

THE Connection

Winter 2022 Volume 4, No. 4



Building the Foundation

Healthy Calf Conference 2022



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on your farm**

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Chair's MESSAGE



Pascal Bouilly

Shared responsibility to maintain the VFO foundation

As I sit and write my column, I am reflecting on what a year 2022 has been. The year has gone by very fast with so many changes—some good and some not so much. The one thing that has been constant for me this year is the incredible work of Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO). Much has been accomplished and yet there is so much more to do for our members.

The very foundation of VFO is our independent financial stability that enables the organization to advocate and work on behalf of the dairy calf and veal sector. Like any building, a solid foundation is important but so is maintaining it. One of the key areas that VFO must focus on is licence fees (some also know this as check-off). Licence fees and check-off on veal cattle have been around for a very long time and started when the veal sector was part of the *Beef Cattle Marketing Act*. All of the various commodity organizations—livestock, grains, fruits, and vegetables—are funded by a check-off or licence fee collection system. In 2015, VFO became an independent marketing board with its own regulations under the *Farm Products Marketing Act* and with this came the ability to collect our own licence fees.

With VFO collecting our own licence fees, it gave us the ability to direct the funds to the issues and projects specifically for the benefit of the dairy calf and veal sector. As veal farmers, we should be happy that our organization has the control of these important dollars that are collectively paid for by all of us for betterment of our sector. Together, we can do more. Licence fees for VFO apply to all veal cattle which includes dairy and dairy-cross calves, preconditioned, and finished veal cattle.

When a dairy or dairy-cross calf, preconditioned and finished veal cattle are sold—whether to a sale, direct to packer or to your neighbour or dealer—that triggers a licence fee payment. At the sale barn or when marketing direct to packer the licence fee is deducted off the sale of the calf, preconditioned or finished veal cattle. This should be the same when selling through private treaty. The licence fee is to be deducted from the sale of the animal and remitted to VFO. And the remittance of licence fees must equitable and equal for all involved in the dairy calf and veal sector. All dairy calf and veal farmers, dealers, processors, and sale barns have a shared responsibility to do their part to comply with the regulations and remit licence fees in a timely manner.

Without the foundation of the licence fees, VFO would not be able to lobby to government on issues like the very important Risk Management Program (RMP) for example. RMP has been such an important program for the veal sector and VFO has worked hard alongside our industry colleagues to protect RMP. A new study released on the *Evaluation of the Impact of the Risk Management Program/Self-Directed Risk Management Program on Ontario Farmers and the Economy* showed that every dollar spent on the RMP led to a possible \$3.60 return on investment, leading to an economic output up to \$506.2 million. As farmers we can all agree that is a good return on our investment of farmer-paid premiums and one that is needed in agriculture, and specifically in the veal sector.

Together with our members, VFO is working hard to ensure a strong, viable industry. Licence fees are an investment in our industry, and we all have a part to play in both the collection and remittance of the licence fees to help maintain the foundation of our organization. If you have questions about licence fees, please do not hesitate to call the VFO office. Education, open communications, and understanding goes a long way to making sure the system is working smoothly.

At this time, I would like to thank our dedicated staff for their continued work and leadership on behalf of our members. Thank you as well to the VFO Board of Directors for their input, discussions, and support. As the holidays approach, I hope you are all able to celebrate with Ontario veal at the centre of your plate! I would like to wish everyone a very happy and festive holiday season and all the best for a healthy and prosperous 2023! ■



Join the VFO Board of Directors!

Call for nominations now open

The Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) Board of Directors is seeking interested veal and male dairy calf producers to get involved in our organization. Directors work on behalf of the Ontario veal cattle and male dairy calf sector on projects, issues, and initiatives that benefit our membership. All voting producer members of VFO, with their membership in good standing, are eligible for nomination.

Board meetings are two hours in length, and held virtually every other week, with full-day in-person meetings held in the Guelph-area throughout the year as needed. In the future, board meetings may be a combination of in-person and virtual meetings, and conference calls. VFO Directors are provided a meeting per diem and reimbursement for approved travel expenses as applicable.

Interested candidates must complete a self-nomination form found at vealfarmers.ca and submit it no later than January 27, 2023, for review by the Nominating Committee. Nominations from the floor will not be accepted. Elections, if required, will take place at the VFO Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, March 8, 2023.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Haley, Executive Director at 519-824-2942 or jhaley@vealfarmers.ca. ■



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Think like a veterinarian on your farm

Practical, take-home tips resonate with 2022 Healthy Calf Conference participants

Building the Foundation

Healthy Calf Conference 2022



"It's a basic concept that requires precise implementation," explained Dr. Kelly Barratt, partner at Heartland Vet Services, as she addressed an audience of over 300 at the hybrid 2022 Building the Foundation: Healthy Calf Conference (HCC). Her talk focused on new colostrum guidelines, practical techniques and equipment that can be used on-farm to manage, monitor and improve calf health and welfare. The tenth biennial event, hosted by Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO), was held in Stratford this past November, marking 18 years of the HCC.

Reflecting on her own experience as a veterinarian and dairy producer, Barratt encouraged the audience to look at their colostrum harvest, storage and feeding procedures like a veterinarian. "You can do this on your own or with an advisor," she explained. "Review the protocols, have the conversations, walk me through the steps, show me the equipment," she furthered, while stressing the importance of reviewing your records and your memory.

Her talk concluded the day, framing recommendations from veterinarians and researchers earlier in the program in a practical way and allowing attendees to see how the latest research in calf management can be used on their own farm. Expert speakers, including Harold House M.Sc P.Eng from DairyLogix, and Drs. Michael Steele and Devon Wilson from the University of Guelph offered advice on all aspects of calf management, including health, housing, welfare, and nutrition.

Dr. Frederic Beaulac from Triple-V Veterinary Services and Dr. Cynthia Miltenburg from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs were part of a special focus on *Salmonella* Dublin (S. Dublin) during the day-long event. Beaulac shared his over 10 years of experience managing S. Dublin on veal farms, including the kinds of clinical symptoms he expects calves with S. Dublin to present, how he works with producers to control an outbreak, and the steps that can be taken to help prevent further spread of the disease.

"Run or runt," explained Beaulac, summing up his thoughts on treatment. "Either you run to treat them, or they will be the runt." While offering recommendations for individual animals, he also emphasized how to manage cattle at the herd level during an outbreak, including treatments, supportive care, isolation and vaccination strategies, and how to identify when euthanasia is necessary.

His frank discussion of his on-farm experience was followed by Miltenburg offering an Ontario perspective on S. Dublin, advising producers on how they can reduce the risk of zoonotic disease. She shared details from recent bulk tank milk sampling projects and ongoing research to help producers struggling with S. Dublin, directing them to calfcare.ca/salmonella-dublin for more information.

Each attendee left with practical tips they could implement during that evening's chores, and in-person attendees also took home a free copy of VFO's *Building the Foundations for Healthy Calves II* manual.

"We recognize the important role dairy producers play in the veal industry," explained Pascal Bouilly, VFO Chair. "It is always encouraging to see how many people are making their calves a priority by attending the HCC with their calf management team."

Making time for learning opportunities for not only yourself, but your staff, has many benefits including greater knowledge, skills and confidence at work and enhanced calf health and performance. There is a valuable return on investment for your farm business when considering the cost of attending events like the HCC and the benefits to animal health and performance seen on farms where employees have received training.

As your calf care partners, VFO takes pride in this important industry initiative that helps progressive calf managers find even more efficient ways to raise calves and increase profitability in Canada's dairy and veal industries. The next HCC will take place in 2024—see you there!



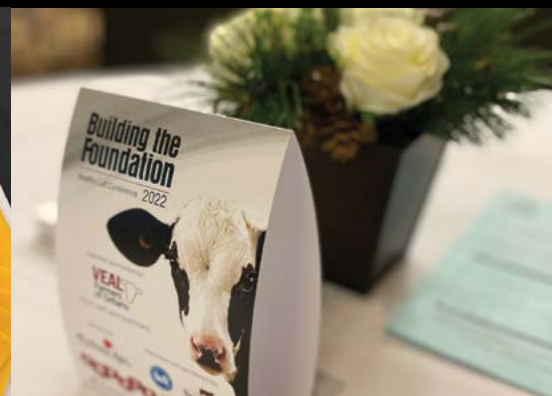
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Pascal Bouilly, VFO Chair

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On-farm feeding observations: What we can learn about veal cattle health



Holly McGill M.Sc.

Ruminant Nutritionist

Any producer will tell you that running a veal operation takes significant investments of time, energy, and money to ensure efficiency and profitability. Though there are many hours spent in the barn, it can sometimes be easy to overlook things in the hustle and bustle of the day-to-day running of the farm.

A smart producer will leverage the skills of their trusted farm advisors, bringing them on-farm to look at the herd with them and ask advice on things such as animal health, nutrition, or barn and farm maintenance. I feel confident in speaking for all animal health and nutrition professionals when I say that we are more than happy to provide these services. But we can only be on-farm for one day out of many; the rest of the time, it is up to the producer to identify areas of concern and for improvement. To help bridge this gap, this first article in a series of two will teach veal producers what to look for with respect to their herd and their management before, during, and after feeding, and how to identify when signs show that things could be improved.

Avoiding an empty feed bunk is the number one rule of good bunk management. While it is prudent to avoid overfeeding and therefore wasting feed, an empty bunk means cattle are not eating; and if they are not eating, they are not gaining. Furthermore, the longer a bunk remains empty, the more likely the cattle are to overeat when feed does arrive, causing bloat or acidosis. No matter what time of day cattle are fed, there should always be some feed leftover, and the amount remaining should be used to determine whether the amount fed for the next day should increase or decrease. Before every feeding, a producer should look to clean out the old feed from the day before, determine how much feed is left over and adjust the next feeding amount accordingly, and observe the herd to ensure cattle are calm and content prior to feed out, and not apt to gorge themselves when feed is delivered.

During feed out, producers should keep a close eye on the feed bunk to ensure that feed is consistent and of high quality. The ration being delivered to the cattle should be uniform and well-mixed; every single handful should look the same, no matter where along the bunk the sample is taken from. Feed should also look and smell good, being free of spoilage or mold. Any feed that is “off” is not appealing to cattle; they may refuse to eat it and it could cause metabolic issues that are difficult to reverse.

Producers should also watch their cattle while feed is being delivered. As mentioned, cattle should approach and eat at the bunk calmly. Calm and quiet underpins every single aspect of animal management; feeding is no exception. Cattle require adequate time to eat, chew, and swallow their meals. Overcrowding or aggressive behaviour at the bunk from dominant animals causes cattle to eat defensively, wherein they rush to the bunk, eat quickly, and retreat. This feeding behaviour discourages regular meals, decreases feeding frequency, and ensures cattle do not chew their feed as they feel they do not have time to. A perfect mealtime sees every animal standing quietly at the feedbunk, with adequate time and space to eat and chew their meal properly.

Finally, it is important for a producer to observe the cattle after feeding, and throughout the day. Again, the goal of calm, quiet animals holds true. Cattle should be relaxed, and most of the group should be lying down at any given time. Evidence of any stereotypic behaviour such as chewing, or tongue-rolling should be minimal or non-existent. Manure should be consistent throughout the group, and it should not be possible to see whole corn in it. Cattle should appear satiated but not lethargic or bloated, and should eat frequent, small meals throughout the rest of the day or until the next time feed is fed out.

It can easily be said that no one knows a herd of cattle better than the person that is raising them, and I believe this to be true. A producer



spends every day with their herd and is the best equipped to pick up on any changes in behavioural patterns that may come about for any reason. While it can sometimes be easy to miss the forest for the trees, by learning what to look for, it becomes much easier to see trouble on the tracks ahead before the train completely derails. In part two of this two-part article series, I will discuss what can be done on-farm to help address the issues that we discussed that may arise before, during, or after feeding. ■



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Surveillance update from the Ontario Animal Health Network

Dr. Cynthia Miltenburg

On behalf of the Ontario Animal Health Network

The bovine Ontario Animal Health Network meets on a quarterly basis to review data collected from laboratory submissions and field veterinarians and discusses the implications for animal health in the province. Regular review of this information allows our network to provide regular communication with veterinarians and industry on changing animal health risks in Ontario.

This article will share a few highlights from our last year of surveillance for cattle in Ontario.

Salmonella Dublin

Salmonella Dublin continues to be a challenge for cattle producers with regular detections in diagnostic laboratory samples and new premises becoming infected. In 2021, there were 38 detections of the bacteria at the lab which was estimated to represent 24 individual outbreaks on 20 unique farms. For 14 farms (four veal, 10 dairy), this is believed to be the first time *Salmonella* Dublin was detected on the farm.

Given this information, producers should continue to prioritize sourcing cattle from low-risk operations where possible. When cattle are ill or have died, postmortems on calves are the most effective method to confirm *Salmonella* Dublin. Cleaning and disinfection using an appropriate protocol can minimize the risk to other cattle on the farm should an animal with *Salmonella* Dublin be introduced.

Mannheimia hemolytica outbreaks in cattle

Over the last year, veterinarians have reported several severe outbreaks of *Mannheimia hemolytica* pneumonia in lactating dairy cattle. These outbreaks frequently involved a large percentage of the herd becoming rapidly ill with several deaths of mature cattle in some cases. The number of outbreaks is unknown as in many circumstances postmortem samples are not submitted to the laboratory.

Producers can mitigate the risk to their own herd by following best practices for introduction of new cattle purchases including knowing the herd of purchase, isolating, and potentially vaccinating new purchases before introduction to the herd. Best outcomes for herds affected with a disease outbreak occur when a screening and treatment protocol is put in place to quickly identify ill animals as developed by the herd veterinarian.

Bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVD)

Testing for BVD occurs weekly at the provincial diagnostic lab. Approximately five per cent of cattle samples tested over the last year were posi-

tive for BVD. Samples tested are a mix of samples from suspect cattle with clinical signs that are consistent with BVD as well as samples collected as part of routine herd screening programs. Given the regular detection of positive results each month, BVD remains a risk in the province. ■



The Bovine Ontario Animal Health Network is a group of veterinarians and specialists working in government, university research and laboratories, 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.

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Sunken flank: What does it mean and why is it important?

Dr. Dave Renaud

ACER Consulting Ltd.

Research conducted at the University of Guelph has identified several metrics that can be used to identify calves arriving at veal facilities that are high-risk for future mortality and treatment for disease. Specifically, they have identified that calves arriving with an umbilical infection, dehydration, diarrhea, and low body weight are more likely to be treated and die. Another factor that was identified to be important in predicting future disease risk was the presence of a sunken flank.

What is a sunken flank?

A sunken flank is present when a calf has a hollow abdomen or depression in the paralumbar fossa. This is highlighted in Figure 1 where the area behind the rib cage is depressed inwards. A recent research study that evaluated almost 5000 calves on arrival at a veal facility in Ontario found 20 per cent, or 991, arrived with a sunken flank, suggesting this is quite common in the industry.



Figure 1

What is the impact?

In the Ontario study highlighted above, researchers found that calves with a sunken flank were more likely to die. Specifically, calves that had a sunken flank had a four times greater risk of dying in the first 21 days after arrival to the facility when compared to calves without a sunken flank. Another study conducted in Europe also highlighted the risk of a calf having a sunken flank at the beginning of the production cycle where calves with a sunken flank were two times more likely to die over the entire production period. Therefore, making sure that calves do not have a sunken flank upon arrival at veal facilities can help to reduce mortality.

How does a sunken flank occur?

It is not completely clear how sunken flanks occur however it is thought that they develop over time when there is a long period of time between milk meals. As calves with little to no energy input have reduced disease

resistance, this is likely the reason for the association between sunken flank and mortality. In addition, the presence of a sunken flank is further compounded by long transport times, where calves will expend additional energy to move and stay warm, leading to less energy to expend on fighting disease.

Preparing your calves for transport to prevent sunken flank occurrence

It is important to feed calves as close to transportation as possible. A recent study identified that feeding milk immediately prior to transport can help calves to have better energy stores when arriving at a veal facility. This highlights the importance of feeding a high energy diet before transport, which can not only reduce the occurrence of a sunken flank but also lead to higher body weight at arrival thereby reducing the risk of disease.

It is important to prepare calves for their journey through the marketing system to better prevent not only the occurrence of a sunken flank but many other health abnormalities. Once calves leave the source dairy farm, ideally it is best if they are brought to a veal facility within a few hours. However, there are many calves that are marketed through auctions and transported for long periods of time, leading to a depletion of energy stores, exhaustion, and in the winter, chilling. To combat these challenges, when possible, try to establish local connections where calves are only in transit for a few hours prior to arriving at a veal facility.

Take home messages

Sunken flanks are common in calves that arrive at veal facilities. The presence of a sunken flank in an arriving calf is associated with a much greater risk of mortality. Ensuring that calves receive a milk meal prior to transport is critical in improving disease resistance and preventing a sunken flank from occurring. In addition, identifying ways to reduce the time calves are in transit can also help to reduce the occurrence of sunken flanks. ■

This project was funded by the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

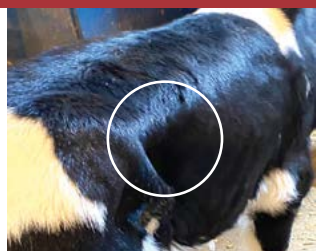
SUNKEN FLANK

What is it and why it is important?

A sunken flank is a predictor of disease risk in young calves. These calves have a four times greater risk of dying in the first 21 days.

This resource is designed to help both dairy and veal producers have a better understanding of the importance of ensuring all calves are well-fed before shipping and to be fed as soon as they arrive at the veal facility.

Did you know? Calves are born with two per cent brown adipose tissue (brown fat). This is not a lot of energy reserve for young calves.



Calf anatomy

Paralumbar fossa—looks like a triangle

The triangular boundaries of the paralumbar fossa are between the last rib and the thigh.

Lumbar transverse processes—the flat part above the triangle



Sunken flank

A sunken flank is present when a calf has a hollow abdomen or depression in the paralumbar fossa (triangle).



On arrival

This photo is a great example of how sunken a calf's flank can be on arrival at a veal facility, which is a visual indicator of how hungry the calf is.

When calves are this hungry, they will utilize their own body fat (brown fat) for energy. Calves presenting with sunken flanks have a higher risk of morbidity (sickness) or even mortality (death).

NOTE: Feed all calves within the hour before leaving the farm.



Post arrival

After a couple feedings, the paralumbar fossa (triangle) is filling in. It will take multiple feedings to fill the triangle when they have been very empty.

When calves leave the dairy farm, their destination is not known, therefore the time to the next feeding could be longer than 12 hours.



The goal

This is the goal! This calf is well-fed and full.

The triangle is hard to identify.

This calf will have the energy reserves to fight disease, grow, and be a productive member of the herd.

Feed calves before transporting. Calves should be fed within one hour before leaving the dairy farm.

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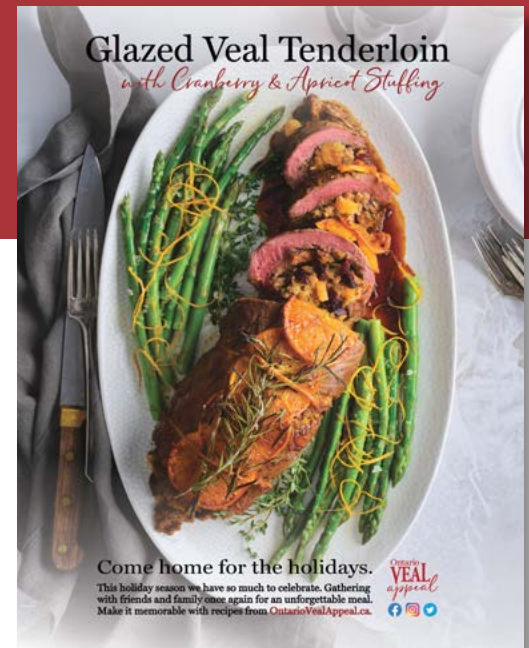
Celebrating together again with Ontario Veal

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Jennifer Haley
Executive Director

Food is at the heart of so many of our favourite special occasions, celebrations, and holiday entertaining when we gather with our family and friends. At this time of the year there are so many different holidays and celebrations taking place. Many cannot wait to entertain and gather once again, and it all starts with the food!



A special celebration deserves a special menu, and Ontario Veal is the perfect centre-of-the-plate protein choice. Tender, lean, and flavourful, Ontario Veal is a versatile meat protein that perfectly complements the many different herbs, spices, and family favourite recipes that so many enjoy.

To highlight the holidays, Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) is launching a new campaign "Celebrating together again with Ontario Veal" as part of its consumer marketing program targeting the many different multi-cultural celebrations and traditions that are part of the holiday season. From market research, we know that our consumer base comes from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds. Not everyone celebrates the same holidays or in the same way, but Ontario Veal can be the foundation to our gatherings.

Through a variety of digital media partnerships, partnering with social media influencers as well as other communications outreach, VFO is targeting the many different holiday celebrations that are part of the season. With the goal of raising the awareness for including local Ontario Veal as new food memories are created and we gather once again, the campaign will run from November 2022 to January 2023.

The campaign, funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, is focused on promoting local Ontario Veal to Ontario's

culturally diverse communities. Consumers are excited to gather once again this season after two years of pandemic restrictions and recreate some of the foods we all love during these special celebrations.

"We appreciate the funding support from the Government of Ontario for this project to help us leverage opportunities to promote local Ontario Veal to the consumer," stated Pascal Bouilly, VFO Chair.

"The government of Ontario appreciates the importance of coming together again to celebrate the upcoming season and a wonderful source of protein that the Veal Farmers of Ontario are capturing in their holiday campaign," said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. "Boosting the promotion of nutritious food grown in Ontario helps consumers identify what delicious and fresh food is available throughout the year. Ontario's veal farmers are diligent in their awareness about providing the highest quality meat for Ontarians to enjoy this holiday season and beyond."

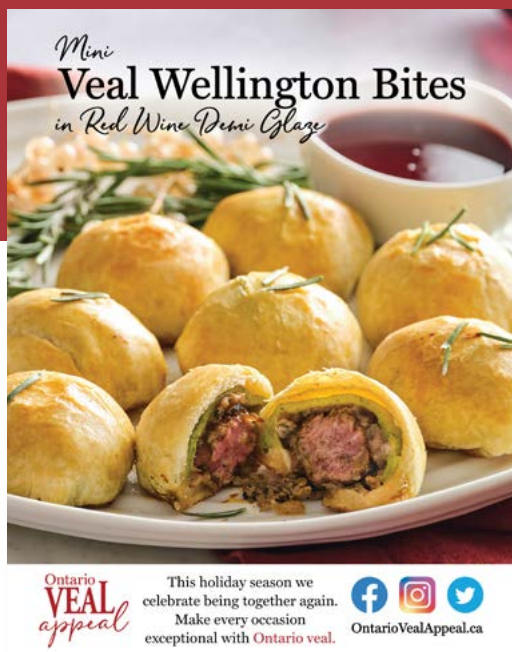
Food memories are some of the strongest emotional ties we have to our families and friends. The tastes and aromas of special dishes created by loved ones and enjoyed together is something so special and Ontario Veal holds a special place on these menus. As part of the campaign, VFO has partnered with several social media influencers to create special holiday-themed recipes based on their backgrounds and cultures.




**This holiday season
we celebrate being
together again.
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While working with our social media partners it has been interesting to learn that while many consumers may not celebrate Christmas, they will gather together as a family during the holidays and serve traditional foods with special meanings.

Food blogger and VFO partner, Amina Al-Saigh says the holidays are all about cooking delicious and traditional meals with her family. "All of our celebratory meals will always include meat," she explains. "Meat-based dishes in our culture are something special to be shared with guests. Serving meat is a way of honouring guests as well." A special meal deserves a special protein like Ontario Veal.

Cindy Chan, another food influencer and VFO partner, has created some delicious recipes using Ontario Veal that she will be featuring. Cindy suggests that traditional Asian "hot pots are very popular for family gatherings and holidays because they bring people together and there's something for everyone." She adds that "Ontario veal comes in a wide range of cuts, and thinly sliced veal is perfect for quick cooking in hot pots. Hot pots are a joyous way to eat together." Having the opportunity to work with a diversity of influencers helps to extend our reach to their followers who are Ontario Veal's targeted consumer.

VFO Directors and staff will also be part of the campaign sharing their favourite Ontario Veal recipes on the Ontario Veal Appeal social media platforms to bring a connection back to the hard-working farm families raising Ontario veal for the consumer. How will you be celebrating the holidays with Ontario Veal? Do you have a favourite recipe or food memory that includes Ontario Veal? We would love to hear from you—send me an email with your food memory details at jhaley@vealfarmers.ca.

For more information and updates about the campaign, make sure you are following @ontariovealappeal on Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok and Twitter. Like and share all our social media posts so we can extend the reach of our promotions to all your networks as well and help us promote your industry. Updates can also be found on our website at ontariovealappeal.ca. ■



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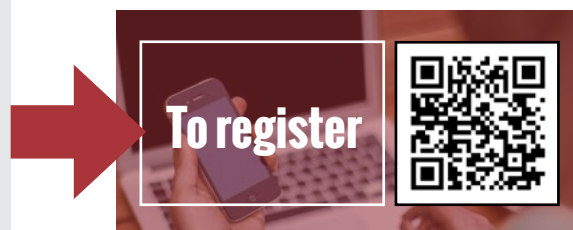
Join Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) for this virtual workshop series for grain-fed veal producers. Registration is limited for these interactive events. VFO encourages you to come with your questions—following a short presentation, producers will have the floor to ask the expert themselves! Recordings of the presentations will be made available a later date. The Q-A portion will not be recorded, so don't miss out on this opportunity to have a conversation with someone in the know. **All sessions will be held via Zoom from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. EST.**

Thursday, January 19, 2023 Get to know your veal COP

Do you know your cost of production (COP)? Do you know the elements that make up your COP and which parts of that COP have the greatest impact on costs and returns? Join us for this presentation where we will discuss veal COP, examine the elements that impact your costs and how you can improve profitability by understanding these costs.



James Byrne, Beef Cattle Specialist
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs



Registration for the individual workshop sessions is free but required. Scan the QR code or visit VFOasktheexpert.eventbrite.ca to sign-up. Registration closes at 4:00 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to each session.



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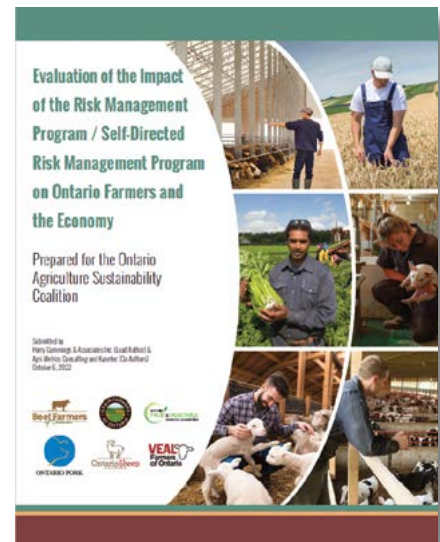
Study highlights economic impact of Ontario's RMP program



Patrick MacCarthy
Projects and Policy Coordinator

Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO), as a member of the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition (OASC), is pleased to support the release of a new study examining the economic impact that Ontario's Risk Management Program (RMP) has on Ontario farms, farm production and the broader Ontario economy.

The study includes feedback and quotes from producers, including VFO members, who participated in the survey and focus groups. The release of the study comes at an important time as many farm sectors struggle to manage the impact of inflationary pressures on the price of farm inputs, debt servicing costs due to rising interest rates and supply chain disruptions due to ongoing pandemic issues, labour shortages and international conflicts. Price increases received by farmers are not keeping pace with historically high production costs. Ultimately, these challenges continue to present significant threats to domestic food production and the viability of Ontario farms.



Highlights of the study include:

Every dollar spent on RMP leads to \$2.01 to \$3.60 return on investment. In 2020, this led to an increase in economic output of between \$282.6 million and \$506.2 million.

RMP helps support more than 47,000 full-time, part-time, and seasonal jobs.

More than 95 per cent of participating farmers agree that not having access to this program would negatively impact their farm operations.

RMP support allows farmers to mitigate input cost volatility and enables many participating farmers to increase their investments in innovation, equipment and labour.

On average for the 2016 to 2020 years, program funding only covered 40.4 per cent of calculated insurance benefits for participating farmers due to the current funding cap.

RMP is viewed by participating farmers as a particularly important risk management tool for young and beginning farmers and assists farmers in obtaining financial services from private lenders.

The study demonstrates that provincial investment in the RMP program is good for farmers, good for the Ontario economy, and supports job creation. The RMP program for veal is the industry's most important business risk management program. The program is a critical tool that enables veal producers to help build domestic food security amidst supply chain disruptions, inflationary pressure, and rising input costs. Through OASC, VFO will continue to lobby the provincial government for additional funding for this critical business risk management program. ■

You can read the complete study at: bit.ly/oascstudy.



Have questions about the RMP program or considering enrolling your production?

Check-out VFO's webinar with Agricorn staff: bit.ly/ExpertWSRecord.

Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Veal Cattle—Interpretation

Following the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) process, the Canadian Veal Association (CVA) has formed a Code Technical Panel (CTP) to do the five-year Code review and discuss an interpretation of a requirement in Section 3.2 Young Animal Housing: *“Effective December 31, 2020, calves in hutches and outdoor enclosures must not be tethered and calves in hutches must be able to access an area outside the hutch”* of the *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Veal Cattle* (Code).

The five-year Code review has been completed and will be presented at the next NFACC Board meeting. In the last five years a lot of research has been completed, however there is still lots to do.

Since the Code's release there have been challenges regarding Section 3.2 Young Animal Housing which prompted the question for an

interpretation, *are calves that are housed in hutches required to have access to the outside during periods where there may be heavy rain and/or snowfall?*

The CTP has met to discuss this question and has concluded that as is reflected in the veal cattle Code, the CTP agreed that calves must not be tethered; therefore, a fenced off area is necessary to safely contain calves that have access to an area outside the hutch. When drafting Section 3.2, the Code Committee did not discuss the management challenges of this fenced off area during heavy precipitation nor the risks to calves outside the hutch during wet and cold months.

The Requirement in Section 3.2 states that “calves in hutches must be able to access an area outside the hutch” should not be interpreted to mean that calves must have outdoor access during wet and cold winter months. The Code

does not explicitly require year-round access to an area outside the hutch. Consequently, it would not be considered a violation of the Code if calves did not have access to an area outside the hutch during wet and cold months from mid-November to mid-April.

In the interest of appropriate management strategies and calf welfare, the CTP recommends this interpretation, outdoor access can be optional during mid-November to mid-April where high rain and/or snowfall and/or cold temperatures are possible, until the 10-year Code update is complete.

The interpretation will be posted on NFACC, Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) and the Les Producteurs de bovins du Québec websites. If you have any questions regarding the Code, please contact the VFO office. ■



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Managing interest rates



Erich Weber, CPA, Business Finance Specialist

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Over the past several months, you may have heard that the Bank of Canada has increased the overnight lending rate, which in turn has increased the bank prime lending rate. With this change in interest rates, people, businesses, and farmers will have noticed that the cost to borrow money has increased. Let's look at some of the options that are available to you to help you navigate in this new interest rate environment.

Reviewing the terms of debt

This exercise is a good first step when determining how changing interest rates can affect your farm business. Take some time to list any debt that your farm business has, the related interest rate, and terms (details) of the debt. By reviewing this list, you can start making decisions as to how you want to deal with debt that has higher interest rates or debt that has a variable interest rate.

Fixed rate versus variable rate loans

When you are working with your lender on borrowing money, one of the major questions that they will ask is whether you want your new loan to be a fixed interest rate loan (interest rate is fixed over the life of the loan or a specified timeframe) or a variable interest rate loan (interest rate fluctuates over the life of the loan). By using a fixed rate loan, you may pay a higher interest rate than a variable rate loan, but a fixed rate loan protects you from increasing interest rates over the life of the loan because your payments will not change. With a variable rate loan, the monthly payments may change depending on the bank prime interest rate.

Pay down debt

Another way for farmers to manage their interest rate expense is to make lump sum payments on high interest debt or variable rate loans. By paying down your high interest debt or variable rate loans, you may be able to keep your monthly payments stable compared to if you did not make a lump sum payment. Have a conversation with your lender to see how a lump sum payment will affect your monthly payments and if there are any fees or penalties that may apply.

Talk with your lender and or farm business advisor

Your lender can help you navigate how the change in interest rates is affecting your business and what options are available for your farm business.

A farm business advisor can also help you make decisions that affect your farm business financial health. Similar to your lender, your farm business advisor can provide advice that can help you steer your farm business to success. Your lender and advisor want to see your farm business succeed as much as you do.

Can you delay any major purchases?

Does this mean that farmers should stop buying equipment? Not necessarily. Farm business owners invest in significant equipment purchases over their farming career. With the change in interest rates, the farm business owner should ask themselves if the piece of equipment needs to be purchased now, or if it can wait until interest rates stabilize. There are some cases where a piece of equipment may not need to be replaced right away, but there are other cases where it does make sense to make that purchase as soon as possible. Do your research and see what your farm business can manage.

Alternative financing products

There are alternative financing options that farmers may be able to use to help fund necessary purchases that have more attractive interest rates or terms. Some examples of these alternative financing products include the Feeder Cattle Loan Guarantee Program, the Tile Loan Program, and the Commodity Loan Guarantee Program.

With the changing interest rates, it is a good idea to take the time and review your farm business' financial situation and make informed decisions. By working with your lenders and your financial team, you can be sure that the decisions you make are in the best interest of your farm business. ■

Wishing you a very
Merry Christmas

Happy Holidays and all the
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INDUSTRY

updates



VFO attends Outdoor Farm Show

Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) attended Canada's Outdoor Farm Show in September, reconnecting with veal and dairy producer members, discussing industry issues, promoting calf care, and distributing resources. We encouraged producers to visit our booth, tweeting throughout the day and promoting our location on VFO's social media channels. Thank you to everyone who dropped by to say hi or pick up resources, we look forward to seeing you again at our Annual General Meeting in March!

VFO celebrates pride in farming during Ontario Agriculture Week

Ontario's veal is raised on family farms that support our rural communities and the Ontario economy. Held October 3 to 9, 2022, Ontario Agriculture Week celebrated the abundance of food Ontario farmers produce, the Ontarians our industry employs, the rural communities we support and the economic engine we fuel. VFO used this opportunity to thank our supply chain partners, share resources to support our industry partners, and celebrate our pride in veal farming using the hashtags #ONTAgWeek and #LoveONTfood.

New virtual producer workshop recordings available

This fall, VFO held a series of evening workshops connecting busy producers with leading experts on veal cattle and business management. Recordings of the live talks from the 2022 Ask the Expert Virtual Producer Workshops were released in October, visit vealfarmers.ca/producer-workshops to learn more. Sign-up for our weekly e-blast by contacting info@vealfarmers.ca to be the first to know about upcoming sessions!

VFO attends Minister's Agriculture Roundtable

Pascal Bouilly, VFO Chair, attended the Minister's Agriculture Roundtable at Queen's Park in early November, along with our industry colleagues to talk about the priorities and opportunities facing our sector with Premier Ford and Minister Thompson. VFO appreciated the opportunity to share more about the issues facing the grain-fed veal industry and the impactful discussions with our fellow agriculture and food sector leaders.



Grain-fed veal fact sheets

VFO has developed a series of fact sheets that will help answer common questions about starting and operating a grain-fed veal farm. Recent releases include feed ratios, imports, and assessing welfare. Learn more at bit.ly/GFfactsheets.

Dairy Cattle Code update

The Code Committee is working diligently to consider the record-breaking amount of feedback received during the public comment period. After taking a brief break over the summer months, the Code Committee and its subcommittees continue to meet virtually in the lead up to another two-day in-person Code Committee meeting in December. The focus of virtual and in-person meetings is to finalize chapters on cattle health, euthanasia, preparation for transport, and the remaining housing topics.

The Code Committee has finalized the Feed and Water chapter, Husbandry Practices chapter, most key housing topics, and a short first chapter on training and responsibilities.

Learn more at bit.ly/dairyupdate.

Transportation Code – Risk Assessment and Collaboration Planning Exercise update

When challenges surrounding the lack of a national lead organization resulted in concerns over proceeding to update the transportation Code, the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) Board agreed and secured support from our project funders, to pursue a Risk Assessment (RA) coupled with a Collaboration Planning Exercise (CPE).

Neither the risk assessment nor collaboration exercise will generate, in and of themselves, definitive “solutions” or explicit courses of action for the Board to follow. They will, however, ensure that all decisions eventually made are done so in accord with a comprehensive understanding of the nature and scope/breadth of the strongest preferences of the NFACC community.

To this end, those responsible for conducting both exercises have prepared a two-phase data collection process. The first will involve inviting members of the NFACC community, who may be interested, to complete a short survey. The nature

of this survey will be quite high-level and will be intended to invite top-of-mind feedback on the preferred future/fate of the Transport Code in relation to key risk and interests-related priorities. Once all survey material is completed and returned, membership feedback will be coded and analyzed. At this point, decisions will be made with regard to the prospective benefits associated with exploring key themes in greater detail among designated members of the NFACC community. If so, or at that point, invitations will be forwarded to a select number of that community to discern whether they may be interested in participating in face-to-face interviews (with

regard to risk assessment, collaboration planning, or both).

Upon completion of both the top-of-mind surveys and prospective interviews, all feedback received will be thoroughly reviewed and consolidated in the form of two reports that will be submitted to the NFACC Board. Both interviewers will also highlight prospective areas of overlap (i.e., possible “sweet spots”) that may be of particular interest to the NFACC Board as they review all findings in advance of deciding on the future of the transport Code.

Learn more at bit.ly/transportcode. ■



Biosecurity stop signs and resources

Susan Fitzgerald, Executive Director
Ontario Livestock & Poultry Council

The Ontario Livestock & Poultry Council office still has biosecurity stop signs in stock. They can be ordered by calling the office at 519-787-4322 or emailing Laura at laura.tfio@bell.net. Signs are \$20.00 + HST.

They also have biosecurity videos on DVD. The videos work well for training non-agricultural staff and for 4-H or school groups. You can view the videos at www.ontlpc.com/videos.html.

Order forms for DVDs can be found here: www.ontlpc.com/resources.html. ■

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Return to in-person events made for busy autumn

Amber Anderson, Communications Manager

Farm & Food Care Ontario



Farm & Food Care Ontario (FFCO) has had a busy fall as we all adjust to in-person events again. FFCO's annual conference in April kicked off the 2022 event season followed by hundreds of urban neighbours attending the Breakfast from the Farm in Paris in June. FFCO pulled together hundreds of our members and friends in August for a barbecue in celebration of the organization's tenth anniversary.

To cap off the summer, we hosted Breakfast from the Farm in Elora at the Grand River Raceway on August 27, in partnership with the Grand River and Fergus Agricultural Societies. On October 8, FFCO partnered with the Halton Agricultural Society to host our last Breakfast from the Farm event in 2022 at the Milton fairgrounds. Between both events, thousands of urban and suburban neighbours enjoyed a great day, walked through the site and had the opportunity to view livestock and farm equipment as well as meet Ontario farmers to ask questions about agriculture. They also received take-home goodie bags that included recipes and information from Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO).

FFCO also returned to in-person farm tours this fall for target audiences. They are our first since 2019. In September, Toronto food influencers toured a berry farm and an apple orchard in Norfolk and dined on a Caribbean-themed meal with a number of Norfolk County growers and Seasonal Agricultural Workers.

At the end of September, Registered Dietitians joined a tour in the Hamilton-area that included stops at Pristine Gourmet, a grain farm, and P & H Milling on the port of Hamilton.

FFCO also hosted four tours for culinary students at Niagara College, the Culinary Arts School of Ontario (Mississauga), Fleming College, and Algonquin College. These tours allow those about to be working in the food sector to hear directly from farmers and see first-hand how their food is made. FFCO is pleased to be returning to providing these in-person experiences.

In 2021, FFCO partnered with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture on a new public trust initiative called Source Local. This summer, a number of local federations have undertaken projects to let their neighbours know why they should Source Local when choosing food, fibre, and flowers. Events have included hosting events at drive-in movie theatres, creating trail signage, and a local food colouring book.

For Ontario Agriculture Week, October 3 to 9 this year, FFCO organized four events to celebrate local food in the cities of Thunder Bay, London, Ottawa, and Halton Region that reminded residents to Source Local.

Ontario Veal Appeal recipe cards and information were some of the resources distributed at each location.

For the rest of the fall, FFCO is still on the go. We will be at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, helping to host the Food & Nutrition Forum on November 9, and you can visit our booth to try our 3D farm tours over the course of the fair.

On Thursday, November 17, FFCO invites you to join us for the Annual Harvest Gala. The Denim & Diamonds-themed soirée at the Delta Hotel in Guelph on Thursday, November 17, will be a night of celebration, together again.

FFCO's members are excited to connect face-to-face again and FFCO's board and staff are excited about being live and in-person as well. ■



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Five-year holiday planner for producers

This chart lists religious holiday dates to assist with shipping planning. For veal farmers who plan their shipping, taking holiday timing into consideration is important, as it does affect pricing. For example, Easter is a time of the year when the processing plants are very busy with the harvest of lambs and kids, leaving little room in the cooler for veal.

This chart will help producers to plan accordingly, and time their purchase of male dairy calves or pre-conditioned calves by determining if they will

be ready for market around a holiday. This information applies regardless of your preferred shipping method, direct to packer or to the sales barn. Prices reflect cooler space availability.

Note: Dates may vary based on religious calendar observed. Also note that some holidays are observed over several days. Consult with your buyer to ensure accuracy. ■

Holidays		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Christian	Epiphany	Thursday, Jan. 6	Friday, Jan. 6	Saturday, Jan. 6	Monday, Jan. 6	Tuesday, Jan. 6
	Western Roman Easter	Sunday, April 17	Sunday, April 9	Sunday, March 31	Sunday, April 20	Sunday, April 5
	Eastern Orthodox Easter	Sunday, April 24	Sunday, April 16	Sunday, May 5	Sunday, April 20	Sunday, April 12
	Christmas	Sunday, Dec. 25	Monday, Dec. 25	Wednesday, Dec. 25	Thursday, Dec. 25	Friday, Dec. 25
Jewish	Passover/Pesach	Saturday, April 16	Thursday, April 6	Tuesday, April 23	Sunday, April 13	Thursday, April 2
	Rosh Hashanah	Monday, Sept. 26	Saturday, Sept. 16	Thursday, Oct. 3	Tuesday, Sept. 23	Saturday, Sept. 12
	Hanukkah	Monday, Dec. 19	Friday, Dec. 8	Thursday, Dec. 26	Monday, Dec. 15	Saturday, Dec. 5
Islamic	Ramadan	Sunday, April 3	Thursday, March 23	Monday, March 11	Saturday, March 1	Wednesday, Feb. 18
	Eid ul-Fitr	Tuesday, May 3	Saturday, April 22	Wednesday, April 10	Monday, March 31	Friday, March 20
	Eid ul-Adha	Sunday, July 10	Thursday, June 2	Monday, June 17	Saturday, June 7	Wednesday, May 27
	Muharram	Saturday, July 30	Wednesday, July 19	Monday, July 8	Friday, June 27	Wednesday, June 17
	Mawlid al-Nabi	Saturday, Oct. 8	Wednesday, Sept. 27	Monday, Sept. 16	Friday, Sept. 5	Wednesday, Aug. 26
Hindu	Navadurgara or Navatra Dashara or Dassai	Monday, Sept. 26	Monday, Oct. 5	Thursday, Oct. 3	Monday, Sept. 22	Monday, Sept. 22
	Diwali	Monday, Oct. 24	Sunday, Nov. 12	Thursday, Oct. 31	Monday, Oct. 20	Monday, Oct. 20
Other holidays to consider	Cinco de Mayo	Thursday, May 5	Friday, May 5	Sunday, May 5	Monday, May 5	Tuesday, May 5
	Canada Day	Friday, July 1	Saturday, July 1	Monday, July 1	Tuesday, July 1	Wednesday, July 1
	Independence Day (USA)	Monday, July 4	Tuesday, July 4	Thursday, July 4	Friday, July 4	Saturday, July 4
	Independence Day(Jamaica)	Saturday, Aug. 6	Sunday, Aug. 6	Tuesday, Aug. 6	Wednesday, Aug. 6	Thursday, Aug. 6

Incidents and injuries

Cheryl DeCooman, CHRL, President

People Management Group/UdderlySAFE



Incident definitions

People may use the term incident or injury to describe many different situations. It is important that you understand the definitions so that you can determine what needs to be reported and what other steps are required if something happens.

An injury or illness may involve an employee or other individual and actually results in harm. Critical injuries are defined by the Province. They are serious injuries that may be life-threatening, they also include broken bones, amputation, loss of consciousness, and significant bleeding.

A near miss is an incident where no property was damaged and no actual injury happened, but if the circumstances were slightly different an injury or damage would have been likely. These situations are extremely important to learn from because they can reduce the risk of a similar situation in the future. For example, you are walking into the barn and almost slip on a patch of ice, but you catch yourself before you fall, and there is no injury to yourself. But what about if the next person who encounters the patch of ice falls, hits their head and become unconscious? This is why it is important to report near miss incidents, investigate and take action on the cause, so the danger is eliminated.

A non-occupational injury or illness is something that may happen in the workplace but is not directly related to the work being completed. This may include a heart attack or asthma attack.

Other types of incidents include motor vehicle incidents, property damage, fires, or chemical spills.

Responsibilities

The first priority when someone is injured is to attend to their injuries. This may mean getting first aid or some other medical treatment if required. This is the priority for non-occupational illnesses as well.

The next priority is reporting. All injuries and incidents **MUST** be reported **IMMEDIATELY** to the supervisor. This includes near misses. The reporting forms will need to be completed at this time.

Incident investigation

All events and incidents will be investigated to determine the root causes by asking these questions:

- ☒ **Who** (was injured and/or involved)?
- ☒ **What** (happened, what material or equipment was involved)?
- ☒ **Where** (did the event take place)?
- ☒ **When** (did the event take place)?
- ☒ **Why** (did the event happen, what were the root causes)?
- ☒ **How** (do we prevent the event from happening again)?

Employees and witnesses will be asked to provide details of the incident. The goal of the investigation is not to find blame but to determine which factors led to the incident and what steps can be taken to ensure a similar incident does not happen again. Taking pictures of the scene is helpful in determining steps to prevent the incident from occurring again.

Critical injuries must be reported to the Ministry of Labour and will require additional investigation. If a critical injury occurs, you must cordon off the scene and begin the investigation immediately.

Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW)

If an employee is injured at work and not able to complete their regular tasks, it is important that the employer do everything they can to get the employee back to work completing tasks that fit within their current restrictions. Employees and supervisors must work together to discuss any restrictions and determine a return to work plan. This approach will minimize the WSIB costs and will ensure your employee recovers safely and can get back to their regular duties as soon as they have recovered.



First Aid

If an injury does occur it is important to have employees available to administer first aid. You must follow the First Aid Regulations which stipulate the number of trained first aid providers in your workplace. At a very minimum at least one person (onsite at all times) with valid First Aid training in your workplace but most workplaces need more than one. This is to ensure that if one person who is First Aid trained is on vacation, or on a different shift, that there is always someone on location who is certified. A copy of their first aid certificate must be posted on your health and safety communication board. The first aid log must be used whenever first aid is administered.

Having the right first aid supplies available is also very important. The First Aid Regulations also stipulate the first aid supplies required based upon the number of employees on your farm. You must have at least one first aid kit in your workplace. More will be needed for larger workplaces and in farm vehicles or other equipment. The first aid kits must be easily accessible, and the location must be marked on your emergency map.

The first aid kit must be inspected quarterly and kept clean and well stocked containing the specific supplies required based on the number of employees in the workplace.

Eye wash facilities

If an eye injury occurs it is critical to get the eye rinsed as soon as possible. A continuous flow eyewash station with at least 15 minutes of flush must be in the workplace if tasks are being completed that pose a risk of eye injury. Examples may include working with chemicals, using tools or other tasks that generate small particles. The continuous flow eyewash station should be located by the hazard if possible.

Bottled eyewash solution can be located throughout the workplace and can be used as an immediate, very limited, flush of contaminated eyes to get the injured person to the continuous flow eyewash station.

Eyewash stations must be clean and inspected regularly to ensure the station is working. ■

References available upon request.



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Why what happens at shipping affects meat quality: stress, dark cutters, and shrink



Kendra Keels

Industry Development Director

To consumers, eating quality veal is an experience, not just a meal. The colour, tenderness, and velvety texture makes it unique. As veal producers that is the ultimate goal, to keep consumers coming back for more.

What happens when things go wrong at the time of shipping and the veal cattle become stressed? That stress can impact meat quality, causing what is known in the industry as a dark cutter.

A dark cutter is a result of a stressor like fasting, commingling, pen riding, transportation, rough handling, changing weather conditions and long holding times prior to processing (shrink). Any of these stressors can cause the glycogen (energy reserves) in the muscles to deplete, impacting the colour of the meat.

Glycogen is stored in the liver and is a main source of energy. It is broken down by enzymes into glucose which is transported through the blood. Ideally, at the time of processing, the glycogen in the muscle is converted to lactic acid which decreases the pH in the muscle. The more glycogen in the muscle, the more lactic acid is produced, lowering the pH. Veal with a pH of 5.5 to 6.1 has the potential for a superior eating experience (neutral pH is 7.0). When an animal is stressed at processing, it increases the pH of the meat, impacting quality.

The term dark cutter refers to the meat not “blooming” or turning a bright pink colour when cut and exposed to air. The dark colour is an unappealing characteristic for veal and an unpleasant eating experience for consumers. The meat of a dark cutter tends to be a coarser texture. It also has a reduced shelf life because of the higher pH which provides the perfect environment for bacteria to grow. Dark cutters also tend to retain water increasing moisture content, which is lost during cooking, drying the veal out. July to October are the most common months for dark cutters to occur.

What is shrink?

Shrink can be tricky to understand. From the time the animal leaves the farm, shrink begins and it occurs at a greater rate earlier on in the trip. During transport, cattle do not have access to feed and water and coupled with the stress of leaving the farm and being commingled, they lose rumen fill, manure, and urine. This loss in gut fill and fluids reduces their body weight (BW) from the time they leave to when they arrive at their destination, which is referred to as shrink.

Carcass yield/dressing percentage

Dressing percentage is calculated by dividing the hot/warm carcass weight by the shrunk live weight. For example, if the hot/warm carcass weighed 185 kg (408 lbs.) and the shrunk live weight was 340 kg (750 lbs.) the dressing percentage would be 54.4 per cent. As a rule of thumb in the veal sector, the value of 54.5 per cent is used.

The longer the animal is without feed or water, the more tissue shrink will occur from fluid loss, which will account for higher shrink as time goes on. Ideally, the shorter the transport time from the farm to the plant and then harvest, the less shrink occurs, resulting in less loss to the producer and better-quality veal, including reducing the odds of dark cutters.

There is a rule of thumb for cattle shrink—cattle will lose approximately one per cent of their BW per hour for the first three to four hours and then .25 per cent BW per hour for the next eight to 10 hours. On average, veal cattle shipped in Ontario will shrink two to three per cent on the live weight. Shipping direct can minimize shrink. ■

References available upon request.

INNOVATION IN ELECTROLYTES

TruVital Animal Health is a Canadian company whose goal is to develop products that will help to responsibly reduce the use of antibiotics, and encourage on farm management practices that contribute to a preventative as well as therapeutic action against health challenges. You may recognize their name, but not their fresh new look!



Their top-selling electrolyte products, Truvitalyte and Truvitalyte-Max, both utilize a blend of mixed buffers or alkalizing agents to properly rehydrate the calf. These electrolyte powders are an effective alternative to current products on the market because current products are formulated using only a single alkalizing agent and energy source.

Truvitalyte has two sources of energy, one that is readily absorbed and the second is absorbed over a longer period of time; as well as a blend of three effective alkalizing agents.

In addition, Truvitalyte has an osmolarity of about 420 mmol/L, which is similar to the osmolarity of blood, which assists in getting the electrolytes into the blood stream. Using other higher osmolarity products can be cause for concern.

Truvitalyte-MAX is an especially innovative product, because unlike many other electrolyte products on the market it has the added benefit of a comprehensive vitamin package. These include B vitamins (Biotin, Niacinamide, Riboflavin, Pyridoxine hydrochloride, Thiamine, Folic Acid) as well as Vitamin E and Vitamin C. These vitamins are important to replace any nutrients lost as a result of diarrhea, especially when milk is refused. It also contains a MOS (Mannan oligosaccharide) used to help bind pathogens therefore passing them through the feces.

The key components of Truvitalyte and Truvitalyte-MAX that were focused on in development were:

- Alkalizing agents: Used to correct metabolic acidosis
- Sodium: Required to correct dehydration due to losses caused by diarrhea
- Glycine: An amino acid that acts as a carrier for proper sodium absorption in the intestine

▪ Potassium: Assists with bodily functions and is required to restore depleted potassium stores as a result of diarrhea

▪ Energy: A blend of energy sources to correct a negative energy balance

▪ Chloride: Has many functions but is used to balance strong ion difference (an important component of proper sodium absorption)

Both products have been thoroughly researched at the Mapleview Agri Ltd. Research Facility in Palmerston, ON. This facility has become a benchmark in calf research since its opening in 2015. Over the past 7 years Mapleview has performed over 70 trials, exceeding 10,000 calves. These studies have been performed for academia, pharmaceutical, and nutrition companies, worldwide, to assist in validating their existing products as well as developing new ones.

The Mapleview Agri Research Team has also welcomed Master's students and PhD candidates from the University of Guelph to complete their project research.

TruVital products are available across Canada, in store and online. Visit www.Truvital.ca for more information, and to see the other products they offer.





Preventing liver abscesses in veal cattle

Angela Fairfield M.Sc., Ruminant Nutritionist

Floradale Feed Mill Ltd.

The occurrence of liver abscesses (LA) in veal cattle is a silent problem affecting not only animal welfare but also hurting the bottom line of producers. The potentially subtle and periodic physical signs of LA make detection difficult until slaughter occurs and without a good feedback loop to producers, knowledge of the issue has been limited.

A reduction of five to 15 per cent average daily gain in cattle with severely abscessed livers can occur in comparison to those without any LA, which makes this a costly disease. Not only do animals experience reduced production efficiencies but also have the potential to suffer from additional secondary diseases resulting in the requirement for more sick treatments. A recent *Journal of Animal Science* article put incidence rates of liver abscesses in feedlot cattle between 10 and 20 per cent (Amachawadi and Nagaraja, 2016). Although there is a lack of data on the actual prevalence of this problem in veal cattle in comparison to feedlot cattle, we do know many of the same feeding and management practices that contribute to their occurrence happen similarly in both systems, creating opportunities for the disease to occur frequently.

At slaughter, this disease will result in condemnation of the liver and reduce carcass yield potential and profitability for all involved. In the more severe cases where adhesions happen with other organs or the diaphragm, further trims to the carcass may be inevitable. The liver represents approximately two per cent by weight of the carcass (Nagaraja and Chengappa, 1998). Usually, an affected liver will have between three and 10 abscesses, but that could be as high as 100 in some cases.

LA occur when damage to the rumen allows for the escape of naturally occurring bacteria into the bloodstream which then end up travelling to the liver where they start forming abscesses. Foreign body penetration of the reticulum is another potential cause but is less frequently occurring. Feeding management practices that can lead to rumen acidosis are a known link to disease occurrence but are preventable in many cases as will be discussed. Other potential causes are related to reduced gut health including exposure to mycotoxins (especially vomitoxin and T-2) and heat stress (Baumgard and Rhoads, 2013).

There are several management and feeding tips we can employ to reduce and prevent liver abscesses by preventing situations that could cause rumen acidosis:

1. Start veal cattle on a high-quality calf starter early in life (within two to three days) and ensure they are eating at least 0.9 kg (two lbs.) of dry feed for several days prior to beginning the weaning process. It is important to keep the feed fresh and offer free choice until reaching the targeted maximum feeding rate.
2. Make sure animals have access to clean water at all times, including prior to weaning and especially during hot weather. This promotes steady and maximal dry matter intakes and prevents larger meal intakes when water is only introduced at mealtimes.
3. Wean cattle slowly by reducing the amount of milk fed at each feeding but never reducing the concentration of the milk fed (ie., watering it down). Adding more water to milk replacer or whole milk could change where the milk is directed in the gut (ie., rumen instead of abomasum) and cause digestive upset.
4. Avoid abrupt changes in feed type(s) and feeding management practices. The use of transitional feeding can help avoid periods of feed refusals due to unfamiliarity in taste, smell, or texture.
5. When concentrate feeds are fed in limited quantities, divide the daily amounts into several feedings throughout the day.
6. Reduce or eliminate stressful social situations. Wherever possible avoid multiple movements of animals and mixing with older, unknown herdmates. Do not move calves or change the type of dry feed being fed during the weaning process, instead wait at least seven to 10 days post-weaning.
7. Offer animals a small, fresh handful per head per day of good quality fibre. If you have chopped straw available, it could be offered free choice in a clean, easily accessible container. Even though animals bedded on straw will likely consume some, it is better for animal health to have them eat clean hay or straw instead of eating potentially contaminated bedding.
8. Weaned animals should have free choice access to a salt block as a lack of salt intake can lead to reduced dry matter intakes.
9. Ensure feed never runs out in front of animals. When the bunk goes empty it creates feed binging behaviour which can lead to acidosis.

and then trigger the development of liver abscesses. Small, frequent meals prevent large build-ups of acids in the gut.

10. Remove any spoiled feed, especially with young animals, to encourage steady, consistent feed intakes.
11. Ensure feed bunk access is not limited throughout the production system. Eliminating feed bunk competition will allow animals to consume smaller, more frequent meals thereby reducing the potential for rumen acidosis to occur.
12. Use veal-specific feeds medicated with Monensin Sodium (MOS). MOS has three positive effects on animal health and productivity including:
 - a. helps prevent rumen acidosis which lead to liver abscesses
 - b. improves feed efficiency by reducing dry matter intake five to 10 per cent while maintaining body weight gains
 - c. prevents/reduces the occurrence of coccidiosis which can lead to secondary health issues and potentially permanent digestive tract damage ■



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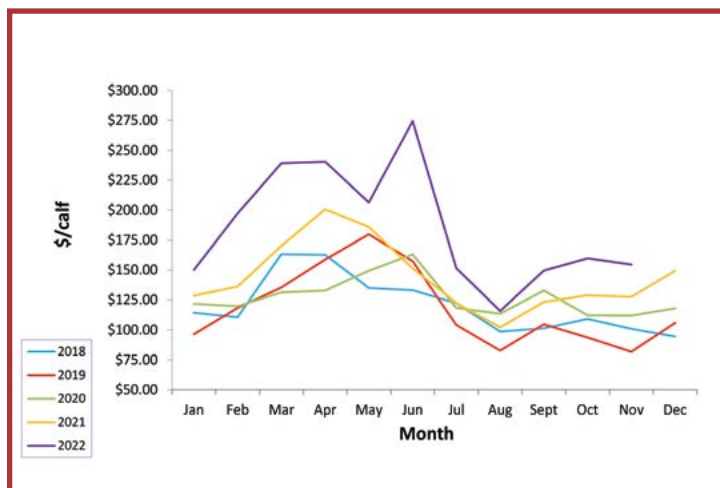
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Veal Market Information

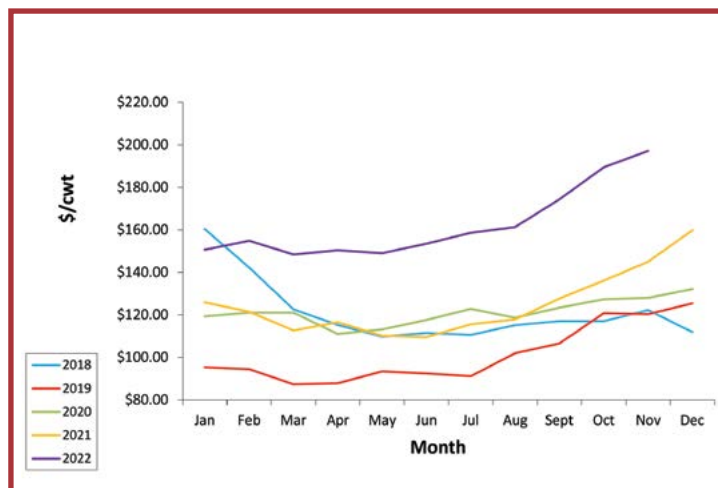
This information is collected from various sources and disseminated by Veal Farmers of Ontario.

Bob Calf Pricing



This price range is collected and tabulated from participating sale barns throughout Ontario based on average pricing. This information is used to follow trends.

Sale Barn Veal Pricing



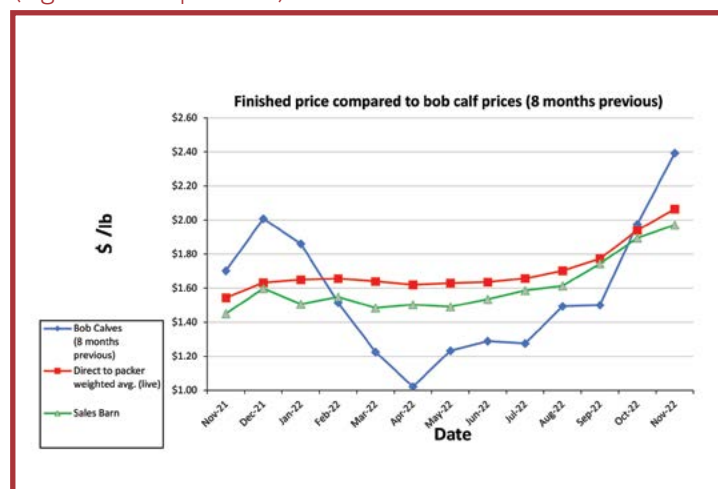
This price range is collected and tabulated from participating sale barns throughout Ontario based on average pricing. This information is used to follow trends.

Rail Grade Veal Pricing

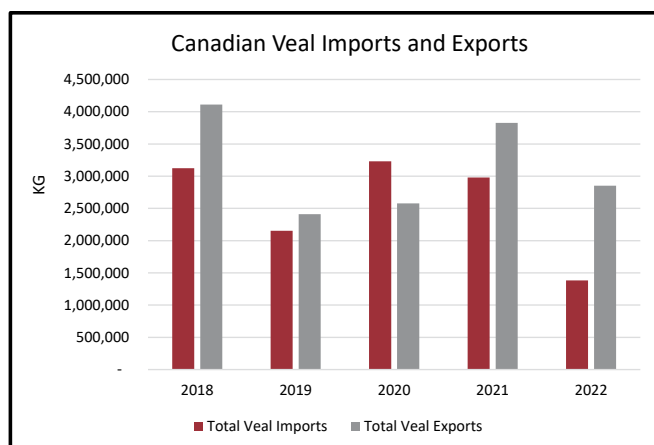


This information is collected from producer contributions on a weekly basis. Once the numbers are collected a weighted average is calculated. The weighted average gives a more realistic price of what is happening in the market. This information is used to follow trends.

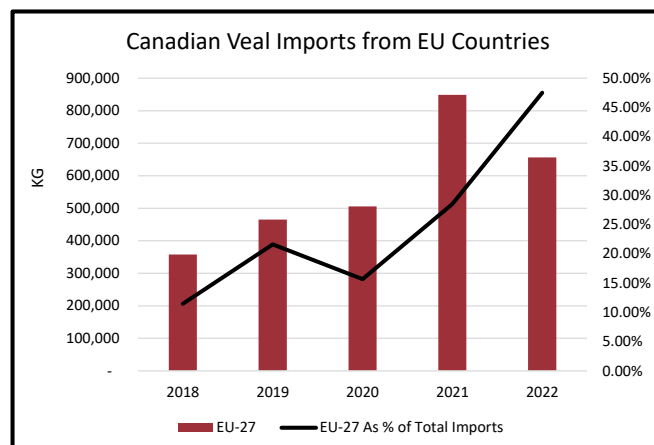
Finished price compared to bob calf prices (eight months previous)



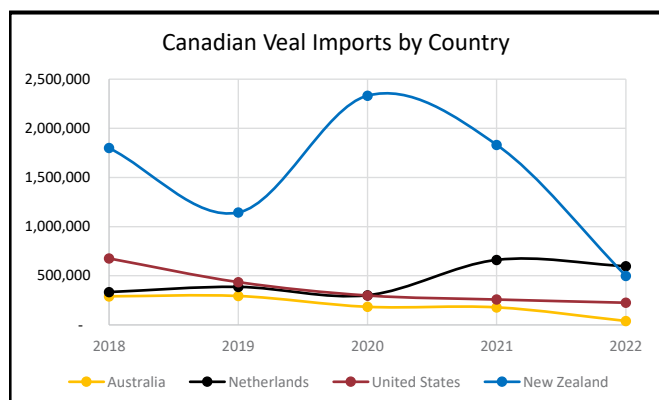
This graph is used to compare the finished price from both the sale barn and rail grade pricing to the bob calf prices eight months prior. This information could help when deciding on the purchase prices of calves and what market they will be shipped in. This information gives a quick glance at both bob calf pricing and finished veal pricing.



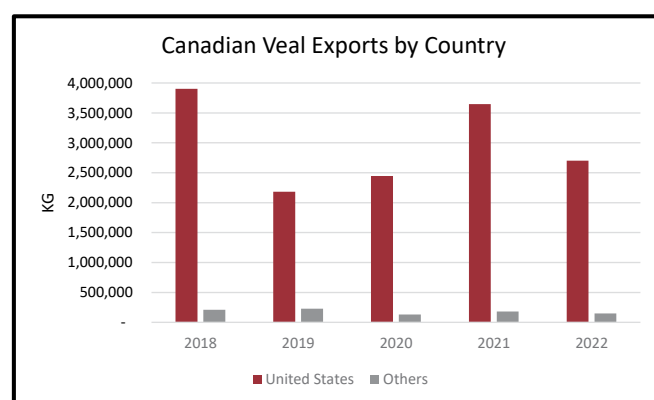
In 2022, Canada continues to maintain a trade surplus for veal. Year to date, Canadian veal exports amounted to 2.85 million kgs, a year over year increase of 2% by volume and 22.5% by value. Conversely, veal imports decreased in volume by 39% and held steady in value compared to 2021. Inflation is likely causing the disconnect between volume and value.



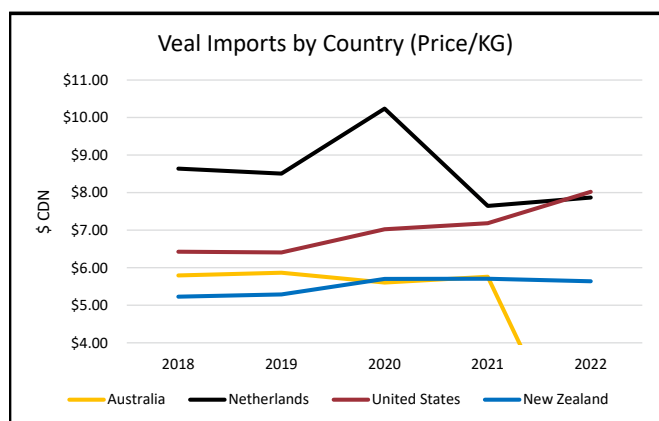
The volume of veal imports from the EU (red) is down 22%, compared to this time in 2021. This is equivalent to 48% of Canada's veal imports (black line); continuing the large increases reported since 2018. The Netherlands is the predominant supplier of European imports, with smaller volumes imported from Italy, France, and Denmark.



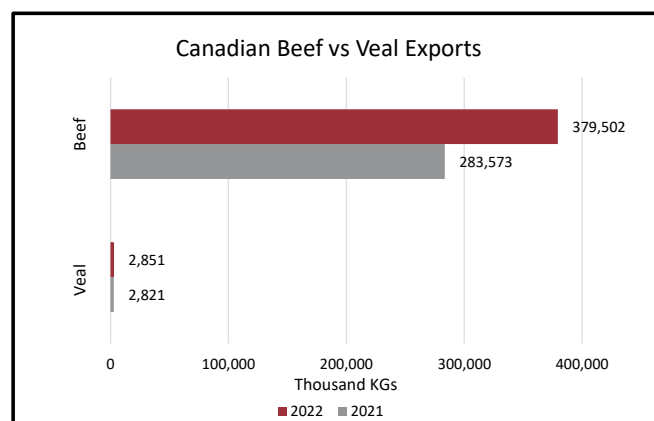
The Netherlands is now Canada's largest supplier of imported veal, followed by New Zealand. Imports from the USA continue to decline. No Australian imports have been reported. Larger import volumes from other EU countries are also being reported.



Veal exports to the USA increased by 2% year to date compared to 2021. This is the highest amount of veal exports since 2018. The balance of Canada's veal exports are sent to the Middle East.



The per kg price of veal imported from the Netherlands has held steady in 2022 from lows set in 2021 at \$7.87/kg. The value of American cuts remains at higher levels in 2022 at \$8.02/kg, while the value of New Zealand imports held steady at \$5.64/kg.



While veal represents just a small fraction of Canada's red meat trade, both veal and beef exports have marginally increased compared to this time last year.

Data retrieved from AAFC and Statistics Canada. red meat section.

Ontario VEAL appeal

Traditional Veal Tourtiere

A Quebecois custom on Christmas Eve, this savoury pie is terrific for any dinner. This filling can be made ahead and frozen until you're ready to serve it. Chili sauce or pickled beets on the side make perfect accompaniments.

Cut: Ground/Minced | Servings: 6-8 | Prep Time: 40 minutes |
Cook Time: 35 minutes

Ingredients:

Filling:

- 2 lb (1 kg) ground veal
- 1 slice side bacon, finely chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) finely chopped celery
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) water
- 1 tsp (5 mL) salt
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) each pepper, dried sage, dried thyme, dried savoury and cloves
- 1 potato, peeled and diced
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) chopped fresh parsley
- 1 pastry for 9-inch (23 cm) double crust pie
- 1 egg, beaten

Instructions:

In large saucepan, cook veal, bacon, onion, garlic and celery over medium heat, stirring, for about 10 minutes or until veal is no longer pink. Add water, salt, pepper, sage, thyme, savoury and cloves. Reduce heat, cover and simmer, stirring, occasionally, for 20 minutes. Add potatoes and simmer, covered, for 5 minutes longer or until most of liquid is absorbed. Let cool. Stir in parsley.

Pour cooled filling into 9-inch (23 cm) pastry-lined deep pie plate. Brush edge of bottom pastry with egg. Cover pie with top pastry; fold edge over bottom pastry and crimp to seal. Cut steam vents in top: cut out pastry decorations from scraps, if desired. Brush top crust with egg; stick on decorations, if using. Brush with egg; refrigerate until chilled. Bake in 425°F (220°C) oven for 15 minutes; reduce heat to 350°F (180°C) and bake for about 20 minutes longer or until filling is hot and pastry is golden. Let stand for 10 minutes before slicing.

Nutritional Information: 434 Calories * 28.7 g Protein * 23.9 g Fat
* 26.0 g Carbohydrate



Helpful Tips: To make ahead, omit potatoes, cool filling and freeze in airtight container. Thaw in refrigerator; stir in partially cooked potatoes and fill pie crust. This recipe can easily be doubled to make 2 pies. ■



Leading Dairy Farming with Passion and Purpose

Ontario dairy farmers are committed to the sustainability of their farms, their animals and the land, and take pride in producing high-quality, nutrient-rich milk for Canadians from generation to generation.

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Licensed dealers

As a veal (bob calves, started/preconditioned calves, and finished veal cattle) producer, you should be dealing with licensed 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 email 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 licensed, ask to see the licence, check the Agricorn website at bit.ly/Agricorndealers or contact the VFO office.

Licence fee remittances

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 and preconditioned calves are considered veal cattle. This regulation also includes veal cattle that are sent for custom slaughter.

If you are purchasing male dairy and dairy crossbreed bob calves (up to 150 lbs.) and preconditioned intact male dairy and dairy crossbreed calves (up to 450 lbs.) licence fees are required. To help veal producers and to streamline efficiencies VFO will allow producers purchasing private treaty calves or sending veal for custom slaughter to fill out the Year End Licence Fee Remittance Worksheet.

This worksheet is only for finished veal producers, not dealers. Dealers are to remit monthly unless arrangements have been made with the VFO office. Form 5- List of Veal Cattle Sellers Information Report must accompany the Year End Licence Fee Remittance Worksheet.

If you require additional copies of the Year End Licence Fee Remittance Worksheet for 2022, Form 1 or Form 5, please visit the VFO Licence Fee forms page at bit.ly/LicForms or contact the VFO office.

Ontario Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program

Agricorn is the 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 Licensing inquiries, must be directed to Agricorn. Visit bit.ly/agricorp or call 1-888-247-4999 for more information. ■

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A photograph of several black and white calves in a barn, looking over a metal railing. The image is partially obscured by a large red 'V' shape on the left and a red rectangular frame around the central text.

**SAVE
the DATE**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

The GrandWay Events Centre, Elora, Ontario



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info@vealfarmers.ca



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