

# BeefTalk: The Next Chapter: Some Happy, Some Sad

## Ringwall is becoming director of the University of Saskatchewan's Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence.

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The world is full of revolving doors.

Recently, I walked through one and was selected by the University of Saskatchewan as the director of its Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence, an innovative research, teaching and industry center engaged in all aspects of livestock and forage production.

This appointment means change, which challenges me to move out of my daily comfort zone. But life is too short and the world too large to sit still for long. Something always needs to be done somewhere.

Beef operations are deeply rooted in the soil and change. As beef producers know, the work is not easy. Comfort comes with familiar surroundings, and we, as humans, go to great lengths to extend the status quo, which is not bad or wrong.

However, I have decided that now is a good time to start the next chapter, to walk through the revolving door and to meet the next challenge. The challenge of giving up comfort in exchange for the unknown is also good. The world is big, and if our surroundings prevent us from engaging the world, then we need to rethink.

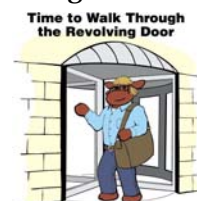
On a recent trip to Mongolia, I observed vast comingled herds of grazing cattle, sheep, goats, yaks, camels and horses on grasslands. I pondered how different our two lands were but with the same objective: utilizing land, forage and all that grows on the land for the betterment of all that live on this planet we call Earth.

As humans, our interaction with the world is key to sustaining the world for the survival of future generations. Livestock, plants, soil and all living organisms are part of the interaction, creating a healthy environment in which the art and science of livestock production can thrive.

Recently, the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, initiated the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence (LFCE) initiative. This collaborative effort between the College of Agriculture and Bioresources and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine incorporates input from the center's Strategic Advisory Board, which includes representatives from the university, the provincial and federal governments, and the livestock and forage sectors.

Collaboration is good. In fact, multidisciplinary collaboration across the many sectors that research life is essential to solving the complex problems we encounter today. The simple answers are no longer simple. For us in agriculture, we find excitement in helping create, guide and implement research and education involving livestock and agricultural products of the soil.

### Images



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Time to Walk Through the Revolving Door



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This goal links the LFCE with resources and ultimately impacts future generations. It also involves listening to producers and researchers by recognizing that working together will result in positive outcomes for everyone: researchers, producers and consumers. This is the heart of the center.

The center comprises 27 quarters of land and three units. The Beef Cattle Research and Teaching Unit, south of Clavet, Saskatchewan, includes a 1,500-head capacity feedlot and intensive environmental monitoring. The Forage and Cow-Calf Research and Teaching Unit, also south of Clavet, includes 300 breeding cows. The Goodale Research and Teaching Farm, near Floral, Saskatchewan, includes 165 breeding cows, horses, bison and deer for research.

If one only sits in a shell and never looks out, one would miss the fast-paced comingling of the continents. Who would have thought a calf born on a lonely day in the far back pasture could be walking off an airplane cargo deck halfway around the world a year later?

Any product, once marketed, is released to the world. A beef carcass processed in an inspected harvesting facility can go worldwide.

Worldly forces, proven true through time, are real and impact discussions at morning coffee. We need to explore the complicated international news because international relationships and markets directly impact our farm and ranch. Sometimes, the rationale evades us, causing us to retreat, but we can't.

As a rancher or farmer, we feel good because our ground was growing produce that was helping people in many parts of world, parts that we never would see. But the rest of the world is looking. Today, the tables have turned. People in other parts of the world are having the same thoughts.

The domestic cow herd, as well as those who are involved in the cattle industry, must maintain global links. The world is very competitive, with efficient production systems that control costs and sell products profitably.

This is not to say that the present is not good. It is. But so is leaving one's comfort zone. It's time to walk through the revolving door.

Having to say goodbye to a very large part of the present is not easy, but knowing one's roots will keep growing will strengthen later reunions. My feelings are happy and sad, but it's time to begin the next chapter.

May you find all your ear tags.

For more information, contact your local NDSU Extension Service agent (<https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/extension/directory>).

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Attachments



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