



# U.S. ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE BEEF

FRAMEWORK OUTREACH | **MODULE TOOLKIT**  
*COW-CALF*



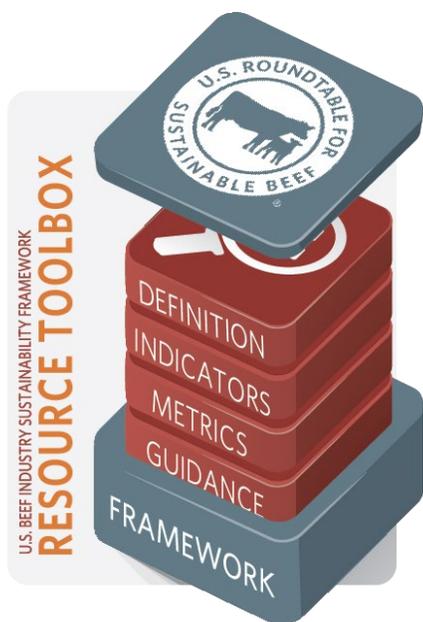
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## U.S. ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE BEEF: INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB) Online Module Toolkit. In this resource, you'll find a collection of external sources to support the material of the online training. Templates are available for in-the-moment application and active links will allow you to visit websites instantly, expanding your knowledge of each topic.



### OUR FRAMEWORK

The U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework is a voluntary resource developed to identify opportunities for continuous improvement in all types of operations and companies through the beef industry. The ability to establish benchmarks for current conditions and assess progress toward goals is critical to the U.S. beef industry's sustainability efforts. [Read the complete Framework here.](#)

#### This Toolkit Addresses Five High-Priority Indicators:

- **Efficiency & Yield**
- **Grazing Management**
- **Animal Health & Well-Being**
- **Employee Safety & Well-Being**
- **Succession & Transfer**



Get started with the [Cow-Calf Self-Assessment Tool](#) from USRSB





## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: MEASURING PERFORMANCE

Financial Benchmarks are calculations used to measure the financial health of your operation. These benchmarks can be used regardless of your type of operation and provide comparable, standardized measures to judge your efficiency. Benchmarks come in three forms:

- **Ratios:** Measures like the Debt-to-Equity Ratio, which compare the bank's ownership to your ownership in an operation
- **Percentages:** Rates such as Rate of Return on Farm Equity, which represents the return you are getting out your investment in the farm
- **Dollar Amounts:** Dollar figures like the Net Farm Income, which is the farm's gross income less expenses, inventory changes and depreciation

Using the **Balance Sheet, Income Statement, Cash Flow Statement**, and other financial documents you can find your operation's:

- **LIQUIDITY** – Your ability to have cash readily available to meet financial obligations such as living expenses, taxes or debt payments
- **SOLVENCY** – Your ability to pay off all debts if they were to be called in today – solvency is a measure of the borrowing risk and capacity of an operation
- **PROFITABILITY** – The difference between revenues earned on goods produced and the costs of production
- **REPAYMENT CAPACITY** – Your ability to repay debts on time using both on-farm and off-farm income as a measure of capacity
- **FINANCIAL CAPACITY** – How well your operation can generate income using your assets – past performance can help indicate future potential



## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: BALANCE SHEET

The Balance Sheet Financial Statement is a snapshot of what your farm looks like TODAY. At this point in time, what do you own and what do you owe? Use today's date for the document and track your assets and liabilities in the template below. Remember, Assets less Liabilities is your Net Worth or Owner Equity. *This is a tool for personal use only. Learn more and view definitions at [this link](#).*

Current Assets		Current Liabilities	
Cash	\$ _____	Accounts Payable	\$ _____
Accounts Receivable	\$ _____	Operating Loan	\$ _____
Market Livestock & Products	\$ _____	Principal Proportion of Term Debt Due Within One Year	\$ _____
Crops and Feed	\$ _____	Interest on Non-Current Liabilities	\$ _____
Cash Investments in Crops	\$ _____	Taxes Due: Real Estate/Property	\$ _____
Supplies	\$ _____	Taxes Due: Employee Payroll Withholding	\$ _____
Prepaid Expenses	\$ _____	Deferred Tax Liability on Current Assets	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	Other	\$ _____
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>	<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
Long-Term Assets		Long-Term Liabilities	
Notes Receivable	\$ _____	Machinery Loans	\$ _____
Breeding Livestock	\$ _____	Real Estate and Building Loans	\$ _____
Machinery and Equipment	\$ _____	Deferred Tax and Liabilities Loan	\$ _____
Vehicles	\$ _____	Other	\$ _____
Farm Real Estate and Buildings	\$ _____	<b>Total Long-Term Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
Cropland	\$ _____	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
Pasture	\$ _____		
Other	\$ _____		
<b>Total Long-Term Assets</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>	<b>Owner's Equity/Net Worth</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>		

Adapted from Northwest Farm Credit Services and Noble Research Institute, LLC special thanks to Dan Childs



## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: INCOME STATEMENT

The Income Statement shows the Revenues and Expenses of the operation over the course of a year. The difference in Revenues and Expenses is the Net Farm Income. Use the template below to track these items for the year. *This is a tool for personal use only.*

Revenues	
Livestock	\$ _____
Crops	\$ _____
Government Payments	\$ _____
Custom Work	\$ _____
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
Expenses	
Chemicals	\$ _____
Feed	\$ _____
Fertilizer	\$ _____
Gas, Fuel, Oil	\$ _____
Insurance	\$ _____
Hired Labor	\$ _____
Rent	\$ _____
Repairs and Maintenance	\$ _____
Seed	\$ _____
Property Taxes	\$ _____
Vet and Medicine	\$ _____
Machine Hire	\$ _____
Depreciation	\$ _____
Interest	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
<b>Net Farm Income (before taxes)</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>



## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: CASH FLOW STATEMENT

A series of cash flow statements will allow you to see or project your ability to meet cash payment obligations, and when you might have excess cash available to pay ahead on existing liabilities. Cash flow statements can be completed on intervals tailored for the operation such as monthly or quarterly. Use the template below to track beginning cash balance, cash inflows, and cash outflows. *This is a tool for personal use only.*

Category	Cash In (\$)	Cash Out (\$)
<b>Cash Farm Income and Expenses (Operating)</b>		
1. Total cash income (Net Farm income Statement)	\$ _____	\$ _____
2. Total cash expenses (Net Farm Income Statement + interest paid)	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>Capital Assets (Investing)</b>		
1. Sales of capital assets	\$ _____	\$ _____
2. Cost of purchases and trades	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>Loans (Financing)</b>		
1. New loans received	\$ _____	\$ _____
2. Principal repaid	\$ _____	\$ _____
3. Discrepancy in loans received and paid VS. change in principal owed	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>Non-Farm</b>		
1. Non-farm income invested in the farm business	\$ _____	\$ _____
2. Cash withdrawn from the farm from living, taxes, savings, etc.	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>Cash on Hand (Balance in Farm, Checking, Savings Accounts)</b>		
1. Beginning of year	\$ _____	\$ _____
2. End of year	\$ _____	\$ _____



## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: BEEF CATTLE BENCHMARKS

In addition to standard benchmarks measuring financial health, the indicators below offer more specific guidelines for beef cattle operations. These are only suggested target levels - use the resources in this toolkit to find what is best for your operation and your financial goals.

EXAMPLE BENCHMARK	EXAMPLE TARGET LEVEL
Nutrition Base Expense as a Percent of Total Expenses	Between 30% -45%
Labor and Management Expense as a Percent of Total Revenue	<15%
Operating Expense as a Percentage of Total Revenue	<75%
Net Income Ratio	> 5%
Current Ratio	> 2.0
Equity to Asset Ratio (Market Basis)	> 50%
Asset Turnover Ratio (Cost Basis)	> 15%
Rate of Return on Assets (Market Basis)	> 1.5%



### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: YOUR OPERATION

How is your operation doing? Visit [this link](#) to see a list of ratios and KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) to measure your operation’s financial health. Select two measures for each category, then calculate and determine if your measure indicates Healthy, Room for Improvement, or Unhealthy status.

			Strong	Moderate	Vulnerable
<b>LIQUIDITY</b>					
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>SOLVENCY</b>					
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>PROFITABILITY</b>					
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>REPAYMENT CAPACITY</b>					
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>FINANCIAL CAPACITY</b>					
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Measure: _____	Calculation: _____	Result:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## MORE RESOURCES

The following websites provide tools, articles and industry standards for beef cattle economics:

- Visit the [Center For Farm Financial Management](#) from the University of Minnesota to find links and resources for financial planning.
- Find the standardized guidelines for reporting farm finances from the [Farm Financial Standards Council](#).
- Browse the resources at the [Iowa Beef Center](#) for information on investment, production, ownership and cattle markers.
- View [Financial Analysis Resources](#) from Purdue University Center for Commercial Agriculture and use their [Farm Finance Spreadsheets](#) as ready-to-use tools for inputting your data.
- Use the [CattleFax: Cow-Calf Cost Calculator](#) to input your financial information and estimate breakeven point, taxes, expenses and more. Below is an example of this user-friendly tool:

Cattle Revenue					
		Low	Expectation	High	
Feeder Steer Weights (lbs.)					
Expected Steer Market Price (\$/lb)		2.00	1.70		1.40
Feeder Heifer Weights					
Discount to Steers (\$/cwt)		15	18		20
Expected Heifer Market Price (\$/lb)					
Weighted Average Price (\$/lb)					
Cull Cow Weight (lbs.)					
Expected Cull Cow Market Price (\$/lb)			0.85		
Marketing/Selling Costs (%)			2.0		
Ranch Revenue and Cost					
Expected Revenue				Total	\$/Cow
	Select	Daily Cost/Hd	No. of Head	Lease Term (Days)	
Current Pasture/Residue Being Leased	By Acre	0.12	75	150	
	Select Yes or N/A				
Forage Production (Hay, Other)	Yes	120	20		



**CHECK IN:** *What technology or programs are you currently using to track your financial documents? Does the system meet your needs? If not, what needs to change?*

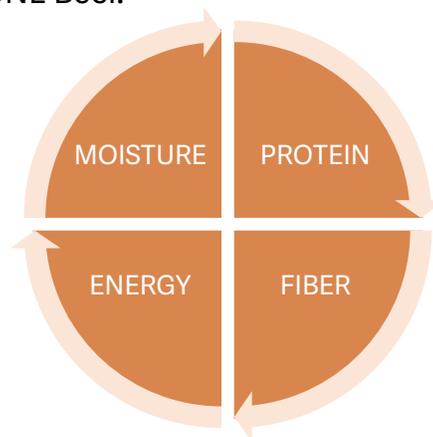


## NUTRITION: FEED INGREDIENTS AND ANALYSIS

NUTRIENT	UNITS
Moisture	%
Crude Protein	%
Total Digestible Nutrients	%
Neutral Detergent Fiber	%
Acid Detergent Fiber	%
Net Energy	Mcal/lb
Calcium	%
Phosphorus	%
Copper, Zinc	ppm
Vitamins	IU/lb

Utilizing these tools requires accurate data of animal characteristics (e.g. body weights and condition scores) and the nutrient compositions of feedstuffs. For more information, visit this [Feed Analysis article](#) from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Institute of Agriculture & Natural Resources, UNL Beef.

**A Feed Analysis will provide information in these four key areas. Use the link above to explore more about the measures in each.**



### ▶▶▶ MORE RESOURCES

- Download the [“Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle” e-book](#)
- Download the [University of Georgia “Basic Balancer” spreadsheet](#). This Excel spreadsheet is a simple ration balancer for cattle.



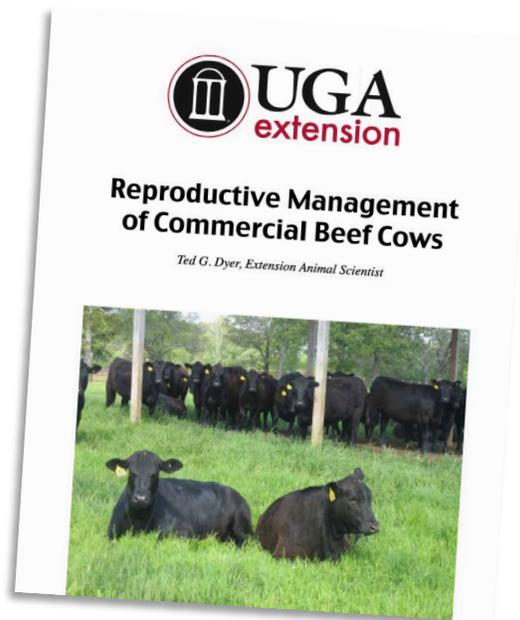


## REPRODUCTION: BEEF COWS

Topics regarding the reproductive management of commercial beef cows include:

- **Controlled Calving Season**
- **Checking for Pregnancy**
- **Strategic Supplementation**
- **Body Condition**
- **Heifer Development, Selection and Breeding**
- **Herd Health**
- **Dystocia**
- **Breeding-Soundness Examination**

Learn more about these topics from the University of Georgia Extension [Reproductive Management of Commercial Beef Cows](#)



## ▶▶▶ MORE RESOURCES

- Find charts and resources on cattle reproduction at the [Applied Reproductive Strategies in Beef Cattle \(ARSBC\)](#) at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, part of the [Beef Reproduction Task Force](#)





## GENETICS: BEEF HERDS

Who can help with navigating genetic selection decisions?



**Beef Extension Specialists  
Land Grant University Personnel**



**Breed Associations**



**USDA Researchers  
Informational Sources**



## MORE RESOURCES

- Visit the [Beef Improvement Federation](#), whose aim is, “Improving the beef industry through performance evaluation.” You can also find their [Guidelines for Uniform Beef Improvement Programs](#) online.
- Use the many resources available at [eBEEF](#) Beef Genetics and Genomics Community of Practice with eXtension from UC Davis.



## BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: BUSINESS GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The information collected in this section on “Efficiency & Yield” will only benefit your operation if you have a destination in mind. How can this information help you? Are you making progress toward your goals? Consider your overall Mission, Objectives and Goals & Checkpoints when using the template.

Category	What is this?	Your Plan
<p>Mission</p>	<p><i>The mission of the operation summarizes why it exists; it is the “big picture” of your operation. This also provides the framework for creating objectives and goals. While it may seem obvious, writing it down will help you create specific and defined goals down the road.</i></p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Objectives</p>	<p><i>Objectives are action statements that help you achieve your mission. What will it TAKE to get you where you want to be?</i></p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Short Term Goals &amp; Checkpoints</p>	<p><i>Remember to use “SMART” guidelines when writing your goals:</i>  <b>S - Specific</b>  <b>M - Measurable</b>  <b>A - Attainable</b>  <b>R - Realistic</b>  <b>T - Timely</b>  <i>Also include “checkpoints,” which are opportunities to stop and evaluate your progress on your goals (and make adjustments if needed).</i></p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

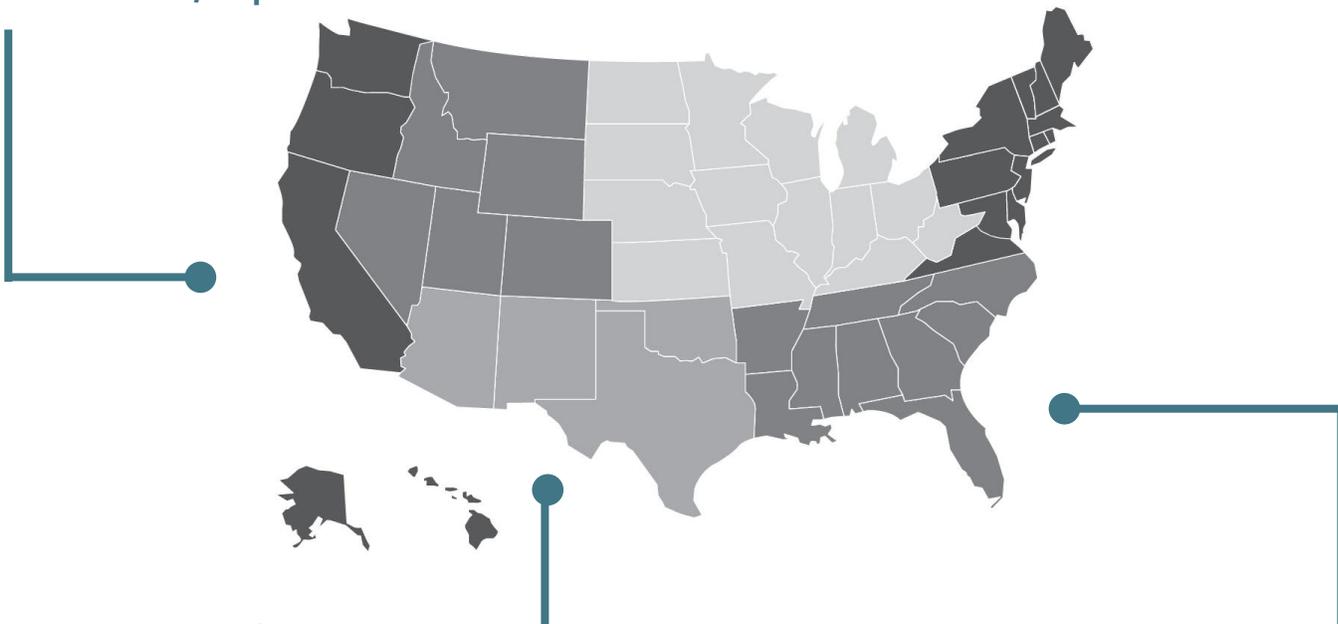
*Adapted from Vern Pierce and Joe Parcell at University of Missouri*



## GRAZING MANAGEMENT: REGIONAL NEEDS

Grazing management is about optimizing land and water resources and being an ethical steward of the environment. Region specific factors like soil type, climate, vegetative cover, wildlife and wildlife habitat, soil function, cattle health and performance requirements, and invasive species all play a role in making your grazing management plan and success. Many resources are available to understand factors like these in your region. The following are just a few examples.

The [National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center](#) will provide weather outlooks, maps and news about weather forecasts.



The [Grassland Production Forecast](#) is an educational resource provided by Colorado State University which uses Grassland Production Forecast to help producers in the Great Plains better guess the amount of grass that will be available for grazing.

[Archbold Biological Station](#) is an organization which shares scientific knowledge needed to protect the life, lands and waters of Florida and the United States.

## GRAZING MANAGEMENT: RESOURCES

Who can help with developing a Resource and Grazing Management Plan?



**RANCH MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS** can provide resources specific to an operation's needs and goals.



**STATE CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS** are a resource to gain information about public policies related to grazing management and learn what practices other producers are implementing.



**STATE EXTENSION SPECIALISTS** and other university academics can provide an assessment of current operations and help producers create a plan for implementing new land resource practices.

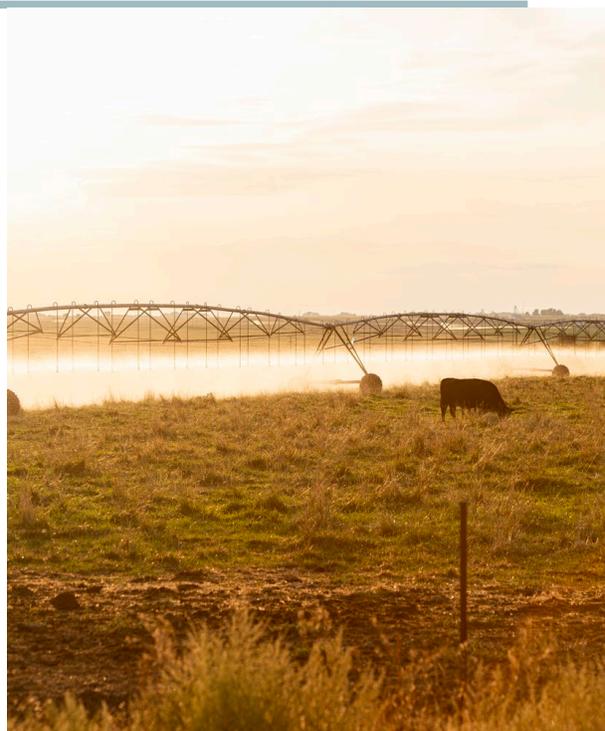


**WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERTS**, both state and federal agencies and non-governmental organization staff can assess operations and provide advice on opportunities to incorporate wildlife habitat inclusion on existing operations.



## MORE RESOURCES

- The [USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service \(NRCS\)](#) provides financial assistance, technical assistance tools and resources for producers looking to incorporate conservation practice within an operation.
- The [Noble Research Institute](#) is a collaboration of scientists, consultants, collaborators, plant breeders, greenhouse assistance, agricultural economists, forage agronomists, beef producers, crop specialists, wildlife biologists, biochemists and teachers who focus on research, producer relations and education to find solutions to problems faced by farmers and ranchers.



## MORE RESOURCES



### Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

- [Ducks Unlimited](#) provides resources for conservation including waterfowl research and conservation techniques. They partner with farmers and ranches for grassland and wetland management and protection.
- [Pheasants Forever](#) is dedicated to the conservation of pheasants, quail and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education and land management policies and programs. They believe there's room for wildlife habitat on every farm and ranch to better protect our natural resources and to leave uplands and wetlands for future generations to enjoy.
- [The World Wildlife Fund](#) is a leading conservation organization that combines global reach with a foundation in science to conserve forests, oceans, fresh water, wildlife, food and climate. They advocate for programs which help farmers and ranchers improve conservation outcomes on working lands.
- [The Nature Conservancy](#) is a global environmental non-profit organization that works to conserve the land and waters on which all life depends by tackling climate change, protecting land and water, providing food and water sustainability and building healthy cities. They are working with farmers, ranchers and other partners to meet the growing demand for food, while protecting lands and waters for people and nature.



### Publications

- The National Climate Assessment's [2014 Agriculture Guide](#) provides an in-depth look into how agricultural production impacts our world.
- The [Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable](#) focuses efforts to better serve social, ecological, and economic indicators of rangeland sustainability.
- The [Sustainable Ranch Management Assessment Guidebook](#) is an in-depth look into social, ecological, and economic sustainability on rangelands as part of the Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable organization.
- [State and region-specific grazing resources](#) are regularly updated online from USRSB.





## DISEASE PREVENTION: VCPR

A Veterinary-Client-Patient-Relationship (VCPR) Agreement should be in place in order to specify the responsibilities of the producer and veterinarian, as well as to meet legal obligations for some antibiotics and medications.

A Valid VCPR Requires the following:

-  The **livestock owner consents** to entering into this VCPR.
-  The **Veterinarian of Record (VOR)** has sufficient knowledge of the farm and animals
-  The VOR takes **responsibility for making medical judgements** regarding the health and welfare of cattle on the farm
-  The **farm owner, farm management and farm workers agree** to follow the VOR's instructions
-  The VOR is available for follow up and agrees on a **schedule for timely visits**

*If farm owners, managers or workers use or administer drugs contrary to the VOR's instructions it is a violation of the VCPR, making this agreement null and void.*

When you require a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD), check if the State or Federal Definition of the VCPR applies in your state. Visit the [FDA VCPR Jurisdiction](#) document to find your state.



### DISEASE PREVENTION: VCPR

Use this VCPR template adapted from the [Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization](#)

Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Address (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Animal Groups Covered in This VCPR:		
Lactating Cows	<input type="checkbox"/>	Breeding Age Heifers
Weaned Calves	<input type="checkbox"/>	Milk Fed Calves
		Dry Cows

**Veterinarian of Record Information:** The veterinarian of record takes responsibility for making medical judgements on the farm regarding the health and welfare of animals and is the responsible party for providing appropriate oversight of drug use on the farm. Such oversight is critical in establishing and maintaining a VCPR. This oversight should include establishment of treatment protocols, training of personnel, review of treatment records, and monitoring use of all drugs regardless of where or from whom the drugs are distributed.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

State Licensed in: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Before signing this agreement, the following must be completed:

- Develop an Approved Drug List, noting condition to be treated, proper dose, route, and withdrawal times
- Develop and commit to maintaining a Treatment Record System (written or computer based)
- VOR provides/approves treatment records

I hereby certify that a valid VCPR is established for the above listed farm and veterinarian and will remain in force until cancelled by either party, or one year from signature date below.

Farmer/Owner Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Veterinarian of Record Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## DISEASE PREVENTION: JUDICIOUS USE OF ANTIBIOTICS

The Beef Quality Assurance Program (BQA) provides 14 Guidelines for the Judicious Use of Antibiotics, which are outlined here. You can find more information on these guidelines in the [BQA Antibiotics Stewardship for Beef Producers Guidebook](#).

1

### **Prevent Problems:**

Emphasize appropriate husbandry and hygiene, routine health examinations, and vaccinations.

2

### **Adhere to FDA guidance:**

Follow label instructions and FDA guidance for the use of all antibiotics. The use of antibiotics medically important in human medicine should only be used after careful consideration. If medically important feed grade antibiotics are used, they must be under the guidance of a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD).

3

### **Select and Use Antibiotics Carefully:**

Consult with your veterinarian on the selection and use of antibiotics, under the premise of a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship (VCPR). Have a valid reason to use an antibiotic. Appropriate therapeutic alternatives should be considered prior to using antimicrobial therapy.

4

### **Use the Laboratory to Help You Select Antibiotics:**

Cultures and sensitivity test results should be used to aid in the selection of antibiotics, whenever possible.

5

### **Combination Antibiotic Therapy is Discouraged Unless There is Clear Evidence the Specific Practice is Beneficial:**

Select and dose an antibiotic to affect a cure.

6

### **Avoid Inappropriate Antibiotic Use:**

Confine therapeutic antibiotic use to proven clinical indications. Avoid inappropriate uses such as for viral infections without bacterial complication.

7

### **Treatment Programs Should Reflect Best Use Principles:**

Regimens for therapeutic antimicrobial use should be optimized using current pharmacological information and principles.



## DISEASE PREVENTION: JUDICIOUS USE OF ANTIBIOTICS

The Beef Quality Assurance Program (BQA) provides 14 Guidelines for the Judicious Use of Antibiotics, which are outlined here. You can find more information on these guidelines in the [BQA Antibiotics Stewardship for Beef Producers Guidebook](#).

8

**Treat the Fewest Number of Animals Possible:**  
Limit antibiotic use to sick or at-risk animals.

9

**Treat for the Recommended Time Period:**  
To minimize the potential for bacteria to become resistant to antimicrobials.

10

**Avoid Environmental Contamination with Antibiotics:**  
Steps should be taken to minimize antimicrobials reaching the environment through spillage, contaminated ground run off, or aerosolization.

11

**Keep Records of Antibiotic Use:**  
Accurate records of treatment and outcome should be used to evaluate therapeutic regimens and always follow proper meat and milk withdrawal times. Keep records for a minimum of two (2) years or longer based on state and local regulations.

12

**Follow Label Directions:**  
Follow label instructions and never use antibiotics other than as labelled without a valid veterinary prescription.

13

**Extra Label Antibiotic Use Must Follow FDA Regulations:**  
Prescriptions, including extra label use of medications, must meet the Animal Medicinal Drug Use Clarification Act (AMDUCA) amendments to the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and its regulations. This includes having a valid VCPR.

14

**Medically Important Antibiotic use Should be Limited to Treat, Prevent, or Control Disease:**  
Medically important antibiotics should not be used if the principle intent is to improve performance. Antibiotics that are medically important to human medicine may not be used for performance. Guidelines developed from AVMA, AABP, and AVC guidance on Appropriate Veterinary Antibiotic Use.



## MORE RESOURCES

- The [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) provides information about antibiotic resistance in humans with their Common Questions and Answers page.
- The American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP) [Antibiotics Position Statement](#) sets context on proper and judicious antibiotic use in cattle production



## SAFE & HUMANE HANDLING: FACILITIES

Low-stress cattle handling is aided by facility design and maintenance and a handler's choice of equipment. Use these resources to evaluate your current facility and learn more about low-stress handling.

- Mississippi State University Extension provides an in-depth look of components of [Beef Cattle Handling Facilities](#) including crowding pens, alleys, slider gates, and loading ramps.
- [Drovers Livestock Publication](#) will often provide current information about facility design.
- Dr. Temple Grandin's research and communications often define and describe proper animal handling and facility design. See her [Ranch and Property Cattle Corral Designs](#) for diagrams and suggestions or read more about why these systems are recommended in this [research publication](#).
- The National BQA (Beef Quality Assurance) YouTube Channel provides [Facility Design videos](#) for large and small operations.



### TRAINED PERSONNEL: STOCKMANSHIP

It is likely you have participated in at least one stockmanship training at the state or national level. Review the resources below to refresh your knowledge from any previously taken trainings, or see what opportunities are available to continue developing your stockmanship skills.

- The [BQA Cattle Care and Handling Guidelines](#) provides detailed information about proper cattle care and handling techniques which should be followed by all personnel.
- [BQA Self-Assessment Guides](#) can be utilized to gauge effects of current handling and care protocols and identify areas of improvement.
- The Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) from the National Milk Producers Federation and the BQA (FARM) program partnered to create this [Stockmanship Video](#).



- Consider attending the [Stockmanship and Stewardship](#) unique two-day training with hands-on practice for low-stress cattle handling.

### STATE LEVEL RESOURCES

**State Cattlemen’s Associations** and **State Extension Service Specialists** can provide resources on a variety of animal care and handling topics. *Do you have a contact at these two state-level associations? List their information here. If not, consider a friend or fellow producer who could connect you with their staff.*

State Cattlemen’s Association Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

State Extension Service Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



### SAFETY MATTERS: CREATING A SAFETY PROGRAM

USRSB recommends producers utilize outside expertise and consultants who can develop or aid in the development of an employee safety and well-being training program. Public and private agencies and institutions who can help producers develop or evaluate a safety and health program include:

- [Agricultural Safety and Health eXtension](#) – find resources, live and online training events, and expert advice
- [American Farm Bureau Safety & Health Network](#) – provides leadership and assistance to local and state Farm Bureaus promoting safety and health in agricultural and rural communities.
- [University of Minnesota Extension Farm Safety](#) – find a collection of resources on risk management and farm safety.
- [USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture Farm Safety](#) – browse resources and external links in partnership with USDA NIFA on farm safety and employee well-being.
- [Ohio State University Extension Ag Safety & Health Program](#) – browse Employee Safety Resources including videos and print materials.
- [USDA Preparedness Fact Sheet](#) – do you have a plan should disaster strike? Use this guide from the USDA to develop a plan in case of an emergency.
- [Department of Homeland Security](#) – visit Ready.gov to see what you can do to prepare for disasters if you have livestock or other animals.
- [North Carolina State University Agricultural Safety for Farmers and Workers](#) – find a collection of resources from pesticide safety to OSHA trainings.

### TRAININGS

- The [Animal Care Training \(ACT\)](#) is an online training for producers, transportation, and livestock marketers to gain information for the American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP).
- The [Beef Cattle Institute](#) at Kansas State University provides innovative solutions to veterinarian and beef producers for success in the beef industry.
- The [Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention, and Education](#) is a part of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and conducts programs designed to reduce occupational injuries and diseases among agricultural workers and their families.



## SAFETY MATTERS: PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) includes a variety of clothing and external wear to keep cattle handlers and operational employees safe. Learn more at the [National Ag Safety Database](#).

- **Steel-toed or hard-toed shoes** can help prevent injury from being stepped on by cattle.
- **Dust masks** should be worn in areas with inadequate or improper ventilation when working in dusty environments such as moving and handling feed.
- **Rubber gloves** and **splash goggles** should be worn when mixing and spraying chemicals such as pesticides and insecticides.
- **Eye protection** and **gloves** should be worn when working with a sick animal or giving a shot, as some livestock diseases can be introduced to humans through open wounds.

*Note: loose, ripped, or baggy clothing should never be worn around machinery as it can easily be caught in equipment with moving parts.*



### EYE AND FACE PROTECTION

When is eye and face protection needed? When there is a reasonable probability of injury from hazardous chemicals or flying particles, such as:

- **Pipetting**
- **Opening centrifuge tubes**
- **Using syringes**
- **Mixing/vortexing**
- **Preparing solutions**
- **Titrations**
- **Pouring**
- **Operating a saw**
- **Grinding/cutting**
- **Trimming grass or shrubs**
- **Spraying**
- **Vehicle/equipment maintenance**
- **Plowing**
- **Cutting/mowing brush**



### NOISE EXPOSURE

Workplace noise can cause hearing loss, create physical and psychological stress and contribute to accidents by making it difficult to communicate. All employees working in high exposure areas or jobs should be trained before initial assignment and at least annually on the following topics:

- **Effects of noise on hearing**
- **Purpose of hearing protectors**
- **Advantage and disadvantages of various types of hearing protectors**
- **Proper use, selection, fit, and care of hearing protectors**



## SAFETY MATTERS: EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Use the checklist below to help develop your safety and well-being training. As you read through each section, consider if you are currently meeting these in your training, or if you could improve.

### Safety Training Components

- Identifying hazards and implementing control measures.
- Learning the proper safe work practices.
- Learning when and how to use personal protection equipment.
- Learning to perform basic first aid, CPR and emergency training.

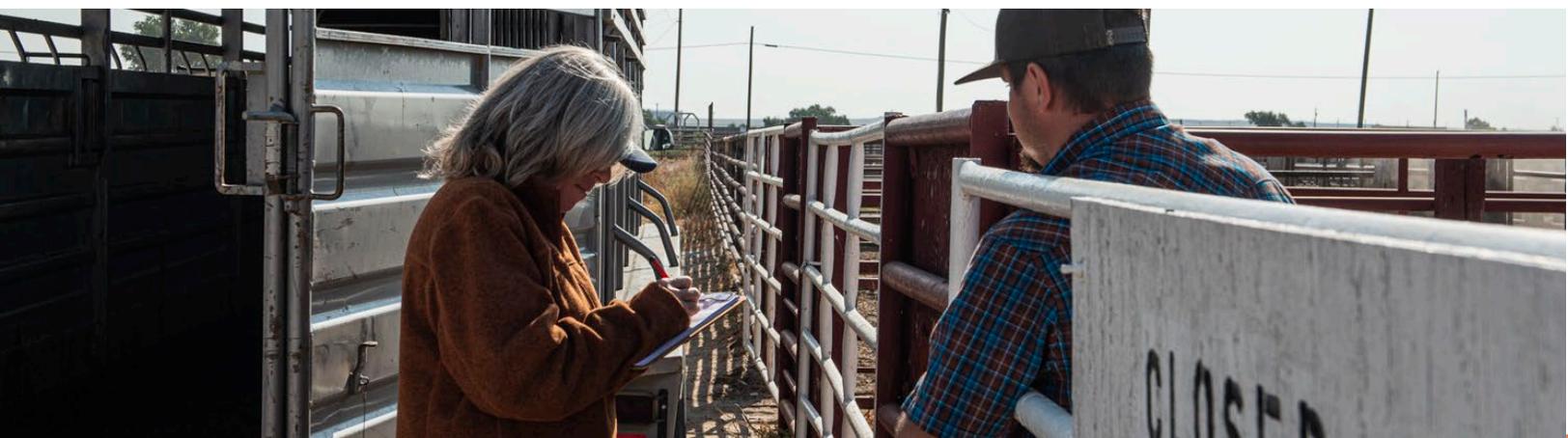
### Training Tips

- Be specific
- Give examples
- Provide feedback
- Schedule regular practice, interactive components, and hands on activities
- Provide feedback to participants
- Give positive reinforcement
- Keep it short
- Encourage employee involvement
- Mix it up

### Advice for the Trainer:

- ✓ The trainer should know the job well and should be prepared ahead of time for training
- ✓ Explain the purpose of the training
- ✓ Treat the worker as an equal or a friend
- ✓ Demonstrate the process step by step
- ✓ Instruct the worker to perform the job one step at a time and repeat the process as needed
- ✓ Monitor performance and evaluate the training

*Adapted from Noble Research Institute, LLC special thanks to Megan Kelley and Sharon Bard and the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) and the Integrity Beef Alliance.*





### SAFETY MATTERS: EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Use the checklist below to help develop your safety and well-being training. As you read through each section, consider if you are currently meeting these in your training, or if you could improve.

#### Tailgate Training

**Tailgate training is an effective, informal way to communicate safety information to workers.** It is usually conducted in 15 to 20-minute time periods on a specific safety topic to a small group of workers. Given by managers, the tail gate sessions usually happen at the beginning of the week, in the morning before work has begun. It is usually conducted weekly and directly related to the work assigned for that time frame.

Near misses are a good topic to cover. This is a good, proactive approach to help reduce injuries and incidents. Make sure the training is directed at learning and understanding rather than alienating the people involved in the near miss.

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#### Evaluation

**Evaluation is a key part of training.** You can use informal evaluation to find out what the worker learned from the training experience. You can ask questions and have them perform the job while you are observing to make sure the job is done correctly and in the safest manner possible. You can use formal evaluation to get a more thorough, objective understanding of the training process. Pre-tests and post-tests can be used to measure whether the training was effective. You can also use follow up assessments to measure if the information learned was retained. Document all trainings, including attendance.

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#### Youth Regulations

**The Federal child labor provisions were enacted to ensure that young workers are protected from unsafe and hazardous jobs.** The Federal child labor provisions, authorized by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938, were enacted to ensure that when young people work, the work is safe and does not jeopardize their health, well-being, or educational opportunities. By knowing minimum wage, overtime, discrimination protections and ages and conditions guidelines and complying with these provisions, agricultural employers, parents, and teachers can help working teens enjoy those safe, positive, early work experiences that can be so important to their development.



## SAFETY MATTERS: SAFETY & HEALTH POLICY

Use the sample Safety & Health Policy below as a starting point for your own policy. Adapt as needed for your own operation and remember to include authorizing signatures. Fill in the name of your farm or operation in the blanks below.

### \_\_\_\_\_ Safety and Health Policy

The safety and health of workers and cattle is very important. Our farm will comply with all applicable workplace safety and health regulations and support and enforce occupational safety and health regulations. Everyone including management will be involved with the safety program.

**Based on everyone’s involvement, our safety and health goals are:**

1. Strive to achieve a “zero incidents” goal.
2. Train staff to perform all work tasks safely.
3. Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for all job activities.
4. Improve and maintain equipment and environmental conditions on the farm.
5. Perform regularly-scheduled work inspections, document and remediate all hazards.
6. Prepare and train all employees to react appropriately under emergency conditions.
7. Establish a continual reporting system for “close call” and “near miss” incidents.
8. Reward workers appropriately for their safety and health workplace achievements.

Owners and farm managers are responsible for training workers in specific safe work practices. Owners and farm managers must enforce company policies and make sure everyone is following proper safety procedures. Everyone working at \_\_\_\_\_ is responsible for safety and everyone is required to participate in reporting of accidents, recognizing hazards and unsafe acts, and wearing proper personal protective equipment.

**The following workplace safety rules apply to everyone employed at this farm operation:**

1. No employee is required to do a job that he or she considers to be unsafe.
2. No horseplay will be tolerated at our farm worksites.
3. No illicit drug or alcohol use is permitted on the farm.
4. Injuries and/or unsafe work practices should be reported to management immediately.
5. Employees are not permitted to operate machines for which they have not received training.
6. Failure to follow these safety rules can result in verbal or written warnings, job re-assignment or retraining, or employment termination.

As a worker of \_\_\_\_\_, I have read, understand and will abide by the safety and health policies stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner or Manager



**SAFETY MATTERS: EMERGENCY ACTION INFORMATION**

Use the template below to capture information needed in the event of an emergency on the farm. Fill in the name of your farm or operation in the blanks below.

**Emergency Action Information**

Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Premises ID Number (PIN): \_\_\_\_\_

Owner/Operator Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Site Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Emergency Contact (Name & Phone): \_\_\_\_\_

Site Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions to Site: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Important Telephone Numbers**

Write organization/person name, number and any relevant notes. People on this list should include:

**Emergency & Medical:**

- Rescue/Ambulance
- Fire Department
- Sheriff
- Highway Patrol
- Police
- Hospital/Clinic
- County Emergency Management Coordinator
- Local Poison Control Center
- Herd Veterinarian
- State Veterinarian

**Agricultural Contacts:**

- Center for Agricultural Security
- Extension Personnel
- DNR

**Operation Contacts:**

- Manure Applicator
- Equipment Dealer
- Agrichemical Dealer

**Utilities:**

- Electric Company
- Water Company
- Natural Gas/Propane Supplier

**Community Contacts:**

- School(s)
- County road department
- Other county/township offices



### PEOPLE FIRST: MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

Research shows farmers experience higher levels of psychological distress and depression than the general population. You can feel empowered to use and teach the **BRAIN** method to help manage stress in the moment.

- **BREATH:** Breathe deeply five times. Release air slowly.
- **RELAX:** Tell yourself to relax, whether in your head or our loud. Notice areas of tension in your body and try to release that tension.
- **ASK:** Ask yourself what you need or want to feel. We usually ask why external things are the way they are. Instead, ask yourself what you need to feel: calm, in control, at peace, and other comforting feelings.
- **IMAGINE:** Imagine feeling that way.
- **NOW:** After doing those four things ask yourself, "How do I feel now?"



*You can always reach out for help*



### MORE RESOURCES

- **Farm Credit, American Farm Bureau Federation, and the National Farmers Union** have partnered to provide a training program for farmers and ranchers to recognize signs of stress and provide help to those in need. Read this [press release on the new mental health initiative](#) to learn more.
- The [Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network \(FRSAN\)](#) establishes a network to connect farmers, ranchers, and other agriculturalists to stress assistance programs.
- The [Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center \(UMASH\)](#) is a collaboration of research and health care institutions which provide resources for emerging occupational health and safety issues in agriculture.
- The [Employee and Family Assistance Program \(EFAP\)](#) provides immediate and confidential support to resolve work, health, and life challenges.
- [Make It OK](#) is a campaign to reduce the stigma of mental illnesses and includes resources for rural crisis prevention.
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#) is the United States' largest grassroots mental health organization providing advocacy, education, support, and public awareness to individuals and families affected by mental illness.
- [Michigan State University Extension](#) has excellent resources regarding managing farm stress.
- Find health service providers and hotlines from the [Minnesota Farm and Rural Helpline](#).
- For live support call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or visit their website for the [Online Lifeline Crisis Chat](#).



## PASSING IT ON: TRUSTS AND ESTATE PLANNING

Succession and transfer plans are the roadmap for the next generation to maintain management of an operation. Establishing these plans requires an investment of time but will positively impact your family, future, and your bottom line.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

Based on what you learned in the online training, which of the following areas are you most likely to pursue next in your succession planning?

- A discussion of values, goals, objectives, roles and responsibilities**
- Identification of issues and creation of an advisory team**
- Evaluation of the most effective business structure for your operation**
- A conservation easement**
- A trust**

*What are you waiting for?  
Use the resources below and dive in!*



## MORE RESOURCES

As you continue developing your transition plans, use these resources for guidance, templates, and inspirational stories of success:

- Published by the University of Wyoming, the guide [“Passing It On: An Estate Planning Resource Guide for Wyoming's Farmers and Ranchers”](#) is an all-encompassing overview of what you need in transition planning.
- Hear from an attorney on the importance of estate planning in this opinion piece in the [California Rangeland Trust News](#).
- The [Land Trust Alliance](#) provides an extensive list of resources specific to accredited national land trusts.
- Find a collection of transition topics, worksheets, and service providers at [American Farmland Trust](#).



## PASSING IT ON: WHAT COULD TRANSITION LOOK LIKE?

When you begin discussions on what transition will look like for you and your family, consider answering each of these questions. This can help shape your planning decisions and what the future of your operation will look like.



### Important Questions to Ask the Parents

- ✓ What is the most important non-financial outcome you would like to achieve with an estate plan?
- ✓ How likely would your current lender be to continue to lend money if the current owners pass away?
- ✓ How have you (or will you) pass knowledge on to the next generation?
- ✓ What do you see as your involvement in 5, 10, 20 years?



### Important Questions to Ask the Kids

- ✓ Where do you see yourself in 5, 10, 20 years?
- ✓ Where do you see the farm/ranch in 5, 10, 20 years?
- ✓ How do you want to be involved?
- ✓ What is your comfort level of having to personally guarantee the debt of the ranch?
- ✓ If you had to share the ranch with a non-operating sibling, how would you feel?
- ✓ What does it mean to be a member of this family?



## BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE: BQA MANUALS & GUIDES

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is a national program funded by the Beef Checkoff that raises consumer confidence by offering proper management techniques and a commitment to quality within every segment of the beef industry. You can find online trainings, manuals, and resources at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association website: [BQA.org](https://www.bqa.org)



## MORE RESOURCES

- The [National BQA Manual](#) provides an in-depth look into all aspects of proper animal care and handling topics. This link also provides the manuals for *Antibiotic Stewardship for Beef Producers* and the *Cattle Industry Guidelines for the Care and Handling of Cattle*.
- You can find the [BQA Cow Calf Assessment](#) designed to help all cow-calf producers benchmark their operations in areas such as animal welfare, cattle handling, record keeping, etc.
- For interviews, producer profiles, and demonstrations on BQA practices, visit the [BQA YouTube Channel](#).



## WHAT ABOUT TRANSPORTERS?

For Cattle Transporters, the [BQA Transportation Quality Assurance Program](#) is an online training to provide steps to implement during the transportation of cattle.