

PREPARE FOR A GOOD DAY

Chuteside BQA begins before cattle reach the headgate.

Story & photo by Shauna Hermel, editor

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) chuteside begins before cattle enter the chute, Steve Paisley emphasized, encouraging producers to take time before processing the cattle to inspect their facilities, looking for anything that might cause a problem or injury to the cattle or the people working them.

An associate professor and extension beef cattle specialist for the University of Wyoming, Paisley offered tips for processing cattle the correct way before nearly 125 cattlemen gathered for a BQA Certification Event in Mitchell, Neb., mid-November. The BQA event preceded the traditional two-day Range Beef Cow Symposium program.

Remember to make sure the chute is adjusted to the size of the cattle you'll be working, he added, and look for and eliminate distractions, such as shadows.

Make sure your processing team understands your goals for the day, said Paisley. Take time to make sure everyone understands their job and how the equipment they'll be using operates.

While a variety of syringes — single-dose and multi-dose — are available to use according to your personal preference, it's important to inspect them to make sure they are in proper working order and adjusted to provide the correct dose, he advised.

Marking the syringes can help ensure the correct syringe is used with the correct product, he said, noting that many times a

seven-way clostridial vaccine is given at the same time as a modified-live virus (MLV) vaccine. If the products are mixed, such as by pulling the MLV product into the syringe with the clostridial, the adjuvant used with the clostridial can lessen or nullify the effectiveness of the MLV product.

Syringes are available with different-colored nobs on the end of the plunger. Electrical tape of different colors can also be used to mark the syringes and their resting places.

Syringes should be sterilized using three rinses of water at greater than 180° F, Paisley said,

reminding those chuteside that soaps can be harmful to vaccine products if residue remains in the barrel. Don't forget to sterilize transfer needles used to transfer the diluent from a plastic bottle to a glass bottle with the freeze-dried MLV product. Disposable single-use transfer needles are available, he added.

Use the correct needle for the job, said Paisley, recommending 16- or 18-gauge needles, using $\frac{5}{8}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch lengths for subcutaneous (sub-Q) injections and 1-inch lengths for intramuscular (IM) injections. Needles are color-coded according to their size, he pointed out. 18-gauge needles have a green sheath, while 16-gauge needles have a grey sheath.

Change needles often, at least every 10 head, he advised. "Never put a dirty needle back into a syringe."

As many syringes hold 10 doses, making a routine of changing the needle with each fill of the syringe can be a useful practice, he noted. While official sharps containers are available for needle disposal, a laundry detergent container works well and fulfills BQA standards for safe disposal.

Paisley displayed several types of coolers — commercially available and homemade — to keep products out of direct sunlight and stored at safe temperatures during processing. Most of the coolers doubled as a rest for syringes when not in use. While ice packs may be needed during hot days, a warmed bag of rice can be placed in a cooler on cold days.

Wyoming's state coordinator for BQA, Paisley recommended a chuteside "ready kit" containing:

- ▶ extra needles, transfer needles and syringes;
- ▶ screwdriver and pliers;
- ▶ needle disposal container;
- ▶ pen and paper for any notes, such as to retain a lot number on vaccines used;
- ▶ paper towels or rags;
- ▶ disinfectant/antimicrobial spray; and
- ▶ general antibiotics to treat any sick animals.

Admitting he's on a first-name basis with staff at a local hospital, Paisley said preparing and having on hand a first-aid kit is a good practice. He carries one with antibiotic ointment, disinfectant, Band-Aids®, tweezers, scissors, antihistamines, bottled water and ibuprofen.

For additional BQA resources, including the BQA Manual, visit www.bqa.org. ■



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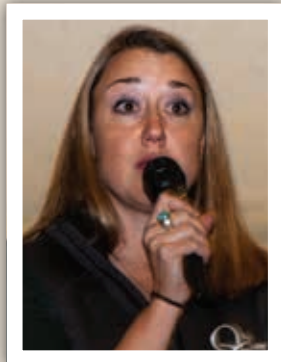
Editor's note: The BQA Certification Event was hosted prior to the 2019 Range Beef Cow Symposium, coverage for which may be found at www.rangebeefcow.com. Coverage is provided via sponsorship of Leachman Cattle of Colorado. Visit the site Newsroom for summaries of the sessions, proceedings and PowerPoint presentations provided by the speakers, as well as audio if available.

Do The Right Thing

Libby Bigler is confident a majority of beef cattle producers want to do the right thing. The Colorado Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) coordinator told producers attending the 2019 Range Beef Cow Symposium in Mitchell, Neb., that attaining and maintaining BQA certification is, simply, the right thing to do.

Bigler was joined by Jesse Fulton, National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) director of producer education, who said BQA strengthens the relationship between beef producers and consumers.

Bigler explained that maximizing consumer confidence in beef is the mission of the BQA program, which is supported through the beef checkoff. At a time when consumers want to know more about how their food is produced, food production practices come under increased scrutiny. Bigler said that by seeking training and certification, beef producers

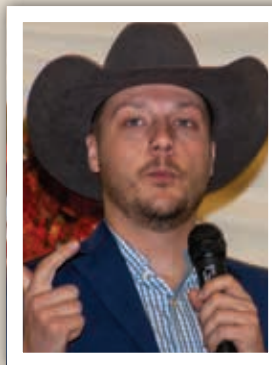


By seeking training and certification, beef producers demonstrate a commitment to using best management practices that promote livestock health and comfort, said Libby Bigler, Colorado BQA coordinator.

demonstrate a commitment to using best management practices (BMPs) that promote livestock health and comfort. But BQA-certified producers also demonstrate a commitment to consistently produce a safe, wholesome and high-quality product that consumers can trust.

Fulton discussed survey data revealing how beef production is frequently misunderstood by an increasingly urbanized consumer base. According to Fulton, about 63% of respondents expressed concern for the welfare of animals raised for beef. For about 30% of those respondents, animal welfare was a chief concern.

Fulton said that might be partially explained by the fact 43% of survey respondents believed that all beef animals were born and raised in confinement, spending their entire lives in feedyards. They are unaware



BQA strengthens the relationship between beef producers and consumers, said Jesse Fulton, NCBA director of producer education.

that the vast majority of beef cattle spend all but their last few months on ranches and other grazing operations.

On the bright side, however, Fulton said 82% of consumers surveyed responded positively to videos sharing the BQA message and tagline: *The right way is the only way.*

Also included on the BQA training agenda were breakout sessions addressing animal health product

handling and storage, chuteside product administration procedures, animal fitness for transport and humane euthanasia, plus demonstration of low-stress cattle handling. Producers had the opportunity to complete the necessary test and become BQA-certified.

For full coverage of the breakout sessions and of the Range Beef Cow Symposium, visit the Newsroom at www.rangebeefcow.com.

— Story & photos by Troy Smith,
Angus Media field editor

"If we're being truthful, we're grass farmers. We manage the land so cattle can harvest it."

KEVIN YON

YON FAMILY FARMS, SOUTH CAROLINA



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 63 WW EPD, 118 YW EPD



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