

Corporate View

Former farm kid shares corporate beef industry experiences. Organization elects new officers; continues beef promotion.

by Kindra Gordon, field editor

Sharing perspectives of a woman working within the beef industry, Nicole Johnson Hoffman, senior vice president and chief sustainability officer with OSI Group, addressed American National CattleWomen (ANCW) members attending the organization's annual conference Jan. 30, 2018, in Phoenix, Ariz.

Johnson Hoffman shared with the audience that while they may have never heard of OSI Group, they've likely eaten some of its product, as the company is the largest supplier of protein to McDonald's restaurants around the world. Johnson Hoffman, who grew up on a Minnesota farm, formerly worked with Cargill for 14 years.

From her rural upbringing, Johnson Hoffman expressed, "I believe that ag is everything and forms the foundation of this country. It is the core of our country's culture."

Johnson Hoffman highlighted some of the challenging choices she faced in her career, and said the lesson she has learned is to take a big-picture view and "make your choices simple — boil them down and go forward."

She also underscored to those who are in a leadership role not to focus on yourself and what you might gain, but instead recognize the needs of the people you lead. From her own experiences, Johnson Hoffman said she's learned to "think about the value proposition for the people you want to lead,"

Additionally, she expressed that change — for yourself or an industry — is hard. However, she added, "Sometimes to get the next good



Nicole Johnson Hoffman shared some of the challenging choices she has faced in her career.

thing you have to let go of something you love and take the step forward."

In addition to her work with OSI Group, in January 2018 Johnson Hoffman was named president of the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB). The multi-stakeholder initiative is being developed to advance continuous improvement in sustainability of the global beef value chain through leadership, science and multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration.


Of her role with GRSB, Johnson Hoffman expressed that, given her farm roots, she is committed to ensuring the interests of farmers are taken care of in this process. Of the sustainability issue, she expressed, "When critics are interested in talking, even if they are hostile, you have to show up and listen, and then speak your truth. You don't force it; you just offer it. ... But we (the beef industry) have got to show up."

New leadership

During the business meeting portion of the ANCW conference, a new slate of officers was elected. Serving for the upcoming year are incoming president Gwen Geis from Wyoming; president-elect Wanda Braun Pinnow from Montana; and vice president Evelyn Greene of Alabama.

Colorado cattiewoman Nancy Carlson was recognized with the ANCW Outstanding Educator of the Year award for her local, state and national beef education and promotion efforts and reaching thousands of students and adult consumers. Carlson has been involved with the Colorado ag literacy program, has aided in developing a beef tailgating toolkit, and has made beef presentations to an array of audiences.

ANCW members are continuing their efforts to promote beef to consumers through the Collegiate Beef Advocacy Program (CBAP). Three CBAP college students assisted with beef outreach efforts in 2017, and new collegiate students will be selected for 2018. Additionally, the organization has initiated a leadership certificate program for ANCW officers and interested members at the state level to help bring efficiency and effective leadership to ANCW's future programming. Over the inaugural year of the program, 111 women from 20 states have participated.

Learn more about ANCW's efforts at <https://ancw.org/>. 

Editor's Note: This article was written as part of Angus Media's coverage of the 2018 Cattle Industry Convention.

Three to Watch

Herd Security/BVD Working Group addresses bovine health concerns.

by Troy Smith, field editor

It's no secret that for the U.S. cattle industry bovine viral diarrhea (BVD) is a major disease problem. Lesser known bovine leukemia virus (BLV) might be a more significant problem than we think. There is little doubt that foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) could be disastrous for multiple livestock industries if it were reintroduced to the United States.

Research projects designed to provide better understanding of these three infectious diseases were the topics addressed by scientists making presentations to the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Herd Security/BVD Working Group, which met during the 2018 Cattle Industry Convention Jan. 31-Feb. 2, in Phoenix, Ariz.

BVD

Shollie Falkenberg, a research microbiologist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) National Animal Disease Center, described an ongoing study of pestivirus — the class or genus that includes the viral strains responsible for BVD.

According to Falkenberg, one in 10 animals reach breeding age with no protection against BVD. Her team's research seeks to learn more about BVD transmission, through acute infection and fetal infection (transmitted from dam to fetus during gestation and resulting in a persistently infected calf). The scientists are studying vaccines,



PHOTO BY HANNAH TREMANE FROM NIAA/ANGUS JOURNAL PHOTO CONTEST

vaccination practices and variations in cattle immunity to BVD, looking for paths to improved response and protection against BVD.

Leukosis

In his presentation on BLV, Michigan State University veterinarian Dan Grooms, said the virus affects the lymphatic system causing dysfunctional lymphocytes — white blood cells involved in immune response. Thus, BLV infection can lead to reduced response to vaccination and increased susceptibility to disease. Grooms said BLV can lead to leukemia and cancers of various organs.

“Bovine leukosis is chronic. Once infected, always infected,” stated Grooms. “There is no vaccine for prevention.”

Infection is spread through colostrum and through infected blood, via blood on common-use injection needles, palpation sleeves and instruments. Infection may also be transmitted by biting insects and from dam to fetus, *in utero*.

He explained that BLV causes

production losses in dairy cows and significantly decreased longevity. Eighty-three percent of U.S. dairy herds are thought to be infected. However, less is known about BLV's impact on beef cattle production.

Grooms described a two-year study involving infected beef breeding herds, with infected animals. Results suggest lymphomas caused by BLV may be

a major contributor to carcass condemnations among cull cows.

FMD

Kansas State University veterinarian Mike Sanderson discussed a feedyard FMD modeling project designed to simulate an FMD outbreak in some large cattle-feeding operation.

“A fair amount of modeling has been done to determine how FMD might spread through the breeding animal population, but not about how FMD might look in a feedyard,” Sanderson explained.

He noted how such operations involve large cattle populations with frequent transport of animals in and out, and with numerous avenues for transmission, including across fence lines, exposure to contaminated bunks and waterers, spread by pen riders and hospital pen exposure. Sanderson said the project should help the industry prepare for detection and response, should an FMD outbreak occur. **AJ**

Editor's Note: This article was presented as part of Angus Media's coverage of the 2018 Cattle Industry Convention.