Social License

- The public approval or acceptance of the ongoing operations of a company or an industry.
- Essentially, that society believes you are “doing things right”.

**Beef History:**

**Survival (1880-1960)**
- Keeping animals and humans alive
- The “Wild West”
- Lucky to just have beef
- Lots of Trust in Farms
- Social License not even a concept.
- Despite our practices in cultivation, soil loss, overgrazing, DDT, cattle handling, etc

**“Maximizing” Era (1960-1980)**
- More is better
- Getting the most out of every acre or animal
- Economics driven
- Still lots of trust

**Optimizing and Efficiency” Era (1980- ?)**
- Feeding a growing population with limited resources
- How to better manage feed, water, the animals themselves

**“Social License Era” (2000- ?)**
- Today: Consumers have a growing “unease” about beef production

**Trends**

*Source: Agriculture and Agri-food Canada*
Why Is Social License a Hot Topic?
1. **93%** of Canadians saying they know little or nothing about farming, determining fact from fiction about our food continues to be a growing issue. (CCFI, 2016)
2. Affluent society means consumers want more choice
3. Internet
4. Misleading Advertising

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Strategy Pillars & Goals

- **Connectivity**
- **Productivity**
- **Competitiveness**
- **Beef Demand**

Connectivity Outcomes
1. Effective delivery of Crisis and Issues communications/ coordination within industry
2. Development of a **Reputation Management** and Issues Management strategy
3. Increase number of future leaders and advocates for the beef industry
4. Increase stakeholder engagement, coordination and relationships (inc consumers, government, industry partners)- CBIC

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Beef Demand Outcomes

Focus Area D&E: Consumer Confidence and Social License
1. Enhance consumer confidence in Canadian beef with a focus on enabling industry advocates, leadership in issues management, and partnerships with influencers
2. Enhance public image of the Canadian beef industry emphasizing continual improvement in environmental sustainability, animal health and welfare, and food safety
3. Increase public understanding of beef industry husbandry practices

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CCA's Core Services
1. Advocacy: (Government focused)
   - Trade, policy development, government relations, regulations
2. Knowledge Transfer (Producer focused)
   - Communications
   - In collaboration with partners like BCRC, CRSB, etc.
   - Sustainability, Animal Welfare, Environment, Best Management practices
3. Crisis Management
4. **Issues Management and Social License (CDN Consumer focused)**
Current Issues

1. Animal Welfare – Livestock Transportation
2. Antibiotic Use and AMR
3. Environmental Impacts of Beef production
   - Canadian Roundtable For Sustainable Beef (CRSB)
4. Growth Hormones and Promotants
5. General unease with technology

Human Health- Red Meat and Cancer links, irradiation

Do we still have Social License?

- 43% concerned with humane treatment of animals
- 48% were concerned about the use of hormones
- 54% concerned with Food Safety
- 69% concerned with rising price of food
- Only 29% said Canadian farmers are good stewards of the environment

- Canadians positive impressions of agriculture have increased by 20% from 41% in 2006 to 61% in 2016.

But there is confusion

Hormones: An Example?

Good science used to mislead

- The UK joined the EU in 1973
- The EU banned growth promotants in 1989
- The UK girls in this study were born in 1991-1992
- This paper never mentioned “beef” or even “red meat”… just “meat”
- This paper made no reference to hormonal growth promotants at all

Other dietary sources

- Other foods contain hormones, too.
- Some contain a lot more hormones than beef.
- But there’s no reason to worry about those, either.
- Oral bioavailability is important:
  - When hormones are eaten, only a small fraction reach the tissues (5 to 10%).
  - The rest (90 to 95%) are broken down and inactivated in the gastrointestinal tract and liver.
Summary

- Beef is a great source of many nutrients
- It is a really lousy source of hormones
- Innovative tools can allow us to produce more food, while reducing impacts to the environment. There are also ethical considerations

Changing the Conversation: Building Social License

- Build Trust and Transparency
  – Telling the real story, including the pros and cons of our practices, accepting and answering questions
- Recognizing and Demonstrating Improvements
- Being Proactive
  – Consumer engagement and buy-in
  – Building/strengthening relationships with key influencers and partners
  – Innovative projects and research (asking hard questions - are there alternatives?)

Do Consumers know what they want?

“If I had asked what consumers wanted they would have said faster horses” - Henry Ford

“A lot of times, people don’t know what they want until you show it to them.” - Steve Jobs
Consumers ultimately want to know where their food comes from and how it was produced.

• Environmental: making sure you don’t take more than what you put back in (maintaining or enhancing ecological integrity; stewardship)
• Economic viability: long-term viability
• Social well-being: animal care and welfare, human health, water quality, young beef producers, social license, continuity, fair working conditions
• Continual Improvement

Is our ranch sustainable?

Sustainability
“Managing cattle to not only minimize impacts but enhance the environment, while maintaining and improving animal health and welfare in an economically and socially acceptable manner.”
Canada’s beef industry accounts for 2.4% of Canada’s Total GHG emissions. (CRSB, 2016)

One of the lowest livestock GHG emissions in the world, alongside NZ, Aus, USA. (Legesse, et al., 2015)

Beef GHG Emissions in Canada: 11.4 kg CO\(_2\) equivalents /kg of live weight.

It is estimated that one hectare of unbroken Canadian grassland sequesters as much carbon as a hectare of above ground temperate forest.” (Janzen et al, 2002)

Cattle and other livestock play a vital role in maintaining healthy grasslands, which sequester large amounts of carbon, up to 200 tonnes C per Hectare.

Consequences of not eating beef

-70% of wetlands have been lost on the Canadian Prairies
-Only 20% grasslands remain intact in North America
-70% of AB’s Species at Risk are on grasslands
-90% of Cnd. Sage grouse population died of between 1988 and 2006

Conventional cultivation of a rangeland by itself can lead to the rapid loss of 30-50% of soil organic carbon (SOC) (Bork, 2013)
More than 80% of all cattle feed is not edible by humans, and livestock transform large amounts of grass, biomass, crop residues and by-products into high value food. (CEC, 2016)

Only 9% of cattle feed is from grown on annual cropland. (CRSB, 2016)

Research and Innovation

LOW RFI cow J1042 (5 yr-old Hereford-Angus cow in the spring of 2004; RFI adj = -2.64 kg as fed/day; 2003 weight at weaning = 709 kg).

HIGH RFI cow E1245 (8 yr-old Hereford-Angus cow in the spring of 2004; RFI adj = 2.83 kg as fed/day; 2003 weight at weaning = 755 kg).

Feed Savings over 1 year: 5.47kg as fed/day or 1997kg as fed/year difference between low and high RFI cows.

Proper Animal Care

• Have enough food, water, shelter
• Ability to exhibit natural behaviours
• Free from pain or suffering
• Free from stress (or minimize stress)
• Use of antibiotics
• Nature vs Nurture
• Human health

Back to Social License
1. We need to tell/show people at every opportunity how beef is produced and where it comes from: TRANSPARENCY-
2. Need to get engagement and buy in from the public: TRUST
3. Need to demonstrate our commitment through improvements and research
4. And we need to coordinate and collaborate with key partners and stakeholders

Thank You
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Questions?