



The official publication of the Utah Cattlemen's Association



Our industry continues to see strong support and high demand for the products we produce. As of mid-June 2025, the U.S. beef market is navigating a complex landscape shaped by high seasonal demand, tight cattle supplies, and strong consumer preferences. While prices remain relatively stable, the underlying market dynamics suggest we take a cautious outlook for the remainder of the year.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has revised its 2025 beef

production forecast downward to 26.423 billion pounds, mainly due to a slower-than-expected pace of fed cattle slaughter. This adjustment reflects ongoing supply concerns, particularly in feeder cattle availability, which are expected to tighten further into 2026. The USDA projects a 5% year-over-year decline in beef production for 2026, highlighting the long-term implications of current herd contraction trends.

These pressures are caused by several years of drought conditions across the main cattle-producing regions. This has led to herd liquidation and reduced numbers of breeding stock. Although weather patterns have improved in some areas, the rebuilding of herds is a slow process, and producers remain cautious amid uncertain feed costs and market volatility.

According to the latest USDA data and industry reports, live cattle prices have held steady, trading mostly between \$2.35 and \$2.36 per pound in early June. This stability is notable given the tight supply environment and reflects balanced market fundamentals. Weekly slaughter numbers have also remained pretty steady, with approximately 582,000 head processed last week, up slightly from the previous week.

In the boxed beef market, prices for various cuts have shown mixed trends. Premium cuts such as strip loins, top butts, and tenderloins have

continued to rise, driven by strong seasonal demand from foodservice and retail sectors. Analysts expect these prices to remain elevated through late June before possibly easing in early July.

Ground beef markets have also experienced fluctuations. While the 80/20 blend traded down in early June, it has since rebounded, with analysts predicting a steady market through the summer grilling season. This reflects strong consumer demand for affordable beef options amid broader inflationary pressures.

Cattle futures markets reflect cautious optimism, with traders weighing current supply constraints against potential demand shifts. The long-term outlook remains bullish for producers who can weather short-term volatility, especially as herd rebuilding efforts begin to take shape.

Corn prices, a key input for cattle feeding operations, have also influenced market sentiment. While recent declines in corn futures have provided some relief, feed costs remain a critical factor in profitability calculations for cattle feeders.

On the demand side, consumer interest in beef remains strong, particularly for popular grilling cuts during the summer months. Retail promotions and food service activity have supported steady movement of

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UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY 7-9	CATTLE INDUSTRY SUMMER BUSINESS MEETING - SAN DIEGO, CA
JULY 9-10	USU EXTENSION MEAT & POULTRY HACCP WORKSHOP - LOGAN, UT
JULY 22-23	USU EXTENSION FOOD SANITATION WORKSHOP - LOGAN, UT
AUG 1	LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD APPLICATION DEADLINE - PAGE 11
AUG 20-21	WESTERN RANCH MANAGEMENT ACADEMY - LOGAN, UT
SEP 4-14	UTAH STATE FAIR
SEP 12	ANNUAL BEEF FEAST AT STATE FAIR
SEP 20	AG DAY BARBECUE - LOGAN, UT - PAGE 5

President's Message Continued

product, even as overall food inflation continues to impact household budgets.

There is also growing interest in value-added and branded beef products, which offer differentiation in a competitive retail environment. Sustainability and animal welfare remain important considerations for consumers, influencing purchasing decisions and shaping industry practices.

The U.S. beef market in June 2025 is characterized by a delicate balance between tight supplies and resilient demand. While prices have remained stable in the short term, the outlook for the second half of the year and into 2026 suggests continued challenges for producers and processors alike.

With herd rebuilding still in its early stages and feed costs remaining a concern, the industry must navigate a path forward that balances profitability with long-term sustainability. For consumers, the summer grilling season offers a wide array of beef options, though prices may remain elevated for premium cuts. As always, adaptability and strategic planning will be key for stakeholders across the beef supply chain in the months ahead.

Jeff Young - UCA President



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Utah State University Extension has joined with Intermountain Farmers Association (IFA) to establish an ongoing ranch management seminar series focused on the Intermountain West. The series will provide high-quality educational opportunities for ranchers and allied industry professionals. We will hold one more seminar in 2025, and four in 2026.

Managing Wildlife as Part of the Ranch Operation Portfolio
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Wed 1-7pm
Thurs 8-12PM
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Key topics:

- Science-based Wildlife Management for Working Lands
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- Finding Opportunities to Benefit from Wildlife on Your Operation
- Mitigating Wildlife Damage and Livestock Predation
- Building a Resilient Ranch through Wildlife Conservation

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How Long Is Too Long?

By Dr. David Secrist, PhD - Beef Extension Specialist Utah State University



With July upon us, the bulls are turned out and have hopefully been working very hard the last few weeks. If the cows calved on time

and were in good shape at calving, they are probably bred by now. That begs the question: What is the cow worth that was bred on the first day of the breeding season, as opposed to the cow that was bred much later? Additionally, how long should that breeding season be?

I realize that some of you don't have the option to pull bulls off the range after 60 or 90 days, and even if you did, what about the neighbors? Despite that, I would like to talk a little about the length of the breeding season and its effect on profitability.

The recent CattleFax cow-calf survey indicated that 45% of operations calved out 75% of their cows in the first 45 days of the breeding season. Does your operation track this metric?

Cattle Fax also sorts the operations into three groups based on their profitability in the last year (high, average, and low). Not surprisingly, most high-profitability producers completed calving within 45 days. How do early breeding cows make an operation more profitable?

With that question in mind, I put together a model to evaluate the change in value per calf as the percentage of cows calving in the first 45 days changes. I made the following assumptions: A 500-pound calf is worth \$4.00 per pound, and the

slide is \$0.40/pound. The calves were weaned at 8 months of age after a 90-day calving season.

To start with, the calf born on the first day of the calving season was 180 pounds heavier than the calf born on the last day. Figuring in the slide, the older calf brought back \$382 more! I think it is safe to assume that the cow calving later absorbed just as much cost as the early calver. If so, that's a \$382 difference in value derived from those two cows.

Assuming a baseline where 80% of cows calve within the first 45 days, the average weaning weight of calves decreases by 4.5 pounds for every 1% decline in the early calving rate. That amounts to a tax of nearly \$10.00/calf or \$9.00/cow for a five-percentage point move down. That's not just a tax on the late calvers but on every cow and calf in the herd.

The bottom line is that late-calving cows are robbing many ranchers of their profitability. Once a cow calves later, she will likely always calve later, making it very difficult to change the trend.

So, what can be done to improve the breeding/calving window? At risk of leaving some things out, I will give you several ideas:

1. Reproduction is the most critical aspect of successful ranching. Select cows that fit your environment. Selection for growth and carcass quality should not come at the expense of reproductive performance.

2. Match your management plan to fit your environment. Your cow's highest nutritional needs should be matched with the highest and best forage production.

3. Maintain body condition such that your cows calve in a body condition of 5 or better. Adhering to point #2 will help you do this more economically.

4. Consider calving your heifers two to four weeks ahead of your cow-herd. This allows them extra time to get in synch with the calving season.

5. Cull for poor reproductive performance. Culling open cows is most always a good practice, but cull late calving cows whenever your stocking rate allows it.

6. Ensure that your vaccination program is protecting you from disease issues that may be causing cows to slip an early pregnancy.

7. Ensure that your bulls are in good condition and can breed when the time comes. A thorough Breeding Soundness Exam for each bull is a must.

Have a great summer! Remember the greatness of our country as you celebrate the nation's 249th birthday with gratitude for those who have sacrificed much for all to pursue our life's passions and enjoy the fruits of freedom!

Please feel free to reach out anytime. david.secris@usu.edu



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Finalized 10-Year Sage Grouse Study Confirms Benefits of Grazing

The University of Idaho released the finalized results of their 10-year study looking into the impacts of grazing on greater sage grouse populations. The study concluded that cattle grazing does not negatively impact greater sage grouse and can only benefit the species through building robust habitat, increasing forage, and reducing invasive grasses that lead to catastrophic wildfires.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), the Idaho Cattle Association (ICA), the Public Lands Council (PLC) and the Idaho Public Lands Council (IPLC) have all highlighted the benefits of grazing and pushed back against anti-grazing myths for decades, making this landmark study a must point of reference moving forward for anyone questioning the benefits of grazing on wildlife.

"America's public lands ranchers knew that livestock production has supported sage grouse populations since our ancestors started ranching in the 1800s but we never had the comprehensive, long-term data to back up what we all took as common knowledge. This study finally proves what ranchers have been saying all along – livestock grazing benefits wildlife, native grasses and the overall landscape. This study also shows that the work and expertise of local stakeholders, including University researchers and federal grazing permittees, is crucial for conserving wildlife populations. Ranchers appreciate the decade of research conducted by the University of Idaho to reiterate the benefits of public lands ranching," said PLC President Tim Canterbury.

"For years, those with ulterior motives have perpetuated the myth that cattle production negatively impact-

ed sage grouse populations. Nothing could be further from the truth and anyone that has worked on a cattle operation with or without grouse nesting knows that grazing improves rangeland health and with it the wildlife that live on working lands. This study is another example of how cattle producers are the original conservationists and grazing cattle is a key component to maintaining the health of America's treasured natural resources. Thank you to the University of Idaho for spending so much time debunking the unscientific myth that cattle grazing harms native wildlife," said NCBA President Buck Wehrbein.

"When University of Idaho approached us about the idea of this project, we were supportive. As ranchers in grouse country, we have been seeing firsthand the healthy relationship between grouse and cattle for years, and were intrigued by the idea of having scientific data to validate what we have witnessed. Knowing the importance of the study, Idaho Public Land Council approached the National Public Lands Council (PLC) with a grant application to support the project. With PLC and Idaho Cattle Association (ICA) support, as well as many other partners, the 10 year study was completed. We are not surprised by the results, and believe the results in this important research will be a critical component in future grouse management moving forward. We commend the University of Idaho and US Geological service for pushing this across the finish line!" said Idaho Public Lands (IPLC) Board member and research partner Darcy Helmick.

"Idaho beef producers are deeply committed stewards of the land and wildlife, managing rangelands with care, knowledge, and generational experience. Their responsible grazing practices not only support thriving ecosystems and native species but also enhance soil health, promote biodiversity, and reduce wildfire risk—making beef cattle an essential part of a balanced, resilient Western landscape. We are pleased that this research reinforces that life-long work and that producers now have this data to substantiate the practice of grazing," said ICA President Spencer Black.

Background

Last year, preliminary results of this 10-year study, led by University of Idaho Professor Courtney Conway, were released confirming that grazing benefits sage grouse populations and has no negative effects on nesting success. The finalized study reiterates the preliminary data that supports the benefits of grazing including:

- Increasing the biomass and diversity of insect species for food.
- Reducing the risk of wildfire that can kill sage grouse and destroy habitat.
- Reducing the volume of cheat-grass and other invasive grasses that degrade the sagebrush biome.



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Utah Cattlewomen's Association



The Utah Cattlewomen recently hosted the ANCW Region VI meetings. Region VI encompasses California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Hawaii. The region varies in all aspects of lifestyle, climate, and beef production.

I was impressed with the understanding each of the women brought to the meeting. Some are very knowledgeable about politics and events happening within the market. Some are very educated in non-cattle areas and love the ranch lifestyle. Others want to educate everyone about beef and how it enhances the world. There are also those that work daily in the elements to make their ranches successful. The meetings provided training, information, innovation, entertainment, friendship, and enthusiasm for the beef industry.

During the business portion of the meeting, we learned about PRF (pasture rangeland forage), LRP (livestock risk protection) and other insurance measures. We were informed on how the Beef Checkoff and the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion & Re-

search Board are working to keep beef as the top protein to include in a healthy diet. Tips and tricks for keeping a meeting organized and on track were followed with each state reporting on its' accomplishments.

Utah's new beef ambassadors, Ashlyn Orton, Brookly Flint and past ambassador, Adarely Lazos-Yanez, gave presentations to make us all proud. We also enjoyed the musical talents of Kaden Miner while eating Pas-kett's Pit BBQ.

Thursday afternoon and Friday consisted of the WIRED (Women in Ranching Education & Development) portion of the week. This is an opportunity for hands-on learning devoid of judgement or yelling.

Representatives from MERCK Animal Health, Moly Manufacturing, FerAppease, Utah State University, Utah Farm Bureau, as well as our own Jacob Schmidt, came to educate us on proper vaccination methods, mental health, succession planning, safety, "new cuts" recipes, and engaging with USDA and Congress.

The Beef Tallow Demonstration by Q bar S; Suzanne & Quinci Siddoway was a huge hit. Working the Silencer chute was well received and those skills were used in the afternoon to vaccinate and apply parasite control to yearling cattle. There was also the opportunity to be up-close



with Breed'n Betsy (an artificial breeding simulator) presented by Chance Marshall. Of course, there was a trade show

Thank you to all our sponsors and those that set up booths. The event was a great success due to the hard work of our UCWA officers and volunteers! It is true that many hands make light work. We are so blessed to have the people in our circles that make ranching successful and enjoyable.

Recently, I was working cattle with my husband, son, and son-in-law. The facility looked great from the outside, but the reality was that it was built to be used in a specific way for a specific purpose. The gate latches were to be operated from atop a horse by a long-armed cowboy. Belting was secured on the top rail with twisted smooth wire that was cut so that it was guaranteed to cause injury to the errant hand.

The belting was positioned for mature cows and bulls in the alleyways and pens to keep them from seeing what was happening on the other side. However, we were sorting pairs.



Small calves had the opportunity to go under the intended barrier and caused us a little angst. One pen was unusable due to the dividing cables being very loose. Now, at various times, this facility has been overstuffed, and the gates bow out a little. Because of the latch position, sometimes extra force needs to be exerted while leaning into the gate to open and shut it. This all combined to make us think about the process at hand and how it was to be accomplished without undue stress to man or beast. Two of us were gate keepers and on foot. I refer to the position of the latches mentioned above. Needless to say, there were a few pinched fingers with forceful words clouding the air.

We successfully sorted calves and cows and were ready for the trucks to arrive with a mere two-hour wait, 90-degree heat, no shade, and nowhere to go.

As I sat listening to the conversation, it drifted from 4-wheelers, the condition of the cattle, the price of the cattle, the threats of predators both two and four-legged, until it came to rest on the blessings of our lifestyle. Truly it is evident when cattlemen and cattlemen gather that their conversations eventually evolve to the blessings of our way of life. And, those blessings include the good, the bad, the ugly, and the "we will laugh about this later" moments.

-Kitty Young

Utah Brand Renewals

All registered brands in Utah must be renewed by the end of 2025.

You should have received a notice in the mail. If you did not, please call the brand office at (801) 982-2240.

Brand holders may choose to register their brand for either a five or ten-year term.



Thank you to the sponsors of our Region VI and WIRED Meetings!



Big Returns from Targeted Digital Campaign

This spring, the Beef Checkoff partnered with a leading national retailer on a targeted digital marketing campaign to promote beef to health-conscious shoppers. The campaign, ran from March 3 to April 13, 2025 and focused on wellness-themed messaging highlighting beef as a delicious and nutritious part of a balanced diet.

National Results

The campaign generated **74 million impressions** nationwide. This means beef messages were seen 74 million times by consumers during the six-week period. The results were impressive.

We saw **\$23.2M in incremental beef sales** which was a **\$59.37 incremental return on ad spend** (aka ROI). The retailer took a group of their shoppers who were served our BIWFD ads and bought beef (our test group) and compared their sales numbers to the same number of shoppers who were NOT served our ad and bought beef (a control group) and then compared the two groups. The test group bought an additional \$23.2M in beef compared to the control group.

In total, the campaign resulted in **\$238 million in attributable beef sales**, from beef purchased by households that were served our ads and bought beef within 14 days. That translates to an incredible **\$608.62 return on investment for every dollar spent**.

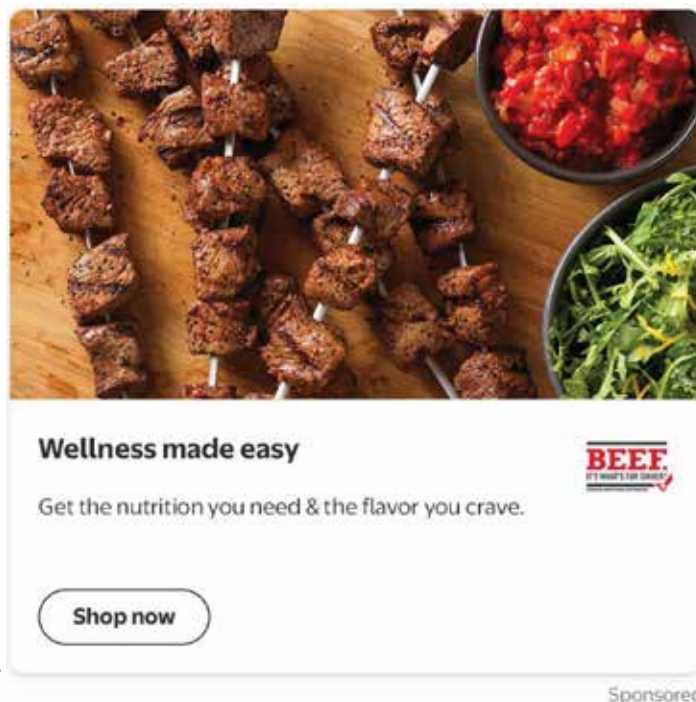
Utah Results



The Utah Beef Council provided an additional \$10,000 investment made by Utah beef producers. The campaign delivered **1.91 million digital ad impressions** to consumers throughout the state. These impressions led to **\$4,578,249 in attributable beef sales**, which equals a **\$457 return for every dollar spent**.

This campaign demonstrates that national campaigns, paired with targeted state investments, can drive meaningful results and get more beef from the store to the plates of consumers.

Campaign visuals and messaging focused on beef's nutritional value, flavor, and versatility. They were designed to connect with today's health-focused consumer and inspire purchase at the point of decision. These kinds of high-impact promotions demonstrate how your checkoff dollars work to protect and grow beef demand in today's competitive retail environment.





Conservation Pays in Utah



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Photo by Dot Jensen, Utah Farm Bureau.

If you or someone you know is a Utah landowner committed to conservation on working land, we invite your application for the Leopold Conservation Award! The \$10,000 award honors farmers, ranchers and forestland owners who go above and beyond in their management of soil health, water quality and wildlife habitat.

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