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Thursday, November 14
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Friday, November 15
Echelon Front

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Workshops Sponsored By:

More Convention Information:

Bios on our workshop presenters - page 17
Complete convention schedule - page 24
Checkout Jason Gardner’s (Echelon Front) Article - page 7
1st Annual Photo Contest - page 17
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A Message from the WCA President

Sam Ledgerwood

The 2020 WCA/WCW Convention is fast approaching and our staff is working diligently to assure we have a great convention. The convention is a great time to advance our knowledge of the industry and its issues. This year’s convention should prove to be educational and informative as well as a great time to reconnect with our friends and fellow producers from around the state. As we the producers, finish our gathering and weaning I hope for a fair price and a slower pace so we can attend the WCA/WCW Convention in Kennewick November 13th -15th.

Public Lands – Daryl Aussmusen, Dick Coon and I attended the Public Lands Council meeting in Great Falls MT. I always find these meetings informative. Representatives from the Forest Service talked about customer service. How many permittees have ever felt you received “customer service” from the Forest Service? If there is a change in the wind it would be welcome. Another concept was Good Neighbor Authority. My understanding of this is, “it will give the Forest Service the ability to work across ownership lines with their neighbors to develop a plan (grazing or other) to manage all land in the area. I think many of us can see benefits in a plan to include state and private ground in a Cordial Resource Management Plan, (CRMP). My permit adjoins Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife land. I personally have trouble even crossing WDFW land on my way home with my cows let alone grazing it on the way through. I know these situations occur in many other permits as well. I feel knowing these policies exist will help us to talk to our local people about creating a better working plan in the future.

Wolves, Grizzlies and recreational challenges were also discussed. PLC and WCA are working together to head off introduction of Grizzly bear in Washington State. Wolves continue to be on the docket to delist federally. It seems to be moving, albeit slowly. Look for it in the Spring of 2020. Permittees continue to receive pressure from the public who use the forest for recreational purposes. When the public camps near or uses a water trough for washing or bathing, including the dog, the cattle will leave the area. These are public grounds and everyone has equal right to use them, it would just be nice if we all treated each other with respect.

To those of you who don’t have to deal with public grounds, I apologize for going off on a rant. All in all, information is always helpful in dealing with the challenges of our industry. I look forward to seeing you at the Convention where we can continue to share our concerns and hopefully gain valuable information.
I had an interesting experience over the weekend where I came across a plant-based protein in the meat case at our local Super 1. It was not obvious until reading smaller words on the packaging that it was made from plants. The signage surrounding it clearly said “Beyond Meat” and the package said “Beyond Beef” in big, bold letters. Personal opinion, but this gush in the package looked absolutely disgusting!

Since I was disturbed by what I saw, I wanted to know how to be productive in speaking with the grocery store about this. I reached out to our Beef Commission and got some great information that I thought should be shared with everyone. I feel that the rules of how we need to approach the “fake meat” situation change constantly, so I was glad to get the most up to date knowledge for a situation like this.

Here’s the advice we gathered in summary: It’s best to provide and share handouts with the retailers that talk about beef sustainability and the protein benefits of beef. When you share them, you should approach it from the aspect that you have noticed they have fake meat in their case and assume it might bring about shopper or staff questions. As a producer, you know there is lots of misinformation out there so you just want to share some facts in case they (their staff) or their customers have questions. Basically, it’s best to position these handouts as resources to make their job easier and cut through the noise. That will tend to make the handouts better received, rather than scolding a retailer for displaying these products inappropriately.

A picture of one handout is on page 6. I will bring copies with me to convention for those able to attend, or if anyone would like me to share them through email, just let me know and I will gladly forward them. Here’s a link to more resources that will help share the facts on Beef Sustainability: https://www.beefresearch.org/beefsustainability.aspx

What was further explained to me from NCBA’s Director of Retail Engagement is that retailers tend to tell beef folks that “they sell these products merely because competition is so tight amongst stores and they don’t want to get skipped for a store visit if someone has a plant-based product on their list. Stores are still very much in support of beef and animal proteins and beef tends to still be one of, if not the, highest money maker in the store, but stores don’t want to lose a customer if they’re looking for a package of those products. That doesn’t make us happy, but is the nature of retail.”

There’s a very high chance that some of these plant-based companies are putting retailers in an even worse spot by requiring them to display them in the meat case. Either that, or they won’t sell their products to the retailers anymore. Of course, we would love that, but “this is truly where the retailer gets stuck, thinking they have to compete with neighboring stores.”

Even though there is a formal agreement in place that confirms USDA as the lead oversight in the production and labeling of these products, I’m afraid the entire approval process for product labels hasn’t been set into place. This is the misperception the beef industry has been trying to stop from happening because it’s deceitful to consumers. They deserve the truth, and it should be obvious from the get-go about what they are purchasing. I know NCBA continues to lead this effort in Washington D.C. and both NCBA and ANCW have their own formed policies guiding the beef industry's stance on this subject.

I’m looking forward to seeing all of you at the Convention in Tri-Cities this month! Our meetings are scheduled from 7:30AM to 11:30AM on both Thursday and Friday of convention. We will have guests and presentations featuring the WA Beef Commission, WA Ag in the Classroom, Miss Rodeo WA, and the ANCW President. Installations for our new officers are planned to take place on Friday morning.

**Dates to Remember:**

**WCW Convention Meetings** - Three Rivers Convention Center: November 14th and 15th ANCW/NCBA Convention in San Antonio: February 3-7 Region 5 Conference in Pendleton, OR: April 30-May 2

**WCW Committee Chairs**

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<tr>
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**A Message from the WCW President**

Kady Porterfield

4 November 2019 | Ketch Pen
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**Simplot Feeders**
Keith Pearce (509) 547-8864

**Toppenish Livestock Commission**
John Top (509) 865-2820

**Washington Beef, LLC**
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**WA Cattle Feeders Association**
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A Message from the WCA Executive Vice President
Danny DeFranco

defranco@wacattle.org
509-859-4949

October started off with a Region 1 (Ferry, Stevens, Okanogan) meeting that Jeff Dawson organized with partners, Boehringer Ingelheim and Purina. It was a great time for members to get together and have a dinner and social at K Diamond K Guest Ranch in Republic. Lane Howe with Purina and Tanner Schmidt with Zinpro gave a short presentation on the importance of mineral in livestock operations. Boehringer Ingelheim representative, Sarah Ryan, presented on the importance of timely vaccinations in our operations. Bringing these two organizations together for some education was extremely worthwhile as we all are trying to do the best we can for our calves as they move through the beef chain. I personally enjoyed the opportunity to introduce myself to members in Region 1 and was able to visit with a few folks during my time there. Big thank you to Jeff for getting all of us together.

Several WCA members attended the in person public comment for the proposed reintroduction of Grizzly bears at the agri-plex in Okanogan, WA. I heard from numerous people that there were upwards of 500 people in attendance. Most people who had the opportunity to comment were strongly opposed to the reintroduction of Grizzly bears in the North Cascades. I was impressed by the number of people who took the time to represent their community and their concerns with another apex predator being placed in our backyards.

I attended the first Livestock Identification Advisory Meeting held in Yakima. All committee members that have been appointed at this point were in attendance. Dairy and Packers have yet to have a representative appointed to this group. If you know of anyone that may be interested in representing these two segments of industry, please ask them to contact their respective associations to initiate the process to be appointed.

Brandon Meeks (horse rep) asked the Department to provide the group with a quarterly financial report so the committee can help guide the financial viability of the brand program into the future. There were some concerns about a few brand holding producers from neighboring states that were getting charged the non-ID fee in a pasture to pasture move that were cleared up. In RCW 16.57 it clearly states ID’d cattle are categorized as “owner’s recorded brand.” It does not specify that the brand must be the Washington recorded brand. Therefore, out-of-state producers who own a brand in their state will receive the ID cattle rate when they receive a Washington inspection for cattle branded with their out-of-state brand in pasture to pasture movement.

We also received an overview of the ETCR system which will be an option for producers to report transactions. It seems to be fairly user friendly but as with all technology we will hopefully see improvements as time goes on. WSDA will be at our convention and will be showing people the ECTR system at their booth and will be more than happy to answer questions and concerns. Please visit WSDA’s booth during convention.

Convention is a little less than a month away which is always a great opportunity for us to all get together and work toward our mission as an organization which states “The WCA will provide a unified voice for beef producers, promote innovative rangeland and livestock management, protect and preserve the cattle industry in the state of Washington”. WCA leadership has been very supportive of the workshops and keynotes that the WCA team has scheduled for our members in the hopes it will add some more tools to the toolbox for us to attain our mission.

Ranching for Profit will present ideas to our producers that will help us develop stronger businesses not only presently but for the next generation coming behind us and maybe they will teach some of us how to take a vacation every once in a while! We also have Echelon Front and Retired Master Chief, Jason Gardner, coming to visit with us about Extreme Ownership leadership principles and how his experiences as a U.S. Navy Seal relates to our lives and businesses. I look forward to seeing everyone in Kennewick and please call, email, or text if you have any questions about our upcoming convention or any other issues.
Putting the mission first is simple. Check your ego. You may find yourself in a situation where all of your efforts are in support of another department, team, or person. Since you are supporting them, that means they will get the bulk of the credit for any successes they experience. You may find yourself resentful in some respect—after all, were it not for your hard work, they would likely not have achieved the success for which they are now getting the credit. But when you recognize this line of thinking within yourself, it is time to DETACH. Realize that it is not about you. The team and the mission are more important. And if that isn’t good enough, remember that those victories are yours to share as an integral part of the organization that is succeeding. When the team wins, EVERYBODY wins. There is a great deal of pride to be taken from being part of a successful organization, if you can put your own ego in check and recognize it.

In 2006, I deployed as a SEAL platoon chief to the Pacific Theater. The mission we were assigned with was not glamorous or dangerous. There weren’t going to be any combat awards, or chances for personal glory. At this same time, Task Unit Bruiser was deployed to Iraq and slugging it out in constant gun battles with enemy fighters in the streets of Ramadi. Jocko, Leif and the rest of Task Unit Bruiser (including Marc Lee and Mike Sarraillé, who were originally from my own Task Unit but we had reassigned to Task Unit Bruiser) were doing the kinds of things that every SEAL dreams of. As the deployment went on and I heard more and more about their exploits in Ramadi, I could feel jealousy and resentment begin to creep in. I stopped putting 100% of my efforts toward the mission I had been assigned because it wasn’t challenging and success was a long-term goal, something that would be measured over decades. It wasn’t likely that my platoon or I would get any credit for that success.

My leadership must have noticed my motivation starting to slip because I received a much-needed pep talk. I was told what a great job my platoon had been doing in training our foreign counterparts and that even though training our allies wasn’t a glamorous or high-speed mission, it was an integral part of America’s overall strategy in the War On Terror. As we talked, I felt pride begin to well up in my chest and replace the jealousy and resentment that I was feeling toward Task Unit Bruiser. From that talk forward, I began again to take pride in my mission and refocus on our efforts. After all, as a member of SEAL Team Three, I was able to share in the prestige gained by the success of Task Unit Bruiser on the battlefield.

As a leader, it is critical that you have honest conversations with each person, department, or team who works in support of the main effort. Let them know that their job may not be the most recognized or rewarding, but it is crucial nonetheless to the strategic success of the whole team. They can and should take pride in their job—and in that victory.
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Livestock Identification Rulemaking
By: Jodi Jones, Division Operations Director, WSDA

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) proposed to amend chapter 16-610 of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) to align with recently enacted legislation to:

- Establish a definition for legacy brand;
- Increase the membership of the Livestock Identification Advisory Committee;
- Expand the Electronic Cattle Transaction Reporting (ECTR) system to allow for all cattle producers to report change of ownership and out-of-state movement transactions electronically;
- Modify those able to perform livestock inspections;
- Reflect livestock inspection fees;
- Reflect a legacy brand transfer fee; and
- Reflect brand transfer fees.

The Department also proposed to amend chapter 16-610 WAC by establishing an ECTR licensing and renewal fee; increasing the certified inspector certification fee; modifying the requirements associated with being a certified inspector; moving the language regarding the ECTR system into a section of its own; retitling the chapter to more accurately reflect the different forms of identification being regulated; establishing definitions for call out fee, certified veterinarian, electronic official individual identification, and field livestock inspector; and revising language to increase clarity and readability and to conform with current industry practices.

The final rulemaking orders were filed on September 23, 2019. The amended regulations will become effective October 24, 2019.

The most current information is available on our website at www.agr.wa.gov/lawsrules.

Bite of the Burg!
Tasting what Ellensburg has to offer

Above: WCA member, Kevin McDowell handing out tri-tip samples
Right: FFA members handing out tri-tip samples

(Photos courtesy of Gail Shelton)

Moving Cattle
(photo courtesy of Danny DeFranco)
Beef Commission
Consumers Contribute over $100,000 to Support Beef
Counts This Summer
Patti Brumbach, Executive Director

What started out as the AgriBeef Company’s annual $50,000 donation to Second Harvest over a decade ago, has become a beef community treasure that engages Washington’s ranchers, feeders, auctions, packers, retailers and consumers in providing beef to hungry families statewide today. The gate to plate collaboration is the very definition of “Beef Counts - Washington’s Beef Community United Against Hunger.”

The Beef Counts program, launched in 2010, has taken on a life of its own with our industry partners who have adopted the program as their own. This past summer alone over $100,000 was raised in Western Washington for the program that provides nutritious beef to hungry families through Food Lifeline’s food banks. Most of that money came directly from the cash register donations of Haggen grocery store customers and from donations collected at the Washington Brewer’s Festival in June. The Beef Commission has collaborated with Rosauers in Eastern Washington and Haggen stores in Western Washington to expand the Beef Counts promotions statewide.

Local beef producers have also strongly engaged in the program. Many county cattlemen and women’s associations have donated cattle for the annual rollover auction at the Toppenish Livestock Commission or held fundraisers of their own at the county level. Individual members of the Washington Cattle Feeder’s Association have donated thousands of dollars to the cause by bidding on the calf at the rollover auction that raised $15,550 in 2018. Since its inception the Beef Counts program has raised over $920,000 which has provided well over one million servings of beef to families in need.

The Beef Commission funds the promotion of this “cause-marketing” campaign designed to strengthen awareness of the Beef Counts program and put a positive face on Washington’s Beef Community. It is an important element of our campaign to build trust in Washington’s beef community. Market research indicates that millennial consumers prefer to buy products from those who give back to their communities. Television, radio, digital and in-store advertising are all part of the marketing mix that features local ranchers talking about the importance of beef in the diets of families in need. In 2018-19, Checkoff-funded Beef Counts advertising achieved over thousands of impressions statewide.

Fall is an important time for the Beef Counts program. Mark your calendars to participate and continue to put a positive face on Washington’s Beef Community:

• Rollover Auction at Toppenish Livestock Commission
  o October 1st at 5:30 PM

• Beef Counts Week – Holiday Mobile Food Distribution Events
  (Locations to be confirmed):
  o Tuesday, December 10th – Toppenish
  o Wednesday, December 11th – Yakima
  o Friday, December 13th – Ellensburg

For more information about any program funded with your $1.50 Beef Checkoff investment contact Patti Brumbach at 206.444.2902 or e-mail her at pbrumbach@wabeef.org. Visit beefitswhatsfordinner.com to learn more about the Checkoff-funded promotions. Follow our activities targeting millennial consumers on social media at wabeef.org, Facebook.com/WABeef, Twitter@wabeef, YouTube@WABeef or Instagram@WABeefLove.

We encourage all of our cattlemen to send pictures to use in the Ketch Pen. We are also proud to acknowledge our “future ranchers” by publishing their accomplishments.

Send stories and pictures to frontdesk@wacattle.org
A Call to Action on Wolf Planning
By Dave Duncan, WCA Wildlife/Rancher/Sportsman/ESA Committee Chair

In my last op-ed in the Capitol Press I described the existing predator pit in the Kettle Range north of Hwy 20 and wolves "prey switching to livestock". Since that time the WDFW has removed the OPT pack and the Togo pack is under a pack removal order. New wolves are already moving into the vacated OPT territory, only to become depredating wolves into the future.

In Washington the Grouse Flats pack in the Blue Mt. has had 4 depredations in the last 2 months and is now under a lethal removal order. In the Blue Mt. over a 12 year period hunter success has gone from 282 spike bulls harvested a year to 65, which is caused by decades of single species management of cougars and black bears and now the added protein needs of wolves. The Huckleberry Range, home of the 14 member Stranger pack is a small mountain range surrounded with human occupied edge. The prey base has been greatly reduced by predators and the pack is now starting to depredate in peoples back yards.

WDFW Biologists are in complete denial that the cause of these depredations is their single species management of apex predators with no regard for their affect on the prey base, causing hungry wolves to "prey switch to livestock". The WDFW prefers to deal with the symptom, wolf/livestock depredations in isolation spending hundreds of thousands of tax payers dollars on preventative, like range riding which is presently designed to keep livestock away from hungry wolves or fox lights to keep hungry wolves away from livestock. The WDFW is now in the process of writing a long overdue Post Delisting Plan, and their management goals appear to be mostly driven by management ineffective political correctness and not based on historic on the ground science or common sense problem solving.

WDFW is ignoring their mandated responsibility and will not acknowledge the effect on ungulate populations that ever growing apex predator populations have created in other States and Countries and the extreme actions that have to be employed to bring those predator/prey populations back into balance. Granted, it is difficult and costly to manage a integrated predator/prey policy but the costs of kicking the can down the road are extreme both financially and politically. To summarize a few of the many examples.

Tweedsmuir Park in Western central BC and the Hart range in Eastern central BC; To reverse the extreme caribou population declines, a 80% rate of removal must be achieved according to the Provincial Government. A parallel cull is also proposed in the Hart ranges to remove cougars who have focused on caribou as a prey source.

The Southern Alaska peninsula was a paradise of abundant wildlife with predators in balance with the prey base. Then the wolf population started to explode. In 2007 in the caribou herd, cows were 90% pregnant, only 40% of the calves survived the first 2 weeks and only 1% survived for 6 months. The herd population was down to 6% of it’s historic population mostly caused by wolves. Across Alaska similar depredations on moose and caribou was playing out. In 2008 an Intensive Management Plan was carried out by ADF&G severely cutting back on wolf populations in a number of management units and ungulates are now increasing in numbers.

Idaho’s wolf population was allowed to grow to approximately 6 times it’s Federal delisting requirement before the NRM was finally delisted and management was turned over to the States. Idaho has tried to manage this unrealistic population of wolves to minimize their adverse impacts on the prey base, with a Predation Management Plan, see page 83 Big Game Seasons and Rules. Elk calf to cow ratios and cow survival rates have declined to levels far too low to sustain elk populations for a number of factors including increased predation by apex predators, 90% of known deaths of marked cow elk were due to predation, 76% were caused by wolves, 88% of known-caused deaths of radio marked older calves were due to predation of which 73% were caused by wolves. In Idaho wolf caused mortality is the major factor limiting elk calf recruitment and elk cow survival.

Idaho contains 70% of the wolf packs per square mile that Dist 1 in NE Washington presently contains. Idaho killed 395 wolves in 2018 to increase it’s fast declining ungulate base and to reduce livestock attacks. While livestock depredations reached a record high with 175 confirmed wolf depredations in 17 county’s. Unlike Washington with its small fragmented habitats, Idaho contains large wilderness habitats which are becoming devoid of ungulates as wolves have changed ungulate patterns and pushed them onto the agricultural fringe for protection causing increased wildlife depredation on privately owned grazing lands and cropland.

Is the WDFW going to manage for healthy robust ungulate populations or near their habitat carrying capacity along with a sustainable predator population in balance, which will minimize livestock depredations and maximize the public recreational and hunting opportunities for all citizens OR are they going to manage for predator pits leaving predators to seek their protein sources in back yards and from production livestock while forcing hunters to spend their dollars in other states?

Rural communities, hunters and livestock producers need to join forces and speak out against the animal rights educated wolf, cougar and bear biologists within the WDFW and put a stop to their single species approach to predator management and pressure WDFW into conserving the wildlife in a manner that does not impair the resource. This is a CALL TO ACTION as your comments are needed today on the scoping process dEIS which is a process to determine which issues are most important to be addressed in the dEIS for Wolf-Recovery-Planning in Washington.

Send your email comments to https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/at-risk/species-recovery/gray-wolf/post-recovery-planning/public-input Option 2

OR, mail your written comments to: Liza Wood, SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Habitat Program, Protection Division, PO Box 43200 Olympia, Wa, 98504
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A Message From Ag in the Classroom

Kristen Hinton

As I prepare my November Ketch Pen article, I’m totally immersed in my favorite color season – FALL! I absolutely love the oranges, yellows and reds that dot the landscape and find myself wanting to forgo all work and just be on the back of horse riding through God’s country. Mind you, we are just coming off a beautiful but COLD week and before that I was wondering if we were just skipping fall and going straight to winter. With that said, back to the task at hand, this article!

Last month I shared our school year accomplishments and we are already off and running this school year! A highlight already for this school year, we’ve mailed out an additional 400 copies of the fall issue of Ag@School, highlighting the diversity of Washington agriculture, in the first month and a half of school! WAIC also allocated 1,000 Ag@School magazines for Whatcom Farm Circle which takes place the end of November where 940 3rd graders will learn about agriculture (very similar format to Franklin Farm Fair).

I’m thrilled to report that I’ll be attending convention this year, meeting and networking with the Cattlewomen! This convention is always one of the highlights of my year!

We are SO THANKFUL for ALL of the cattleman and cattlewoman who make donations to our organization and/or promote our program! We are dependent on our generous and faithful sponsors! We always need volunteers to reach out to teachers and promote our incredible industry!

Let us be thankful, Happy Thanksgiving!

Kristen
360-770-3383
khintonranches@gmail.com

Washington Ag in the Classroom (WAIC) is funded 100% by donations from individuals, organizations and businesses

Teachers are now in their groove of the school year so feel free to promote agricultural literacy and get teachers signed up for the Ag@School magazine aligned with 4th grade academic standards! Educators can sign up for FREE to get a classroom set of magazines on our website – www.waic.net! Encourage teachers to visit our website and search the curriculum matrix for accurate lesson plans including resources as well as lesson plans!
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Are You Running a Marginal Business?

By: John Marble (Originally Published in On Pasture, reprinted with permission)

Over the past few decades I’ve heard more than one ranching guru give advice regarding being careful about who you hang out with.

“Stay the heck out of the coffee shop. Ranchers just sit around in there and bitch about things they can’t control, and brag about things that don’t matter.”

I know this is good advice. But in addition to coffee shops, it’s too bad they didn’t mention taverns too.

I recently found myself in a dimly-lit backroom at a local watering hole, hanging out with a couple of fellas in straw hats and pointy boots. Studiously avoiding politics and religion, the talk was mostly about markets, weather, and the government. After a while, one of my compadres noticed that I was pretty quiet. When he asked why I was adding so little to the conversation, I pointed out that it didn’t seem to me that those topics deserved much thought, as we have so little opportunity to change them.

“Well for goodness sake, this stuff’s all goofy! Every one of these ideas will wind up lowering my weaning weight, and making smaller frame cows, too! Who wants a bunch of 400-pound dink calves? My buyer wants calves with some bone, some frame, calves that might be ready to go to the feed lot right off the cow. And besides, we get paid by the pound, remember?”

At this point I knew I should just order another round and forget about it, but I couldn’t quite stop myself.

“Sorry fellas, but I have to disagree. We do not get paid by the pound. We get paid based on a thing called margin. Margin is the difference between what that calf sells for and the amount it costs to raise it up. And hopefully, that will be a positive number. You are correct that weaning weight is important. Turns out, there is a direct correlation between higher weaning weight and profit. But most of the time, it is a negative correlation! In other words, generally speaking, the bigger we get these cows and calves, the less profit there is in it for the rancher.

“And there are some good reasons why it works that way. Turns out, 1,000 pound cows are just more biologically efficient that 1,700 pound cows. That smaller cow takes less input to produce a pound of calf, so your calves cost less per pound to produce. Plus, you can run a higher number of small cows on the same rangeland. Finally, take a hard look at the difference in value between a 600-pound calf sold at $1.50 and a 400 pounder at $2.00. You’re only getting 50 cents per pound for the extra 200 pounds. Can we raise a calf for 50 cents a pound? I don’t know, but I don’t really want to. Are you starting to get the point?”

“Well, all that might be true, but I run a reputation outfit here. We’ve been producing good calves — calves that the buyers really like — for a long time. I’m not about to go back to running those little mongrel cows like grandpa did. And besides, we get paid by the pound, you know.”

Sigh.

So…Let’s Talk About This

Truth be told, each of the ideas

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That extra 200 lbs only gets you an extra $100. What did it cost you?
suggested above (on the bar napkin) may well lead to smaller cows and lower weaning weights, and both of those things run counter to what we’ve all been raised up to strive for. But the point of those suggestions—the purpose of each—is to increase the margin, to make the economic model work better, so the ranch actually makes more money.

There are plenty of worthy ideas floating around about ways to improve the economics of the cattle business, and it’s hard to choose which one is most important. Personally, I believe this business of understanding the concept of margin is critically important to improving our economic outcome. The formula really is pretty simple:

**Sale Price** minus **Direct Costs** = **Margin**

Overheads are related to Land, Labor and Management. Adding another cow probably won’t mean hiring another employee or buying another tractor. And it won’t change your mortgage or land taxes.

We could spend an entire article dissecting the different “costs” associated with running the ranch, but for the purposes of this discussion, let’s simply try to agree that it costs a certain amount of money to support a cow and her calf for a year. These costs fall into two categories: Direct Costs and Overheads.

Direct Costs are the inputs we spend on the cow herd, things like hay, minerals, medications. Sometimes I find it easiest to think about it like this: If I add another cow to the herd, what costs go up? Those costs, then, are Direct Costs.

**Sale Price** minus (**Direct Costs** + **Overheads**) = **Gross Margin per Unit**

Some folks out there are probably thinking that this is all mumbo jumbo; a cost is a cost. The only thing that matters is how much money is left in the checking account at the end of the year. (Besides, we get paid by the pound, you know!)

**But here’s the real bottom line:**

In order to recognize where you need to make improvement in your economic model, you need to be able to identify where you are spending your money, which enterprises are working and which ones aren’t. Identifying Direct Costs allows you to calculate margin for each enterprise, and knowing your margin tells you if you can afford to pay for the ranch Overheads. If you can’t do that, you need to make a change to the enterprise, in order to improve the margin. Or—and this is generally more difficult—make a radical change to the Overhead structure of the ranch (i.e. get rid of land, your mortgage, your help etc.)

So, do we get paid by the pound? Well, sort of. Actually, **I think we sell our product by the pound.** But the real payday comes when we are able to take the “left-over” money from the sale and use it to pay the mortgage. If you don’t have any leftover money (margin) you won’t be living on that property for much longer. And as for weaning weight, well, I think it’s pretty clear that every increase in weaning weight comes with an attendant cost, and often that increase in weaning weight costs the rancher more than the additional sale value of the weight. In other words, even though bigger calves might bring a higher sale price, they may actually bring the ranch a lower margin. Since it is the margin that makes the land payment, maybe it’s our margin that we should be bragging about!

**Happy grazing!**

WCA President, Sam Ledgerwood and Public Lands Committee Chairman, Daryl Asmussen at the 2019 Annual PLC Meeting (Photo Courtesy of: Dick Coon)
Water and Ecology Updates
By: Toni Meacham, Attorney at Law

The DOE Ag and Water Quality Advisory Committee only meets twice per year now. Once in Olympia in March and once in Union Gap in the fall. The fall meeting was Oct 17, and although a good and informative meeting, was not well attended. The majority of the audience consisted of DOE employees. The people at the table consisted of ag and enviros, with WCA, Feeders, Dairy Fed, Potatoes, Direct Seed, and Hort represented as well as the CDs. Tribes, Shellfish, Riverkeeper, and Center for Environmental Law and Policy were also present.

The meeting started out with a DOE update on watershed evaluations. DOE’s focus for 2019 has been Hangman, Palouse, Blue Mountain, Whitman, Yakima, and Snake River tributaries in Eastern WA. The Western Washington list seemed to encompass all of Western WA. 2020 will be much of the same. Outreach and mailers have been sent out. Technical assistance letters were sent in 2019, with approximately 64 sent since March 2019. Hangman was used as the primary example, of the 15 sites contacted in 2019, 6 landowners are actively working with DOE, 9 are not working with them yet. In 2018, 15 additional people were contacted and by the fall of 2018, 11 people were actively working with DOE, 1 water issue had been resolved, and 3 people are not responding. The 3 people not responding will be getting a warning letter next, with graduated enforcement working up to an Order. Bruce Wishart and Jerry White, both enviro advocates, stressed that the process is not fast enough and the three people from 2018 not working with DOE should be facing stricter consequences. DOE responded that each situation is looked at case-by-case and that the process is not fast, but we are all working towards clean water.

Positive outcomes from the process include improvements on California Creek, Spangle Creek, Hangman Riparian area, and Little Hangman riparian area. Funds have been identified for restoration of riparian areas, inclusive of fencing. Steptoe Creek and Stearns Creek both have had restoration funds and considerable work, with Stearns Creek showing that bacteria levels have been diminished after the riparian fencing was put in. This work will continue in 2020 with three more non-point areas of concern being added—Skagit, Snohomish, and Skohomish.

The second presentation was by the Cattle Feeders. Feeders have been working on a Water Pollution Prevention Certification Process that is voluntary for Feeders. This program would be similar to the Farm Smart certification which would include BMPs (Best Management Practices), a suite of tools, site inspections, and an overall proactive approach to deal with polluted stormwater before said water moves off-site to surface or leaches pollutants into groundwater. This would be a three year plan with a re-certification at the end. The enviros (same two mentioned above) had concerns around the BMPs. DOE is already developing BMPs and these BMPs are not BMPs that the enviros have control over. The enviros feel that the "stakeholders" should get a voice in the process. To reiterate, Feeders are working on a voluntary program with DOE that is not required under law. There is no requirement that any "stakeholders" get a voice in this process. This is a proactive approach that does not require, nor need, enviro support. The BMPs that DOE and the "stakeholders" are working on are required by EPA for 315 funds to be allocated to Washington DOE, so those BMPs do not necessarily pertain to the BMPs developed by Feeders. The enviros also felt that there is a regulatory gap if waste is given to a third party and that third party is not under the jurisdiction of the CAFO permit, meaning if waste from a feedlot or dairy is collected then sent off-site for application on a field, there is no over-sight on that third party that is applying the waste. What I heard when that statement was made is that we are going to be facing proposed regulation brought by the enviros on that issue.

During this meeting, I was sitting next to Jay Gordon of Dairy Fed, and he put forth to me a very good analogy which seems to fit these meetings and the people sitting at the table. If a person has breakfast of ham and eggs, the chicken was involved in the breakfast, while the pig was committed to the breakfast. This analogy highlights the difference between being committed and being involved. These DOE meetings involve two very distinct groups- the Producers who are committed to the land and the regulations that are brought down upon us (we are the pig in the analogy) and the Stakeholders who see themselves as involved (the chicken). These meetings require patience and perspective as we sit at a table with people with no commitment nor understanding of ag and have to listen to them tell us how bad we are for the environment and tell DOE how DOE needs to come down harder upon us. Not fun meetings.

The third segment of the meeting was an update on how DOE is coming along with the Voluntary Clean Water Guidance for Ag, which is the BMPs being required by EPA. At this time, DOE is doing drafting the intro, the tillage chapter, and the residue management chapter. Next is the riparian buffers, livestock pasture practices, and livestock heavy use areas. This will go out for public comment sometime in 2020 after the March meeting.

The last part of the meeting was a CAFO update. A new permit writer started in April 2019. DOE continues to work with the permittees and work under the conditions of the permit. There are 28 facilities with permits. There are a couple of facilities that are in non-compliance that DOE is working with. The CAFO permits will be reissued in 2021. Currently the challenge to the CAFO permit, by both sides of the aisle, will be heard in Appeals Court in January 2020.

The next meeting will be in Olympia in March 2020.
Dave Pratt is one of the most sought after speakers and respected authorities on sustainable ranching in North America. He's earned a reputation for innovative teaching with a practical edge and has helped hundreds of farmers and ranchers develop and implement strategies to improve their land, strengthen their relationships and increase profit. His programs, which include the Ranching For Profit School and Executive Link, have benefited thousands of families and millions of acres.

Dave's new book, Healthy Land Happy Families and Profitable Businesses has received high acclaim from industry leaders. Joel Salatin said, “This book delivers more meaningful advice in one small space than I’ve ever seen.” Wayne Fahsholtz, former President and CEO of Padlock Ranch advised, “If you are serious about wanting your ranch to be successful / sustainable, than this is an important read.” Stan Parsons called it, “…the best book ever written about ranching anywhere.”

Echelon Front - Jason Gardner
www.echelonfront.com

Jason Gardner is a former U.S. Navy SEAL, combat leader, and now a leadership instructor and speaker with Echelon Front. Jason spent nearly three decades in the SEAL Teams with eight deployments across the globe. With experience operating in violent cities in both Iraq and Afghanistan, Jason has seen first-hand the power of the leadership lessons taught at Echelon Front. He brings perspective from every level of leadership from a front line SEAL sniper to the SEAL Team FIVE Command Master Chief. As a lead instructor for Naval Special Warfare Group One Training Detachment, he created and implemented realistic and challenging special operations combat training to better prepare SEAL units for the real-world battlefield. Throughout his career, he worked alongside Jocko, Leif, and several members of the Echelon Front team developing the same principles and mindsets taught to companies across every industry. He is the recipient of the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, a Purple Heart and numerous other awards.

After his retirement from the US Navy, Jason brings unmatched experience with combat leadership in dynamic environments, building winning teams, and developing relationships across all levels of an organization. He serves as a leadership instructor, speaker, and strategic advisor at Echelon Front.

WCA Photo Contest at Convention

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You never know what can happen in Olympia and we continue to fight for the survival of the cattle industry. I know you’re well aware of our battles for the State to address Elk in the Skagit and Wolves in the Okanogan and Southeastern parts of our state (to name just a couple issues), but now our industry is under attack on a whole new level by the well-heeled animal rights activists.

Recently, both Washington’s Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and our State Board of Education received a Petition for Rule-Making from Adam P. Karp, JD, MS, of Animal Law Offices (www.animal-lawyer.com) and Karen Davis, Ph.D., President of United Poultry Concerns, Inc. (“UPC”) (www.upconline.org). (To see the full petition go to washingtoncattlemen.org under “news”).

Among other things, their petition for rule-making proposes the following for K-12 education:

(1) Incorporating tenets and resources consistent with notions of animal welfare and veganism throughout lesson plans and course materials, including stand-alone courses such as the Animal Studies class at Sehome High School; supplanting or supplementing libraries with books and periodicals that promote humane literacy; requiring vegan options in school lunches and plant-based milks; and mandating instruction as to the health benefits, affordability, and culinary diversity of plant-based cooking in Life Skills and Home Economics courses.

(2) Eliminating from lesson plans and course materials those tenets and resources that further animal exploitation for experimentation, entertainment, fur, fiber, flesh, and companionship, as well as abuse, neglect, and cruelty, and which endorse or further animal product consumption, as well as educating students about desertification, overpopulation, deforestation, global warming, and other environmental hazards.

(3) Curbing use of anti-animal idiomatic expressions that connote violence toward animals and countenance desensitization toward them, and offering children literature that promotes kindness while simultaneously deconstructing traditional texts, like Curious George, that condone the antiquated and cruel practice of capturing wild animals and incarcerating them.

(4) Eliminating classroom vivisection, as well as dissection (unless humanely sourced and not sacrificed for the sole purpose of dissection), offering all students nonanimal alternatives without any penalty or stigma, and discontinuing any use of animal life in science kits, particularly given that some animals are killed after the unit.

(5) Removing from the classroom all art supplies sourced from animals, such as glue (gelatin), non-synthetic brushes (animal hair, such as ferret, squirrel, goat, or horse), paints and inks derived from animals (carmine or cochineal extract [crushed beetles], sepia [forcibly obtained from squid], India ink [crushed bugs], oil pastels [fat and beeswax], charcoal [Bone Black]), leathers, watercolors using ox galls as wetting agents, gessoed canvases (which add gelatin, or boiled skin, bone, tendon, and hooves of cows or pigs), and rabbit skin glue to size canvases.

(6) Excluding all captive animals from the classroom.

(7) Prohibiting teachers from killing or injuring animals in the classroom or on campus, instead instructing them to save, preserve, heal, rehabilitate, and respectfully handle (or give space not to be handled) animals who are intentionally or inadvertently found. Thus, children should be led by the example of humanely catching undesired insects and removing them to a safe location.

(8) Provisioning students with cruelty-free musical instruments, such as synthetic drumheads and bagpipes, and using vegetable tallow, Japan tallow, paraffin, or ceresin to clean them; synthetic bows from carbon fiber or fiberglass instead of horsehair; white plastic piano keys instead of ivory; and nylon or steel strings instead of sheep, bovine, kangaroo, or water buffalo intestines as “catgut.”

(9) Outfitting athletics programs with cruelty-free alternatives like synthetic baseball gloves, footballs, volleyballs, dance shoes, ballet slippers, boxing gloves, roller and figure ice skates, soccer balls, weightlifting gloves, running shoes, and rock-climbing shoes.

(10) Banning fundraisers that involve the use of animals for entertainment, such as donkey basketball (which has thankfully, though recently, ended at Ferndale High School).

(11) Ending Future Farmers of America (“FFA”) and 4-H programs that involve raising animals to be slaughtered, on- or off-site, because they teach children unkindness to animals, callous desensitization, and cause deep emotional upheaval in developing minds, and terminating classroom bird-hatching projects (to learn more, see www.upc-online.org/hatching/alternatives.html).

It’s hard to believe something this wacky would be taken seriously, but these days we certainly can’t take anything for granted! We have reached out to OSPI regarding this petition for rule-making.

We’ll definitely keep you updated.
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Name:____________________________________________________
Address:_________________________________________________
City, State, Zip:__________________________________________

Send contributions to WCA, PO Box 96, Ellensburg, WA 98926

Circle One: ETF, Legislative, Wolf, Litigation, Public Lands, Jenny Stiles Hudson or Mary Burke Scholarships
Join Us At The WCA/WCW Annual Convention!
Featuring “Ranching for Profit” and “Echelon Front”

**Wednesday, November 13th**
10:00 AM - 7:30 PM Registration Open
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM WCA Board Meeting
Noon - 3:00 PM Tradeshow Set-up
2:30 PM - 5:30 PM WCA Committee Meetings
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM Land Planning / Noxious Weeds
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM Animal Health
3:00 PM - 6:30 PM Public Lands
3:45 PM - 4:30 PM Breeds
4:45 PM - 5:30 PM Marketing & Trade
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM Dinner

**Thursday, November 14th**
7:30 AM - 9:00 PM Tradeshow Open
7:30 AM - 11:30 AM WCA Annual Meeting
8:00 AM - 11:30 AM WCA Committee Meetings
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM Allied Industries
8:00 AM - 8:30 AM Research Beef Cattle Improvement
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM Water & Ecology
8:40 AM - 9:10 AM Historical
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM WRS/ESA
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Livestock ID
11:45 AM - 1:15 PM Lunch
11:45 AM - 1:15 PM Keynote - Dave Pratt - Ranching for Profit
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Ranching for Profit Workshop
2:00 PM - 4:30 PM Echelon Front Workshop
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM Land Planning / Noxious Weeds
3:00 PM - 5:00 PM WA Feeders
5:00 PM - 5:30 PM Social
5:30 PM Dinner
6:00 PM ETF Auction
6:00 PM Keynote - Jason Garner - Echelon Front

**Friday, November 15th**
7:00 AM - 5:00 PM Registration Open
7:30 AM - 11:30 AM WCA Annual Meeting
7:30 AM - 11:30 AM WCW Annual Meeting

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2019 ETF Raffle Tickets
Available Now! Enter for your chance to win great prizes and support the Endowment Trust Fund. Contact WCA at frontdesk@wacattle.org to purchase your ticket