

10 YEARS of SUSTAINABILITY PROGRESS

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



CRSB®

Canadian Roundtable
for Sustainable Beef

Anne Wasko
4 Bar Land and Cattle
Eastend, SK

Principles of sustainable beef



MISSION To advance, measure and communicate continuous improvement in sustainability of the Canadian beef value chain.

VISION The Canadian beef value chain is a global leader in environmental, social and economic sustainability, and part of a trusted and thriving food system.

SUSTAINABILITY A journey of continuous improvement

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Ron Glaser

Ron Glaser, VP Corporate Affairs –
Canada Beef

Being a member of the CRSB enables all of us to pull the rope in the same direction and have a partner for sustainability. For the future of all of our organizations, making smart investments that are meaningful and practical for beef producers and for the industry is so important, and we make the maximum impact by working together.



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF THE CRSB

OUR JOURNEY OF SUSTAINABILITY COLLABORATION

This year marks the 10-year anniversary of the creation of the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. As we celebrate this important milestone, we are excited to reflect on all that we have accomplished, challenges we have overcome, the partnerships that have been forged, and what our future holds. We are thankful for our founding members who had the vision for the CRSB, bringing together this amazing collaborative community focused on common goals.



FOUNDING MEMBERS

BEEF PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS

- Canadian Cattle Association
- National/Alberta Cattle Feeders Association
- Beef Cattle Research Council
- Canadian Federation of Agriculture
- Alberta Beef Producers
- Alberta Barley
- BC Cattlemen's Association
- Beef Farmers of Ontario
- Manitoba Beef Producers
- Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association

PROCESSORS

- Cargill
- JBS Canada

RETAIL AND FOOD-SERVICE

- Costco Canada
- Loblaw Companies Limited
- Retail Ready Foods
- Walmart
- Co-op
- McDonald's Canada
- Tim Hortons
- A&W

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Alberta Conservation Association
- Cows and Fish
- Holistic Managment
- Nature Canada
- Operation Grassland Community
- World Wildlife Fund US

Over the past 10 years, we have achieved many milestones together, which have solidified our leadership in beef sustainability here in Canada and on a global scale.

The CRSB is a proven model for multi-stakeholder engagement and is often used as a shining example across the Canadian agri-food sector and beyond. Our membership has grown three-fold over the past 10 years and continues to expand and evolve. See our current members on page six.

Beginning with its first Annual General Meeting in 2015 in Saskatoon, the CRSB has hosted two member meetings per year every year since 2015, in eleven different cities and six provinces, as well as two virtual meetings. The CRSB is known for its engaging sessions, interesting on-site tours and discussion sessions that welcome participation from a wide range of all perspectives.

"Some of our most treasured accomplishments include hosting the inaugural Global Conference on Sustainable Beef in Banff, AB. (2016), two National Beef Sustainability Assessments, and the CRSB Certified program, first of its kind in the world."



Cherie Copithorne-Barnes,
Founding CRSB Chair

It allowed us to bring together unique experiences and perspectives, and really learn how to collaborate. It wasn't enough to tell a great story – we needed the science to validate it. By doing that, we became premier global leaders in sustainable beef production.



MEASURING SUSTAINABILITY

The first **National Beef Sustainability Assessment** has provided an extensive scientific evaluation of the industry's sustainability performance and was instrumental in establishing the industry's suite of 2030 goals. The **National Beef Sustainability Strategy's** goals and actions guide progress and industry improvements across all pillars of sustainability. The metrics that the assessment provides support member and industry communications, marketing, research, advocacy and policy. The 2024 study showed progress in several key areas, demonstrating what is possible to accomplish when we unite and work together towards common goals.

CERTIFYING SUSTAINABILITY

The **CRSB Certified** program was launched in 2017. Developed to elevate the Canadian beef industry, it provides certified assurances about how beef is produced in Canada against standards across CRSB's five core beef sustainability principles. The CRSB appreciates the extensive efforts of all, and especially the guidance of beef producers, into the development of, and the continued support for this program.



The movement that started with McDonald's Canada, has grown to over 10 companies sourcing CRSB Certified beef in 2024. We are excited to see the continued demand, and the opportunity to share the diverse stories of what makes Canadian beef special.

CRSB communications have been recognized with five Best of CAMA (Canadian Agri-food Marketers Alliance) awards since 2020. Consumer research data shows that Canadians value what farmers and ranchers to produce high quality, sustainable beef, and are proud to serve it to their families.

The ability to work with a wide variety of organizations and companies to make improvements and align with common goals shows what we can accomplish when we work together. We are so grateful to everyone who has been, and continues to be, part of the CRSB's journey over the past 10 years, particularly those who have volunteered to participate and engage in CRSB Council, committees, working groups and events. Our successes are thanks to your commitment, expertise and dedication.

We can't wait to see what the next 10 years holds.

COUNCIL



CHAIR

Ryan Beierbach

VOTING MEMBERS

BEEF PRODUCER ASSOCIATIONS



Don Badour
Beef Farmers of Ontario



Laura Plett
Manitoba Beef
Producers



Andrea Stroeve-Sawa
National Cattle Feeders'
Association



VICE CHAIR

Clay Holmes
Intercity Packers Meat
and Seafood



No Photo
Available

Stirling Fox
JBS Food Canada

RETAIL & FOODSERVICE SECTOR



Stephen Clark
Chop Steakhouse
and Bar



Hope Bentley
McDonald's
Canada



Tom Lynch-Staunton
Nature Conservancy
of Canada



Maria-Elena
Varas
World Wildlife
Fund US



Tim Hardman
Fulton Market
Group

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

AGRICULTURE BUSINESS

MEMBER AT LARGE



Graeme Finn
Foothills Forage and
Grazing Association



Karen Clark
Agriculture & Agri-
Food Canada



Fonda Froats
Saskatchewan Ministry
of Agriculture



Jamie Wuite
Alberta Agriculture
& Irrigation

GOVERNMENT LIAISONS

VOTING MEMBERS

BEEF PRODUCER ASSOCIATIONS



BEEF PROCESSORS AND ASSOCIATIONS



RETAIL & FOODSERVICE SECTOR



NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD BUSINESSES



NON-VOTING MEMBERS

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS



OTHER SUPPORTERS OF OUR MISSION, VISION AND PRINCIPLES



KEY HIGHLIGHT

8 new members in 2023-2024



Individual beef producer members not listed here to protect their privacy.



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Spring rains brought much needed relief to the Canadian Prairies this year. Beef farmers and ranchers have been struggling with multi-year drought, and although moisture reserves have not fully recharged, we are in a much better situation than we were last year. However, the drought has had impacts on the industry - the beef cattle herd shrunk, and at the same time, consumer demand has increased, resulting in higher beef prices. This dynamic has affected many of our members.

The National Beef Sustainability Assessment (NBSA) launched in January, and I was one of the media spokespeople. The announcement was received positively and reached a broad audience. The NBSA metrics have been used by our membership in policy, communications, research and various reports. We hope this comprehensive, scientific study of the Canadian beef value chain from environmental, economic and social perspectives will continue to be a valuable tool for our members and the industry.

I have had many conversations with different stakeholders about Environment and Social Governance (ESG) reporting this year. There is a lack of clarity on future reporting requirements as financial institutions, retail and food service companies and others work towards their ESG goals. Currently, there is a lot of focus on climate goals. This has generated lots of questions from beef farmers and ranchers who are directly or indirectly affected by these exploratory efforts. We encourage organizations to utilize the NBSA wherever possible, collaborate through the CRSB network and include farmers and ranchers in your efforts. It is also important to thoroughly understand your needs before implementing any requirements. CRSB is set up to support these discussions.

The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef holds a seat on the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB) Board of Directors. Participation at the global level is important to support broad alignment on beef sustainability, to provide strategic direction, to ensure Canada's voice is at the table, and to learn from others. Priorities at the GRSB this past year included developing a position statement on deforestation as well as drafting a social impact goal. There were two in-person board meetings this past year - one in October in San Diego, California and one in April in Bologna, Italy. We toured a feedlot in the Imperial Valley of California - water security is very important there. Anywhere that isn't irrigated is desert and there are multiple competitors for water. There will be more pressure on water there in the future which may affect the future of cattle feeding in that area. The meeting in Bologna had a European focus and really made me aware of the influence NGOs have in Europe. There is a strong anti-meat lobby there and animal agriculture is behind in getting facts to consumers to counter the negative information that is being put out by the anti-animal agriculture groups. This has a strong influence on the direction FAO takes. It is very important that beef has representation at UN events to provide factual information because those policies quite often get adopted at a national level. We also went through the Global strategy briefly. I think it would be good to go through the goals and action items when we have more time and make sure they are aligned with what members want.

Respectfully,

Ryan Beierbach, Chair, CRSB



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The importance of relationships and clear communication have been reiterated over and over this year. The strength of the CRSB is bringing stakeholders together and facilitating communication and collaboration to advance continuous improvement in beef sustainability. We are looking forward to celebrating our 10-year anniversary at our Annual General Meeting & Convention in Calgary. Thank you to our members for your unwavering commitment to the organization and for your investment in precompetitive, multi-stakeholder approaches. We are pleased to have added eight new members this year.

Our semi-annual event in April had over 70 attendees and we discussed two important topics for the industry – data and ESG – from different perspectives. These topics will require more discussion and further collaboration as we all work towards our aligned goals. While climate goals have been the prominent focus of supply chains, governments and financial institutions over the past few years, there is increasing attention on other aspects of the five principles of sustainable beef – 1. natural resources; 2. people and the community; 3. animal health and welfare; 4. food; and 5. efficiency and innovation. We must consider the entire system, not just one component, as we are working on complex food systems and there are no easy solutions. There are numerous pathways, and they all require collaboration and relationships to succeed.

Related to data and ESG noted, supply growth for the CRSB Certified program continues to be a challenge. We are working with the value chain and are developing different strategies to support program growth and drive further value (e.g., producer engagement strategy, incentives, recognition, etc.). We will need further discussions and direction from our members on this as well.

Participation and attendance at events were a priority for the organization this year to reconnect with stakeholders and to share the results of the National Beef Sustainability Assessment, including a peer-reviewed publication in the Canadian Journal of Animal Science, and the second version of the Certified Sustainable Beef Framework (or CRSB Certified). These two workstreams underwent extensive reviews over the past three years and we are thrilled to have both announced and launched.

Thank you to Council and our four committees for your time, support and direction. And thank you to the staff team for your passion, hard work and dedication. I am looking forward to another successful year of collaboration and impact.

Sincerely,

Monica Hadarits
Executive Director

COMMITTEE REPORTS

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR

Greg Bowie, Alberta Beef Producers

MEMBERS

Ryan Beierbach – Chair, CRSB

Anne Wasko – Bar 4 Bar Land & Cattle Inc.

Lauren Martin – Canadian Meat Council

Shay Duer – Cargill Protein

Staff Support provided by: Andrea White

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MANDATE To provide guidance to the CRSB Council on matters relating to the leadership and governance of the CRSB.

The main responsibilities of the Governance Committee include:

- 1 Providing guidance to the Council on matters pertaining to its adherence to good governance principles and practices;
- 2 Reviewing the structures and effectiveness of CRSB's corporate governance systems to ensure they function effectively;
- 3 Reviewing existing policies and procedures on an annual basis, identify the need for new or revised policies, and present such changes to the Council for consideration;
- 4 Leading the process for Council member recruitment and succession;
- 5 Overseeing the annual Council member nominations and elections plan and process;
- 6 Advising on Council orientation or education/ training needs, and
- 7 Advising on any perceived or real conflict of interests if they arise.

Key activities of the Governance Committee this year have been to oversee the nomination and elections process for the CRSB Council. The committee has also discussed inclusion of a CRSB Council position specifically designed to bring a youth voice to the CRSB, which also aligns with the CRSB's renewed Sustainability Strategy released in early 2024. We are working in coordination with the Canadian Cattle Association's Youth Programs to ensure effective alignment.

I am pleased to report that we had a strong response to the call of nominations, and all Council seats have been successfully filled. There were competitive elections in the Beef Producer Associations and NGO member classes, as well as for the Member at Large seat; one Councilor each was elected in both Beef Processors and Associations and Retail and Food Service Sector member classes. Member voting turnout was strong in all member classes.

I would like to thank all outgoing Council members who have served the CRSB Council, including Don Badour, Beef Farmers of Ontario and Laura Plett, Manitoba Beef Producers, who have both represented the interests of beef producers across Canada since 2022; Sam Wildman and Maria Elena Varas who represented World Wildlife Fund US in 2022 and 2023, and Rob Meijer, formerly of JBS Canada for their valuable guidance and unique perspectives.

I am pleased to welcome new Council members, all of which are elected for a two-year term.

- Brodie Haugan - Alberta Beef Producers and Dean Manning - Beef Cattle Research Council (Beef Producer Associations)
- Kristine Tapley – Cargill Protein (Beef Processors and Associations)
- Carl Dean - Cactus Restaurants Ltd. (Retail & Food Service Sector)
- Karli Reimer – Ducks Unlimited Canada (NGO)

Graeme Finn has been re-elected in the Member at Large seat. Ryan Beierbach continues as Council Chair.

Respectfully submitted,
Greg Bowie, Chair

COMMITTEE REPORTS

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR

Brad Downey, Alberta Conservation Association

BEEF PRODUCER ASSOCIATIONS

Dr. Reynold Bergen & Stacey Domolewski,
Beef Cattle Research Council

Melissa Downing, National Cattle
Feeders' Association

Betty-Jo Almond*, AgSights

BEEF PROCESSORS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Nick Hardcastle*, Cargill

RETAIL & FOOD SERVICE SECTOR

Rebecca Ruiz*, Wendy's

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Dr. Jordan Sinclair*, ALUS

AGRICULTURE & FOOD BUSINESSES

Emily Conlin, Masterfeeds

Dr. Dorothy Erickson, Zoetis

Doug Helm, Syngenta Canada

Dr. Michael Lohuis, Semex

Dr. Cameron Olson, Elanco Canada

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

Dr. Guillaume Lhermie, Simpson Centre, University
of Calgary

Sean Thompson, Olds College

Dr. Scott Wright, Livestock and Forage Centre of
Excellence, University of Saskatchewan

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

Virginia Nelson*, Alberta Agriculture
& Irrigation

**Dr. Tim McAllister & Dr. Karen Schwartzkopf-
Genswein**, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada

Dr. Kim Ominski, University of Manitoba

Christoph Wand, OMAFRA

*Staff Support provided by: Kara Barnes, supported
by Jenna Sarich*

**denotes new committee member*

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MANDATE To provide scientific analysis, advice and supporting information regarding beef sustainability to the CRSB.

The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) reached important milestones with the completion and launch of the second *National Beef Sustainability Assessment (NBSA) and Strategy 2014-2021* in January, and the publication of its Environmental Life Cycle Assessment in the February addition of the *Canadian Journal of Animal Science*.¹ A paper highlighting the social assessment methodology and results was also published in the *International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment* in August 2024.² Planning ahead for continual improvements in future iterations of the NBSA, the SAC identified research and data gaps in the current processes and updated CRSB's *Research Priorities and Recommendations* to include these new areas.

While overseeing the NBSA remains a core responsibility of the SAC, it also oversees the CRSB Projects Pillar. The decision to discontinue the online Sustainability Projects Inventory was formalized in late-2023, with the role of spotlighting and communicating sustainability projects moving from the SAC to the CRSB Marketing and Communications Committee. The SACs focus will remain on collecting and assessing projects and initiatives under a newly structured submission and recognition process. The updated Projects Pillar will focus on identifying, organizing and facilitating connections between sustainability projects and initiatives across Canada that meet the strategic action items of CRSB's *Sustainability Strategy* and move the industry towards achieving its 2030 goals. This will include developing organizational policy on topics of interest to CRSB and its membership and evaluating CRSB's potential role in science-based projects and initiatives.

1. Aboagye I. A., Valappil, G., Dutta, B., Imbeault-Tétreault, H., Ominski, K. H., Cordeiro, M.R. C., Kröbel, R., Pogue, S. J., McAllister, T. A. 2024. An assessment of the environmental sustainability of beef production in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Animal Science*. 104(2): 221-240. <https://doi.org/10.1139/cjas-2023-0077>

2. Graham, R., Couture, J-M, Nadeau, S, Johnson, R. 2024. Applied qualitative methods for social life cycle assessment: a case study of Canadian beef. *International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11367-024-02358-y>

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

National Beef Sustainability Assessment 2014-2021 completed and launched

E-LCA paper published in the *Canadian Journal of Animal Science*

Social Assessment paper published in the *International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment*

Carbon measurement and reporting paper shared with CRSB members

Environmental impact reporting, for example, particularly the measurement and reporting of GHG emissions and carbon sequestration, is a rapidly moving topic. The ability to make meaningful impacts is something many are working towards. The Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB) Climate Working Group surveyed the available measurement and accounting tools used by GRSB members, and the Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO) Global Livestock Environmental Assessment Model (GLEAM) was presented at the GRSB Climate Working Group's meeting in Bologna, Italy in early April. To help us better understand and contribute to this space CRSB developed and shared with its members a paper titled, "*Understanding the Current State of Carbon measurement and reporting landscape*."³ While by no means comprehensive, this report was the best of our knowledge at the time of writing; and is a document that will be updated, as needed, until there is clarity on this topic.

3. Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. (2024). *Understanding the current state of carbon measurement and reporting landscape*. Calgary, AB.: Canfax Research Services.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Carl Dean, Cactus Restaurants Ltd. (Chair)

Kelly Sidoryk, KW Cattle Co. (Vice-Chair)

BEEF PRODUCER ASSOCIATIONS

Shannon Argent, Verified Beef

Christina Betker, Saskatchewan
Cattlemen's Association

Maureen Cousins, Manitoba Beef Producers

Emma Cross, Canadian Cattle Association &
Verified Beef

Gina Devlin, National Cattle Feeders' Association

Jennifer Kyle, Beef Farmers of Ontario

Amie Peck & Lynsay Beavers, Canadian
Cattle Association

Ron Glaser, Canada Beef

BEEF PROCESSORS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Shannon Braun, Cargill Protein (North America)

Clay Holmes, Intercity Packers
Meat & Seafood

RETAIL & FOOD SERVICE SECTOR

Ashwin Ramesh, McDonald's Canada

Rebecca Ruiz, Wendy's

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Graeme Finn & Kayla Minor, Foothills Forage and
Grazing Association

Karli Reimer, Ducks Unlimited Canada

Mike Verhage, Alberta Conservation Association

AGRICULTURE & FOOD BUSINESSES

Cynthia Beretta, Beretta Farms

Martin Lemoyne, Certified Angus Beef

Shane Roger, Alltech

BEEF PRODUCERS

Cherie Copithorne-Barnes, CL Ranches

*Staff Support provided by: Andrea White, supported
by Cassandra DeMars*

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

National Beef Sustainability Assessment & Strategy
report launch with reach of nearly 100 million

Best of CAMA Award for Look for the Mark digital
campaign promoting the CRSB Certified program

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING COMMITTEE

MANDATE To provide strategic direction on marketing and communications for the CRSB and the Certified Sustainable Beef Framework, addressing CRSB’s diverse range of members and stakeholders.

It’s been an incredibly busy and rewarding year for the communications team at the CRSB. Cassandra DeMars joined the CRSB in December 2023 as Member Engagement Manager, and supports our internal and external communications.

A huge focus this year was development of materials to support the launch of the much-anticipated 2024 National Beef Sustainability Assessment (see pages 19-22). Working with 5 Gallon Creative, a comprehensive toolkit of interconnected resources was developed, including a 70-page summary report, infographics to communicate key metrics and progress, videos, a digital content calendar, presentations, key messages and speaking points for members and stakeholders, and more. A series of indicator icons for key topics throughout the report are linked in communications materials to help identify key metrics and topics of interest. The Benchmarking pages on the crsb.ca website were also updated with fresh content. A media advisory, press release and online media event held when the report was released garnered a **reach of nearly 180 million** since January 2024, with **nearly 500 media stories** in print, TV, radio and online. We are pleased to see industry partners and members incorporating the new metrics into their own materials.

In November 2023, CRSB was honoured with its fifth Best of CAMA (Canadian Agri-Marketers Alliance) award for the 2023 CRSB Certified Look for the Mark digital campaign. As reported in our [2023 Annual Report](#), the campaign was aimed at building awareness for the certification program. It is exciting to be recognized for our creativity in sharing the Canadian beef sustainability story.

Always focused on continuous improvement, CRSB hired the Public TrustWorks agency to help us to develop a comprehensive communications and marketing strategy for the next three years. The Communications

and Marketing Committee reviewed and approved the strategy this summer, and the staff team will be moving into implementation over the next year. The strategy identifies five core areas of focus encompassing CRSB’s strategic workstreams, with key messaging, target audiences and priority strategies and tactics to focus our efforts over the next three years.

Our regular bi-annual consumer research study was also developed this spring, which assesses consumer trends and sentiment regarding beef production and sustainability, as well as awareness and perceptions of the CRSB Certified program. See pages 23-24 for a sneak peek of the results highlighting the latest trends and insights.

CRSB has participated in many industry events this year with great opportunities to share the results of the National Beef Sustainability Assessment and to connect with beef producers across the country and beyond.

CRSB’s Director of Marketing & Stakeholder Relations Andrea White and Canadian Cattle Association’s Manager of Public & Stakeholder Engagement Amie Peck co-chair the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef Communications Council and hosted a Communicators Summit in San Diego in October 2023.

As we celebrate our 10th anniversary, we look forward to new and exciting initiatives on the horizon for communicating the CRSB and beef sustainability in Canada.

Respectfully submitted,
Carl Dean

Total reach 228 M	Followers nearly 10K	Social Reach 4.5 M
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COMMITTEE REPORTS

FRAMEWORK COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Kristine Tapley, Cargill/formerly Ducks Unlimited Canada (Chair)

Tim Hardman, Fulton Market Group (Vice-Chair)

BEEF PRODUCER ASSOCIATIONS

Cherie Copithorne-Barnes, CL Ranches Ltd.

Andrea Stroeve-Sawa, National Cattle Feeders' Association

PROCESSORS AND PACKERS

Tanya Thompson, Cargill

RETAIL & FOOD SERVICE SECTOR

Adam Brown, RECIPE Unlimited Corporation

Carl Dean, Cactus Restaurants Ltd.

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Kevin Teneycke, Nature Conservancy of Canada

Sam Wildman/Maria Elena Varas/MacKenzie Waro, World Wildlife Fund US

AGRICULTURE & FOOD BUSINESSES

John Arnold, RBC Royal Bank

Curtis Grainger, Farm Credit Canada

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

Dr. Scott Wright, Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence, University of Saskatchewan

Staff Support provided by: Kara Barnes

FRAMEWORK COMMITTEE

MANDATE To oversee the implementation and delivery of the Certified Sustainable Beef Framework.

The Framework Committee, after two years of hard work, completed the first scheduled five-year review and update of the Certified Sustainable Beef Framework (“the Framework”). Key improvements and updates to the Framework included a thorough review of each indicator in CRSB’s standards for both beef production and processing, informed by stakeholder and public consultation. The Assurance Protocols that guide how certification is carried out were updated to strengthen the assurances and improve consistency and clarity of the system.

The Chain of Custody Requirements, which outline both how cattle and beef are tracked through the supply chain and how CRSB Claims for beef sourced from CRSB Certified Operations are enabled, were updated. As of October 2023, the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) is providing the tracking of live cattle for the program (outside Quebec). This included the addition of a Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS) [search](#) feature for active CRSB Certified Operations to see the “CRSB Certified” status of their cattle’s indicator as those indicators/cattle move through the supply chain. The suite of claims related to certified operations and sourcing of CRSB Certified beef were reviewed and updated, guided by comparison with other programs, expert opinion, stakeholder feedback, consumer research and legal review.

Focus for the Committee has turned to exploring how CRSB Certified can and should evolve, with a particular focus on building value through the program. Improved performance and impact metrics, producer incentives, and alignment with and leveraging of new and existing programs are being considered.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Publication of CRSB Certified program documents version 2.0

Approval of CCIA as the chain of custody verifier for CRSB Certified beef cattle across Canada (excluding Quebec).





CRSB CERTIFIED IN ACTION

SUSTAINABLE BEEF PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING



As of June 30, 2024:

1301 farms and ranches certified to CRSB Sustainable Beef Production Standard

~20% head of cattle under management of CRSB Certified Operations across Canada

5.8 million acres of land estimated under the management of CRSB Certified Operations across Canada.



CERTIFICATION BODIES

CRSB-approved Certification Bodies carry out third party auditing of the Framework standards and requirements on Canadian farms and ranches, in beef processing facilities, and including tracking cattle and beef from CRSB Certified operations through the supply chain.



- Cow/Calf (45%)
- Backgrounding (1%)
- Feedlots (9%)
- Combined Operation (45%)

INCENTIVIZING CERTIFICATION

OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT PRODUCERS TO BECOME AND/OR MAINTAIN CRSB CERTIFICATION



Farm Credit Canada re-opened its Sustainability Incentive for the third year in May 2024, providing up to an annual \$2,000 payment, based on lending with FCC, for CRSB Certified beef producers who are also FCC customers.



In 2018, Cargill launched a Certified Sustainable Sourcing program that included rewarding producers for becoming CRSB Certified, supported by its retail, restaurant and foodservice customers involved in sourcing CRSB Certified beef. In March 2024 - funded by Cargill's customers sourcing CRSB Certified beef - a Recognition Credit of up to \$400 per CRSB Certified Operation was provided to ensure that all operations received recognition for their commitment to sustainability certification, regardless of where their cattle were marketed. This credit, at minimum, covers the annual audit cost for all producers who maintain their certification. Participating customers include:



BEEF PROCESSORS



Primary beef processing facilities certified to the CRSB Sustainable Beef Processing Standard.



These processors' tracking systems have also been audited to the CRSB Chain of Custody Requirements.

FURTHER PROCESSORS AND DISTRIBUTORS



These packers and further processors are sourcing from one or more of the above beef processors and have also been audited to the Chain of Custody Requirements, making them approved suppliers of CRSB Certified beef.



CRSB CLAIMS IN THE MARKETPLACE



Several companies are showing their support for the adoption of farming and ranching practices that meet CRSB standards by sourcing beef from CRSB Certified farms and ranches across Canada.

Sourcing through the program in their beef or specific product lines between the July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 time period:

RESTAURANTS AND QUICK-SERVE

- McDonalds (Quarter Pounders)
- Harveys (Original Burger)
- Chop Steakhouse and Bar
- Montana's BBQ and Bar
- Cactus Club Cafe
- Prairieland Park Concession (burgers)



CACTUS CLUB CAFE



GROCERY RETAILERS

- Walmart – in a selection of beef products
- Calgary Co-op
- Metro (Platinum Grill in Ontario stores)



FOODSERVICE COMPANIES

selling CRSB Certified Beef to individual customers and restaurants:



THE ASSESSMENT

THE NATIONAL BEEF SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY:



Ryan Beierbach

Ryan Beierbach, Chair, CRSB

Canada's agri-food system is respected world-wide, and I am proud of the outstanding leadership the Canadian beef industry has demonstrated in advancing sustainability - regionally, nationally and on the international stage. I am immensely proud of the improvements the industry has accomplished by working together. This is a key tool in demonstrating performance and progress on our sustainability journey. ”

MEASURING SUSTAINABILITY PROGRESS IN CANADIAN BEEF

The CRSB's National Beef Sustainability Assessment (NBSA) measures the Canadian beef value chain's environmental, social and economic performance and progress against an initial baseline of indicators and metrics every seven years.

The first baseline NBSA was published in 2016 utilizing data from 2014. The second study, published in January 2024^{4,5}, is the first to measure changes against that baseline, utilizing data from 2021, and serves as a benchmark and a half-way point as the industry works towards its 2030 goals.⁶

4. Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. (2024a). National Beef Sustainability Assessment: Environmental and Social Assessments. Calgary, AB: Groupe AGECO. (CRSB NBSA, 2024a).
5. Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. (2024b). National Beef Sustainability Assessment: Economic Assessment. Calgary, AB: Canfax Research Services. (CRSB NBSA, 2024b)
6. Canada's National Beef Strategy: 2030 Industry Goals. <https://beefstrategy.com/2030-goals>



KEY FINDINGS

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



The environmental assessment showed improvements in most farm gate indicators (carbon footprint, fossil fuel depletion, water consumption, agriculture land occupation and freshwater eutrophication) between 2014 and 2021.⁴ These improvements were driven by increased efficiency, ultimately leading to more beef now being produced from the same number of animals, while requiring fewer resources. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions intensity decreased by 15% (per kg boneless beef, consumed)^{4,7}, on track towards achieving the 2030 beef industry goal of a 33% reduction.⁸

The total soil organic carbon (SOC) in land used for raising beef cattle in Canada is estimated at 1.9 billion tonnes, with a substantial proportion (84%) attributed to pastureland.⁴ This high capacity to store carbon and promote biodiversity in agricultural areas highlights the importance of preserving that land for raising beef cattle.

While the overall habitat capacity on cropland and pastureland has decreased due to land use change (LUC), the contribution attributed to land used for raising beef cattle has increased since 2016, providing an astonishing 74% of the wildlife habitat for reproduction and 55% needed for feeding.⁴ This highlights that maintaining agricultural land occupied by beef cattle on native and tame grasslands and pasture is vital to supporting biodiversity and storing SOC.

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT



The Canadian beef industry has withstood many supply and demand shocks between 2014 and 2021, and the Economic Assessment⁵ clearly demonstrates our resilience and ability to shift according to market conditions. Off-farm income increased, and the feedlot sector grew despite high feed prices. Inflationary pressures have increased the cost of inputs faster than cost of outputs, but consumer demand here in Canada and globally for protein remains strong with a preference for high-quality beef.

SOCIAL ASSESSMENT



The social assessment provided key social observations in the life cycle of Canadian beef production, identifying strengths and opportunities to manage the risks and challenges regarding labour management, people's health and safety, animal care and antimicrobial use (AMU).⁴ The assessment indicated that labour availability, recruitment and retention are increasing workload levels; however, there is broad awareness and efforts being made across sectors to address workload levels and integrate innovative approaches to reduce risk.⁹ Health and safety are also identified as an area where more dedicated efforts would be beneficial. Producers are experiencing elevated levels of physical and mental stress, but on a positive note, awareness and the stigma around mental health are improving.⁴

Animal care is a success story in Canada, and many federal regulations and industry standards (e.g. Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle) play a role; increased coordination and communication across areas within the beef supply chain are areas for improvement to fully secure animal care throughout the cattle life cycle. Antimicrobial use is important to the industry and its stakeholders and there are good practices currently being utilized by producers to ensure responsible use. Further training would be beneficial to drive continuous improvement. Room for improvement also exists with respect to the adoption of management practices associated with AMU, including further reduction of stressors and increased access to veterinarians in some regions.⁴

7. Aboagye I. A. et al. 2024. An assessment of the environmental sustainability of beef production in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Animal Science*. 104(2): 221-240. <https://doi.org/10.1139/cjas-2023-0077>
8. Canadian Beef Advisors – Industry Goals to 2030 Factsheet: Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Sequestration Goals (2020). https://beefstrategy.com/pdf/2020/GHG_Goal_Fact_Sheet%20Sept%203.pdf
9. Graham, R. et al. 2024. Applied qualitative methods for social life cycle assessment: a case study of Canadian beef. *International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11367-024-02358-y>

The three main components of the NBSA

NATIONAL BEEF SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT



Environmental
Assessment
E-LCA | LUA



Social
Assessment



Economic
Assessment

THE STRATEGY

With continuous improvement at the core of sustainability, the National Beef Sustainability Strategy¹⁰ accompanies the Assessment, and identifies gaps and areas for further collaborative work. The 2024 strategy is aligned with, and supports achievement of, the beef industry 2030 goals. The strategy also includes an overarching goal of continuing to build on the CRSB's collaborative, engaged beef sustainability community, as well as economic goals that are not specifically part of the 2030 suite of industry goals. The CRSB's Scientific Advisory Committee is guiding the implementation of the strategy and has updated the CRSB's Research Priorities. The committee is prioritizing projects, initiatives and collaborations needed to achieve the goals through the CRSB's Projects and Initiatives.



10. CRSB National Beef Sustainability Strategy 2024-2030. <https://crsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/CRSB-National-Beef-Sustainability-Strategy-FINAL.pdf>

COMMUNICATING OUR IMPACTS

An immense amount of work went into distilling the full environmental, social and economic assessments into a detailed summary report, highlighting the key results and progress, and integrating sustainability strategy goals and actions for continued advancement.

A detailed and comprehensive communications and dissemination strategy led to a successful launch of the NBSA report. Accompanying graphics, videos, presentations, digital content, key messages and speaking notes for members and industry stakeholders was developed as part of this strategy. Updated Benchmarking pages on the crsb.ca website replaced and archived existing content related to the 2016 report. At the same time, the entire website is now available in both English and French.

Aligning the launch of the report with the publication of a peer-reviewed scientific paper in the Canadian Journal of Animal Science, CRSB worked with a Public Relations agency to prepare effective public messaging, to train key spokespeople for media opportunities, and develop a media relations plan. A media advisory and news release were issued across the Canadian newswire, and an online media event with key subject matter experts was coordinated with publication of the report (January 15, 2024). Although the report includes a wide array of results, the launch plan focused largely on the key environmental indicators, leading with the GHG emissions intensity reduction. We believe this was a key driver for the success of the launch, and the coverage was overwhelmingly positive.

Media coverage in the month of January 2024 alone included approximately 500 stories in print, online, radio and TV, and between January and June 2024, the combined communications reach of the report was 100 million. The NBSA has been featured in industry events across the country and beyond since the report was published.

Some key events included:

- Producer meetings, industry events and conferences in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario, with a Quebec Beef Symposium and Maritime Beef Conference planned this fall.
- Post-secondary academic presentations; presentations for industry, national and international delegations
- Cultivate Net Zero Conference (Winnipeg, MB.)
- University of California (Davis) 2024 State of the Science Summit: Reducing Methane from Animal Agriculture
- Partnered booth in Cattle Trail at Calgary Stampede
- International Farm Management Association Congress
- AgSmart at Olds College
- Canadian Beef Industry Conference

It is exciting to see CRSB members and industry partners using the new NBSA metrics, and the value it brings to their advocacy, communications, marketing, policy and strategic initiatives.

Read more about the Assessment and Sustainability Strategy at <https://crsb.ca/benchmarks/>.



PERCEPTIONS & ATTITUDES ABOUT BEEF SUSTAINABILITY

Measuring the evolving understanding and perceptions of Canadian consumers is an important aspect of continuous improvement for sustainability and trust in Canadian beef. In July 2024, the CRSB conducted its fourth consumer research survey. Working with Abacus Data, which specializes in agri-food consumer research, the study evaluated lifestyle, purchasing and consumption behaviours related to sustainability; perceptions of the sustainability of Canadian beef production, including around key 2024 NBSA messaging, and awareness and perceptions of the CRSB, its CRSB Certified program logos and claims. Several of the survey questions are benchmarks that help measure trends and changing consumer perceptions over time.¹¹

SUMMARY

For over 90% of Canadians, beef remains a protein of choice (+2 points compared with 2022); the majority of consumers report eating beef at least once/week, and the frequency of consumption has increased slightly, with 27% choosing beef three or more times/week. Price is by far the largest driver influencing purchasing decisions. As the focus on affordability increases, and with choice at the supermarket, the importance of choosing Canadian beef is down slightly; however supporting Canadian beef remains more important particularly for those who believe in the sustainability of Canadian beef (68%), and for whom sustainability is a key purchasing factor (74%).

ON SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is an important aspect of life for many Canadians – and while affordability and price sensitivity are the top priority, two-thirds of consumers are passionate about sustainability and leading a sustainable lifestyle.

Canadians still believe that reducing food waste, reducing use of plastics and recycling remain the most actionable way to make sustainable choices, and only a quarter rank reducing or eliminating meat from their diet a [top 3] priority.

ON BEEF + SUSTAINABILITY

Impressions of sustainability in the beef industry remain consistent and overall positive.

With the publication of the National Beef Sustainability Assessment (NBSA) report earlier this year, we wanted to evaluate the impressions of the CRSB's messaging around the key results. Rating a series of messages related to the NBSA, there is broad appeal for comparing Canada's environmental footprint with other jurisdictions (i.e. that Canada's emissions are less than half the global average).¹² Canadians are also most excited about the 15% greenhouse gas emissions intensity reduction between 2014 and 2021, the industry's economic contribution and the importance of cattle on the land for carbon sequestration. And those who are keen to learn more about the sustainability of the industry have similar preferences, with a stronger interest in the beneficial role of cattle grazing.

11. The research was done with a representative sample of 2,000 Canadians, with a margin of error of $\pm 2.19\%$, 19 times out of 20. The data was weighted against Canadian census data to ensure it matched Canada's population in terms of age, gender, education and region.

12. Global Livestock Environmental Assessment Model Version 3.0, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN: https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/gleam/docs/GLEAM_3.0_Model_description.pdf (Accessed March 4, 2024)



A majority believe Canadian beef is produced in a responsible, sustainable way, and most (81%) think the rate of industry's carbon footprint progress is happening at a good pace.

ON THE CRSB LOGO

There are a number of factors that contribute to trust in a logo. For example, trust in the product or brand carrying the certification logo is the most influential factor, and at least some knowledge of the organization issuing the certification also contributes to trusting that logo. There is a wide variety of aspects that Canadians expect are included in a sustainability certification; the most common assumptions are food safety and quality, what animals are fed, humane animal treatment, and climate/environmental impact.

Recognition of the CRSB logo has risen 10 points since 2022, particularly at the grocery store or on packaging, and over half of Canadians say they are more likely to purchase a beef product if they see the CRSB Certified logo on the product, especially at the grocery store. The sway of the CRSB Certified logo and claims positively impacts likelihood to purchase beef, and the strength of that sway has intensified. So, although price is an increasing influencer of purchasing behaviour, the CRSB Certified logo carries weight in Canadians' beef purchasing decisions.

As always, this research provides interesting trends to watch, opportunities for future research, and valuable information for the CRSB and our members, stakeholders and program partners.

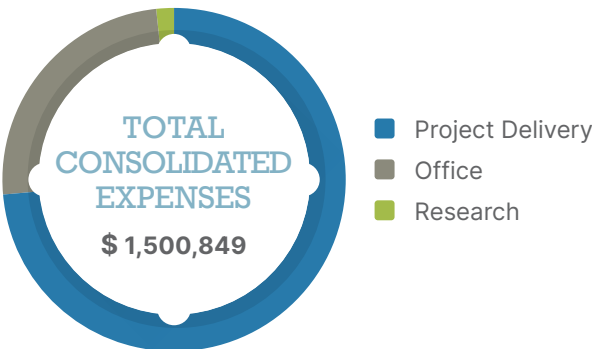


REPORT ON THE SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) provides secretarial duties, including account management, on behalf of the CRSB. Summarized financial information is extracted from the CCA financial statements. The full report, financial statement, and auditors' report may be obtained through written request to the CRSB or the CCA..

Respectfully submitted,

Caron Melin
Controller, Canadian Cattle Association



Revenue	2023-24
Certified Sustainable Beef Framework	195,875
Contract Services	
Sponsorship	11,000
Event Fees	65,272
Grant Funding	1,038,557
Membership Fees	203,340
General Revenue	20,315
Total Revenue	\$1,534,359

Expenses	
Certification Framework	
Community Engagement	
Project Delivery	1,106,057
Office	369,792
Meetings & Travel	
Research	25,000
Reserve Adjustment	25,000
Total Consolidated Expense	1,500,849

Net Assets	
Beginning of year, July 2023	907,788
Excess (deficiency) of revenue (June 2024)	58,510
Net Assets, June 2024	966,298

Deferrals & Reserve	
Deferred Revenue	491,687
Sustainability Assessment Reserve	86,000
Net Deferred Revenue	577,687



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