

California to Host BIF Symposium

Sacramento, Calif., will provide the backdrop for the 2009 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Research Symposium and Annual Meeting April 30-May 3. The California Cattlemen's Association and the California Beef Cattle Improvement Association will host the event, themed "Rush to California BIF 2009."

The on-site registration booth opens at 10 a.m. Wednesday, April 29.

Events Thursday include the eastern tour featuring bovines, equines and fine wines; the opening reception; and the biennial National Association of Animal Breeders (NAAB) Symposium.

Spouses can participate in the

"Sacramento Highlights" tour Friday as meeting attendees attend the general sessions in the morning, the awards luncheon featuring seedstock producers of the year, and committee meetings in the afternoon. Friday evening features a reception and wine tasting followed by dinner at the California Railroad Museum.

Saturday morning's general sessions will be followed by presentation of BIF awards, including the commercial producer of the year, along with lunch. The meeting will wrap up with committee meetings Saturday afternoon.

Participants can stay Sunday for the western tour featuring ocean, wines, views and bovines.

The tours

The eastern tour, "Foothill Bovines, Equines and Fine Wines," will begin with a California ranch breakfast at Five Star Land and Livestock, home of Mark and Abbie Nelson. It will be followed by a cutting horse demonstration at the Rancho Murietta equine facility, host to two national cutting futurities. Lunch will be at the Trinchero Family Estates Winery in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley, renowned for its zinfandel wines. The final stop on this tour will be at the ranch of Duane Martin, one of the top 10 cow-calf operators in the United States.

The western tour, "Ocean, Wines, Views and Bovines," will visit Drake's Bay Family Farm, which raises grass-fed beef and oysters. The tour includes lunch at the scenic Bodega Bay Marine lab, and concludes with wine tasting on the beach. Coastal California can get rather cold, so meeting hosts recommend bringing a coat for this tour.

The "Sacramento Highlights" tour is Friday, May 1, and will encompass Sutter's Fort, built in 1839; the State Capitol Building, which underwent a \$68 million renovation; the International Gardens of the Capitol Park; and visits to the Firefighters Memorial, the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, the International World Peace Gardens and the Historic Governor's Mansion.

Hotel and registration

General meeting registration is \$295 if received by April 29 and includes all sessions, breakfasts, noon meals/receptions, the railroad dinner and proceedings. Spouse registration is \$250, and student registration for the first 50 students is \$90 if received by April 29. Tours are an additional fee of \$70 each. Single-day and single-event registrations are also available.

The Sheraton Grand Hotel at 1230 J St. in Sacramento will serve as the headquarters hotel. Book your reservation before April 3 to receive the group rate of \$139.99 per night. Rates will increase substantially after April 3. The hotel phone number is 916-447-1700.

Visit www.bifconference.com for more information, including a link to online registration.