

Thanksgiving

December is upon us, which means that we have just finished celebrating Thanksgiving. We should take this time to be thankful for more than the fact that there is only one day each year we don't get to feature beef for dinner. There has certainly been plenty to be thankful for this year, but like any year in agriculture there has been some apprehension and rocky roads to travel. The corn and soybean production was a positive feature this year and the high yield will keep prices moderate for feed usage.

For cow-calf producers, cattle prices in 2015 were not as strong as the year before but still high enough to be profitable. We are finally starting to see some expansion in the cow herd and looking to build the cow herd throughout Iowa. Be on the lookout for the third installment in heifer development from the Iowa Beef Center. Coming in 2016 from a location near year, this program will help you make the most of your replacement heifer operation. Utilize these tools now to keep your program profitable as prices for feeder cattle resume their cyclical nature as herd expansion grows. Pasture land in Iowa was in great shape this past year and hopefully we can see some marginal crop land come

back to pasture to support the cow herd.

Although the fat cattle market had a strong beginning coming off the robust fall of 2014, we could not carry that momentum for long and feedlot profitability has been hard to find lately. Otherwise, there is still plenty of excitement in the Iowa feeding industry. Iowa feedlots are continuing to compete with larger western feedlots on a cost of gain basis and we continue to see new or expanding feedlot development.

Finally, we are thankful to be living in this great country with all the blessings that we have received. We were reminded throughout the past year of the tremendous sacrifice that other have made for us as we marked the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe (May 8), and Victory in Japan (September 2), as well as Memorial Day, 9-11, and just recently, Veterans Day. I am thankful each day for the protection that the men and women in the military provide us and the tremendous sacrifice that they have made for us.

I hope to see many of you at the 2015 Iowa Cattle Industry Convention in Des Moines, and wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

THE SECURE BEEF PLAN: BIOSECURITY

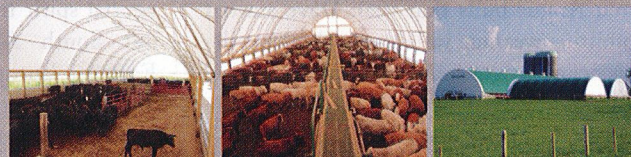
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in Iowa and other areas of the U.S.

Movement of incoming cattle will require meeting specified health requirements, surveillance, and/or testing as determined by the IMT. Other important concerns addressed by the Biosecurity Working Group and the BPS include strategic placement of the LOS, including graphic examples of the LOS at feedlots, actions of livestock transporters during the loading and unloading processes, and minimum standards for C&D and PPE. Additionally, factors to consider when designing SOPs for a specific operation, such as carcass disposal, weather and seasonal conditions, manure management, and other considerations will be developed by the working group.

What does the work of the Biosecurity WG mean to Iowa cattlemen and women? If an FMD outbreak occurs in the US, producers will be responsible for implementing biosecurity steps to reduce the risk of FMD infecting their cattle. The BPS will provide the guidance needed to protect your herd from this devastating animal disease. A successful cattle business relies on healthy animals; it is critical to the viability of cattle producers, allied industries, consumers, the state of Iowa, and the U.S. economy. The Secure Beef Supply Plan aims to help producers take preparedness steps to continue their business of cattle production to feed our nation and world. Stay tuned for upcoming articles about other SBS working groups, including Surveillance, Communications, Data Management, and Continuity of Business for Infected Feedlots.

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