

Spring 2025

# THE *South Dakota* CATTLEMAN

The official publication of the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association





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## SDCA *Calendar of Events*

March 19: SDCA BOD Meeting via Zoom

March 21 - 27: National Ag Week

March 24 - 26: NCBA Region VII Fly-In,  
Washington, D.C.

May 1 - 31: Celebrate Beef Month!

June 26 - 28: Stockmanship & Stewardship,  
Watertown, SD

July 7 - 9: NCBA Summer Business Meeting,  
San Diego, CA

### SDBIC Events

March 10: SDBIC Board  
Meeting, Drifters, Ft. Pierre,  
SD



March 22: Ag Day at the Pavillion,  
Washington Pavillion, Sioux Falls, SD

March 21 - 27: Ag in the Classroom with  
South Dakota Junior Beef Ambassadors

April 4: South Dakota FFA Career Carnival,  
Brookings, SD

## Advertising *Opportunities*

**The South Dakota Cattleman** is published six times a year and sent to SDCA members including beef producers, beef industry supporters, property owners, allied industry partners, as well as state and local government officials with a circulation over 1,000.

Advertising deadline is the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication.

The SDCA e-newsletter, **The Cattle Guard**, is emailed to all SDCA members every week. **The Cattle Guard** contains updates and news from SDCA, industry partners, and NCBA.

Follow us on our social media platforms to stay informed of the latest SDCA news, events, and information.



Scan to access  
SDCA's Media Kit

Magazine cover photo by  
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## Features

Ag is King in South Dakota .....	8
Don't Forget the Bull's Impact on Reproductive Efficiency.....	11
From the Desk of Chairman Boozman.....	12
SDCA Leadership Academy Leader Spotlight.....	14-15
Penrhos Farms: Four Generations Strong .....	16-17

## In Every Issue

From the Cattle Pen .....	4
The Cattlemen's Outlook .....	18
View from My Side of the Fence .....	19
Making the Most of Membership .....	27
SDCA Working for you .....	28-29
For the Cattlekids .....	31
SDCA Affiliates .....	32

## Association & Industry News

SDCA Day at the Capitol.....	6-7
2025 Cattle Con Recap .....	20-23
A Message of Gratitude.....	24
NCBA's 2025 Policy Priorities .....	26



### Mission

To advance the interests of South Dakota Cattlemen through representation and promotion of the beef industry.

### Vision

To be an organization where members can work together to protect their interests; seek solutions to industry problems; provide a unified voice, and to build the good will, esteem, and recognition the industry deserves.



South Dakota  
Cattlemen's  
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# SDCA Leadership

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Drew Edleman, Northeast Region

Nick Wilkinson, Northeast Region

Colby Olson, Southeast Region

Austin Havlik, Southeast Region

Casey Heenan, Southern Region

Kory Bierle, Southern Region

Britton Blair, Western Region

Devin Stephens, Western Region

Megan Sanders, SDSU Collegiate  
Cattlemen's Club

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# Manage your South Dakota Cattlemen's Association member profile online!

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Go to [sd cattlemen.org](http://sd cattlemen.org) and click on 'Member Login' at the top right hand corner of the website.

## Step 2:

Enter your unique member login information when prompted. No username? Email [office@sd cattlemen.org](mailto:office@sd cattlemen.org) to request one.

## Step 3:

Member Menu

Members Events Communication Engagement Resources Multimedia

Paid Thru Date: No paid invoices

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Affiliate

Sioux Basin

View local affiliate

2024 Policy Handbook

2024 Bylaws As Amended 11.29.23

2023 Membership Meeting Minutes | Convention

June 2023 Minutes | SDCA BOD

September 2023 Minutes | SDCA BOD

January 2024 Minutes | SDCA BOD

March 2024 Minutes | SDCA BOD

Member Number:

Member Name

Member Primary Phone

Member business Phone

Member Email

Review current member information

Access SDCA's policy handbook, bylaws, and meeting minutes.

My Membership Info

Member Information Billing Info

Member Information

Change Contact/Profile Info

Additional Individuals Included

Change Username/Password

Update your membership information, check member status, and renew or modify your membership.

Tip:

Make sure your information is up to date, including your email to receive all membership benefits!

## Ad Index

Farm Credit Services of America.....	Inside Front Cover
Pellet Technology USA .....	Page 2
Axiota Multimin.....	Page 10
Dacotah Bank.....	Page 13
Ward Labs.....	Page 17
American Angus Association.....	Page 17
South Dakota Cattlemen's Foundation - Prime Time Gala .....	Inside Back Cover
Liphatech .....	Back Cover





# From the Cattle Pen

Warren Symens, SDCA President



This issue hits mailboxes accompanied by a slew of bull sale catalogs. I've always enjoyed studying those catalogs and going to cattle sales. Whether at the sale barn during feeder calf runs, or at bred cow sales, or bull sales, it's second nature to look for the best ones. When I'm shopping at a bull sale, I'll often run across someone I know, and we compare what we're seeing around the countryside at other sales. I always say, when you find the perfect bull, let me know, and I'll partner with you. I've never gotten that call or found the perfect bull that does it all.

While no bull can do it all, what most of us are looking for is a bull that adds value to our calf crop, improving the traits where our cows may fall short. Progress in this business is slow. We won't know if our selection paid off for years -- especially if we're keeping daughters. At our operation, we've put a lot of effort into improving fertility, marbling, and moderate birth weights, while not losing the good dispositions, muscling, and efficient growth we've always been known for. It's a quick lesson when you figure out that single trait selection will send you backwards -- decades -- over the course of one year.

If we chase birth weights lower and lower, for instance, performance can suffer. Conversely, if we single trait select for performance, fertility can take a hit. While the perfect bull most likely can't be found (affordably, at least), we can select for several traits at once and fix a what may be holding our cows back from producing the best results.

We should approach each election cycle like bull sale season. Many voters fixate on single issues or tie themselves to a candidate that holds the same stance on one problem that they deem the most important to fix. While all issues are important in totality, when a lawmaker has an axe to grind or runs on a divisive issue, the rest of the issues get ignored, problems are created out of nowhere, and windmills fall when there's no reason to tilt at them in the first place.

Governing is difficult. Governing efficiently and effectively, is even harder. Sometimes it seems as if there are as many issues as there are voters. Like sorting through data in a sale catalog, it's like be drinking from a fire hose, trying not to suffer from information overload. Without years of experience and explanations from those who understand what they're looking at, it's impossible for one person to have a firm grasp of every single issue, understand the ins and outs, and know exactly what the consequences of passing legislation will be. That's why committee hearings are held, to allow law makers to hear testimony from experts or their representatives on these subjects.

I'm the first to ask for explanations whenever a new data point or expected progeny difference (EPD) is released. It helps me understand how to use that tool when selecting new stock. If I hear advice from people who know more, and fail to follow it, I only have myself to blame when my herd goes backwards. The same thing happens when legislators hear advice from experts and choose to ignore it. Perhaps it doesn't fit their agenda, or they're focused on a single issue and can't be bothered with the rest. Whatever the case, it is important to take time to understand the reason for the advice and testimony.

Over the years, the word "lobbyist" has somehow become a four-letter word. But I want our membership to be certain that we have someone doing miles and miles of legwork to cover the legislative session. Policy passed by membership is relayed through testimony in committee hearings, phone calls, conversations, and emails. The policy sorts through the nuance and grey to help lawmakers know where to stand when it comes time to vote on bills.

Just like single trait selection will send you backwards in your herd, when we invest our votes for the future and send lawmakers to Pierre, we must send people that are willing to hear to the experts, listen to the industry and look beyond single issues for the betterment of our industry as a whole and for all of South Dakota. *It's up to us.*

# Allied Industry Members

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Y-Tex Corporation

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### Choice Members



# SDCA Day at the Capitol

The South Dakota Cattlemen's Association (SDCA) Board gathered in Pierre on January 30 for the annual SDCA Day at the Capitol event, where directors gained valuable legislative insights and witnessed history in the making. This year marks the 100th Legislative Session in South Dakota, a milestone made even more significant by a gubernatorial transition. Former Lieutenant Governor Larry Rhoden assumed the role of Governor as form Governor Kristi Noem was appointed to the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security. Governor Rhoden is the first to serve as both President of the Senate and Governor within the same legislative session.

The day began with SDCA Directors attending the House and Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committees. Both committees considered two bills relevant to the cattle industry. One bill under consideration was House Bill 1022, that requires accurate labels on cell cultured protein products. SDCA's Executive Director and registered lobbyist, Taya Runyan, testified in support of the bill alongside several other proponents. House Bill 1022 successfully passed both chambers and was signed into law by Governor Rhoden.

Following the committee meetings, SDCA met with Wendy Semmler, Director of Property Tax at the Department of Revenue. With property taxes being a major topic of discussion this

legislative session, Semmler and her team have closely monitored related bills. She provided an overview of key tax legislation under consideration and its potential impact on South Dakotans, particularly in the agricultural sector.

Next, SDCA Directors had the opportunity to meet with the South Dakota Legislative Research Council (LRC). The LRC provides legislators with legal and fiscal analysis, research, drafting and budget services in a professional, confidential, and nonpartisan manner. Director John McCullough explained the important role the LRC plays in supporting lawmakers as they transform ideas and constituent feedback into legislation.

To conclude the day, Directors attended both the House and Senate general sessions, witnessing a momentous event at the Capitol. SDCA had a front-row seat to watch Tony Venhuizen take the oath office as South Dakota's 40th Lieutenant Governor. Following the ceremony, SDCA was introduced and recognized in both chambers.

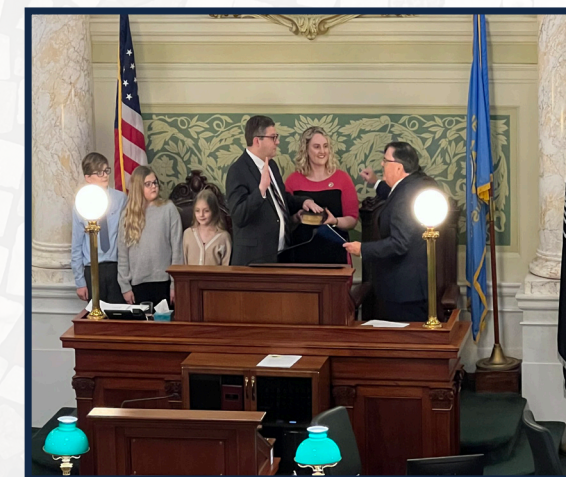
This annual event offers a valuable opportunity to participate in the legislative process, connect with key decision-makers, and serve as a visible reminder to South Dakota's 105 legislators that farmers and ranchers are impacted by the decisions they make in Pierre. SDCA remains committed to advocating for the cattle industry and ensuring that its members' voices are heard in Pierre.



Directors attend the House Ag & Natural Resources Committee



Directors meet with the South Dakota Legislative Research Council



Lieutenant Governor Tony Venhuizen takes the oath of office with former Lieutenant Governor Matt Michels presiding.





# Ag is King in South Dakota

The South Dakota Cattlemen's Association had the opportunity to sit down with Governor Larry Rhoden after he was sworn in as South Dakota's 40th Governor. We discussed his administration's priorities and his vision for South Dakota agriculture. From his time serving in the legislature, to his time as Lieutenant Governor and the Ambassador to Agriculture, the SDCA has been proud to work alongside Governor Rhoden! We look forward to working with Governor Rhoden and his team to keep agriculture strong!

As the state's largest industry, agriculture will always be a central priority under my leadership. "Ag is King in South Dakota," and I am deeply committed to ensuring that it thrives.

As a lifelong West River rancher, I know firsthand the challenges and opportunities that farmers and ranchers face. I am a fifth-generation South Dakotan on my mom's side and a fourth-generation South Dakotan on my dad's. This ranching background means I am no stranger to hard work—both on the ranch and in the Capitol.

I am a firm believer in not just protecting but also growing agriculture in South Dakota—especially through expanding trade partnerships and value-added agriculture. In my previous role as Lt. Governor, I led successful trade missions to countries such as Mexico, Taiwan, and Japan, forging strong relationships that continue to benefit South Dakota farmers and ranchers today. My trade mission to Mexico yielded an 80 to 1 return on investment, highlighting the importance of international

relationships for South Dakota's agricultural success.

My administration will focus on policies that protect and strengthen the industry while also expanding opportunities for diversification. While agriculture will remain a cornerstone of South Dakota's economy, I recognize that overdependence on one industry could make the state vulnerable if significant downturns occurred. As a result, I am committed to promoting other important industries as well such as cybersecurity.

I will continue to work closely with ag organizations, producers, and other stakeholders to ensure that their voices are heard in the policymaking process. My commitment to ongoing engagement with industry leaders will ensure that South Dakota's agriculture community has a seat at the table when decisions are being made.

Under my leadership, agriculture will remain strong, and South Dakota will continue to be a state that is "Open for Opportunity!"



GOVERNOR  
LARRY RHODEN



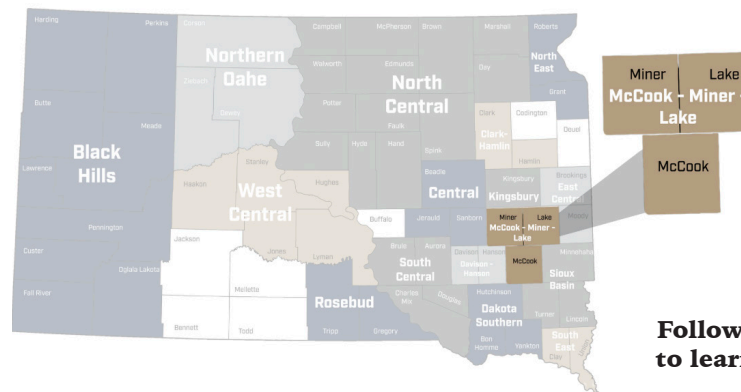
## Affiliate Spotlight

### McCook-Miner-Lake Officers

Peter Hansen | President

Johnathon Noonan | Vice President

Maria Buus | Secretary / Treasurer



### MCCOOK-MINER-LAKE CATTLEMEN'S AFFILIATE

#### McCook-Miner-Lake Highlights

- Hosts annual T-Bone Classic golf tournament
- Provides scholarship opportunities for local youth
- Supports local 4-H clubs annually through Beef Bucks
- Partners with Build Your Base to support area athletics through nutritious beef

Follow McCook-Miner-Lake Cattlemen's Affiliate on Facebook to learn more and keep up with the latest updates and events.

## Affiliate Snapshot

### SIoux BASIN CATTLEMEN'S BINGO NIGHT + ANNUAL MEETING

Sioux Basin Cattlemen's bingo night and annual meeting was a success! Tom Ollerich of Ollerich Cattle Company (photo right) received the Sioux Basin Cattleman of the Year award. Thanks to First Bank & Trust for sponsoring.









## From the Chairman's Desk

U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Chairman John Boozman (R-AR)

There is a lot to be optimistic about this Congress with Senator John Thune leading the new Republican majority and President Donald Trump back in the White House. This new dynamic in Washington is launching an ambitious agenda to roll back burdensome regulations and unreasonable directives imposed on rural America during the last four years.

In both South Dakota, and my home state of Arkansas, agriculture is the cornerstone of the economy. The industry supports families, businesses and rural communities, but it's been a struggle for producers all across the country given the current economic climate. High input costs and elevated inflation are exposing financial challenges and putting family farms at risk.

Our new Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins is a lifelong advocate for America's farm families. I'm confident her leadership at the U.S. Department of Agriculture is what rural America needs right now to protect the way of life of the hardworking men and women who grow our food and fiber. Secretary Rollins will help improve policies to keep our farmers and ranchers in business.

As Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I look forward to working with her to ensure our producers have the ability to continue producing a safe, affordable and reliable source of food by providing certainty and predictability with a new five-year farm bill.

My top priority as leader of the committee is passing a farm bill that meets today's needs of America's farmers and ranchers by improving the farm safety net so producers nationwide will have access to modernized risk management tools.

South Dakota ranchers shared with me the need for improved policies during my visit to Valley Springs last year. The best ideas come from the ground up and hearing this input from producers reinforces the farm bill framework Senate Republicans announced last year to advance and support the farming and ranching industry.

In preparation for writing a new and modernized farm bill, the committee is holding a series of hearings on the current state of the farm economy to give farmers, ranchers and rural stakeholders an opportunity to share what they are experiencing.

As the only A.I. certified Member of Congress, I understand how herd production and success is dependent on animal health and

proactive disease prevention efforts. That's why the Republican farm bill framework includes robust investments in animal health programs. We double funding for the "three-legged stool" programs administered by USDA to combat animal disease outbreaks.

As we've witnessed over the last year with weather-related challenges nationwide, there is a strong need to bolster the Livestock Indemnity Program, the Livestock Forage Program, and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program, among others. These programs must support the demands of today's challenges and reduce the long-term impact of disruptions. I know this is a priority for Leader Thune and I'm proud to work with him to help strengthen these policies.

Ranchers are the original stewards of our nation's lands. This is especially evident in the vast prairies of South Dakota. This is why we need to improve our voluntary, locally-led conservation programs trusted by producers to meet their unique conservation, natural resource, and wildlife habitat concerns. Programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, and Regional Conservation Partnership Program allow producers to improve long-term productivity and stewardship of their land while reducing costs for their operations. In the next farm bill, we need to increase funding for these programs and make improvements that will help producers, whether it's concerns with drought, water quality, biodiversity, soil erosion or improved resiliency in the face of weather volatility.

I'm grateful to Leader Thune for his active role on the Agriculture Committee and look forward to working with him and Senator Mike Rounds to address issues impacting agriculture and protect our rural communities.

Cattlemen across the country selflessly work through bitter cold and relentless heat every day to care for their livestock and provide a safe, healthy, and affordable protein supply for all Americans. They are the face of grit and tenacity, and they deserve a farm safety net that works for them. I'm hopeful the Senate and House of Representatives can come together to pass a strong farm bill that prioritizes these goals and supports the unique way of life for ranchers today and generations to come in South Dakota and beyond.

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Leader Spotlight  
Maria Buus

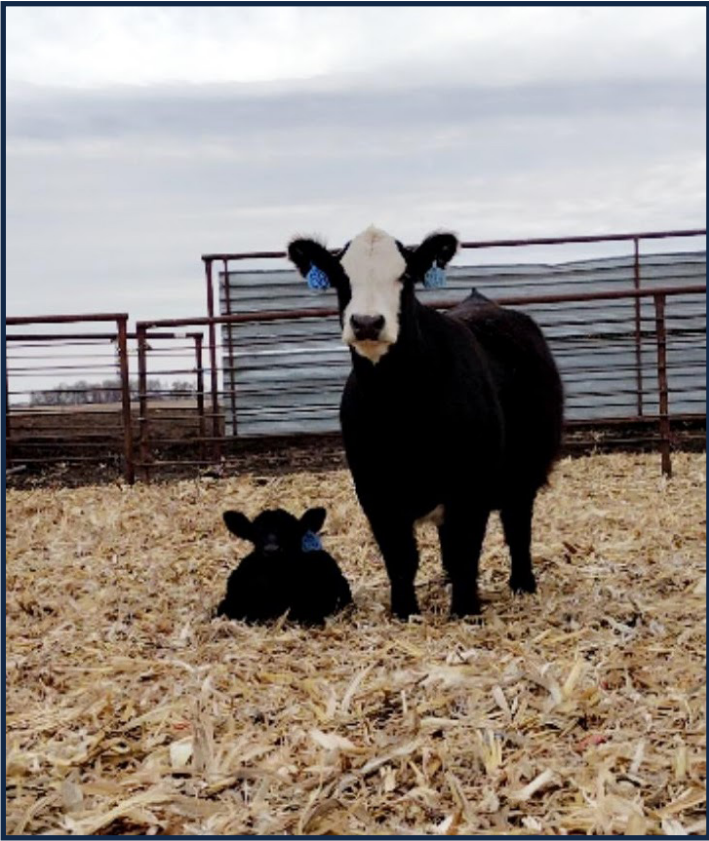
by Kristen Smith, SDCA Contributor

Maria Buus and her husband Colton live on the farm where Maria grew up in Canova, South Dakota, where they own and operate Horizon View Farms, a business they started in 2017. When her parents were ready to transition out of the daily responsibilities of running cows and farming, she and Colton, along with their four children, were ready to take on the extra responsibility. “Whether their future is raising cattle or not, we hope to teach our kids about responsibility and how to have fun while doing it,” says Maria. “They take ownership over their livestock project in the summer with their calves and pigs.” On the farm, they run 500 Simmental and SimAngus cows. Each March, the Buuses and her in-laws of B2/U Stock host a production sale at their farm, offering 65 yearling bulls along with heifer pairs. Additionally, they also market commercial bred heifers each winter for a private treaty sale off the farm. Most of their acreage is dedicated to raising feed. “After we took over the commercial cow/calf operation, our goals were to improve each calf crop, add value to each calf, and raise seedstock that can produce the best for our neighbors and friends who were buying them,” says Maria. The Buuses artificially inseminated each cow and over time built up the pedigree they were looking for in their

herd. They then became a part of the Total Herd Enrollment program through the American Simmental Association where their data is entered on each head every year. Not only did they sell bulls via private treaty, but they marketed a few at the Sioux Empire Farm Show from 2017-2018 and at the Black Hills Stock Show from 2019-2023. Their first on-site auction at the farm was in 2022. “We’re focused on the same goals we started with,” says Maria. “Centering our decisions on improving each calf crop and raising livestock that can do the best for the producers buying them – we’re commercial people raising registered animals.” Average daily gain, feed efficiency and premiums on the grid are part of the Buuses daily conversations. Their goals remain true; raise balanced, problem-free cattle that can excel in multiple facets the beef business presents. “Being a seedstock producer, we simply have the aim to not sell anyone a problem,” says Maria. It’s a joy working with so many repeat customers and neighbors and it’s great seeing their calf’s top feeder cattle sales.”

Maria has been involved in the McCook-Miner-Lake Cattlemen’s Affiliate for ten years, with their affiliate having a strong history participating in SDCA events and members holding state board positions. Maria serves on the affiliate board and strives to keep their members active and engaged with SDCA policy. This spring, Maria will begin the South Dakota Cattlemen’s Association Leadership Academy. “I see my participation in the academy as a valuable way to help our affiliate membership have more familiarity with SDCA policy and updates,” says Maria. “Our affiliate has growth goals, and I will use this experience to help us meet those goals.”

With the beginning of the academy, Maria is looking forward to improving her skills as an industry spokesperson, growing her knowledge of SDCA policy to better communicate to the members about the work SDCA is doing on their behalf in Pierre and on the local and regional level so members can continue to focus on raising cattle. “SDCA is a respected voice in Pierre and legislators look to our organization to better understand how proposed legislation and rules will affect the cattle producers of the state. With fewer legislators having production ag experience, it’s critical to support policy groups like SDCA. I’m thankful for this opportunity,” says Buus. Aside from the McCook-Miner-Lake Cattlemen’s Affiliate and SDCA, Maria currently serves on the South Dakota Farm Bureau Promotion and Education committee, is on the Miner/McCook Farm Bureau board and completed the First Dakota Agrivision Beginning Farmer and Rancher program in 2025. Throughout the year, she also assists with several South Dakota FFA events.



The Leave Your Mark Legacy Fund is a voluntary fundraising initiative to support specific SDCA programs and initiatives selected by the SDCA Board of Directors that will advance the interests of cattlemen across our state and ensuring the sustainability and growth of the organization. The SDCA Board of Directors has elected to earmark contributions to the Leave Your Mark Legacy Fund in fiscal year 2025 to support the creation and administration of the new South Dakota Cattlemen’s Leadership Academy.

*Thank you to all of those who have donated!*

Jones Ranches	Harry Knobbe Feed Yards	Myron J Williams Estate	Eric + Michelle Jennings	Charlie Boe
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# Four Generations Strong

## How Penrhos Farms Honors Tradition while Embracing Change

Penrhos Farms Inc. is a generational family cow/calf operation located in Marshall County near Britton, South Dakota. In 1965, Penrhos Farms Inc. was formed by Arthur Jones and his four sons. They used their great-grandfather's farm name, Penrhos, which is Welsh meaning "head of the valley." K.C. Jones is the fourth generation to work on the operation since his grandfather and great uncles began farming there in 1960s. Today the operation consists of a commercial angus cow/calf operation where they also farm raising corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. In addition to K.C., the operation is run by his uncles, Kirk Jones and Ron Thompson, brother Craig Jones, and nephew Mason Jones.

In the early 1980's, Penrhos Farms Inc. was approached by Genex to test young, unproven bulls within their herd. Genex is a cooperative that specializes in supplying world class genetics, artificial insemination (AI) services, and heard management technologies. In addition to testing new bulls, Genex also provided semen from proven bulls to use in some of the cows. While working closely with Genex, their herd was exclusively AI bred. Record keeping was an important piece of the partnership. Detailed records of breeding, calving, and post-weaning information were kept. During this time, Penrhos Farms Inc. held back their calf crop and finished them themselves. This allowed them to continue monitoring individual weights after weaning. Working closely with Genex brought excellent genetics into their herd. K.C.'s great uncle, Owen Jones recalls, "Genex served as an asset to our operation."

Despite the genetic improvements, there proved to be some challenges over the years. Many of the untested sires exhibited calving ease. Overtime by retaining heifers and

continuing to use semen with greater calving ease, the frame size on their females began to decrease while becoming finer boned leading to calving difficulty. The calving ease trait also placed an impact on calf growth. Penrhos Farms Inc. moved away from their Genex partnership about 20 years ago and has since returned to a 100% bull bred heard. Eliminating the necessary but extensive cattle handling while artificially inseminating has reduced the time and resources exhausted during breeding season.

The marketing plan at Penrhos Farms Inc. looks a little different today as they have moved away from finishing their own calves. After weaning, they hold onto the calves until December or January when they reach 700 pounds. The calves are sold through a sale barn or private treaty – whichever marketing option appears to be the most profitable.

Like many operations today, Penrhos Farms Inc. is facing challenges of increasing input prices and dealing with sickness and death loss within their herd increasing their overall bottom line. With pasture being hard to come by, finding additional pasture to run cows on is not has proved to not be an easy task. However, the

biggest challenge for K.C. is taking on the decision-making role after the recent loss of his father, Kevin Jones who was a driving force behind the management of Penrhos Farms Inc.

Looking to the future, the goal for Penrhos Farms Inc. is to be profitable, efficient, and successful. They trail their cattle to pasture, avoiding the need to haul them which reduces stress on the herd and is more efficient. Penrhos Farms Inc. also raises the feedstuff they provide to their cattle throughout the year including hay and silage. They continue to seek new practices that they can implement to make the operation even more efficient as they expand both their cow herd and the farming side of their operation.



Pictured above is K.C.'s children, Merit, Lenyx, and Kandrick, with their cousin Talon in the back. The next generation helping on the farm!



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# Cattle Inventory Shifts

Matthew Diersen, PhD

Griffith Chair in Agricultural Finance at South Dakota State University



Slight differences are emerging when comparing national trends to changes in and around South Dakota. At the national level the number of cattle continued to decline, falling to 86.7 million head in the latest United States Department of Agriculture-National Agriculture Statistics Service (USDA-NASS) Cattle report. In South Dakota the inventory level was up slightly, stopping a multi-year trend of lower inventory levels (see figure). The national number of beef cows fell again, and the calf crop was down slightly. Those patterns were mirrored in South Dakota as the beef cow inventory and calf crop were both lower than the year before. Thus, fewer beef calves are again expected in 2025, which should be supportive of prices from a supply perspective.

At the national level, other cattle categories showed a consistent decline or tightening of supplies. There were fewer heifers, steers, and calves at the national level compared to a year ago. There were also fewer cattle on feed across all feedlot sizes compared to a year ago. Fewer beef replacement heifers at the national level affirms delayed expansion of cattle supplies. Insights across states have become more difficult as USDA-NASS no longer gives breakdowns for as many categories for as many states as in past years. Among states with larger inventory levels, the total cattle inventory was notably higher in Texas and lower from Kansas and Nebraska to Idaho. No state had a sizable increase in beef replacement heifers. In Texas, there was a large decrease in replacement heifers. Drought conditions are intensifying in and around Wyoming and along the southern U.S. border with Mexico. While that is an important development, any impact would not likely be reflected yet in inventory adjustments.

Aside from fewer beef cows, the other inventory categories reflected different trends in South Dakota. There was a slight increase in beef replacement heifers, although not enough to offset the decrease in beef cows that have already calved. The largest absolute change was an increase in other heifers, those weighing above 500 pounds. There were 460,000 other heifers in inventory, up 60,000 head from the year

before. Such heifers could still be bred or sold to others as replacements. Such heifers could also graze or be placed in feedlots. The inventory totals for steers above 500 pounds and calves are higher also. Thus, South Dakota producers were willing and able to retain ownership for longer than in recent years. Starting from the current inventory of 3.55 million head in South Dakota, it would typically take several years for the inventory to grow to 4.00 million head (see figure).

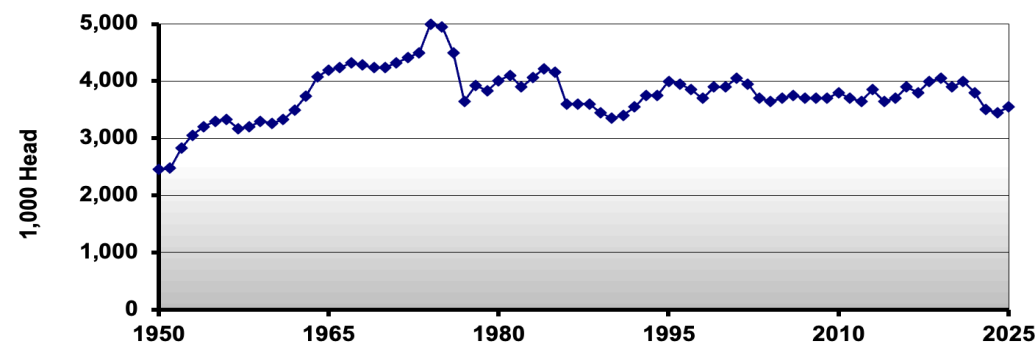
The total number of cattle on feed in South Dakota is also higher than a year ago at 435,000 head. For large feedlots, the January Cattle on Feed report had the inventory in South Dakota unchanged at 230,000 head. Thus, smaller feedlots had an inventory of 205,000 head up from 190,000 head. Small feedlots in Iowa also had an increase in cattle on feed. In Nebraska, while large feedlots had a higher inventory level, smaller feedlots had 70,000 fewer head on feed. Minnesota, the other state that typically has a large inventory of cattle on feed in small feedlots, no longer has its large feedlots reported separately.

With the flurry of numbers and categories available, one last calculation may be useful to consider. In the USDA-NASS briefing, the residual calculation of feeder cattle outside of feedlots was 14.3 million head at the national level, down from the year earlier. The total is found by adding other heifers, steers, and calves together. Then, cattle on feed are subtracted leaving cattle that could still be placed on feed. In South Dakota the total was just over 1.0 million head, up 115,000 head from the year before. The increase was second in magnitude only to Texas. Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma all had fewer cattle outside feedlots at the start of the year.

A new release of Monthly Cattle Prices and Basis Levels containing data specific to South Dakota is available by scanning the QR code.



Long-run South Dakota Cattle Inventory



Source: USDA NASS



## SDCA at Cattle Con 2025

Craig Bieber, Vice President

After a whirlwind couple of months immersed in industry events and advocacy, the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association (SDCA) proudly reflects on our active role at the 2025 Cattle Industry Convention (Cattle Con) and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Trade Show. My partner and wife, Peggy, and I had the pleasure of attending one of the most exciting cattle conventions to date—a gathering that not only captured the optimism of the cattle market but also united industry leaders across the region. Cattle Con 2025 provided the perfect backdrop for robust discussions and critical updates on the issues that shape our industry. The overall mood of the convention echoed the current strength and enthusiasm in the cattle market, setting an inspiring tone for the days ahead. Alongside countless exhibits and sessions, the event also served as a networking hub, allowing attendees to explore the latest ag product supplies—from cutting-edge drones and software to state-of-the-art equipment and seedstock innovations.

### NCBA Region 7 Meeting

A highlight of the convention was the NCBA Region 7 meeting, which brought together industry members and leaders from South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, and North Dakota. With fellow regional leaders presenting detailed reports, it was clear that collaboration is vital in addressing regional challenges and opportunities. I was honored to share the SDCA's report highlighting our proactive involvement in concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) legislation and discussions on the labeling of cell cultured protein.

During this meeting, SDCA also provided updates on our work with Electronic Identification (EID) programs, ensuring that producers are well-informed about the latest regional developments. Outside of policy involvement, I covered SDCA's involvement in the community and advocacy arenas. At DakotaFest—a lively event featuring hearty sandwiches and engaging presentations—we had the opportunity to host NCBA's policy team including Ethan Lane, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, and Tanner Beymer, Senior Director of Government Affairs. Their insights added tremendous value to our discussions, and their subsequent involvement in the Maude case underscored our commitment to proactive federal engagement. Encouraged by SDCA, Ethan and Tanner along with staff from the Public Lands Council worked with federal staff to seek resolution for the Maude family, further exemplifying SDCA's dedication to safeguarding our industry's interests.

### Policy and Legislative Updates in D.C.

On Tuesday morning, a critical session on policy developments in Washington set the tone for our legislative priorities. At the D.C. Issues Update session, NCBA's policy team, delivered a reassuring message: many pressing concerns would soon see positive change with the incoming Trump administration and a new Congress. Discussions spanned a range of topics—from protecting beef

in the Dietary Guidelines and expanding trade opportunities to rolling back overreaching regulations and pushing for lower taxes. The session also highlighted how contributions to NCBA's Political Action Committee have been instrumental in electing pro-agriculture members of Congress.

### Committee Collaboration and In-Depth Discussions

Throughout Cattle Con, SDCA representatives actively participated in policy committee meetings, which play a crucial role in shaping the future of our operations. We contributed to discussions across several committees, including:

**Tax and Credit:** This committee dove into topics such as the Corporate Transparency Act, Federal Disaster Relief Act, the evolving 2025 Tax Policy landscape, and innovative strategies like 1033 Exchanges to mitigate tax consequences. A notable presentation by James Walker from Colorado on easement payments provided valuable insights into reducing tax implications.

**Live Cattle Marketing:** This committee explored the challenges of the existing Red Meat Yield system, highlighting inaccuracies in yield grades that have been in place since 1965. Although the conversation on developing a more precise measurement is still in its early stages, the dialogue promises future improvements in our marketing and grading practices.

Our thanks go out to fellow SDCA board members—Troy Hadrick, Colby Olson, and Eric Jennings (who also serves as NCBA Vice Chair of Ag and Food Policy)—and to our additional colleagues Todd Wilkinson, Rich Blair, Cory Eich, Leanne Eich, Peggy Bieber, Kendra Olson, and Stacy Hadrick, who offered step in when needed. Our team's dedication ensured that SDCA's presence was both strong and effective.

### Looking Forward

Reflecting on our experiences at Cattle Con 2025, SDCA's involvement has not only reinforced our leadership in the region but has also highlighted the importance of collaboration, advocacy, and adaptability in today's evolving agricultural landscape. As we carry forward the momentum from these dynamic meetings and discussions, we remain dedicated to ensuring that the voices of our region are heard at every level of policy-making and industry innovation. For our community, our stakeholders, and everyone invested in the future of cattle production, the lessons and connections forged at this convention mark the beginning of a new chapter in our shared journey toward a brighter, more prosperous future.

*Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to lead, innovate, and advocate on behalf of the cattle industry. Together, we're building a stronger tomorrow—one policy, one partnership, and one convention at a time.*



# CATTLE CON 2025

## SAN ANTONIO

FEB 4-6 | HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER

### SDCA REPRESENTS PRODUCERS AT CATTLE CON 2025

SDCA Board Directors, staff, and members made the journey to sunny and humid San Antonio, Texas! They joined cattle industry leaders from across the country at the Cattle Industry Convention & National Cattlemen's Beef Association Trade Show.



From left to right: Vice President Craig Bieber, Southern Director Colby Olson, Past President Eric Jennings, and Northern Director Troy Hadrick.

### JENNINGS SERVES AS VICE CHAIR OF AG & FOOD POLICY COMMITTEE



Jennings conducting business during the Ag & Food policy committee. Also pictured is Jeffrey Schafer, Chair, and Allison Rivera of NCBA.



This year, SDCA Past President Eric Jennings, was appointed Vice Chair of the NCBA's Ag and Food Policy Committee. In this role, Eric will play a key part in shaping advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C., addressing critical issues like the Farm Bill, transportation, labor, farm programs, disaster relief, food safety, and more.

### POLICY MEETINGS

Directors actively participated in policy meetings with SDCA policy in hand to ensure that South Dakotans are well represented and heard at the national level.



Hadrick comments on a directive introduced in the Ag & Food Policy Committee. The committee passed that directive, as well as three resolutions regarding disaster payments, government disaster and emergency programs, and risk management programs.

Olson (pictured right) attended the Cattle Health & Wellbeing Policy Committee. The committee passed a resolution addressing international arrivals and ensuring that NCBA works with federal agencies to increase surveillance and inspections for foreign animal diseases and parasites that can be transmitted by humans.



Scan to view the interim policy passed at Cattle Con.



Bieber (pictured left) attended the Tax & Credit Committee, where NCBA's Kent Bacus presented on tax issues such as the Corporate Transparency Act and the Death Tax. Bacus commended Majority Leader, John Thune, for championing the Death Tax Repeal Act, highlighting South Dakota's leadership beyond our state's borders.



# SOUTH DAKOTA REPRESENTS AT NCBA'S TRADE SHOW

The NCBA Trade Show is always an attendee favorite, and there were several great booths and vendors at the 2025 event. SDCA was happy to see three South Dakota based organizations participating in the Trade Show: South Dakota State University Department of Animal Science, AgSpire, and Jorgensen Land and Cattle.



**SDSU Animal Science Ambassadors**

Front Row: Sydney Heins, Ella Kreber, and Lauren Ballard  
Back Row: Teigen Hadrick and Lisa Roker (Animal Science Advisor)



**AgSpire**



**Jorgensen Land & Cattle**

Cody Jorgensen of Jorgensen Land & Cattle sat down for an interview with NCBA's Cattlemen to Cattlemen host Lane Nordlund.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

To conclude the business segment of Cattle Con, Josh Geigle, Amy Blum, and Emily Peterson represented South Dakota at the Federation of State Beef Councils. SDCA's Troy Hadrick and Craig Bieber represented SDCA. During the meeting, NCBA directors approved interim policies discussed in policy meetings and introduced the 2025 NCBA officer team, including a Nebraska cattleman, Buck Wehrbein, the 2025 NCBA President (page 25).

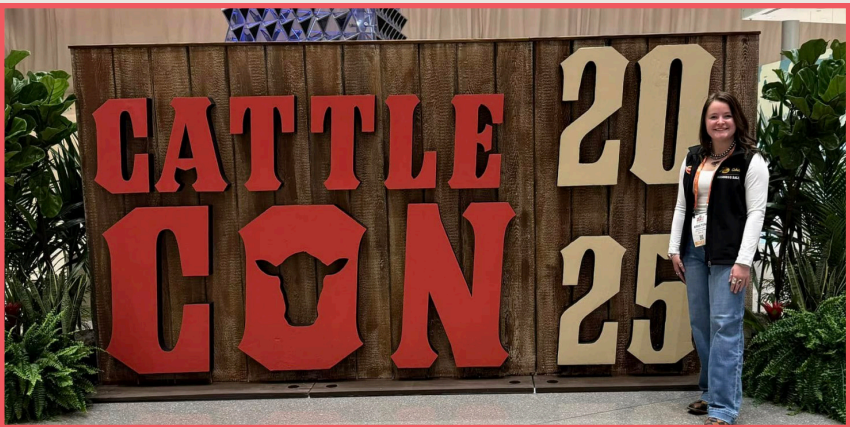


**Geigle, Blum, and Peterson representing SDBIC with the Federation of State Beef Councils, and Hadrick and Bieber representing SDCA.**

# BEHIND THE SCENES AT CATTLE CON

Former SDCA convention intern and frequent contributor, Kristen Smith, gained valuable experience at this year's Cattle Con as an NCBA intern. Kristen was behind the scenes at this major event, from welcoming attendees at registration to covering receptions and award banquets, beyond the policy meeting and trade show.

*"Cattle Con was a truly elevating experience. Not only was I able to intern with peers who turned into lifelong friends, but I connected with countless industry professionals I admire."*







## A Message of Gratitude

Mark Eisele, 2024 NCBA President

It is with immense gratitude that I write this final column as NCBA president. Serving as your leader and representative — regionally, nationally and internationally — has been an honor and privilege I approached with the utmost respect for everything you do. Together, we have faced challenges, celebrated victories and worked to secure the future of our industry.

As I reflect on this past year, I am profoundly thankful for the volunteer leaders who devote countless hours away from home to advance our industry. Their commitment, alongside the steadfast support of you, as members, and the broader supply chain, makes everything we accomplish possible. I am equally humbled by the tireless work of NCBA's staff. They consistently rise to meet the challenges we face, armed with knowledge, preparation and dedication. Their presence in crucial arenas ensures our voice is heard, even when we, as producers, cannot always be there.

I am also proud of how we use science, data and grassroots collaboration to educate and influence both those within and beyond our industry. This approach strengthens our collective efforts and ensures our message resonates far and wide.

One of the most inspiring aspects of my tenure has been witnessing the resilience, faith and community spirit of cattle producers. Across diverse landscapes you adapt, improvise and overcome. I have seen you face wildfires, floods, droughts, blizzards, tornadoes and personal tragedies with unyielding determination. Despite these challenges, you raise your families, care for your herds, and pass down values and knowledge to future generations.

Traveling to your farms, ranches and businesses has been a privilege. You welcomed me into your lives and shared stories that deeply inspired me. While I am often reminded of the difficulties you face, I am equally inspired to improve my own operation and to collaborate more closely with my family and neighbors. Our shared vision to confront challenges and move forward is the foundation of this industry.

As I've often said, "There is strength in numbers." When we unite, we are truly unstoppable. Though there are those who seek to divide us, I remain hopeful, knowing the next generation of leaders is ready to carry this organization forward.

Some of my most treasured experiences have come from connecting with

producers recognized for their excellence, like the ESAP award winners. These individuals exemplify the values and dedication of our industry.

One event that left a lasting impression was participating in the Governor's Steer Show and charity auction for the Ronald McDonald House at the Iowa State Fair. I was paired with a young man whose younger brother was severely injured in an ATV accident. His purpose in raising and auctioning the steer was to support the Ronald McDonald House, which had provided his family a home during his brother's recovery. Witnessing his dedication and the generosity of the Moore family and the Iowa Cattlemen's Association was truly humbling.

It has been exciting to see more young producers and families attending conventions and meetings. These emerging leaders are actively engaging in policy discussions and agency actions that affect their futures. Many have become influential advocates, sharing powerful stories and promoting the benefits of beef.

As a young producer, I faced hurdles I wasn't sure I could overcome. Thanks to my state association and NCBA, I gained the tools and knowledge to navigate challenges and thrive. Networking with other producers and participating in NCBA activities has been invaluable, and I know many of you share this experience. Your involvement matters, and it underscores the grassroots nature of our organization.

NCBA has faced many challenges, from tax changes and water rights to environmental and animal rights extremists. We have also had some great wins! Some of our court cases, such as Waters of the U.S. and the Chevron deference decision set a good course for us to navigate these challenges. Hopefully, this change of administration will also give us the ability to decide our own future and not leave it in the hands of bureaucrats.

I have been honored to fight the good fight on taxes, water rights, environmental and animal extremists, government and NGO agendas that would bring an end to our industry and its independence.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for the trust and support you've shown me. I will always be a proud member and advocate for NCBA and the incredible people it represents. This organization, built on the dedication and hard work of its members, remains a cornerstone of our industry's success.



*Congratulations, NCBA President, Buck Wehrbien!*

Buck Wehrbien, a Nebraska cattleman, took the seat as NCBA's President at the 2025 Cattle Industry Convention.



Photo courtesy of NCBA.

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## 2025 NCBA POLICY PRIORITIES

**NCBA's policy focus for 2025 is to engage with the Trump Administration and Congress to expand opportunities for producer profitability.**

### PURSUE REGULATORY ACTIONS THAT ENHANCE PRODUCER PROFITABILITY

- Remove harmful regulations instituted during the Biden Administration that harm cattle producers.
- Roll back climate policies that create unnecessary regulatory burdens.
- Fight to keep beef on the plate and pursue Dietary Guidelines and federal nutrition policies that reflect the excellent nutritional value of our product.
- Ensure that all labeling requirements for fake meat products are transparent, accurate, and fair.
- Protect the U.S. cattle herd from the incursion of foreign animal diseases and support heightened preparedness actions.
- Ensure access to the use of antimicrobial drugs that will allow veterinarians to prevent, control and treat diseases in cattle.
- Push for further hours-of-service flexibility and continue delaying ELD requirements for livestock haulers.
- Fight for meaningful long-term relief from the burdensome reporting requirements of the Corporate Transparency Act.
- Work with USDA to implement the reformed "Product of USA" label to promote voluntary, verified, trade-compliant labeling that returns greater value to producers.
- Expand market access for U.S. beef exports and ensure equivalent animal health and food safety standards for imported beef.
- Keep working lands working by protecting family farms from undue regulatory burdens under the ESA, NEPA, CWA, CAA, and other regulations.
- Streamline the federal permitting process and increase flexibility to adapt to local conditions.
- Safeguard the U.S. cattle and beef supply chain by working with the administration to ensure a strong workforce that meets consumer demand.

### WORK WITH CONGRESS TO STRENGTHEN PRODUCER PROFITABILITY

- Work to retain core wins in the 2024 House Agriculture Committee-passed Farm Bill.
- Preserve family farms and ranches for future generations by advocating for essential tax relief for cattle producers.
- Enhance wildfire prevention utilizing targeted grazing, controlled burns, and forest management practices to protect grazing lands.
- Secure resources to support cow-calf producers as industry works to implement current disease traceability requirements.
- Protect producer access to voluntary conservation tools to support their long history of science-based resource stewardship.
- Support effective predator control measures and compensation programs for livestock depredations and ensure depredation standards work with ranchers utilizing federal lands and not against them.



## Making the Most of Membership

**Calli Williams, Vice President of Membership**

Things are busier than ever at the TW Angus ranch, but it's our favorite season of the year. We returned from exhibiting two heifers at the Black Hills Stock Show and are now in the thick of calving season. It is always hard to leave home during this season, but fortunately the cows waited to start calving until the moment we pulled in the driveway from BHSS...and I mean literally the moment we pulled in the driveway. We hopped out of the truck and moved a pair into the barn before parking the pickup and the trailer. I almost bought a lottery ticket after that because I know just how lucky we were that they waited until we were home. We are thankful for the mild winter as we started calving season, but now we are thankful for the barn and heaters we have available during these frigid overnight temperatures.

I wanted to start my first contribution to the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association (SDCA) magazine by thanking you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your Vice President of Membership. I have big shoes to fill following Jake Harms as he did a phenomenal job in this role, but I look forward to what I can do for you, the members of SDCA in the upcoming year.

At our recent Board of Directors meeting, I gained even more respect for the association and those who lead this group. To say we have some of the best leaders representing the members who make up our association would be an understatement. The conversations had, legislative items discussed in detail, and the brainstorming session for our 2025 convention made for a full day, but great day. I left that meeting thankful to be part of this association, proud to serve as your Vice President of Membership,

and ready to help make this association thrive through this new role.

As I shared with those at the meeting, I am working through a handful of ideas to recruit new members while also benefiting those who continue to be active members of the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association. Soon I will be meeting with the representatives from Neogen to review our recent partnership and discuss the upcoming year. If you have any thoughts on this recent partnership and the benefits offered for both new and renewing members, please contact me. The best way to represent our members is to fully understand what you see as an added benefit from our partnerships.

While I hope to continue the partnership with Neogen, I am also looking into programs other states utilize for their members and if similar programs could potentially benefit our association. Ideas like coupon books from agricultural businesses made available in our SDCA Magazine, beef programs to benefit the Build Your Base program, continued marketing through our social media channels to highlight producers across our state, and more.

If there is anything that you would like to see our association include as an added benefit, or if you have recruitment ideas for potential members, please reach out to me. I believe the best ideas come from sharing with one another and building off those ideas.

Thank you again for this opportunity to serve in a leadership role for the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association. I look forward to seeing you at Region Roundups and other events across our state this summer.



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\*TSUs must be submitted to Neogen for Igenity, AngusGS, and GGP testing.

**Retail value \$107**





**Taya Runyan**  
SDCA Executive Director

# SDCA *Working for You*

## JANUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The first quarterly board meeting of the year was held in Pierre on January 29th. In addition to regular business, the Board welcomed guests from various partner organizations to share updates.

South Dakota Cattlemen's Foundation Executive Director Addie Graham- Kramer & Board President Ryan Eichler gave an update about the 2025 Prime Time Gala, the expansion of their scholarship programs, and their new partnership with NCBA to conduct research examining meat-centric style diets. SDCA is excited to explore new and expanded ways to work together with the Foundation in the coming year!

South Dakota Beef Industry Council Executive Director Jodie Anderson & Council Chairman Carl Sanders talked about their upcoming events and their continued work with Beef Logic on the Build Your Base initiative.

Ag United's newly hired Executive Director Don Norton & recently elected Board President Allen Merrill gave an update to the Board on their new direction and how ag groups can work together to tackle consumer perceptions of agriculture in South Dakota.

### Board Action

We continue to hear about issues with brand inspections and investigations for missing or stolen livestock. The SDCA participated in several working group meetings with stakeholders last year that brought forward some positive changes, however there is still work to be done. Within SDCA, the directors created a new committee to discuss Brand Board issues and propose possible solutions to the SD Brand Board. Kory Bierle, Bryan Gill, Britton Blair, and Devin Stephens will serve on the committee.

SDCA and SD Grasslands Coalition are partners with the Sand County Foundation to present the Leopold Conservation Award in South Dakota. The program has grown over the last 15 years and the partners have agreed to create a more formal steering committee to administer and grow the program into the future. Eric Jennings and Kory Bierle have been selected to serve on the selection committee on behalf of SDCA.

The Young Cattlemen's Conference will take place May 29- June 6 and includes meetings in Colorado, Iowa, Ohio, and Washington D.C. that will offer participants networking opportunities, and connect attendees with top industry professionals, policymakers and fellow emerging leaders. Behind-the-scenes access gives participants a comprehensive understanding of the entire beef supply chain and engage in the grassroots advocacy process. The board selected Calli Williams to attend YCC on behalf of SDCA.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be March 19, 2025, via Zoom.

## POLICY BOOK AND INTERIM POLICY

The policy approved by the members at the 2024 Annual meeting is published and you will find a printed copy enclosed with this issue of the magazine.



At the January 29 Board meeting, the directors discussed the need to explore future funding efforts that would support the SDSU Meat Lab. Interim policy was proposed and approved by the board. The following interim policy will be presented for full membership consideration at the 2025 Annual Meeting for approval.

*Whereas, the current South Dakota State University Meat Lab and classroom has been in used since 1977; and*

*Whereas, South Dakota's livestock producers rely on safe and modern meat processing facilities and qualified individuals to operate them, therefore be it*

*Resolved, that SDCA supports increased funding for immediately needed updates and renovations to the SDSU Meat lab and classroom, and be it also*

*Resolved, that SDCA supports the future construction of a new facility or renovation of the existing facility and expanded Meat Lab and classroom that provides for teaching and research of modern meat processing.*

The interim policy passed in January is not included in the print version, however it is included in the online version. Scan the QR code for quick access and share SDCA policy any time!



## FFA SPONSORSHIP

Once again, the SDCA is sponsoring the 2025 State FFA Convention, specifically the Beef Production Placement Proficiency award. This award area recognizes a member who works for a cattle producer applying progressive management practices to efficiently produce and market beef. The SDCA is proud to support emerging individuals in the beef industry through this award.

## THE STOCKYARDS SOIREE

The SDCA was proud to support the Stockyards Ag Experience annual event in February. After several years of hosting the Harvest Nights Event, the Stockyards Ag Experience hosted a new event, the Stockyards Soiree in late February to celebrate agriculture's vital role in our region's success. Troy & Stacy Hadrick represented the SDCA at the event. Learn more about the Stockyards Ag Experience by scanning the QR code.



## GENERAL PERMIT COMMENTS

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) is preparing to reissue the state water pollution control general permit for concentrated animal feeding operations and a proposed water pollution control general permit for concentrated animal feeding operations using DANR's delegated National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) authority. DANR staff met with SDCA leaders and the Feeder Committee on several occasions to gather feedback and consider input. SDCA submitted comments based on feedback from the SDCA Feeder Committee and members on the proposed permit language.

## 2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION RECAP

A new governor, many new legislators, and new leadership in both chambers faced a lot of challenges in the 38-day term. The South Dakota's constitution requires that the state's budget not exceed its anticipated revenue and available funds. The balanced budget requirement can prove to be difficult even in years where one-time money is available or when revenue comes in higher than projected, however this year legislators faced limited one-time funds and lower revenue projections than in years past.

Most of the focus during session was on prison spending, property tax relief, and finding ways to ensure the budget balanced. Hot topics such as school vouchers and measures to post the Ten Commandments in classrooms garnered a lot of media attention, but the session was also full of less sensational bills intended to help South Dakotans.

As of our publishing deadline (2/20/25) a few bills we are working on were resolved. Three bills related to cell cultured protein were brought this year. HB 1022 which required accurate and clear labeling passed and was signed by Governor Rhoden! This is a win for producers to make sure these products are clearly distinguishable from REAL meat raised by hardworking farmers and ranchers. HB 1118 also passed which prohibited the use of state funds to promote or procure the products. A little more complex was HB 1109 which sought to ban the manufacture, sale, or distribution of cell based meat. While SDCA certainly doesn't like, endorse, or promote these products, there were issues with the drafting of the bill that had potential for unintended consequences like federal lawsuits. Letting the free market dictate whether these products ever come to SD and knowing if they do, they will be labeled clearly labeled allows our producers to market their superior product and educate consumers on the difference between real meat and something grown in a lab! HB was defeated and we thank the legislators who put freedom and consumer choice above politics!

SDCA is still working on bills related to the Brand Board, CAFO fees, and more. Follow along week by week for the remainder of session with our legislative update email and check out our legislative tracker a full run down of bills we watched, supported, and opposed during the full session.



## SUMMER BUSINESS MEETING

In February, SDCA leaders attended the NCBA Cattle Convention in San Antonio TX, however that is not the end of the policy development process. We will once again meet in San Diego in July for the NCBA Summer meeting to finalize policy and consider any new policy brought forward. If you are interested in learning more about this process or attending the summer business meeting, please contact the state office for more details!



## NCBA LEGISLATIVE FLY-IN



The National Cattlemen's Beef Association is hosting regional fly-in events throughout the year in lieu of the annual Legislative Conference. South Dakota staff and leadership, along with representatives from Region VII and Region IV will head to Washington DC March 24-26. We will meet with agency leaders and state congressional offices on Capitol Hill, followed by a rooftop reception at the NCBA offices, strategically located right between the White House and the nation's Capital.

## *Updates from Capitol Hill*



## ROLLINS CONFIRMED AS USDA SECRETARY

The Senate confirmed Brooke Rollins as USDA secretary in a bipartisan 72-28 vote. USDA Secretary Rollins and will prioritize passing a Farm Bill, protecting America's cattle herd from the threat of foreign animal diseases, and ensuring USDA is focused on supporting America's cattle producers instead of burying them in government red tape. NCBA staff in Washington D.C. is working with Secretary Rollins to defend rural communities and America's cattle raising legacy.

## DEATH TAX - SENATOR THUNE

Recently, South Dakota Senator and Senate Majority Leader Thune and colleagues in the U.S. House introduced the Death Tax Repeal Act in the House and Senate. As farmland and pastureland values rise, more producers will be hit with this punitive tax, forcing them to sell assets or take on debt, sometimes paying the Death Tax multiple times. This is not a tax on the rich, it is a boot on the neck of family businesses. The House bill had 175 original co-sponsors, and the Senate bill had 45 original co-sponsors. This strong showing of support sends a clear message that the Death Tax will be an important priority in the upcoming tax package. Repealing the Death Tax is a top priority for NCBA, and it is critically important for building producer profitability and strengthening multi-generational, family-owned cattle operations.

## MEAT PROCESSING

Senators Thune and Smith reintroduced the Strengthening Local Processing Act for the 119th Congress. Access to local beef is important to producers and consumers, but limited processing capacity is a challenge. The Strengthening Local Processing Act will provide resources that support expanded processing opportunities.

## CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY ACT


In February, the U.S. House voted in favor of the Protect Small Business from Excessive Paperwork Act of 2025. This bipartisan legislation, led by Rep. Zach Nunn (R-IA), delays enforcement of the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) for another year and would help end the almost constant back and forth of CTA enforcement. Senate Banking Committee Chairman Tim Scott introduced the Senate companion bill. He was joined by multiple members of the Senate Banking Committee and senators with a strong cattle presence in their states. This legislation provides much-needed certainty for millions of cattle producers who may be affected by the CTA, and it buys time for Congress to arrive at a meaningful solution rather than subjecting cattle producers to the burdensome reporting requirements of the CTA while it plays out in the courts.








# Tiny Taco Beef Tarts

 30 minutes

 30, 1 tart servings

## Ingredients

- 12 ounces Ground Beef (93% lean or leaner)
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 cup prepared mild or medium taco sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 2 packages (2.1 ounces each) frozen mini phyllo shells (30 shells total)
- 1/2 cup shredded reduced fat Mexican cheese blend

## Directions

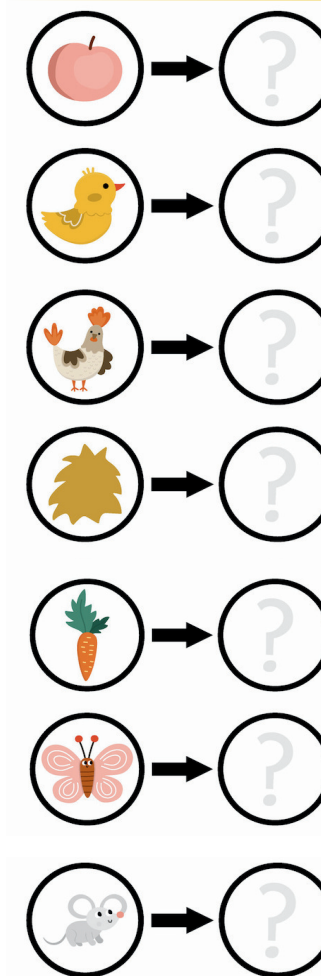
- 1.Heat oven to 350°F. Heat large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Add Ground Beef, onion and garlic in large nonstick skillet over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes, breaking up beef into small crumbles and stirring occasionally. Add taco sauce, cumin, salt and pepper; cook and stir 1 to 2 minutes or until mixture is heated through.
- 2.Place phyllo shells on rimmed baking sheet. Spoon beef mixture evenly into shells. Top evenly with cheese. Bake 9 to 10 minutes or until shells are crisp and cheese is melted.
- 3.Top tarts with lettuce, tomatoes, guacamole, sour cream, and olives, as desired.

## Cook's Tip:

Cooking times are for fresh or thoroughly thawed Ground Beef. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F. Color is not a reliable indicator of ground beef doneness.

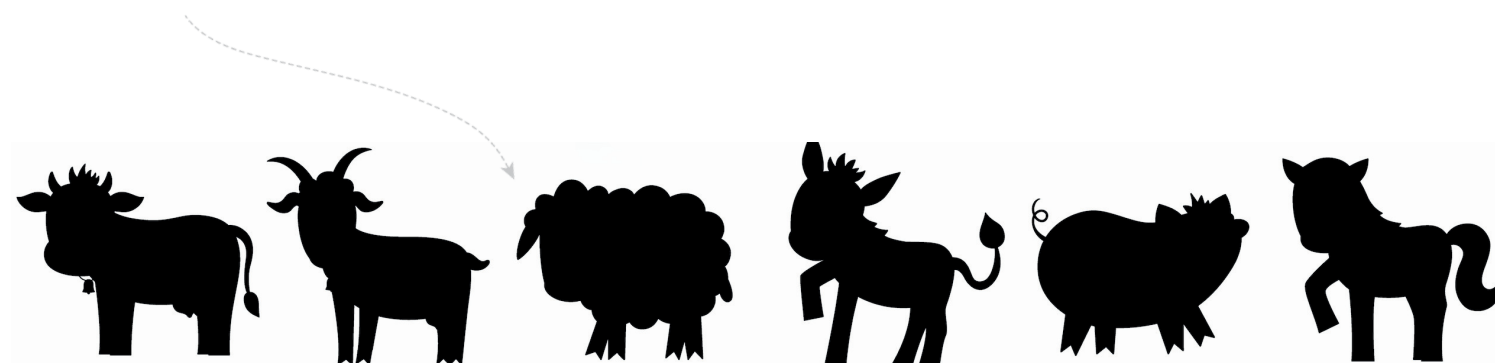
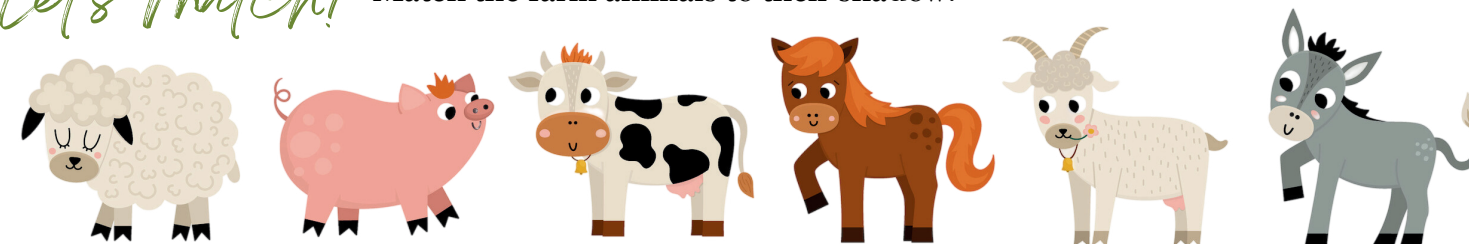
## Hide & Seek

Find the objects in the picture & count how many!



## Let's Match!

Match the farm animals to their shadow!



KEY ON PAGE 32.

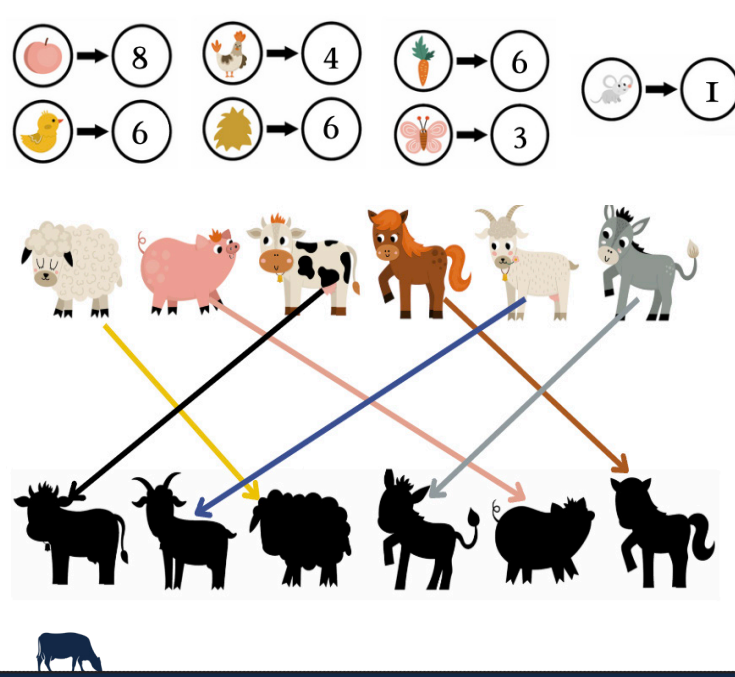


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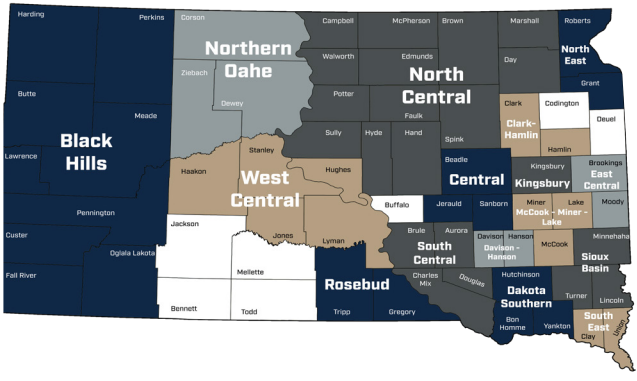
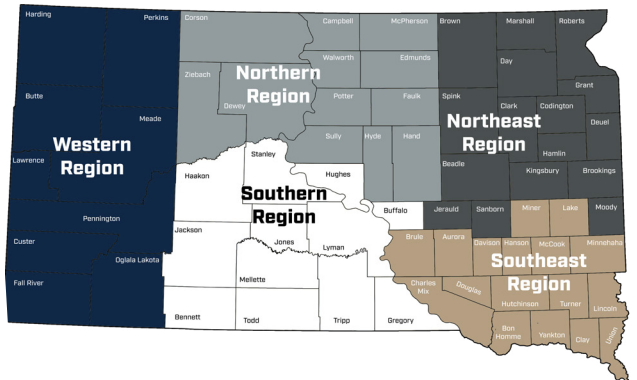
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