



U.S. ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE BEEF | 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



A multi-stakeholder initiative developed to advance, support and communicate continuous improvement in sustainability of the U.S. beef value chain.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

Sam Werth, PhD, *Executive Director*
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Rebecca Bolton, *Associate Director*
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MISSION

Advance, support and communicate continuous improvement of sustainability across the U.S. beef value chain.

VISION

The U.S. beef value chain is the trusted global leader in environmentally sound, socially responsible and economically viable beef.

USRSB BOARD OF DIRECTORS & OFFICERS

Chair: Mike Williams, *California Cattlemen's Association*

Chair-Elect: Nancy Labbe, *The Nature Conservancy*

Treasurer: Scott Anderson, *CRI Feeders*

Past Chair: Chad Ellis, *Partnership of Rangeland Trusts*

Paula Alexander, *Tyson Foods*

Hugh Aljoe, *Noble Research Institute*

Rob Cannell, *National Beef*

Bruce Daley, *Sysco*

Brooke Davis, *Lopez Foods*

Jessica Gilreath, *Elanco*

Jeff Goodwin, *Texas A&M Center for Grazinglands and Ranch Management*

Tim Hardman, *Fulton Market Group*

Clayton Huseman, *Kansas Livestock Association*

Myriah Johnson, *Farm Credit Services of America*

Jamee Krug, *Elanco*

Kendra Levine, *McDonald's Corporation*

Gene Lollis, *Florida Cattlemen's Association*

Rob Manes, *The Nature Conservancy*

Tom McDonald, *Texas Cattle Feeders Association*

Wayne Morgan, *Golden State Foods*

PJ Newcomb, *Golden State Foods*

Belinda Richardson, *McDonald's Corporation*

Jessica Willingham, *Sysco*

Michelle Zackin, *Walmart*

Lance Zimmerman, *Rabobank North America*

*Current Board of Directors | *Term ended May 2024



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

MIKE WILLIAMS, CALIFORNIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION
2024-2025 USRSB CHAIR

During a recent review of the USRSB Beef Industry Sustainability Framework, originally published in 2019, I was reminded of the collaborative spirit and thoughtful planning that brought us together as an industry to address key aspects of beef sustainability. While the framework required a few updates to reflect the times, its core principles have remained highly relevant, even as the business, political and cultural landscapes have evolved over the past decade.

This enduring relevance speaks to the careful work and forward-thinking approach of those of you who contributed to the framework's creation. It also highlights the strength of our collective efforts to ensure beef remains an important part of the food supply chain for those who choose to enjoy it.

As strong as our foundation is, it's important that we remain adaptable. Change is constant, and our ability to adjust to new challenges and opportunities will be essential as we transition from planning and goal setting to implementing action that moves the industry forward. Success will depend on the continued commitment and collaboration of everyone involved.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the leaders, members and stakeholders whose contributions have brought us this far. Your dedication has helped strengthen the beef industry, and I encourage you — and anyone else who shares our vision — to continue engaging with us in this important work.

Together, we can build on our progress and ensure a sustainable future for the industry.

MIKE WILLIAMS, 2024-2025 USRSB CHAIR



USRSB BEEF
INDUSTRY
SUSTAINABILITY
FRAMEWORK



MEMBERSHIP



USRSB members represent a diverse group of individuals with interest in continuously improving how beef is raised, processed and distributed. Members share a stake in creating a sustainable food system for the future and believe in leading that effort throughout the U.S. Together, we learn, explore and solve problems, developing tools and resources to advance beef sustainability

WELCOME 2023/2024 NEW USRSB MEMBERS!

Besher Farms Producer	
Gardiner Angus Ranch Producer	
Prime Pursuits Producer	
True Ranches Producer	
AgSpire Allied Industry	
Ambrook Allied Industry	
Huvepharma, Inc. Allied Industry	
Rumin8 Allied Industry	
American Humane Civil Society	
Oklahoma State University Department of Animal and Food Sciences Civil Society	

USRSB MEMBERSHIP

PACKER/PROCESSOR



ALLIED INDUSTRY

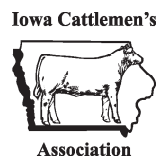
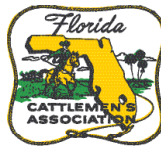


CIVIL SOCIETY





PRODUCERS



RETAIL / FOODSERVICE





2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

MEASURE AND REPORT PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS AND TARGETS

STRATEGY
I

- Establish and publish baselines for each Goal and Target
- Develop data collection and housing capabilities by 2024
- Annually evaluate outcomes of progress and stated timelines, and plan accordingly

DRIVE ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABILITY

STRATEGY
II

- 90% of USRSB supply chain members have adopted and implemented two or more sector-specific sustainability practices, as identified in the U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework
- 25% of U.S. beef supply chain stakeholders have adopted and implemented two or more sector-specific sustainability practices, as identified in the U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework

IDENTIFY, FACILITATE AND SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH PRIORITIES

STRATEGY
III

- Catalyze research to measure and report progress towards Goals and Targets and to maintain continuous improvement
- Grow credibility of the USRSB as a leader in science-based beef sustainability resources and research

ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

STRATEGY
IV

- Ensure 70% of members identify the USRSB as being helpful in achieving their own sustainability objectives
- Build organizational capacity with funding and staff
- Continue to build USRSB credibility as the subject matter expert in beef sustainability

USRSB HIGH-PRIORITY INDICATOR GOALS & SECTOR TARGETS

In alignment with its mission to advance, support and communicate continuous improvement of sustainability across the U.S. beef value chain, the USRSB has set ambitious aspirational goals and sector-level targets across all six high-priority indicators of sustainability. These goals and targets serve as a catalyst for the industry to innovate and demonstrate our collective ambition to foster continuous improvement across the U.S. beef value chain.

AIR & GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS



The U.S. beef supply chain will achieve climate neutrality by 2040.

LAND RESOURCES



The U.S. beef supply chain will work to maintain and improve grazing lands under the care of U.S. beef producers. We will do this by:

- Establishing a baseline for acres under grazing management plans (GMPs) by 2023;
- Achieving 385 million acres covered by a written GMP by 2050; and
- Supporting programs that respect property rights, create value and expand producer capacity to deploy well-managed grazing strategies to ensure lasting legacies founded on conservation and economic success.

WATER RESOURCES



By 2050, the U.S. beef supply chain will improve water management strategies and improve water quality. We will do this by:

- Benchmarking water use and quality by 2025;
- Improving retention and capture of nutrients for beneficial use; and
- Supporting feedstuffs growers to achieve their water sustainability goals.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY & WELL-BEING



The U.S. beef supply chain is committed to continuously improving the safety, development and well-being of individuals working throughout the industry. We will do this by:

- Reducing the Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR) by 50% by 2030 in relevant operations; and
- 10% year-over-year increase in individuals trained for stockmanship and safety through identified programs to reduce injuries on farms and ranches.

ANIMAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING



The U.S. beef supply chain will continue to improve animal health and well-being. We will do this by:

- Strengthening our commitment to the highest standards of animal care; and
- Achieving sector-relevant targets linked to optimal animal care through increased participation in trainings, certification programs and implementation of policies.

EFFICIENCY & YIELD



The U.S. beef supply chain will improve efficiencies, enhance product value and increase demand, which collectively will enable operations and businesses to maintain and improve individual and community financial health.

GOALS PROGRESS

WORKING GROUP UPDATE

FY24 HIGHLIGHTS

Active engagement in Goals Progress meetings:

- Hosted 4 in-person meetings to facilitate collaboration and drive progress
- Conducted monthly or bimonthly virtual meetings for most sectors to ensure consistent communication and alignment

Collaboration for future progress:

- Initiated plans to work with the Communications Working Group to promote Grazing Management Plans (GMPs)
- Established partnerships with relevant members to raise awareness of GMPs and Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) and Stockmanship & Stewardship programs.
- Coordinated with the Outreach Working Group to develop resources and increase supply chain participation in sustainability initiatives

Strong working group support with 100 active members representing diverse sectors:

- Producers: 31
- Packers & Processors: 9
- Retail & Foodservice: 16
- Allied Industry: 18
- Civil Society: 26

FY25 PRIORITIES

- ☐ Maintain credibility of USRSB efforts by **upholding integrity and reliability** across all sustainability initiatives
- ☐ Address key challenges and **build on progress** made in target and goal areas
- ☐ Explore **strategies for addressing land conversion** in the U.S. beef production context
- ☐ **Enhance alignment on water quality and quantity** modeling while considering regional variability
- ☐ Promote **continued adoption and engagement** with BQA and Stockmanship & Stewardship programs
- ☐ Evaluate the cow-calf financial health index and determine **ways to gain deeper insights for individual producers**
- ☐ Collaborate to analyze findings from the GMP survey, share insights and **encourage broader implementation of written GMPs**

2024 WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

Charlie Beshar, *Beshar Farms*
Myriah Johnson, *Farm Credit Services of America*
Nancy Labbe, *The Nature Conservancy*
Wayne Morgan, *Golden State Foods*



SCAN TO
VIEW THE
TRUST IN FOOD
AND ELANCO
REPORTS

FY24 ACHIEVEMENTS BY HIGH-PRIORITY GOAL AREAS

AIR & GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS



Benchmarked acres under written GMPs through Trust in Food (TIF) survey efforts.

Feedyard sector worked with industry experts to understand current progress within the sector.

Partnered with Protein PACT to support Packer & Processor sector efforts.

85% of USRSB Retail & Foodservice member organizations set goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from their direct operations and the remaining are working to develop goals as appropriate to their respective organizations.

LAND RESOURCES



Benchmarked written GMPs through TIF survey efforts:

- 11% of acres are currently under written GMPs.
- To achieve the 2050 goal, 13.1 million acres need written GMPs annually.

Collaborated across sectors to better understand land use change (LUC) impacts to the supply chain.

Participated in the Land Use Change Summit and Land Use Change Initiative (LUCI) efforts to work with other agricultural sectors on addressing LUC.

WATER RESOURCES



Benchmarked written GMPs through Trust in Food survey efforts.

Packer & Processor sector working with Protein PACT to increase uptake of operational water use and water risk assessments.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY & WELL-BEING

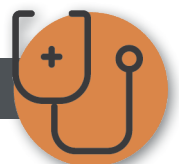


Partnered with National Cattlemen's Beef Association to track and promote Stockmanship & Stewardship training.

All USRSB member retail and foodservice companies have public codes of conduct covering employee health and safety.

According to survey work performed by Protein PACT, 92% of packers/processors implemented robust employee safety programs.

ANIMAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING



Promoted Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certifications, with total certifications rising from 91,444 in 2018 to 184,810 in 2023.

BQA certifications in feedyards increased from 15% of employees in 2017 to 61% in 2022.

According to survey work performed by Protein PACT, 66% of beef packers passed third-party animal transport and handling audits and adhere to BQA care standards.

EFFICIENCY & YIELD



Developed a Financial Health Index for cow-calf producers in collaboration with CattleFax.

Partnered with member Elanco Animal Health to perform analysis on key efficiency and yield metrics for the feedyard sector and published white paper on progress made by the sector.

According to survey work performed by Protein PACT, 37% of beef packers/processors have public-facing food waste reduction goals, while 38% have third-party-certified zero-waste-to-landfill diversion goals.

85% of USRSB member retail and foodservice companies assessed food waste, with 70% setting reduction targets.

RECOGNITION PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

FY24 HIGHLIGHTS

Conducted a **program survey** to highlight perceived value of recognized programs and gathered content for outreach

Collaborated with the Communications Working Group to explore ways to promote the value of recognized programs

Hosted a meeting with Goals Progress Retail/Foodservice sector members to **discuss Recognition Program alignment** with sector-specific goals

Evaluated the **program's pricing structure** to ensure value and sustainability

Initiated **program expansion discussions** on methodologies to evaluate and recognize educational and technical services

FY25 PRIORITIES

- ☐ Enhance the robustness of the current program while launching a new recognition process for **technical/educational services**
- ☐ **Communicate processes** used by recognized programs, such as third-party reviews
- ☐ Develop **communication materials** for participants to promote their involvement and for USRSB outreach efforts
- ☐ Work with Communications Working Group to promote currently recognized programs and **highlight activities helping to foster continuous improvement**
- ☐ Perform assessment of current recognized programs to **understand impact of supply chain sustainability efforts**

2024 WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

Michelle Calvo-Lorenzo, *Elanco*

Rob Manes, *The Nature Conservancy*

Leann Saunders, *Where Food Comes From*

Mary Soukup, *Beef Marketing Group*



ABOUT THE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The USRSB developed an official recognition process in 2019 for members seeking recognition for their industry programs alignment with the USRSB's Sustainability Framework. This rigorous, three-year recognition requires the program owner to submit an application and supporting program materials detailing the inclusion of the U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework in their program. After evaluation and recommendation by an independent third party, the program must then be approved by the USRSB Board of Directors to receive recognition. To find out more about the Recognition Program, please visit the USRSB website.

COW-CALF PROGRAMS



FEEDYARD/FINISHER PROGRAMS



AUCTION MARKET PROGRAMS



PACKER/PROCESSOR PROGRAMS



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TO
LEARN
MORE**

Organizations recognized and listed above under the USRSB Recognition Program have undergone a third-party review in seeking recognition for alignment with the U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework. The USRSB Recognition Program specifically prohibits product claims related to the U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework. The USRSB also does not endorse the use or format of specific documents developed as part of a program's approach to conduct audits or verifications against the U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework. Use of trade names, logos, commercial programs or private organizations above is for identification purposes only to recognize organizations that have successfully completed the USRSB Recognition Program and do not imply endorsement or recommendation by the USRSB.

COMMUNICATIONS

WORKING GROUP



FY24 HIGHLIGHTS

Remarketing Campaign through Progressive Grocer: Partnered with Midan Marketing to implement a successful remarketing strategy that effectively engaged target audiences and increased visibility for USRSB initiatives

LinkedIn Sponsored Content: Worked with Midan Marketing to reach industry professionals and decision-makers, driving awareness and fostering meaningful engagement with USRSB's mission

FY25 PRIORITIES

- ☐ Enhance USRSB recognition among cattle producers through **targeted outreach and engagement**
- ☐ Promote **awareness of the benefits of written grazing management plans** among cow-calf producers
- ☐ Strengthen collaboration between the USRSB working groups to **align efforts and maximize impact**
- ☐ Establish benchmarks to **measure producer awareness of USRSB** and track progress over time
- ☐ Evaluate external assets and opportunities to **identify strategic partnerships and resources** that enhance USRSB initiatives

IN FY24, USRSB LEADERSHIP AND STAFF ENGAGED IN:

18 INDUSTRY
EVENTS
(6 GLOBAL)

4 DOMESTIC
SPEAKING
ENGAGEMENTS

5 INTERNATIONAL
SPEAKING
ENGAGEMENTS



FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

2024 WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

Cece Blythe, *Alltech*
Wes Ishmael, *American Hereford Association*
Gene Lollis, *Florida Cattlemen's Association*

OUTREACH WORKING GROUP

FY25 PRIORITIES

- ☐ Convene **sector-specific task forces** to revise self-assessment language and questions
- ☐ Update **self-assessment tools** across all sectors
- ☐ Transition self-assessments into a more user-friendly format that **improves resource access** and enables users to track progress over time
- ☐ Collaborate across working groups to **ensure development of key resources** to support various working group priorities



SCAN TO
VIEW OUR
LEARNING
RESOURCES

2024 WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

Paula Alexander, *Tyson Foods*

Jennie Hodgen, *Merck Animal Health*

Josh White, *National Cattlemen's Beef Association*

Lora Wright, *Where Food Comes From*



FY24 HIGHLIGHTS

Updated all **Sector Sustainability Toolkits** to integrate USRSB goals and offer new resources

Launched the first **producer-focused learning model**, including a GMP module and template

Hosted several **virtual task force meetings** to gather sector-specific input for the development of goals modules and sustainability toolkit updates

Completed development and implementation of **goals training modules**

Reviewed need for **self-assessment update** and determined that updates would be a focus for the working group in the upcoming year.

Evaluated efficacy of **sustainability modules** as they are currently presented

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

WORKING GROUP

FY24 HIGHLIGHTS

Partnership with Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research (FFAR) to address knowledge gaps and research needs related to the high-priority sustainability indicators of Air & Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Land Resources and Water Resources

- Engaged eight academic experts to guide efforts
- Held three virtual focus groups with over 250 attendees across sectors to discuss the current state of science and identify research gaps

Worked alongside FFAR to plan an in-person workshop for the upcoming fiscal year that will bring together 80 experts from across the supply chain with the intention of **developing a Sustainable Beef Research Roadmap**

Commissioned Texas A&M Center for Grazinglands & Ranch Management to perform a literature review resulting in white paper **"A Review and Exploration of the Socioeconomic Benefits of Written Grazing Management Plans"**

FY25 PRIORITIES

- ☐ Publish the **Sustainable Beef Research Roadmap** with FFAR
- ☐ Develop and publish **peer-reviewed journal articles** for each subject area based on the research roadmap
- ☐ Compile a **special journal edition** featuring the research roadmap priorities
- ☐ Highlight the roadmap during the **USRSB General Assembly Meeting**
- ☐ **Facilitate funding opportunities** for high-priority research projects



2024 WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

Hugh Aljoe, *Noble Research Institute*
Jeff Goodwin, *Texas A&M Center for Grazinglands and Ranch Management*
Clayton Huseman, *Kansas Livestock Association*
Tom McDonald, *Texas Cattle Feeders Association*



**SCAN TO
VIEW THE
WHITE PAPER
AND OTHER
LEARNING
RESOURCES**

FEED TASK FORCE SUSTAINABILITY

FY25 PRIORITIES

- Develop and disseminate **communication materials** from the iFEEDER Feed Sustainability project:
 - Create one-pagers for industry sectors (Cow-calf, Stocker, Feedyard, Packer/Processor)
 - Identify actionable steps for each sector based on iFeeder's findings
- Finalize and implement actions based on the **Aimpoint Water Project**
 - Promote sector-specific actions from the project findings



FY24 HIGHLIGHTS

iFEEDER Collaboration: Completed work on feed sustainability and ration innovation with plans to develop communication materials in FY25

Aimpoint Water Project progress is underway, focusing on water sustainability in feed production

Hosted a joint meeting with **the Feed Sustainability Task Force and Goals Working Group** for the feedyard sector

- Lara Moody presented iFEEDER's findings on reducing environmental impacts of feed ingredients

2024 WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

Lara Moody, *iFEEDER*

Dwane Roth, *Hy-Plains Feedyard*

Emily Andreini-Stackhouse, *Alltech*



GENERAL ASSEMBLY WORKING GROUP

2024 USRSB GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING: CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

Gathered industry leaders to discuss sustainability topics ranging from grazing management planning to sustainable nutrition

New to 2024: Recognized five student scholarship awardees.

- Taylor McAtee, Kansas State University
- Molly Smith, University of Georgia
- Gabriella Johnson, Auburn University
- Ashley Hazlett, Colorado State University
- Nathan Barrett, Texas A&M University

127 attendees from 79 member organizations



2024 WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

Jessica Fink, Merck Animal Health

Craig Mello, Agribeeef

Shannon Wharton, Wharton 3C Cattle

2025 GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

APRIL 29 - MAY 1, 2025 | FORT WORTH, TX

A DECADE OF CHANGE FUELING A FUTURE OF OPPORTUNITY



10 Years



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

USRSB STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES		
For the Year Ended September 30		
	2024	2023
REVENUES		
Dues, Meetings and Sponsorships	\$901,600	\$966,255
Total Revenues	\$932,122	\$981,168
EXPENSES		
Total Expenses	\$900,710	\$797,560
NET CHANGE	\$31,412	\$183,608
RESERVES BALANCE BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$698,375	\$514,768
RESERVES BALANCE END OF YEAR	\$729,787	\$698,375



LEARNING RESOURCES

USRSB Resources | The USRSB offers a variety of free resources to beef industry members throughout the supply chain to facilitate progress towards the U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework and the High-Priority Indicator Goals and Sector Targets. All tools are created with industry member input to ensure the highest level of usefulness and practicality for implementation at the business level.

Self-Assessment Guide | The USRSB, in partnership with Noble Research Institute, offers a free self-assessment tool for all sectors of the supply chain to identify areas of success and opportunities for growth in their sustainability efforts. The self-assessment tool can be repeated over time to benchmark ongoing sustainability progress. Using the results of the self-assessment guide, participants can apply the tactics offered in the sustainability modules and the sector toolkits to enhance their business' sustainability.

Sustainability Modules | The USRSB offers a free series of sustainability modules for each sector of the beef supply chain that address opportunities for improvement in sustainability. The modules use real-world examples and actionable solutions to provide practical resources to individuals and organizations who are interested in enhancing their operation. In 2023, USRSB launched the Grazing Management Plan Development Module to support cattle producers looking to advance their sustainability and stewardship efforts. All USRSB modules are free to use and do not require a login to access.

Sector Toolkits | The USRSB also offers free sector toolkits that include further in-depth information on sector-specific sustainability measures. Available in each toolkit are actionable recommendations, worksheets and links to additional external resources on a variety of topics related to the six high-priority indicators. This is part of USRSB's comprehensive approach toward continuous sustainability improvement in each sector.

[USRSB.ORG/LEARNING-CENTER](https://usrsb.org/learning-center)



