

# State of Beef

## Innovation in the Cowherd and Beyond

November 2-3, 2016  
North Platte



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**Nebraska**  
Lincoln

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## **The State of Beef Conference**

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Proceedings  
The State of Beef Conference

November 2 and 3, 2016  
Sandhills Convention Center  
Quality Inn and Suites  
North Platte, Nebraska

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## NEBRASKA AGRICULTURE FACTS

A cooperative effort of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture; USDA, NASS, Nebraska Field Office; Nebraska Bankers Association  
February 2016

### Nebraska's Top National Rankings

- 1st** Beef and veal exports, 2014 – \$1,128,700,000  
Cash receipts from meat animals, 2014 – \$13,885,411  
Commercial red meat production, 2015 – 7,470,600,000 lb  
Commercial cattle slaughter, 2015 – 6,575,100 head  
All cattle on feed, Jan 1, 2016 – 2,520,000 head  
Great Northern beans production, 2015 – 763,000 cwt  
Irrigated acres of cropland, 2012 – 8,225,973 acres  
Popcorn production, 2012 – 353,711,118 lb
- 2nd** All cattle and calves, Jan. 1, 2016 – 6,450,000 head  
Pinto bean production, 2015 – 1,878,000 cwt  
Proso millet production, 2015 – 3,298,000 bushels  
Light red kidney bean production, 2015 – 298,000 cwt  
Bison, Dec. 31, 2012 – 23,152 head
- 3rd** Corn for grain production, 2015 – 1,692,750,000 bushels  
Corn Exports, 2014 – \$1,212,400,000  
Cash receipts from all farm commodities, 2014 – \$24,942,122,000
- 4th** Cash receipts from all livestock and products, 2014 – \$4,531,158,000  
Cash receipts from all crops, 2014 – \$10,410,964,000  
Beef cows, Jan. 1, 2015 – 1,786,000 head  
Land in farms and ranches, 2014 – 45,200,000 acres (92% of the state's total land area)  
Alfalfa hay production, 2015 – 3,400,000 tons  
Grain sorghum production, 2015 – 23,040,000 bushels  
Soybean production, 2015 – 305,660,000 bushels  
All dry edible beans production, 2015 – 3,117,000 cwt
- 5th** Agricultural exports, 2014 – \$7,262,200,000  
Soybean exports, 2014 – \$1,728,600,000  
All hay production, 2015 – 6,360,000 tons
- 6th** Harvested acres of principal crops, 2015 – 19,175,000 acres  
All hogs and pigs on farms, Dec. 1, 2015 – 3,300,000 head  
Sugar beet production, 2015 – 1,329,000 tons
- 7th** Sunflower production, 2015 – 1,329,000 tons  
Commercial hog slaughter, 2015 – 7,934,000 head
- 8th** Oat production, 2015 – 2,680,000 bushels  
Winter wheat production, 2015 – 45,980,000 bushels

### Nebraska Ag Facts

- Cash receipts from farm marketings contributed almost \$25 billion to Nebraska's economy in 2014 and 5.9% of the U.S. total.
- Nebraska's ten leading commodities (in order of importance) for 2014 cash receipts are cattle and calves, corn, soybeans, hogs, wheat, dairy products, chicken eggs, hay, dry beans, and sugar beets.
- Every dollar in agricultural exports generates \$1.27 in economic activities such as transportation, financing, warehousing, and production. Nebraska's \$7.2 billion in agricultural exports in 2014 translate into \$9.2 billion in additional economic activity.
- Nebraska's top five agricultural exports in 2014 were soybeans and soybean meal, corn, beef and veal, feeds and fodder, and hides and skins.
- Nebraska had 49,100 farms and ranches during 2014; the average operation consisted of 921 acres.
- In 2014, Nebraska ranked second in ethanol production, with 25 operating plants having production capacity of 2.125 billion gallons and used 43% of the state's 2014 corn crop.
- Livestock or poultry operations were found on 49% of Nebraska farms.
- The top five counties ranked by agricultural sales in 2012 were Cuming, Custer, Dawson, Lincoln, and Phelps.
- In 2011, Nebraska was eighth nationally in certified organic cropland acres (129,858) and eighth in certified organic pasture acres (53,174).
- 1 in 4 Nebraska jobs are related to agriculture.
- The average age of a Nebraska principal operator was 55.7 in 2012.
- From 2007 to 2012, Nebraska experienced a 5% increase in number of farms and a 10% increase in number of new farmers.

### Nebraska's Natural Resources

- From east to west, Nebraska experiences a 4,584 ft elevation difference and the average annual precipitation decreases by 1" every 25 miles, allowing Nebraska to have a diverse agricultural industry from one side of the state to the other.
- If Nebraska's aquifers were poured over the surface of the state, the water in those aquifers would have a depth of 37.9 feet.
- Nearly 24,000 miles of rivers and streams add to Nebraska's bountiful natural resources.
- There are nearly 23 million acres of rangeland and pastureland in Nebraska – half of which are in the Sandhills.

Source: USDA NASS, Lincoln, NE, (402) 437-5541

# The State of Beef Conference November 2 and 3, 2016 North Platte, Nebraska

## Schedule and Proceedings Contents

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2

8:45 CT	Vendor Booths Open	
9:30	Welcome: Kelly Bruns, UNL West Central Research & Extension Center Director	
10:00	MARKET OUTLOOK	
	Randy Blach, CattleFax.....	5
10:40	GENETIC SELECTION FOR MORE PROFITABLE COW-CALF ENTERPRISES: TACKLING INPUT COSTS	
	Matt Spangler, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.....	15
11:20	HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CALF, SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS	
	Jerry Stokka, North Dakota State University.....	23
Noon	Lunch and Visit Vendors	
1:20	TECHNOLOGY FOR THE COW-CALF PRODUCER REVISITED	
	Karla Jenkins, UNL Panhandle Research and Extension Center.....	31
2:00	OPTIMUM MANAGEMENT FOR BACKGROUNDING SYSTEMS	
	Jim MacDonald, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.....	35
2:40	Break and Visit Vendors	
3:00	STRATEGIES FOR BREEDING HIGH-RISK BEEF FEMALES	
	Rick Funston, UNL West Central Research and Extension Center.....	41
3:40	DECISION SUPPORT TOOLS	
	Randy Saner, UNL Extension Educator.....	57
4:20	PANEL — WHAT ARE BREED ASSOCIATIONS DOING FOR THE COMMERCIAL CATTLEMAN? .....	61
	Moderator: Matt Spangler	
	Panel Members: Dan Moser, American Angus Association	
	Shane Bedwell, American Hereford Association	
	Chip Kemp, American Simmental Association	
5:20	Wrap-up	
5:35	Cash Bar, Social, Visit Vendors	
6:15	Dinner	
7:00	Bull Pen Sessions	

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3

7:45 CT	Visit Vendor Booths	
8:45	NEW FEEDLOT RESEARCH AND WHAT IT MEANS TO THE COW-CALF AND STOCKER SEGMENTS	
	Galen Erickson, University of Nebraska-Lincoln .....	63
9:25	ENSURING END PRODUCT QUALITY: MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	
	Ty Schmidt, University of Nebraska-Lincoln .....	75
10:05	Break and Visit Vendor Booths	
10:20	INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT AS PART OF A MARKETING PLAN FOR COW-CALF PRODUCERS	
	Aaron Berger, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.....	77
11:00	BEEF INDUSTRY PANEL.....	81
	Moderator: Galen Erickson	
	Panel Members: Marcine Moldenhauer, Meat Link Management	
	John Schroeder, Darr Feedlot	
	Dave Weaver, Delhaize Group	
12:20	Wrap-up and have a safe trip home!	

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE  
2016 STATE OF BEEF CONFERENCE



ON THE COVER: Cattle at the University of Nebraska Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory, near Whitman.  
Photo taken by Jacqueline Musgrave.