



## **2022 Beef Improvement Federation Symposium Comes to Las Cruces**

*Marcy Ward, Extension Livestock Specialist*

The Beef Improvement Federation is an organization that has played a key role in assisting beef producers worldwide towards genetic improvement and management efficiency, since its inception in 1968. The guiding board is made up of representatives from breed associations, learning and research institutions, and cattle producers. The organization established a set of guidelines that include information on performance standards related to beef production. These standards are updated with any advancement in technology or relevant management strategies <https://guidelines.beefimprovement.org>.

Every year, the organization develops a symposium that includes leaders of industry, researchers that are top in their field, and producers that bring a production perspective covering the latest advancements in beef production. New Mexico State University hosted the 2022 Beef Improvement Federation Symposium at the Las Cruces Convention Center from June 1<sup>st</sup> through June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Over 300 people, from eight countries and 25 plus states participated in this year's event. The symposium started out with a tour of the Santa Teresa Livestock Border Crossing. One-hundred and twenty-four people attended the tour. There attendees were given the unique opportunity to learn what is involved in bringing live cattle over from Mexico to be fed here in the United States. Additionally, they were provided information on how cattle are marketed here and where the genetics of Mexico's beef industry are headed.

The two major themes presented over the two-and-a-half-day symposium included addressing environmental concerns and global trade. The presenters that discussed environmental issues approached their talks by stating not IF there are environmental concerns, but rather the beef industry IS going to have to demonstrate an ability to adjust to upcoming environmental policies, in order to remain viable. The reality is that consumers are already demanding transparency related to carbon footprint. Restaurants in England and Europe are now including carbon footprint indicators right on their menus, so customers can make "socially conscious" decisions. This leaves animal protein producers caught between the science and the consumer. True and fair carbon emission formulas have yet to be fully established, yet policy makers and entrepreneurs see an opportunity. Producers from some of the largest and most respected ranches in the country all had their approach to these issues. Staying current with the latest information on the climate initiative and developing a strategic plan will be the best and most productive way to prepare for policy changes related to climate.

For trade and marketing, speakers informed the group of where demand is shifting internationally, and how the US will play a role. Tony Clayton, with Clayton Agri-Marketing indicated a shift in global market demand based on population growth and increased income. The primary growth and thus increase demand for animal protein will be in countries that are currently considered 3<sup>rd</sup> world. Right now, much of our export business is focused on advanced countries such as Japan, South Korea, and China. Though Japan and South Korea remain good partners, China has been shifting their imports of beef to Australia and Brazil. Shipment of live cattle from the US to other countries has increased over the last few years. Countries from the Pacific Rim have increased their demand for feeder calves. The primary reason to ship live animals versus beef products is food security.

Continued population growth and environmental changes will create confounding circumstances for beef producers moving forward. Food demand is expected to increase three-fold by 2050. Land mass limitations and erratic weather patterns provide additional challenges for efficient food production. With the expert input provided at symposiums such as the Beef Improvement Federation symposium, U.S. beef producers are generating more pounds of product from fewer animals since the early 1970s. This trajectory of performance must continue in order to meet global demand while addressing climate standards.

A summation in the form of proceeding papers from the general session speakers will be provided on the BIF website <https://beefimprovement.org/symposium>.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**M**onday, July 4<sup>th</sup> – Independence Day Holiday

### **State 4-H Conference**

**J**uly 11-14, 2022 – Las Cruces, NM

Theme: Rocking and Rolling Through 4-H

<https://aces.nmsu.edu/4h/conference.html>

The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences is an engine for economic and community development in New Mexico, improving the lives of New Mexicans through academic, research, and Extension programs. New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educator. NMSU and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.