



Benefits from VBP build across the beef industry

Some are at the producer level, some industry, but all count toward responsiveness

There aren't many weeks go by where Canada's beef industry is not challenged to do better at something. Be more competitive. Better marketers. Better at food safety. Better stewards of the land. Better at caring for animals.

It's not that the industry is doing badly at those things. It's just the world we live in today of continual discussion of progress and performance, and the extremely high expectations of food consumers and society in general.

That's exactly the scenario the beef industry had in mind when leaders and volunteers drafted the Verified Beef Production (VBP) program years ago. Producers were joined by industry stakeholders such as processors and veterinarians who offered their support, and built a broad coalition which shaped the program.

In the demanding world of today, the benefits of VBP to producers and their industry have never been clearer.

For producers

Producers often ask, "What's in it for me?" There are a lot of intangibles but four clear cornerstones of production emerge.

Better awareness of food safety risks. Over and over again, producers who have taken a workshop say it has made them more aware of the potential of drug residue, or what they can do to avoid a broken needle.

Improved use of animal health prod-

ucts. Even the best managed operations say they have adjusted how they use animal health products, because history shows what product is working and when it's time for a change.

Basis for staff training or family communication. Have new staff? Neighbours who help out with chores, or help sorting out a problem? VBP helps all of them understand proper procedure.

Third party audits. It is optional but more producers recognize the value of the third party VBP audit. It's being able to prove you have done what you said you were doing. Producers say it helps provide authenticity (especially selling branded beef), is a good learning experience, and a real source of pride for those who have completed it.

For industry

Benefits from individual producers accumulate across the industry.

Defines standards. VBP helps ensure the industry is meeting accepted food safety expectations and improves consistency. And importantly, helps people understand what we do.

Identifies practices. VBP has been used numerous times to demonstrate to those involved in industry oversight — what producers do and why.

Differentiate Canadian beef. It's a proactive way to keep the Canadian beef industry competitive with other countries and other protein options. Most of Canadian agriculture has a program



VBP helps you and the industry demonstrate responsible practices.

like this, and so do Canada's major beef producing competitors.

Tool to address other issues. Beef producers are active on other fronts of sustainability such as animal care and environment. VBP offers a template of base-line standard practices that could easily incorporate other options.

Call to action

More than two-thirds of Canada's beef production comes from VBP trained operations today, and one fifth of beef production comes from audited beef operations.

Those numbers are important. Growing them is even more important. VBP workshops are held across the country. Ask your local VBP office — contacts are on the VBP website www.verified-beef.org.