BEEF BUSINESS

by Julie Mais, editor

In this month's "Beef Business," we present a conversation with a Hungarian Angus breeder, ways to protect farmers from back pain and a new feedlot innovation center.

Hungarian Breeder Attends Angus Convention to Learn and Network

Among 2022 Angus Convention attendees, it seems Peter Kun would win hands down in the "traveled the farthest" category. Half a world away from their native Hungary, Kun and his brother came to learn, with hopes of bringing back knowledge and connections to their own seedstock operation and meat business there.

Despite the long travel distance, Kun says his experience three years prior in Reno, Nev., solidified his desire to come back.

"I realized that all the top ranchers and breeders are here at the convention, and the best way to build connections to get answers for our questions is being here," he said.

Kun has ranched in Hungary for two decades and has used Angus genetics for much of that time, but a few years ago he became a member of the American Angus Association.

"… Now all of my cows are registered so we can improve the quality," he said.

To listen to his full interview in this *AJ Daily* clip, visit *www.angusjournal.net/post/hungarian-breeder-attends-angus-convention-to-learn-and-network.*

Source: AJ Daily

USDA Developing Tools to Identify COVID Virus in Wild and Domestic Animals

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is currently implementing a $300 million provision in the *American Rescue Plan Act* to monitor susceptible animals for the COVID virus. Through this initiative, APHIS is partnering with USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) on five research projects to improve understanding of the virus and to help USDA accomplish its goal of building an early warning system to potentially prevent or limit the next zoonotic disease outbreak or global pandemic.

"This investment ensures we are taking the steps necessary to safeguard our nation's animal health — and further, public health," says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "Scientific research undergirds USDA's programs and policies. The new tools and data generated from this research will provide the insights necessary to accelerate our understanding of the COVID virus and help us build a more resilient national capacity to address future disease threats."

Two of the projects call for developing easy-to-use field tests to quickly identify COVID infection in wildlife and domestic animals. In two other projects, field and laboratory studies will determine how long the virus persists in deer and whether deer or elk can serve as an intermediate animal host in which COVID virus can survive in the wild and potentially mutate into new variants. The fifth project is developing a cell line model that will let researchers better predict which animal species may act as hosts or reservoirs for COVID virus.

Through these and other efforts, USDA is working to implement a risk-based, comprehensive, integrated disease monitoring and surveillance system domestically, and enhance collaborations with national, regional and global One Health partners to build additional capacity for zoonotic disease surveillance and prevention.

Source: USDA

Protect Your Back

Farmers can experience musculoskeletal disorders, injuries and pain symptoms, especially in the lower back region, due to the physical demands of their job and limited access to resources in rural areas.

This past summer, the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and

Health Center (UMASH) hosted Justine Bauer, an occupational therapy doctorate program student at the University of Minnesota, as she completed her capstone project: an "Ergonomic Program for Crop Production Farmers Operating in Rural Communities in the Midwest."

Bauer surveyed 23 crop farmers and visited two on-site. Her goal was to understand the musculoskeletal issues experienced by Midwestern crop farmers, identify work tasks associated with low-back pain, and provide ergonomic recommendations to help protect farmers' backs. Her project found:

- Low back pain was common and problematic among surveyed Midwestern crop farmers. 40% of participants reported trouble in the lower back in the last year, and 68% of those with lower back pain said it prevented them from doing their everyday work.
- Certain work tasks were associated with low-back pain, including stooping and bending, getting in and out of farming vehicles, twisting, standing, operating farming vehicles, machinery or equipment, carrying heavy loads, and walking.
- Farmers' musculoskeletal pain experiences varied based on personal, environmental and work factors (e.g., equipment and vehicle types and age). Occupational therapy can be a great venue for understanding and accommodating these individual and unique needs.

Based on the findings of her project, Bauer developed resources to share practical strategies for protecting the low-back region while farming. View them at *www.umash.umn.edu.*

Source: Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

UNL Breaks Ground on Feedlot Innovation Center

More than 150 leaders from across Nebraska's beef industry gathered at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's Eastern Nebraska Research, Extension and Education Center near Mead Nov. 4 to break ground for the Feedlot Innovation Center.

The $7.2 million facility will pave the way for world-class research projects and teaching and extension opportunities in a commercial-scale, state-of-the-art feedlot. In addition, the facility will serve as a one-of-a-kind testbed where industry partners can see how new and emerging technologies work.

The new center will be "a very unique facility in terms of the types of research we can do," said Doug Zalesky, director of the extension center.

Construction of the facility marks the next step in a long history of beef innovation at Nebraska, Zalesky said. The extension center built its first feedlot pens in 1964. The next year, the university hired Terry Klopfenstein, who became the longtime leader of the university's ruminant nutrition program and a pioneer in using byproducts from the ethanol and sweetener industries to supplement cattle feeding. Beef research remains central to the extension center's programming.

The Feedlot Innovation Center will include commercial-scale open-air and covered pens, allowing researchers to improve cattle performance and environmental effects in varied settings. It will include a 240-head feeding facility that will allow researchers to use precision techniques to study the outcomes of various feeding protocols, measure emissions and study precision-feeding technology.

The center will allow for expanded research of the effects of low-stress animal handling and increased emphasis on animal welfare. A new cattle-handling facility and enclosed classroom will give students hands-on experience and allow for training opportunities for Nebraska's beef industry workforce.

The facility will serve as an innovation laboratory, which industry partners, ag-tech startups, producers and others can use as a proving ground for new products, said Mike Boehm, Harlan Vice Chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) and university vice president.

Researchers across IANR are committed to ensuring important discoveries can move quickly from lab to feedlot, Boehm said. This is important in Nebraska, which has about 720 cattle feeders with 1,000 head or more.

The new center will be a key component of the university's Beef Innovation Hub, which aims to advance, support and communicate continuous improvement of beef production, economic vitality, and natural resources stewardship through innovative research, education, and extension. AJ

Source: UNL