees, ensure you document it!

Something as simple as a piece of paper that has the date, description of training and the employee being trained signs off on it

Workplace safety is everyone's responsibility, and we must work as a team to ensure new and existing employees are kept safe on the farm. ■



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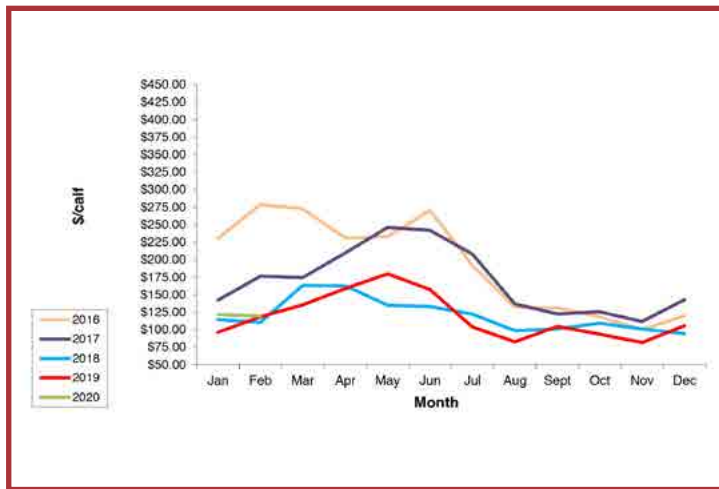
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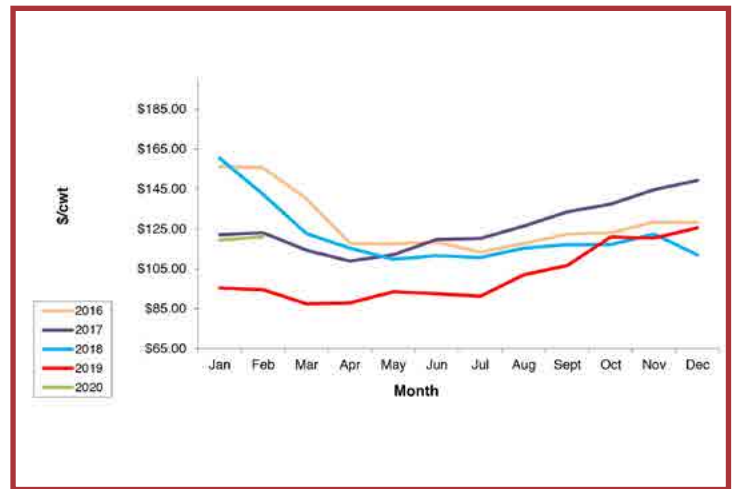
Veal Market Information

Veal market data is collected electronically from Ontario sales barns.

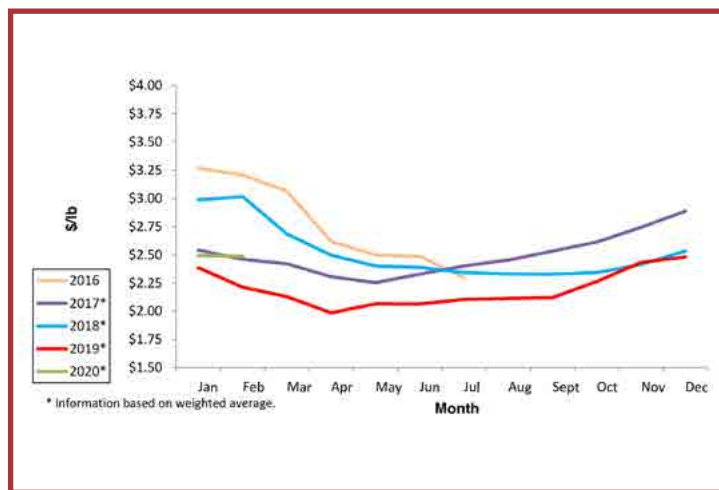
Bob Calf Pricing



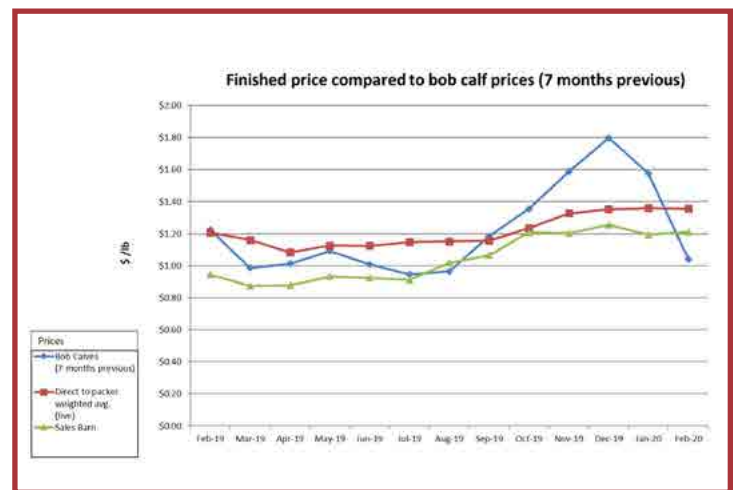
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Licenced dealers

As a veal (bob calves and finished veal cattle) producer, you should be dealing with licenced dealers who are remitting veal licence fees (check-off) on behalf of the farmers they are collecting from.

If you are selling bob calves from your dairy farm, the \$5.50 check-off is to be collected by the person purchasing those calves. If you sell your calves to a sales barn, the check-off is remitted on your behalf. Please contact the Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) office to ensure we have your updated contact information, including your e-mail address.

If you are dealing with an unlicensed dealer, you are not protected under the Ontario Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program (OBCFPP). You could be in jeopardy of losing the money from the sale, especially if you received a cheque for payment. If it is unclear if the dealer is licenced, ask to see the licence, check the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) website at bit.ly/omafralicenseddealers or contact the VFO office.

Licence fee reminders

In order to assist those who have not yet remitted their bob calf purchases from private treaty or dealer sales, the VFO has a **Monthly Licence Fee Remittance Worksheet** available to assist in calculating remittances from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

Please take the time to fill this worksheet out if you are not currently remitting on a regular basis. As a reminder, Regulation 58/15 (i) requires any person who receives veal cattle to deduct from the money payable for the veal cattle any licence fees payable to the local board by the person from whom the veal cattle is received and to forward the licence fees to the local board. Bob calves are considered veal cattle.

If you have not already sent in Form 1 identifying yourself as a veal producer, please do so. They can be e-mailed, faxed, or sent by regular mail to the office.

If you require additional copies of the **Monthly Licence Fee Remittance Worksheet, Form 1** or **Form 5**, please visit bit.ly/licencefeeforms or contact the VFO office.

Ontario Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program

Agricorp is the new Delivery Agent of the OBCFPP and Administrator for the Livestock Financial Protection Board. All communication, including but not limited to: Late Payments Reports, Claims to the Fund, and Licencing inquiries, must be directed to Agricorp. Visit bit.ly/agricorp or call 1-888-247-4999 for more information. ■

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