

Subscribe to our weekly dairy or livestock email newsletter at [CapitalPress.com/newsletters](http://CapitalPress.com/newsletters)

# Dairy/Livestock

## Beef industry opens its doors to consumers

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**  
Capital Press

PASCO, Wash. — No question was too tough when the Washington Beef Commission took 30 consumers on its annual tour of the industry, from pasture to plate.

“All bets are off — this is a completely transparent tour. We’re going to show you everything,” said Patti Brumbach, commission executive director. “There’s no question that is out of line for us, because it’s only through that kind of openness that you gain trust and support.”

The Explore Beef Experience tour included Trinity Farms in Kittitas, Wash., a beef plant in Pasco, Wash., and one of Easterday Farms’ feedlots about 100 miles south of Spokane. The facility was built eight years ago and accommodates 25,000 cattle, bringing them in from ranches throughout the West to Tyson Foods in Pasco.

“It’s part of the responsibility we have producing beef to educate not only the consumers, but the people serving it and buying it,”



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press  
Cody Easterday talks about receiving and preparing livestock on the Easterday Farms feedlot for Tyson Foods in Pasco, Wash., during the Washington Beef Commission’s Explore Beef Experience tour June 1.

said Cody Easterday, director of the feedlots for Easterday Farms. “Hopefully we get the message back to the consumer. We want (them) to know the great things we’re doing at the feedlot, how we’re handling cattle, taking care of cattle and producing great product. This is a good conduit to getting that message across.”

The tour is designed to tell the story of beef production to “people who have to

answer for beef everyday,” Brumbach said, including chefs, retailers, bloggers and food service distributors. “People who are handling our product, answering consumer questions.”

The commission conducts a pre-survey asking participants their level of knowledge about the industry and about their concerns about such things as environmental impacts and animal welfare.

“We dramatically change

their opinions about how beef is produced and increase their comfort level with modern beef production,” Brumbach said.

“Anything you can learn is really helpful,” said Tim Voss, chef instructor with the Hot Stove Society in Seattle. “I’ve been asking a lot of questions along the way. It’s a very welcoming and hospitable group.”

“It’s really just about knowing how close we are

Online  
<http://wabeef.org/>

in Seattle proximity-wise to this kind of a process and these types of facilities,” said Jon Severson, president of the Skillet Group. “It’s right in our backyard. We need to be better stewards of the process and understand it, so we can educate our customers.”

Severson said the tour helps answer concerns created by movies and documentaries about beef production.

“The best part is seeing it and hearing that people care,” he said. “We need to be able to translate that and then spell it back out to the average customer who is buying our hamburgers.”

The commission will offer a specialized tour for a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services working group to reduce antibiotic resistance in human and animal medicine later this year, at a date to be determined, Brumbach said.

## Meadow Gold recalls cream products

By **CAROL RYAN DUMAS**  
Capital Press

The Meadow Gold Dairy plant in Boise is voluntarily recalling Meadow Gold brand Old Style Whipping Cream and Meadow Gold DairyPure brand Whipping Cream and Half and Half due to insufficient pasteurization.

“It is possible that pathogens present in raw milk, including salmonella, campylobacter, listeria, and/or E. coli, may have survived and, if ingested, could cause serious or life-threatening issues,” Meadow Gold stated in its recall notice.

Distribution of the affected product was limited, involving approximately 10,000 units of the affected product distributed in four states including Idaho, Oregon, Wyoming and Utah through numerous retail outlets and food service settings.

The company is notifying customers and retrieving the affected product, Meadow Gold stated.

“During a routine records review, we discovered that the product may have been under-processed. Meadow Gold Dairy has ceased distribution of the affected product and recovery is actively underway,” the company stated.

In a written statement to Capital Press, parent company Dean Foods said the discovery was made last week.

“We worked quickly to retrieve the product from shelves and alerted our customers. To date, we have received no reports of illnesses related to the affected product. As always, our priority is to provide high-quality, safe products to consumers, and we’re working diligently to identify and implement solutions related to this incident.”

The Idaho Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Dairying and the Food and Drug Administration have been notified of the recall.

ISDA has no comment on the recall, according to a spokesman for the agency.

## Feedlot works to meet environmental, consumer demands

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**  
Capital Press

PASCO, Wash. — Feedlot owner Cody Easterday told participants in the Washington Beef Commission’s Explore Beef Experience tour that the industry is squeezed between consumers asking for all-natural products and environmental regulations.

The feedlot uses hormonal implants in its conventional yard to improve cattle performance and to maintain acceptable hydrogen sulfide and ammonia levels under state environmental regulations, he said.

“If we weren’t using implants at this feedlot, we could not operate under the Washington state guidelines of the Clean Air Act,” he said. “The implant makes the animal so efficient because it’s taking



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press  
Easterday Farms consulting nutritionist Bob Brandt talks about the six-pellet hormonal implant given to cows underneath the skin of the ear at the feedlot June 1 in Pasco, Wash.

that much less feed to produce one pound of beef.”

Easterday Farms consult-

ing nutritionist Bob Brandt told the group a six-pellet hormonal implant is placed under the skin of the ear so it never enters the food chain. The implant allows cattle to absorb protein and energy from the feed more efficiently, reducing nitrogen excretion into the environment by 20 to 25 percent, Brandt said.

“If you eat a 4-ounce steak from an implanted steer, you’ll get about 1.6 nanograms of estrogen, equivalent to about one blade of grass on a football field,” Brandt said.

He compared that to the 20,000 nanograms produced per day by a pre-adolescent boy; 150,000 nanograms produced by a grown male or 170,000 nanograms by women of child-bearing age. Birth control pills have 25,000 to 50,000 nanograms of estrogen, Brandt said.

Easterday compared the conventional feedlot with the company’s smaller natural feedlot, which uses no antibiotics or hormones. The company runs the natural feedlot because suppliers ask for it and pay enough to do it, he said.

“If you stand here and ask me, ‘Do you believe in feeding cattle naturally?’ Absolutely not, it goes against every single grain in my body to go back in time to produce food,” Easterday said. “When we are not able to use science like (the hormonal implant), that animal is going to produce about 100 pounds less at the natural yard.”

Easterday estimated the natural operation requires 25 to 40 percent more feed to produce one pound of beef than with conventional production. It takes 5.5 pounds of dry feed

to produce a pound in the conventional yard and 8 pounds in the natural yard, he said.

“When you think about sustainability, think about how much more fuel, labor, grain and hay it takes to produce that same pound of natural beef as it does to produce something we can use implanted,” Easterday told the group.

Easterday said beef production is the best it’s ever been. Science and technology produce a safe, efficient product, he said.

“At what point is the consumer going to step back and say, ‘By eating this natural steak, I am willing to accept that the footprint for making this steak is going to be bigger than it would if I would just eat a conventional steak?’” he asked. “At some point, that message has to be brought across.”

## Cash dairy prices rise but still lag behind last year’s mark

By **LEE MIELKE**  
For the Capital Press

CME block Cheddar closed the Memorial Day holiday-shortened week at \$1.44 per pound, up 6 cents on the week but 27 1/2-cents below a year ago.

The barrels finished at \$1.4450, up a half-cent on the week and 19 3/4-cents below a year ago.

Sixteen cars of block traded hands on the week and 17 of barrel.

The blocks were up a penny and a half Monday on an unfilled bid but a sale Tuesday took them back a penny and a quarter, to \$1.4425. The barrels jumped 4 1/2-cents on a bid Monday but a sale rolled them back a penny and a half Tuesday, slipping to



**Dairy Markets**  
Lee Mielke

\$1.4750, 3 1/4-cents above the blocks.

Cheese vats are running at or near full capacity in the Midwest, says Dairy Market News, and forecasts are for full schedules for June, as milk production shows little to no sign of slowing.

Midwest cheese stocks are long despite strong sales and “many participants believe it is going to take much larger growth in sales to alleviate inventory pressures.” The market undertone is mixed but international interest is steady.

Western cheese output also

remains strong. Domestic demand is firm but “without reliable export demand, inventories for almost all varieties of cheese continue to trend upwards.”

HighGround Dairy suggested rising grain markets and weather concerns are contribut-

ing factors to the upturn.

Cash butter finished the week at \$2.10 per pound, up 3 1/2-cents, highest spot price since April 29 and 20 cents above a year ago. Only three cars traded hands last week at the CME.

The spot price ticked up 4 cents Monday on an unfilled bid, to \$2.14 per pound, but was unchanged Tuesday.

Butter production is steady, says DMN. Retail and food service demand is “consistent” but cream remains plentiful.



**SAGE Fact #131**

Before roads and railroads, steamboats served the growing population along the Columbia River in the late 19th Century. Early steamboats landed at Castle Rock, a few miles west of present-day Boardman



Visit the SAGE Center Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Find us on:




101 Olson Road - Boardman, OR 97818  
(541) 481-7243  
[www.visitsage.com](http://www.visitsage.com)

24-4/#6

# INSURANCE

**FOR WHATEVER CROPS UP IN IDAHO, OREGON & WASHINGTON**

**Do You Have the Right Coverage?**

With thin profit margins, it's more important than ever to have the right crop insurance coverage.

For details contact:

**Rain and Hail Northwest Division**  
200 North Mullan Rd Suite 111  
Spokane, WA 99206  
1-800-967-8088

[www.RainandHail.com](http://www.RainandHail.com)

24-2/#14

Exclusive  
Crop Insurance Services

Jud Taylor  
(208) 790-1618

Lisa Prado  
(208) 790-3722

PO Box 1630  
1525 Idaho Street  
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Fax (888) 221-0318  
[ecis2009@gmail.com](mailto:ecis2009@gmail.com)

24-2/#14



**Customized Insurance Plans to fit your farming operation**

**Clarkston, WA** | **Genesee, ID** | **Nezperce, ID**  
(509) 758-5529 | (208) 285-1661 | (208) 937-9816

<http://stonebrakermcquary.com>

24-2/#14

**If you grow it, we'll help protect it**

No matter what you specialize in, COUNTRY has got you covered from planting to harvest. We offer great coverage for your farm vehicles, too. Let us put our experience and financial strength to work for you.



**Brian Donne**  
Corvallis, OR  
541-757-0899  
[brian.donne@countryfinancial.com](mailto:brian.donne@countryfinancial.com)



Policies issued by COUNTRY Mutual Insurance Company, Bloomington, IL.

24-2/#5

Make one of these companies your choice for insurance coverage every season.

(CALL 1-800-882-6789 TO INCLUDE YOUR INSURANCE AGENCY HERE.)

24-2/#13