

Sheyenne Valley Marketing – Cattlemen's Effort to Market Value in North Dakota Calves

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Developing new businesses for marketing North Dakota beef is not an easy chore. Six years ago, cattlemen from central North Dakota joined together to develop a halal processing plant in Harvey, North Dakota. Unfortunately, the halal endeavor failed to attract enough business to remain viable. The cattlemen rejoined to finance the reopening of the processing plant they helped build. Central Dakota Beef, LLC was recapitalized to operate a custom processing plant and develop a product line unique to North Dakota. As the business evolved, the need for a separate marketing company became apparent and Sheyenne Valley Marketing was formed in Maddock, ND.

In early 2004, the interim board of directors enlisted the services of Food and Livestock Planning, Kansas City, Missouri, to develop a business plan for marketing beef raised, fed and processed in North Dakota. On November 5, 2004, Sheyenne Valley Marketing was able to open escrow and process beef through the Central Dakota Beef plant.

Sheyenne Valley Marketing is developing a brand of beef that focuses on premium cattle, natural production criteria, source verification through a limited number of cattle producers, and fresh, frozen and cooked meat products. Sheyenne Valley Marketing is projected to custom process an average of 63 head of beef cattle per month during the first year of operation and expand its sales region the second year to 160 head per month.

To maintain source verification, Sheyenne Valley Marketing intends to develop producer contracts for a supply of market ready beef cattle from a limited group of dependable producers. This group of producers is intended to be developed from the actual member base of the company.

The marketing labels developed for Sheyenne Valley Marketing meats are intended to guarantee five items to the consumer. These are 1) the animal was born and raised in the Dakotas, 2) no animal byproducts were used in the feed ration, 3) no added hormones were given to the animal, 4) the animal received a grain-based ration and 5) the animal was raised according to the Beef Quality Assurance guidelines.

While producer intentions are motivated by developing a local market for their cattle, community and regional support for added economic development is helping the project become a viable business. Developing a coordinated supply of high quality, tasty, consumer friendly meat products has been a long journey for central North Dakota cattlemen. These visionary cattlemen have persevered through economic hardship and disappointments during their quest to supply a homegrown, nutritious meat to the consumer.

For more information on Sheyenne Valley Marketing, contact 105 Central, Suite 125 or Box 151, Maddock, ND 58348 phone 701-438-2875.