

BeefTalk: Do We Exist Only If Someone Else Knows We Exist?

Data education among producers, feedlot enterprises and all those involved in the beef chain is the priority.

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The concept of data collection is knocking on the door of the beef industry, but the concept is not registering. In fact, there actually is a fairly large disconnect.

This is ironic because most, if not all, beef producers pride themselves on their understanding of the skills needed to master the production of beef. Today, there is another player simply called "data."

The information associated with individual cattle is critical. Producers need to understand how livestock production is viewed.

Steve Holcombe is the founder and chief executive officer of Pardalis Inc. Pardalis is a third-party data storage company that values and treats data the same as money.

"The challenge is to recognize that there now are two distinct products being produced along agricultural supply chains today: (1) the traditional livestock product (the calf) and (2) an informational product that describes the pedigree of the traditional product," Holcombe says.

That distinction is not being made and the ramifications are lost revenue in the actual value of the calf and lost future opportunity. This is critical for the future of the beef business.

When producers market calves, they also market information about the calves. However, this concept is still struggling in the pens and alleyways. The actual information contains the keys to unlock the various doors needed to enter domestic and international markets.

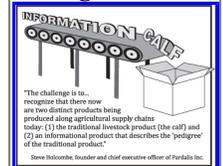
Data education among producers, feedlot enterprises and all those involved in the beef chain is the priority. The data becomes knowledge and information, which are both powerful market tools.

Perhaps a better understanding could be derived if one looked at people. For instance, if one travels around the local community, the calling of your name is all that is required to get your attention.

If someone needs you and he or she sees you, that person simply may say hello, followed by your name, and a conversation will more than likely start up. Now if someone wants to get in touch with you and they do not have immediate local access, they will locate your address or your telephone number and contact you so a dialog can take place. If one wants to travel further and cross international borders, a passport and perhaps even a visa may be inserted in the passport for more specified travel authorization.

The point of these examples is not the fact that these processes of communication and travel exist, but the recognition of what happens when any of the previously mentioned efforts of communication fail. If one calls out another's name and is not recognized, the caller may feel offended.

Images



There now are two distinct products being produced along agricultural supply chains

If one desires to mail or call someone, but cannot find the address or telephone number, one is immediately frustrated. If one is traveling in a foreign country and loses his or her passport or visa, one immediately panics.

People must learn their own name and of those around them. People must know how to locate addresses or telephone numbers and the last situation should make it very clear that the associated information (data) must accompany the traveler.

Even though we may exist in a foreign country, without a passport and/or visa, we may find out we don't exist. That is a very scary thought, but that thought is the same thing that occurs when cattle are presented without data.

We exist and a beef animal exists. The fact that we exist and that a beef animal exists is not sufficient once we or our beef leaves our home.

We need an identification process. Only if we succeed in the process do we actually come to exist in the eyes of those outside our inner circle. Failure is devastating and we must prepare ourselves to gather the necessary documentation (data) to assure success in our travels, for us and our beef.

May you find all your ear tags.

Your comments are always welcome at <http://www.BeefTalk.com>

For more information, contact the NDBCIA Office, 1041 State Ave., Dickinson, ND 58601, or go to <http://www.CHAPS2000.com> on the Internet.

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