

Winds of Change for ANCW

Restructuring and industry support at the heart of CattleWomen.

by **Brooke Byrd**

The events of the American National CattleWomen Inc. (ANCW), hosted in conjunction with the 2006 Cattle Industry Annual Convention, got off to a great start Tuesday, Jan. 31, with a large crowd at the opening session. Highlighting the session was a report of the Advisory Committee, which last year was given the task to “take a good, hard look at our organization,” one cattlemember said.

The committee began by recapping a list of things ANCW needed to do or address, including finding its niche in the beef industry’s new long-range plan, maximizing the strength of its volunteerism, identifying core values and competencies, and engaging and supporting the next generation.

To date, the ANCW membership has adopted a mission statement. It reads: *The American National CattleWomen Inc. is a voice for women who share a passion for the U.S. beef industry; our mission is to promote and support the beef industry by encouraging and equipping women in beef and related agribusiness.*

A set of core values have also been adopted:

- ▶ We value respect, integrity and credibility.
- ▶ We value professional business practices within our organization.
- ▶ We value our volunteers and their contributions.
- ▶ We value a progressive mind-set.
- ▶ We value lifelong learning opportunities.

Proposed changes

The rest of the opening session revolved around discussion of further changes proposed by the Advisory Committee. First, the committee recommended ANCW adopt three core areas on which to focus: the beef industry, women’s issues, and organization and leadership.

Within the beef industry, committee

members noted the importance of continuing ANCW’s participation in consumer and youth education programs about beef.

“Educational programs are by far the most important type of service,” a committee member said in regard to women’s issues. The ANCW puts on several educational programs for women during the Cattle Industry Annual Convention (see “Taking charge of calf health”).

Regarding organization and leadership, the committee noted that a strong focus needs to be placed on communication between officers, committee members, regional directors and state presidents.

The Advisory Committee also suggested restructuring the organization to become more efficient and to allow everyone to focus on the same objectives. By affirming the Executive Committee as the operational management team, forming a Board of Directors to provide oversight, and reorganizing and redefining each committee’s work, the Advisory Committee noted restructuring would allow ANCW to maximize efficiencies.

Finally, the Advisory Committee suggested the adoption of the following as a vision statement:

Founded in 1952, the American National CattleWomen Inc. enthusiastically volunteers to support the well-being of beef commerce in promotion and consumer education. Operating throughout the United States, ANCW offers a wide range of benefits to members including: representation in the beef industry; personal development; leadership opportunities; collaboration; research and forums on related women’s issues. As an organization, ANCW remains fiscally strong through membership dues, financial support from contributors and grants.

Independent and progressive, ANCW is viewed as one of the beef industry’s most dynamic volunteer organizations with core values that remain constant. ANCW provides a culture of innovation with distinguished

partnerships in the beef industry that attract thousands of members and establish a strong national network of CattleWomen.

The proposals were later voted on at the ANCW general membership meeting Thursday, Feb. 2, and all passed.

Committee focus

After the opening session, a series of committee meetings took place. Below are descriptions of some of the ANCW committees and the programs and support they offer the beef industry.

National Beef Ambassador Program Committee. The most recent set of Beef Ambassador finalists have been in a whirlwind of activity. Having just returned from the Pennsylvania Farm Show, where they educated consumers about veal, the ambassadors are heading to the World Ag Expo in California to speak about the beef checkoff; the Boston Marathon, where they will be part of a focus on promoting beef in the eastern United States; and the Washington, D.C., Capitol City Barbeque Battle. The ambassadors have been trained in a workshop on nutrition, and there have been many requests for them to conduct the session.

Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee reviewed ANCW’s role as a 501(c)(6) tax-exempt organization. Committee members also discussed their goals of keeping membership informed on current issues and legislation to give every member the opportunity to get involved. To do so, they explored ways to inform members about legislative and other issues happening at the local, state and national levels.

Public Relations Committee. The Public Relations Committee discussed the best ways to get word of ANCW activities out to members and others who might be interested, including proposing stories to industry publications. They also explored ways to better mesh the ANCW Web site with that of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA), as well as where to turn for answers to tough questions posed to members by those outside the industry.

Promotion Committee. The Promotion Committee discussed the school nutrition policy [the Child Nutrition and

**Advisory Committee
proposed new
organizational
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greater efficiency
and to unify focus.**





Women's Infants and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004] that must be in effect no later than the 2006-2007 school year. This policy provides an opportunity to promote beef's health benefits.

Committee members emphasized the need of ANCW members to get involved with their local school districts in an effort to keep beef on the plate. Other ways of promoting beef were discussed, including involvement by church groups for elderly members and involvement of ANCW members with elderly relatives in assisted-care homes to ensure beef is an option.

Education Committee. The Education Committee also focused on the school

nutrition policy as a way to educate consumers, especially youth, about beef. A School Wellness Tool Kit, offered through the beef checkoff, was discussed, and a sample video for youth that promoted "power foods" was shown. The ANCW beef education resource book (available on the ANCW Web site, www.ancw.org) was discussed as a wealth of information about classroom visits, lesson plans and ways to speak to both adults and children about the benefits of beef.

National Beef Cook-Off Committee.

This committee shared media results from the 2005 National Beef Cook-Off, including a total of 2,794 media placements

throughout the entry, finalist and event/post-event phases. Placements included a variety of newspapers and magazines, including *USA Today*, the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Los Angeles Daily News*, the *Chicago Daily Herald*, the *Miami Herald* and the *Hartford Courant*. The committee noted that it had surpassed its media goal by 133%. The committee also discussed moving the contest from a host state to a host city.



Taking charge of calf health

As part of the American National CattleWomen Inc. (ANCW) "Day of Education," speakers from Schering-Plough discussed preventative measures for dealing with calf problems. Joe Roder, DVM, spoke about prevention and treatment of calf scours, while Mark Spire, DVM, discussed summer calf management.

Prevention is best option

Calf scours "is something best prevented," Roder said. "If we can prevent it, we're much further ahead." The first step to preventing calf scours is to take care of the cow.

"We need to keep her in better body condition," he said. If the cow is in better condition at calving, her calf will have a better chance of survival because of the quality and amount of colostrum produced.

Roder explained that calves are born immunologically naïve. "They depend on the colostrum they get from mama," he said.

Because the calf's ability to absorb colostrum declines to 50% within six hours after birth and is very limited 24 hours after birth, Roder stressed that the calf needs to receive at least 1 quart of colostrum in the first six hours of life. Only then, he said, "can we feel confident that the immunity mama has, has been fairly adequately transferred to her calf."

The most important thing to remember in treating scours is "fluids, fluids, fluids," Roder said. "Our goal is to replace the body weight lost." Oral fluid therapy, similar to that used on humans with diarrhea, is available for cattle.

Roder cautioned against pulling milk away because calves need the fluid, energy and protein to battle the various scours-causing viruses and bacteria.

Other methods of prevention, Roder explained, are segregation and isolation. "We want to keep calves separated by age," he said. In addition, sick calves should be worked last, and all equipment and clothing should be kept clean and disinfected.

Managing calves in summer

Spire, technical service manager for Schering-Plough, discussed summer management methods for beef calves, noting the importance of focusing on management practices that allow a calf to reach its genetic potential.

The first step of summer management is vaccination, he said. He advised against vaccinating calves at weaning time, since the body's reaction to the stress of separation would outweigh any vaccination benefits.

"I don't do anything at weaning if I can avoid it," he said.

Implants are another option, he said, that "can move animals beyond what their genetic potential is." However, he cautioned producers against implanting heifers too early and against implanting bulls meant for reproduction.

Castration and dehorning are both procedures that can create uniformity in a group of calves. "The earlier, the better" applies for each, he said.

The average age for castration is around 70 days, while the average age for dehorning is about 130 days. "Do it when it's easiest," he said. "Do it when they're small."

About 73% of producers use some form of parasite control, Spire noted, but fewer people use control for internal parasites, because internal parasites can't be seen.

Of the money spent on animal health, he said, "parasite control is the biggest percentage by far." However, he warned, "when we treat and what we treat with vary across the United States."

Other tools Spire suggested included trace mineral programs, creep-feeding and early weaning. Of the summer management options, in general, he said, "Almost all of these are going to give us a positive return on investment." For more suggestions and information on these management programs, view the PowerPoint® demonstration accessible in the newsroom at www.4cattlemen.com or contact Spire at (785) 537-3857.

