



WHY BEING CRSB-CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE IS IMPORTANT

Recently the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) granted the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program official status as a Certification Body for its Certified Sustainable Beef Framework. VBP+ can now provide certification and assurance services on behalf of CRSB to assess beef farms and ranches to the Sustainable Beef Production Standard. What this means is any VBP+ Registered beef cattle operation in active status is now recognized as a Certified Operation. This is significant because VBP+ Registered cattle operations now have the opportunity to participate in certified sustainable beef value chains. And they can adjust their marketing and communication efforts adding in the sustainable production twist.

Being certified against the Sustainable Beef Production Standard means VBP+ Registered cattle operations have been audited, met any corrective actions applicable, and continue to meet the annual assessment, which is a combination of a records review and self-declarations. One change for VBP+ operations is that CRSB, working with its retail market affiliates, saw the need to shift to a five-year audit cycle from an eight-year cycle. VBP+ operations currently in their eight-year audit cycle will complete that cycle and then move onto a



five-year cycle. Any cattle operation requesting their first audit from this point forward will use the five-year audit cycle.

The CRSB has released a Certification Mark and a Communications, Claims and Labelling Guide that outlines how VBP+ Registered beef cattle operations can use the Mark and Claims in their marketing and communication efforts. Allowable claims will vary for operations in different places in the value chain (cow-calf, backgrounder, feedlot, retailer, processor, etc.).

Being certified to the Sustainable Beef Production Standard recognizes the beef cattle operation for its sustainable beef production practices and provides the assurances sought

by retailers and food service companies aiming to meet specific consumer demands for sustainably raised beef products. And more and more of those sustainable beef value chains are popping up across the country. For example, McDonald's Canada recently launched a campaign using the CRSB Certification Mark in its Angus product line, showing its commitment to beef sustainability by sourcing at least 30 per cent of its Canadian Angus beef from CRSB Certified farms and ranches.

Virgil Lowe, VBP+ business manager, says this positive announcement is just the start of better things to come. "We at VBP+ are very excited to be a Certification Body for the CRSB's Certified Sustainable Beef Framework," he said. "The potential to verify sustainable beef production standards is very important for VBP+ because there is a further value proposition for producers to participate in the VBP+ program."

To be eligible for certification, beef cattle operations can become VBP+ Registered, which includes taking the training, keeping necessary records and passing the audit. For more information on getting onto VBP+ visit the website at verifiedbeef.ca. To learn more about the CRSB Certified Sustainable Beef Framework visit crsbcertifiedsustainablebeef.ca. 🍁

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