

# green pastures



Winter 2009 NEWSLETTER

## Welcome

*We are pleased to offer you this first issue of the Manitoba Grass-fed Beef Producers Association newsletter. And yes, we are still working on a title and would appreciate any feedback on the current title or if you have any suggestions that has a better reflection of the organization — so please send us your thoughts to [info@manitobagrassfedbeef.ca](mailto:info@manitobagrassfedbeef.ca)*

The newly formed MGF BPA has been in existence since March 2008 and has moved forward with various activities over the last year or so. We are pleased to offer you this publication on a quarterly basis and will be sending it electronically after this issue so sign up at [info@manitobagrassfedbeef.ca](mailto:info@manitobagrassfedbeef.ca)

The MGF BPA is largely a producer group and it is being driven by various other stakeholders including government, agencies, processors, restaurants, and retail stores. We have developed a proposed vision, mission, and values and we hope you are willing to provide us your input into whether this is a fair representation of the organization and what you would like to see it do for you.



## Vision, Mission and Values

The purpose of the MGF BPA is to promote awareness of grass-fed/forage finished beef ultimately to establish a coordinated approach to marketing grass-fed beef in Manitoba and beyond its borders to increase the synergies that will ultimately benefit individual producers, processors, and others within the value-chain.

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## MGFBPA meeting

**Date** February 11, 2009

**Time** 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Where** Canad Inns  
Portage La Prairie

Please RSVP (204) 299-6932

### Vision

Grass-fed Beef---  
bringing nature back to the table.

### Mission

Working with partners, the Manitoba Grass-fed Beef Association promotes grass-fed beef within Manitoba.

### Values

As an Association, we are committed to:

- Getting maximum value for producers of grass-fed/forage finished beef.
- Providing chefs, restaurants, retailers, and institutions with a reliable, safe, consistent, and delicious product.
- Helping individual producers by providing group synergies in the areas of sales, marketing, promotions, events, and publications that individual producers could not attain on their own, ultimately finding new markets for producer's product.
- Providing a means for communications and education among members that will enhance production and marketing.
- Operating in an open and transparent manner.
- Being accountable to and working collaboratively with our partners.
- Being a valued member of the community.

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Havixbeck Consulting has been hired to provide all the services that are necessary to help the Association achieve this vision. A Strategic Marketing Plan was done and is now being implemented. Havixbeck Consulting offers expertise in graphic design, administration, sales, web design and maintenance, and marketing research.

Enclosed in this newsletter is a membership form and we hope you will consider joining the Association and possibly consider volunteering in a role.

## Note to Producers

If you are sending your animals to slaughter, please collect and retain the following data.



## did you know?

### Established Protocols

A production protocol is frequently used by those in a value chain to ensure that the quality of the product meets market specifications. This protocol was developed by members of the MGF BPA and with some external stakeholder consultation and is representative of some of the regulations currently being used. **Each animal has an affidavit that includes:**

- individual animal identification (microchip, animal tag)
- birth date
- weaning date
- record of sire and dam
- breed
- movement history
- veterinary interventions
- feeding records

*It is recommended that animals are weighed every 90 days to manage herd genetics. The diet of each animal shall be recorded.*

### Diet

Must be 100% forage fed, however this may be any combination of grass and legumes from pasture during the growing season or stored forage during the feed period (winter). The animal (including calves) cannot be fed energy in the form of starch (e.g. cereal grains, potato waste).

- Weaned calves cannot be fed energy in the form of starch and/or other milk.
- Cereal crops are to be harvested prior to milk-stage (to ensure no starch).
- Oil seeds and oil seed by-products (e.g. meal, oil) are acceptable feed types.
- No cereal grain supplementation, including corn silage or other high starch feeds.

### Veterinarian Treatment

No growth hormones or antibiotics, no animal by-products to be fed. Although currently allowed, MGF BPA strongly discourages the use of antibiotics and encourages producers to remove these animals from the process. However, should antibiotics be used, no antibiotics are to be used after one year of age and antibiotics are not to be part of a daily feed mix for animals of any age.

- Cattle are to be treated in a humane way according to Canadian standards.
- Animals are in good health at delivery.
- Farms must be inspected by an independent, third party verifier during the production period with the producer certifying the management practices being used.

Last Spring, an executive was elected to help develop and carry out a mission and vision for the **MGFBPA**. Jim Lintott was elected Chair, Bragi Simundsson was elected to the role of public relations and membership coordination, Cal Von Barga and Doug Turnbull were elected as standing members of the executive.

## Market Development

The Food Development Centre scaled up and standardized two products for commercialization. These include a Saskatoon Berry Sausage and a Gourmet Hamburger. Both products were available for sampling and your comments on the first day of the Grazing School. These two products were highlighted at the MGFBA Christmas dinner on December 10, 2008.



*The following materials on grass finishing will be available from MFC/MAFRI in the New Year:*

- ## Check it out...

[www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca/grassfedbeef/annualforagesforbeeffinishing/](http://www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca/grassfedbeef/annualforagesforbeeffinishing/)