

OREGON CATTLEMAN

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE OREGON CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2025



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OREGON CATTLEMAN

JUNE 2025

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REMINDERS

The next issue of the Oregon Cattleman will arrive in August

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ON THE COVER

The crew brings in the herd to sort out bull calves for summer at the Duncan Ranch near Baker City, owned by Harrell Ranch Hereford and Angus.
Photographed by Beth Harrell McKenzie



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DECREASE IN FUNDS
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Common Ground or Common Sense?

Matt McElligott | 541-805-8210
OCA President

On April 21-23, 2025, the Livestock Marketing Association (LMA) pulled together a large coalition of industry representatives in Denver, Colorado, to discuss cattle industry issues and pave a path forward. The first step to making this meeting productive and successful was to agree to put differences aside and work towards the good of the cattle industry. Then, to define their shared vision. That vision is: "To unite the livestock industry in preserving America's agricultural land for future generations, while strengthening and expanding the livestock producers who rely on it to feed the world."

A commonsense vision statement that we all can agree upon. A driving force for myself and many of you reading this. I don't know a rancher, man or woman, who doesn't love their chosen

career and the cattle they raise, but their driving force is to pass it on to the next generation and the next generation after that.

Given that vision, the group then defined their mission, which was to unify the livestock industry, speaking with one voice, effectively communicating the needs of the industry to policymakers. In turn, this will drive policy that will create positive support for the livestock industry, ensure the opportunity for profitability at the producer level, and ensure the future of agriculture in America.

These are all very good, common-sense priorities that all livestock groups and associations should rally behind. Each time I have been in Washington, D.C., the Oregon delegation has addressed each of these priorities. In April, we lobbied for extending the 2017 tax cuts that will expire at the end of this year. In a meeting I had with Senator Wyden a couple of weeks ago, I asked for his support on this. Risk management tools like LRP are relatively new for the livestock sector. The percentage of use for our industry is relatively low compared to crop insurance participants. I feel the program needs to be tweaked to make it more affordable and more user-friendly. How do you improve access to labor? Reforming H2A laws would be a huge step in the right direction. For four years, we have let anyone cross our borders illegally, but if you are on an H2A work visa doing it legally, it is a nightmare! Ask anyone who uses that program—reversing ag overtime laws. They were good intentions with horrible results. Livestock haulers need flexibility in service hours, electronic logbooks, and weight restrictions. The biggest point for me is the creation of support programs for our young emerging ranchers. To ensure the viability and longevity of the industry, we must create avenues for the next generation. In my

The five key priorities that the the Livestock Marketing Association found common ground on are:

1. Achieve and maintain an ag-friendly tax policy
2. Make risk management tools more effective and economical
3. Improve access to labor, particularly by reforming H2A laws
4. Increase flexibility for livestock haulers
5. Create and enhance support for young people who want to farm and ranch



Matt speaking to the crowd at the OCA Mid-Year Conference in Baker County in May

view, capital gains tax is a reinvestment tax. If you realize financial gain on the sale of an asset, that is taxable income. You can forgo that tax if you reinvest in a like asset, thus keeping that money in the economy. There comes a time, though, when that cycle comes to an end. For example, if you purchased your ranch in the 1970s, you would now like to retire. You have no one to pass it on to, so you feel trapped in the paradise you worked so hard to build. Capital gains taxes will take a significant bite from what you have built. How about forgiving capital gains taxes if the land stays in production with a young rancher? Common sense, right? These are the solutions we need to be working towards.

I am glad to see the industry uniting around the key priorities. It gives me hope that we can and should put our differences aside and work towards a common goal: the livestock industry's future. Now, who will carry this baton forward to the finish line? Your local, state, and national organizations. Like the Oregon Cattlemen's Association. There is never a better time to get involved than right now. The future is bright. The industry is aligning, and we need everyone involved in the cattle industry to step up and be present. Join your local, state, and national organizations. Give your time and intellect to the industry you love and to the next generation. It is only common sense! •

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From the desk of your Executive Director

Tammy Dennee, CMP, CAE | 541-980-6887
OCA Executive Director

June marks the end of the long legislative session. This session was both challenging and rewarding. The OCA leadership and members have remained engaged in addressing priority issues, providing testimony, and spending time in the Capitol building to speak with elected officials. Early in the session, the list of OCA priorities was crafted and then strategically managed. The issues were wolves, wildfire, wildlife, water, and brand fees. As of this writing, the wolf compensation bill remains in the House, the wildfire bill is in the Revenue Committee awaiting amendment, and both the wildlife and brand fee bills are in the Ways & Means Committee. OCA is sharing the list of funding priorities with the Ways & Means Committee members for consideration as the budget bill is developed. The next few weeks of this Session will be telling, to say the least.

As this issue of the magazine arrives, we will have wrapped up the Mid-Year meeting of the general membership in Baker City and turned our attention to preparations for the Fall Board meeting and CattlePAC fundraiser scheduled for September 18. We sincerely hope you will mark your calendar and plan to support the CattlePAC event in Powell Butte. This event exists because of the generosity of the Malott Family, who allow OCA to join their Central Oregon Ranch Supply show on its first night. The CattlePAC fundraiser

offers a lighthearted networking opportunity with Central Oregon Ranch Supply exhibitors, who are eager to engage with ranchers and provide updates on their products and equipment. The Oregon CattleWomen will once again provide desserts to be auctioned following dinner. Registration is open, so purchase your tickets and plan to attend. The dollars raised will be distributed to Oregon House and Senate candidates later in the year. Donations can be made throughout the year to the CattlePAC and to the Stewardship Fund.

The Nominating Committee will be appointed by President McElligott and led by Immediate Past President Nash. There will be open seats on the OCA Board of Directors, with two board members' terms limited in District I and District VII. Two new positions on the Executive Committee (First and Second Vice President) were created last year with the Bylaws change, and the Treasurer and President positions will also be slated. Please be watching for your opportunity to submit nominations when this process gets underway.

This year's Annual Convention will be here before we know it. The Convention will take place in Pendleton from December 4 to 6 at the Convention Center. This is another opportunity for you to participate in educational workshops, network, and meet new industry leaders. Please make a note on your calendar and plan to attend.

As your OCA staff team and contractors continue to support the various facets of the Association, we are keenly aware that you are busy with the day-to-day operations of your ranch. Therefore, we are on the frontline, which allows you to attend to your business. Thank you for engaging with elected officials when opportunities arise.

Wishing you a bountiful and blessed summer!
Tammy Dennee, OCA Executive Director •

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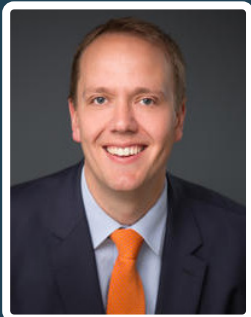
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Forecast indicates a \$500 million decrease in funds for lawmakers in 2025-2027

Rocky Dallum
Political Advocate

This will be our final issue published during the 2025 Legislative Session. The next issue may not include final details on the outcome of several issues we are tracking. However, we can say that significant OCA member engagement, bill analysis by our various committees, and countless trips to Salem by OCA leadership made a difference in Salem in 2025. We're hopeful to have accomplished several of our goals this year, including fairness in sources of wildfire funding, finding sustainable solutions for the brand inspection program, and bringing much-needed support to producers dealing with predators of livestock like wolves and depredation of feed by deer and elk. Finally, we are pleased that OCA's work helped shape, improve, or stop legislation impacting water rights, the ag workforce, and other critical issues for ranchers. All of this work was done during a session that set records for the number of bills introduced, and with significant economic uncertainty.

In mid-May, Oregon's state economists released their final quarterly forecast of the biennium. The forecast indicated a \$500 million decrease in expected funds for lawmakers as they prepare the 2025-27 budget, which begins on July 1. While general economic uncertainty has reduced spending in the latter part of the next biennium, the projection does not account for potential federal cuts that could impact Oregon's state programs, potentially leading to a special session later in the year. The budget projection still allows for maintaining current service levels, but the adjusted outlook has implications for new state spending and funding policy proposals brought this session, including some of OCA's priority asks.

As of the publication deadline, OCA is tracking and advocating for several bills in the Ways & Means Committee. Our number one priority, led by President Matt McElligott, has been stable funding for wildfire that doesn't unfairly burden small landowners or collapse the current rural fire protection system. Those discussions (HB 3940) likely will continue until the very end of the session, but as of late May,

they were trending in a positive direction. We're optimistic that SB 1019, the proposed update of the brand inspection program, will pass along with the Oregon Department of Agriculture's new budget. OCA and its members continue to advocate for additional funding of the County Wolf Depredation and Compensation Grant Program, requesting an additional \$2 million through SB 985 and another pilot program for wildlife damage through HB 3657. And we've led coalition efforts trying to secure \$2 million for OSU Extension to indefinitely maintain the critical AgriStress Helpline, which provides mental health crisis and suicide support for people working in farming, ranching, forestry, and fishing.

In addition to our budget work (which continues right up until the final gavel), our session has been and continues to be dominated by various policy proposals. We believe that by the time this issue hits your mailbox, the Legislature will have overwhelmingly passed SB 777, a change in the formula for compensating for livestock predation: allowing for more funds for deterrence efforts, but more importantly, adding a multiplier in order to better reflect the actual costs of wolf conflict (again, nothing official, but SB 777 received strong support in both natural resource committees and on the Senate floor). Hopefully, these changes will encourage more participation in this program, particularly as wolf populations grow and expand across the state. OCA and our water committee spent significant time on dozens of water bills, and as of late May, were still working on SB 1153, a proposal that could make water transfers even more difficult. And of course, we'd like to see the Cattlewomen's bill, SCR 13, pass its second chamber, making the T-Bone steak the official steak of Oregon.

Again, thank you to all OCA members for your work and attention to this year's legislative session. While it still has several weeks to go, your support and engagement make our job in the Capitol successful and rewarding. •

Meet Oregon's Board of Ag Members: Chad Allen & Elin Miller

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is privileged to have a diverse and skilled advisory board of 10 members. This board offers valuable guidance to ODA, advises the agency on policy matters, develops recommendations on key agricultural issues, and advocates for the state's farming industry. The Governor appoints members. This month, ODA would like to introduce two of our board members: Chad Allen and Elin Miller.



Chad Allen owns and operates Victor Dairy LLC in Tillamook, Oregon, and embodies the spirit of family farming. Growing up on his family's dairy farm gave him invaluable experience, leading him to work in Australia. After graduating from Oregon State

University in 2000, he returned home to partner with his father and establish Victor Dairy. Chad strongly advocates for the dairy community, supported by his wife, Adrienne, and their five children. He actively participates in several organizations, including the Oregon Dairy Farmers Association, the Tillamook County Creamery Association, and the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission. His term on the Board of Agriculture will end on September 18, 2027.



Elin Miller and her husband, Bill, manage Umpqua Vineyards and hazelnuts in Douglas County, Oregon. As co-chair of the Oregon Wine Council and a Fall Creek Farm and Nursery board member, she demonstrates exceptional leadership in the agricultural community. Her strong commitment to water quality,

agricultural trade, and promoting Oregon's agricultural diversity on a global scale reflects her dedication. Elin, raised in Mesa, Arizona, began her journey into agriculture during high school in the Future Farmers of America (FFA) program. This foundational experience led her to hold significant roles in government, corporate, and non-profit sectors. She also volunteered extensively on the West Coast and internationally in Africa, China, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. Her term on the Board of Agriculture will conclude on October 5, 2025.

ODA appreciates all its board members. By contributing their experience and expertise, these members help shape public policies and decisions. •





COMMITTEE REPORT



OCA's Mid-Year Water Policy Update

Sarah Liljefelt, Attorney at Law, Dunn Carney, LLP
OCA Water Committee Chair

When Tammy Dennee asked me to provide a water policy update at OCA's Mid-Year Conference, I thought, "A lot has changed over the last couple of years, so that will be an easy topic." However, as the Mid-Year Conference drew closer, I started preparing a list of recent policy changes for discussion, and one thing became clear, and very troubling. Everything on my list was negative. I could not think of a single policy improvement to share.

Below is only a partial list of the law and policy changes I compiled for discussion at the Mid-Year Conference:

- **2024 Groundwater Allocation Rulemaking:** These new rules may create a de facto moratorium on new groundwater permits throughout the State. The full impacts of the regulations will need to be assessed over the course of the next few years, as new applications are submitted and processed (and likely denied).
- **Limitations on the Livestock Groundwater Exemption for CAFOs:** Senate Bill ("SB") 85 (2023) limited the use of groundwater for livestock as an exempt use at certain Confined Animal Feeding Operations ("CAFOs"). SB 80 (2025) seeks to further erode the livestock groundwater exemption and the issuance of permits for CAFOs in groundwater management areas.

- **Critical Ground Water Area Changes:** New rules in 2023 preceded the Oregon Water Resources Department's ("OWRD's") further restriction of groundwater use in certain areas. Currently ongoing, Division 512 regulations are proposed to reduce groundwater use in the Harney Basin, currently without due regard to relevant groundwater studies for the appropriate locations or levels of reductions.
- **2025 Legislative Session Proposed Bills:** Bills this session have included numerous proposed challenges water users, including costly measurement and reporting conditions (HB 3419), retroactive limitations on extensions of time (HB 3342), vague environmental standards to prevent transfers (SB 427/SB 1153), a proposed 135% increase to OWRD's fees to maintain the current (deficient) level of services (HB 2803), and more. The legislative session is not complete at the time I write this article, but the proposals this year have been numerous and distressing.

A few weeks ago, I presented to a group of lawyers on the topic of water rights due diligence, including how to determine if new water rights are available. I included some of the above updates in my talk. Since the presentation was for the benefit of lawyers representing agricultural clients, I did not sugarcoat the realities of what producers are up against in

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today's legal landscape. Lawyers need to know what their clients are facing. However, at the end of the presentation, I had the distinct impression that the audience shared a collective anxiety about the updates I provided. Folks stared wide-eyed ahead, as if in mild shock. I understood their sense of dread. I worry every day about the trajectory of water rights laws and policies in this State.

Getting ready for Mid-Year, I wanted to do things differently. If you have given or watched a policy update, which should be everyone reading this article, you know how important it is for the update to include something positive or helpful. A light at the end of the tunnel, if you will. I thought about the advice I would give clients if they asked me what they can do to best protect themselves from the many threats to water rights. Here are a few things water rights holders can do now to position themselves as best as possible for the future:

- If you have been considering applying for a new water right or transfer, do it now rather than waiting. Water rights approvals are only getting more difficult to obtain each year.
- If you have a permit that is not fully perfected, do everything you can to fully develop the permit before the completion deadline. OWRD regularly denies extension of time applications, so there is no guarantee that you will be granted additional time to perfect your permit, resulting in cancellation of the unperfected portion.
- Make sure you fully understand your existing water rights. Complete a portfolio of your water rights, and ensure you are complying with all applicable terms and conditions. This is important to guarantee that nonuse or misuse does not create a risk of forfeiture or abandonment.

While Oregon's current course of water policy may feel overwhelmingly negative, awareness and preparation remain our best tools. The challenges are real, and they are mounting—but so is our capacity to adapt. Water right holders who stay informed, proactive, and organized can still navigate this complex and shifting landscape. We may not be able to control the pace or direction of policy changes, but we can take steps now to safeguard our interests and ensure our voices are heard in the conversations ahead.

Sarah Liljefelt is OCA's Water Resources Committee Chair. She's also a natural resources and agricultural law attorney at Dunn Carney LLP in Portland, Oregon. She focuses her law practice in the areas of real property, water rights, and environmental law. •

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So You're Ready for a Succession Plan? The Initial Conversation

Tess Baker | tess@oregonagtrust.org
Oregon Agricultural Trust Farm & Ranch Succession Advisor



It's been nagging at the back of your mind for years, and you finally decide it's time to have that initial succession planning conversation with your family. Now what? Here are some strategies to set yourself and your family up for success in a formal succession planning conversation.

DON'T SETTLE IT ALL IN ONE CONVERSATION

It is really tempting to sit down and hash it all out so you can be done with succession planning once and for all. Unfortunately, this tends to lead to a plan that is hasty, not fully thought out, and leaves no room for development. Instead, think of this first conversation as more of a brainstorming session. It's a chance to put all ideas on the table and give everyone a chance to consider them on their own before coming back together to form an actual plan. This also takes a lot of pressure off the conversation, which will likely result in a much more successful first meeting.

INCLUDE (AND LISTEN TO!) EVERYBODY

It can be very tempting to reduce the number of participants in the conversation to just the heir apparent or the family members who will align with your way of thinking. This approach can not only lead to a missed opportunity but may also set you up for difficulties down the road. It is best to start with everyone. For many families, that means the family members, spouses, and non-minor children of all generations, even if they aren't involved in the operation. You likely have an idea of what everyone else in your family wants, but it's important that you hear it from them. You may be surprised to learn that some family members think differently than you expected, and that's okay. A difference of opinion is not the enemy; the enemy is glossing over differences in opinion without addressing them.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO HIRE A THIRD FACILITATOR OR MEDIATOR

When you think of the family members, spouses,

and non-minor children that would be included in your conversation, some of the relationship dynamics may be enough to make you cancel the first meeting before it even starts. If that is the case for your family, don't be afraid to hire a facilitator or mediator to lead the conversation. It takes the pressure off you to lead a difficult conversation, while managing strained relationships, and participating fully as a family member. A skilled facilitator or mediator can not only ask the tough questions that get to the heart of issues, but they can also diffuse conflict situations that you may not be equipped (or willing) to handle. Even if your family is not in conflict, a professional facilitator can still be very helpful, allowing you to participate fully in the conversation.

CHOOSE A NEUTRAL DATE AND LOCATION

While it can be tempting (and convenient) to host this conversation at Mom and Dad's house while everyone is home for Christmas, it's best to avoid that when possible. This is a family conversation, but also a business conversation that should be allotted its own time, separate from a holiday or special occasion, when the only role you want to play is that of a family member. This also applies to the location. While the lines of family and business blur, do your best to host this conversation in a place that doesn't belong to any one of you, and that doesn't hold a lot of family memories. Think about community centers, grange halls, or even requesting to use the conference room of a local business.

SPEND TIME REMINISCING

Succession planning doesn't need to be all forward-looking! Spend some time talking back through the history of the operation: the lean years, the year that you bought the Jones' Place, the year of the historic flood, and on and on. It not only serves as a chance to reacquaint everyone with the history of the operation and the perseverance it took to get to this place, but it's also an enjoyable way to break the ice and start the conversation.

PLAY THE DEATH GAME

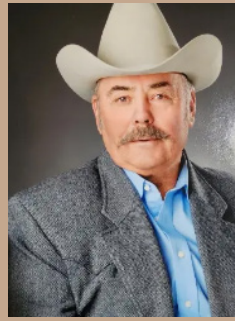
Not all families may be up for this conversation in the first meeting or be comfortable with this approach, but if your family is, it can be a very interesting way to hear from all perspectives. Go around the room, and each person takes a turn being quiet. The others in the room now are charged with figuring out what they would do with the operation if something happened to the person who has “died”, with zero input from the “deceased”. This keeps one person from steering the conversation completely, because they, too, will have to take a turn being silent, and others will need to talk through what they think a solution might look like. This allows your family to consider what would happen to the operation in all scenarios, not just the more predictable ones.

END THE MEETING WITH NO MAJOR DECISIONS

After everyone has had a chance to express their opinions and level the playing field, send your family members home with homework. That may include creating a draft succession plan based on what was discussed at this meeting, gathering existing succession planning documents, creating financial statements to better analyze possibilities through a fiscal lens, or a myriad of other assignments. Either way, assigning homework and scheduling the next meeting before adjourning the first will create forward momentum and a deadline that isn't “someday.”

Effective succession planning is a process that should be revisited over and over again. While this can feel defeating, it really means that you shouldn't expect to get it perfectly the first time. A willingness to take the time to allow conversation to develop and thoughtful planning to take place will pay dividends in the long run. The most important part is that you start the conversation, keep it going, and follow through with the legalization of decisions when they are made.

Tess Baker is a Succession Advisor at Oregon Agricultural Trust who works with clients 1-on-1 to reach their succession and business goals. Tess was raised on her family's 4th-generation cattle ranch in Lake County, and continues to run a haying operation with her husband's family. She brings her experience in production agriculture as well as financial analysis, customer portfolio management, and agriculture business operational support to this work. Contact her at tess@oregonagtrust.org to learn more and to receive advice. •



OBITUARY

Robert Dean (Bob) Forth, 87, of Pendleton, passed away peacefully after a struggle with Lewy Body Dementia, his wife and partner of 56 years by his side.

Robert was born in Pendleton to Dean and Louise (Nelson) Forth of Rieth on February 4, 1938. He grew up on the family's wheat, hay and cattle ranch West of Rieth with his brothers Tom and Ted. He

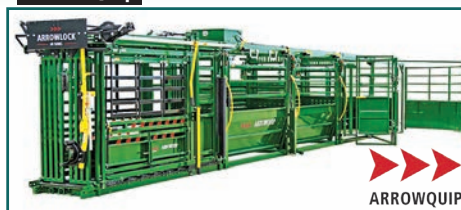
graduated from Pendleton High School in 1956 having been active in FFA, showing cattle and pigs and receiving the State Farmer degree. He began his own hog farm in 1959 on the family's ranch, which operated until 1966. Bob was also in the National Guard during this time and served out of Fort Lewis-McChord South of Tacoma, WA.

Robert Married Myrna Erickson of Pendleton in 1958. They had four children, Mike, Joe, Chris, and Cindy. They divorced in 1967. Robert Married Nancy Quesenberry of Enterprise in 1968. Robert and Nancy, along with his sons started out on the Forth Ranch, and then in 1969 Bob began working for Killenny Ranch on Butter Creek until 1972. He returned to the family ranch in 1973. Also in 1973, they welcomed daughter Stacy Dawn.

Bob was active in local, statewide and national agricultural organizations, most notably Umatilla County Cattlemen's, Oregon Cattlemen's, where he served as membership chair for several years and two terms on the Beef Council, and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association where he represented OCA on the national board check off division for two years. He supported his wife Nancy's activities in the Cattlewomen's Association.

Bob and his childhood best friend Gale Wagner began in 1961 running the West gates for the Happy Canyon Show, positions which Gale kept until his death in 2000 and Bob kept up for 59 years. Bob received the Happy Canyon Appreciation Award in 1999, served on the RU&HC; Hall of Fame board as Trustee Director from 2009-2013. Bob received the Orville Gerberding Award in 2014 and the Round-Up Appreciation Award in 2016. He was entered into the Hall of Fame in 2022.

Bob was active for many years with the First Presbyterian Church in Pendleton. Bob enjoyed travels with his wife and friends. Bob enjoyed reading, especially anything related to history, agriculture and classic cars. He was an avid NASCAR fan. We would be remiss were we not to mention Bob's sense of humor and ability to tell a good story.



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NCBA Works to Deliver Increased Market Access to Cattle Producers

Kent Bacus

Executive Director Government Affairs, NCBA



National Cattlemen's
Beef Association

It has been a whirlwind spring on the international trade front, with numerous announcements from the Trump administration regarding tariffs and trade deals. In April, President Trump implemented reciprocal tariffs on imported goods to address trade practices contributing to the large and persistent annual trade deficit. NCBA supports the President working to hold our trading partners accountable and expanding opportunities for U.S. cattle producers to sell their beef abroad.

Let's first dive into work to expand export markets. These foreign markets are a top priority for NCBA's advocacy efforts because U.S. cattle producers benefit from the added value international trade brings. In 2024, exports markets added \$415 per head of cattle and a big part of that is because foreign markets value cuts like tongue at a much higher price than in the U.S. domestic market, helping drive up prices overall. NCBA is working with the Trump administration and Congress on possible new trade agreements and to hold our current trading partners accountable. We also regularly meet with various foreign trade officials to promote U.S. beef and discuss trade issues. NCBA is excited for future possibilities as the Trump administration is currently doubling down on expanding U.S. beef exports.

Now let's look at tariffs. Tariffs can be an effective tool in negotiations where we seek to improve trading conditions for American cattle producers and the \$29 billion beef trade deficit we have with Australia is a great example of the U.S. getting the short end of the stick. For the past 20 years, Australia has enjoyed open access to the U.S. market, and they have sold more than \$28.7 billion worth of Australian beef. At the same time, Australia has thrown up countless administrative hurdles and non-tariff trade barriers to block the U.S. from being able to sell even \$1 of American beef into their market. This is a lopsided and unfair trading relationship, which is why NCBA supports President Trump potentially using tariffs and other tools to hold Australia accountable and ensure a fairer market. All we want is a level playing field and the same access to the Australian market that we provide in our market.

Numerous other countries impose tariff and

non-tariff trade barriers on American beef and other countries that limit our opportunities to export our high-quality product. Vietnam places a 30% tariff and Thailand places a 50% tariff on U.S. beef, making it close to impossible to sell U.S. beef in either country due to the high cost. The European Union also places numerous non-scientific misguided and incorrect climate restrictions on American beef, such as carbon taxes that limit market opportunities. NCBA submitted this information to the Trump administration in formal comments to the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) and also highlighted that countries like Brazil and Paraguay were allowed access to the U.S. market by the Biden administration despite overwhelming evidence of their animal health risk. This includes both countries' history of dangerous foot-and-mouth disease and deficient safety practices.

President Trump is already delivering results on improving trading conditions. In May, President Trump unveiled a trade agreement-in-principle with the United Kingdom (U.K.) that includes market access for beef. This announcement follows years of NCBA's hard work building the foundation for a trade deal with the U.K., including numerous meetings with British industry stakeholders; Members of Parliament; the British Embassy; the U.K. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; and other top British authorities. All this work NCBA put in to expand trade with the U.K. and that has proven to be fruitful after the U.K. left the European Union in 2020. That opened the door to secure trade deals like the current agreement and ultimately allow for more top-quality U.S. beef to be exported to the U.K.

NCBA appreciates the Trump administration for engaging in these high stakes international trade negotiations and for utilizing all available tools to rebalance trading relationships, helping to ensure American beef is treated fairly in foreign markets. NCBA has always played the long game in international trade talks and will continue working to expand market access for U.S. beef and creating more opportunities for producers to increase their profitability. •



Managing the Cow Herd for Flies

By Travis Mulliniks

Glenn & Mildred Harvey Professor of Beef Cattle Management



**Oregon State
University**

The horn fly (*Haematobia irritans*) is one of the most economically significant external parasites affecting beef cattle across North America and many other parts of the world. Horn flies can have a disproportionately large impact on cattle health, behavior, and productivity, resulting in substantial economic losses to the beef industry, which is estimated to cost the beef industry over \$1 billion annually in lost production and control costs. Their populations can build rapidly and often exceed the Economic Injury Level (EIL) defined as 200 flies per animal.

HEALTH AND PRODUCTION IMPACTS

Fly number per animal over the Economic Injury Level of 200 will decrease in animal performance such as:

- Reduced weight gain: Numerous studies have demonstrated that horn fly infestations can reduce average daily gain (ADG) in growing cattle by 0.2 to 0.3 pounds per day.
- Decreased milk production: In cows, horn flies can reduce milk yield, which negatively impacts calf growth rates.
- Altered grazing behavior: Infested cattle often exhibit fly-avoidance behaviors such as tail switching, skin twitching, and bunching together in the corner of a pasture, which can reduce grazing time.

CONTROL STRATEGIES

Effective horn fly management requires an integrated approach combining cultural, chemical, and biological methods:

1. Insecticide-impregnated ear tags: These provide long-term control but can lead to insecticide resistance if not rotated properly. The decrease in resistance of the active ingredient, not the actual product/brand, needs to be rotated every year. Two

fly tags, 1 in each ear, of a cow can also cover the calf as well. Apply tag in late May to early June for maximum effect.

2. Pour-on and spray treatments: These offer quick knockdown of flies but may need frequent reapplication of every 2 to 3 weeks. Mist blowers and automatic sprayers can reduce labor and improve application efficiency in some scenarios.
3. Feed-through insect growth regulators (IGRs): These disrupt the fly's life cycle by preventing larvae from developing in manure. Consistent intake can be a challenge and decrease effectiveness if cows are not consuming mineral.
4. Dust bags/back rubbers and oilers: Most effective when cows are forced to walk through. Under non-forced scenarios, these types of controls provide 25 to 50% less control.
5. Natural products in mineral – Garlic: It has been theorized that the strong odors emitted from the skin of animals fed garlic-based products are due to volatile organosulfur compounds formed during the metabolism of garlic. Research hasn't validated the efficacy of garlic for fly control.

RESISTANCE CONCERNS

One of the growing challenges in horn fly control is the development of resistance to commonly used insecticides. This emphasizes the importance of resistance management strategies, including rotating chemical classes, avoiding underdosing, and incorporating non-chemical control methods. •



From the Capitol to the Fairgrounds: Finding Our Voice in Salem

Morgan Kromm | 805-801-9960

OCW President | orcattlewomen@gmail.com



As cattlegirls and cattlemen, we are no strangers to hard work, early mornings, and adapting to challenges. Even though that is true, stepping into the legislative process can feel intimidating, even foreign, to many of us. This year, I have learned just how fun and impactful that involvement can be. From giving testimony to sitting down with legislators over steak, I have discovered that the halls of Salem are more accessible than most of us think, and our voices matter more than we realize.

So far this session, I have made quick trips to the Capitol twice to advocate on bills related to wolf compensation, wildfire funding, water rights, Rangeland Fire Protection Associations (RFPAs), rancher mental health, and yes, even the state steak. We attended Oregon Cattlemen's Legislative Days, participated in the traveling Ways and Means meeting in La Grande, and had the honor of joining legislators for dinner afterwards—a fantastic T-bone steak dinner generously sponsored by Oregon CattleWomen and Painted Hills Natural Beef.

Testifying on legislation has been one of the most impactful parts of the experience. I submitted written testimony on several bills this year and learned that while in-person testimony is ideal, video or written submissions are incredibly effective too. My journey into legislative advocacy began while serving as president of Harney County CattleWomen, where I learned how simple it was to submit testimony online. It sparked an interest in me and encouraged me to get more involved.

My first trip to Salem in February for Legislative Days made me a little nervous, but the Oregon Cattlemen's Association provided clear instructions and incredible support. I had friends by my side, and what started as a step out of my comfort zone quickly turned into something empowering and energizing. I have been back

since and will likely return before the session ends.

Perhaps the most surprising and rewarding part has been getting to know legislators, not just as officials behind desks, but as people who care about our stories. When lawmakers begin to recognize us outside their offices and engage in meaningful conversations, you know the connection is real.

If you have ever thought about getting involved, I encourage you to take that first step. Reach out to your local or state cattlemen or cattlegirls' associations—we'd be more than happy to help you get started, whether that means connecting you with your representatives, joining us for Legislative Days, or learning how to submit testimony on the bills that matter to you.

Next year, Oregon CattleWomen plans to expand our involvement even further. We're planning to host Zoom or in-person educational events to help members feel more confident in navigating local and state legislative processes. Keep an eye out — there's a place for everyone in this work.

One of the easiest (and most fun) ways to get involved is by attending the aforementioned Legislative Days that the Oregon Cattlemen put on. Tammy Dennee and the OCA board work tirelessly to make the event welcoming and worthwhile. The evening reception offers a relaxed opportunity to meet legislators and build relationships before the next day's policy discussions begin. It's a meaningful experience that helps turn legislative jargon into real, relevant conversations about our industry.

SHARING BEEF WITH THE PUBLIC AT AG FEST

While the Capitol might be where laws are made, places like Ag Fest are where connections are built, especially with the next generation of consumers and advocates.

On April 26-27, Oregon CattleWomen

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participated in Ag Fest at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem, where approximately 24,000 attendees learned more about agriculture. Our goal was simple: educate the public about cattle, beef, and the role we play in Oregon's food system. Many attendees included multiple generations—children, parents, grandparents, you name it!

Our president-elect, Gabrielle Homer, chaired this year's committee, organizing the event with help from past chair Katharine Davis and a strong team of volunteers, including Susan Bunch, Katie Sites, Cindy Martin, Nancy Bailey, Sarah Liljefelt, Emma Laugle, and Mandy Vanderpool. Their efforts made a powerful impression on thousands of visitors, and they deserve a heartfelt thank you.

Gabrielle led two daily cooking demonstrations: one featuring Beef and Broccoli and the other Natalie's Taco Burgers. Both dishes were served with delicious samples and recipe cards for attendees to take home and try themselves. A special thanks goes to Painted Hills Natural Beef for donating all the beef and ingredients and for helping sponsor the team's travel costs.

Gabrielle shared that this event was one of the best she has attended in her 25+ years of beef promotion experience. Events like Ag Fest remind us that legislative engagement and public outreach go hand in hand. When we take time to educate, advocate, and build relationships—whether it's with lawmakers or curious kids—we strengthen the future of our industry.

So, whether you find yourself submitting testimony, handing out recipe cards, or hosting a legislator at your ranch, remember this: your voice matters. And getting involved is easier than you think.

Gabrielle Homer (top) with Painted Hills Natural Beef whips up some beef recipes at Ag Fest. Susan Bunch (bottom) teaches kids about Oregon's cattle industry.



Understanding Methane Emissions from Grazing Cattle

Juliana Ranches, Assistant Professor and Beef Extension Specialist
Jocelyn Torres, Graduate Research Assistant
 Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center, Oregon State University



Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Agriculture. Greenhouse gases (GHG) are naturally occurring and human-made gases, like methane from cattle, that trap heat in the atmosphere and can impact the climate over time. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, from 1990 to 2021, the GHG emissions in the U.S. were: 3% fluorinated gases, 6.2% nitrous oxide (N₂O), 11.5% methane (CH₄), and 49.4% carbon dioxide (CO₂). Agricultural activities contribute directly to GHG emissions through various processes, including the following source categories: enteric fermentation of ruminants, livestock manure management, rice cultivation, agricultural soil management, liming, urea fertilization, and field burning of agricultural residues.

Ruminant Enteric Methane Production. Enteric methane is a natural outcome of the anaerobic fermentation process occurring in the reticulo-rumen and hindgut of ruminants. The rumen, a low-oxygen environment, supports a diverse array of symbiotic microorganisms such as archaea (primarily methanogens), bacteria,

protozoa, and fungi, which derive energy from the consumed feed. The end products of their metabolism primarily consist of microbial cell protein and volatile fatty acids (VFA; mainly acetate, butyrate, and propionate), utilized by ruminants to fulfill their own metabolic requirements. This symbiotic partnership has enabled ruminants to adapt and thrive across various environments, capitalizing on complex carbohydrates, particularly cellulose, that are challenging for most other mammalian species to digest. Through this evolutionary process, a sophisticated microbial community emerged, including distinct methanogenic species, capable of thriving within the reticulo-ruminal environment where production of carbon dioxide and hydrogen (H₂) by ruminal microorganisms serves as the primary substrates for methanogenic archaea to produce methane, which is expelled to the atmosphere through cattle belching. Although a sophisticated process, the methane produced by the archaea in the rumen has been extensively deemed by researchers

as an inefficiency of the digestive process of ruminants, where 5 to 12% of the energy consumed by ruminants is lost as methane during the digestive process. Therefore, reducing methane emissions can improve feed efficiency, meaning better weight gains and/or more milk production from the same amount of feed.

Ongoing Studies at EOARC: Enteric Methane Emissions of Beef Cows Grazing Native Rangelands. The characteristics of feed (or forage), the extent of feed degradation in the rumen, and the amount of hydrogen formed by the degradation of the feed are factors that determine the level of methane production in the rumen. As a result, methane production is modulated by the cattle diet, consequently, differences in methane emissions are expected by different production systems (i.e. grazing systems vs. feedlot).

Therefore, our group is interested in understanding how the changes in forage quality over seasons, commonly observed in native rangelands, impact the methane emissions of cattle. The goal of our current study is to characterize the seasonal variation in methane emissions that result in changes in forage nutritional quality.

The study began in the spring of 2024 with twenty-two cows (Angus × Hereford) from the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center. Methane emissions (g/day) were measured using the Greenfeed (GF) Pasture System monitoring units (C-Lock).

Table 1. Forage nutritional quality, number of methane readings on greenfeed and methane emissions of beef cows in eastern Oregon. ^{a, b} means with different superscripts differ ($P < 0.05$).

Season	Crude Protein %	Total Digestible Nutrients %	Number of visits to Greenfeed	CH ₄ g/cow daily
Spring	8.5	56	2482	198 ^b
Summer	3.5	56	3144	216 ^a
Fall	2.9	57	2997	197 ^b

Prior to the grazing season, all cows were acclimated to the monitoring units. During spring they were maintained as a group and provided meadow hay ad libitum. Fifteen cows were successfully acclimated. After the acclimation, the cows and monitoring units were relocated to the Northern Great Basin Experimental Range for the measurement of enteric methane emissions during the grazing season over summer and fall. The monitoring units were placed near water sources and programmed to record up to 8 visits per cow each day, with alfalfa pellets used as an enticement. Grazing management was done with virtual fence collars (Vence) and forage samples were collected in each pasture for analysis of forage nutrients. Throughout the study, body weight (BW) and body condition score (BCS) were recorded from all cows.

Forage analysis for the spring was reported at 8.5% crude protein (CP) and 56% TDN (total digestible nutrients), for the summer 3.5% CP and 57% TDN, and for fall 2.8 % CP and 55% TDN. Approximately 9,000 methane emission readings were collected from spring to fall. Preliminary data for methane emissions during seasons were greatest during summer (213g/cow daily), and similar between spring and fall (198 g/cow daily), illustrating the seasonal variation in emissions of grazing beef cattle in native rangelands (Table 1).

Implication for Cattle Producers. Understanding methane patterns in grazing systems helps us set realistic baselines for our region and production system. From there, we can begin exploring cost-effective tools—like feed additives or forage strategies—that could reduce methane and improve feed efficiency. Moving forward, studies evaluating the effects of methane mitigation technologies in grazing systems, such as feed additives and seaweed supplementation, will be crucial to help reduce methane emissions, improve

feed efficiency, and animals' performance, ultimately improving farm and ranch sustainability and profitability. •



Dr. Juliana Ranches (pictured above) is an Assistant Professor at Oregon State University, based at the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center (EOARC). She holds a master's degree and a doctorate

from the University of Florida. Her research and Extension programs focus on diverse topics important to cattle producers, with the primary goal of improving production efficiency and sustainability. The pillars of her research program include cattle nutrition, health and welfare, production management, and precision technology.

Dr. Ranches' Extension efforts are dedicated to educational programming for cattle producers, primarily through RanchER, a webinar series that highlights the work of women in agriculture and livestock production, and the Ranching Academy, a year-long program that combines lectures and hands-on activities.



Introducing... Connie Landis

Please give a warm welcome to Connie. She is joining the Natural Resources Division team as the new CAFO Program Manager, starting on June 2nd.

Connie Landis comes to us from the Washington State Department of Agriculture where she was their Produce Safety Program Manager for the past four years.

Connie is originally from Prineville, OR and earned both her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees from Oregon State University. She holds a PhD from North Carolina State University and a graduate certificate in U.S. Food Law from Michigan State University.

Connie has over eleven years of experience as a cooperative extension educator working directly with ag producers, primarily those growing fruits and vegetables, to support and grow regional and sustainable food systems and help producers understand how to comply with buyer requirements and government regulations. Her extension efforts have included working with diversified operations and beginning farmers and serving as a mentor to other extension personnel and nonprofit organizations. She also has experience teaching college-level courses in environmental science, biology, microbiology, food science, human nutrition, agroecology, and horticulture.

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Thank you for your passion and dedication towards creating a better tomorrow for Oregon's cattle industry!

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