

BeefTalk 511: Can Do, Must Do and Need To

The joy of working in agriculture allows the concept of control to take on a different perspective.

Agriculture is a fast-moving, high-technology business. The production and processing of agricultural products for our consumption is demanding. These demands are not getting easier as consumers increasingly become distant from production.

The connection between the cow and hamburger becomes vague and is being replaced by expectations that may or may not be real. Perhaps it is all right to ponder the why, how and consequences of our expectations. The thoughts are not age dependant and not strange to have. They simply are what separate us as uniquely living people who care and are concerned for the rest of the world.

Much of what we imagine or try to understand does have answers. However, there is so much more that we need to ponder. We need to ponder about ourselves and the world we are in or the world we wish we were in.

There seems to be an increasing tendency to focus on what we can do and how we convert the “can do” into our lives. Concepts of change or, perhaps, control certainly quickly get entwined with the “can do” to the point of becoming “must do.”

In some respects, our hectic pace finds us looking for ways that we can feed an internal change that actually tries to anchor our expectations within ourselves. As our expectations increase, we absorb control. However, the daily news would not be much without numerous human failings, even though we believe we actually are in control.

However, failings create more news as those in control strive to achieve success and a return to what we humans suggest is normal. Is something missing in this day or time when we mistakenly grab the helm and attempt to steer with the assumption that we can go it alone?

The joy of working in agriculture allows the concept of control to take on a different perspective. Although agriculture is a defined business with clear objectives and management principles, the produce or numerous products of agriculture are very much in jeopardy. Much that is done is completed with the understanding that the end product never may be achieved.

A leap in faith is needed and some good pondering by ourselves and those around us. Today, we take polls and conclude that the direction of the masses is the direction we should go. We feed upon ourselves as the “can do” becomes the “must do” and finally becomes the “need to.”

We become addicted to our lives, which sounds strange. However, as one views the world when the “can do” becomes the “must do,” at least in the beef business, expectations quickly can become somewhat surreal.

To make matters even more confounded as the “must do” becomes the “need to,” our customers can become fairly demanding. These demands create expectations that may or may not be realistic.

What does all this have to do with beef production or, in a bigger sense, food production? We spend an enormous amount of time trying to get our products on the “need to” list. Being on the “need to” list assures a desire of the consumer to purchase our products and, in simple terms, improves demand. But, if the demand becomes centered within our lifestyles, our demands literally can create work that, in the end, may not be what we set out to do.

Perhaps, that is good, but at least I think a little pondering does not hurt. We need food. We would like good food. However, if our lifestyles start demanding expectations even within our food system that are not realistic, it seems like rather than ponder, we simply add more stuff to try to make what was not realistic in the first place become realistic.

There are a lot of good people associated with food production. Hopefully, some semblance of reality will surface and the world truly will be a better place. For now, a little pondering does not hurt. Everyone should ask if the “can do,” “must do” or “need to” fits.

Always remember that just because we “can do” something does not mean that we “should do” it.

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.

