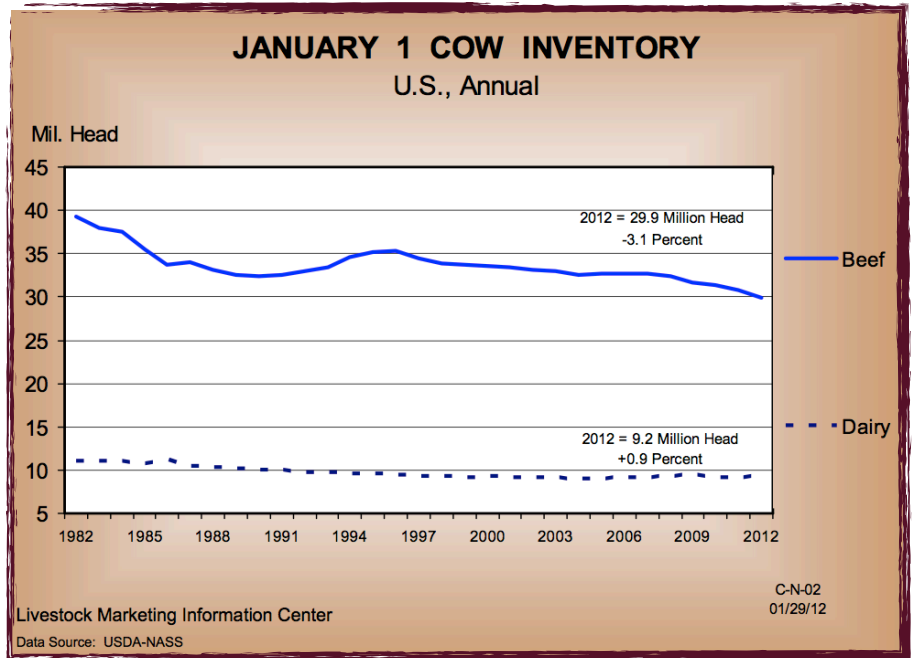


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## U.S. Cowherd down 3%, but signs of expansion

The USDA released its January 1 Cattle Inventory report on January 27th. As expected, the beef cowherd was down. The figure above shows there are now 29.9 million beef cows in the U.S., down 3% or 1 million cows from Jan 1, 2011. A great deal of this decline was due to the [drought](#) in Texas.

The cowherd is at a 50-year low in terms of size. While the cowherd is down, retained heifers are up 1% suggesting that expansion is on the way. With heifer retention comes further pressure on beef supplies, and likely higher prices until those

retained heifers start producing calves (in 2015).

If you are interested in finding graphs like the one above, it is available for free from the [Livestock Marketing Information Center](#).

What is Canada's beef cowherd size? Statistics Canada will release its Cattle Statistics report on February 21st. There were 4.27 million beef cows as of Jan 1, 2011. You can view these report(s) for free by [clicking here](#).

### In this Issue

U.S. Cowherd Down 3%	1
WBDC Research Update	2
Feed Testing Publication	3
Smartphone Savvy	3
2011 COP Recruitment	3
Upcoming Events	3



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## WBDC Research Update

- Pellet Supplementation for Steers on Mature Crested Wheatgrass (CWG) Pasture - Graduate student Federico Añez (Supervisors: Drs. Bart Lardner and John McKinnon) [presented](#) Year 1 results from his study at the Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference last month. Forty-five steers (736 lb avg) grazed mature CWG from August 3 to October 12 (70 d). Two groups (n=15) were supplemented with by-product feed pellets at 0.6% x BW, while the third group was not supplemented (control group). The pellet formulations were equal in CP and TDN, but one pellet was low-starch and one high-starch. The steers fed pellets gained over 3 lb/d while the control steers gained only 2.2 lb/d. The cost of gain was \$0.34/lb for the high-starch pellet and \$0.36/lb for the low-starch pellet. The pellets were valued at \$173/MT for the low-starch and \$166/MT for the high-starch. Results suggest that strategically blended by-product feeds can enhance performance of yearlings grazing mature pasture.



Steer weigh day, August 2011.  
Photo credit: Russ Klitch

- Grazing Standing Corn - Five different RoundUp Ready varieties of corn were seeded June 1, 2011 on land west of Termuende Research Ranch. We granular fertilized 5 d prior to seeding at a rate of 120 lb actual N/ac. Crop production costs ranged from \$203-\$220/acre (variation due to different prices for seed). Dry matter yield ranged from 4-5.7 ton/acre. Sixty cows were turned out on the corn on November 19th; additional cows have been added to the corn as they came off other trials. There are currently about 90 cows grazing the corn. The cows are moved every 2 d; access is controlled with electric fence. When all five varieties have been grazed, further analysis will be conducted and shared. This project was funded through ADOPT. A larger-scale 3 year project funded by ADF & ALMA will begin later this year.



Corn at Termuende, December 2, 2011.  
Photo credit: Russ Klitch



Cows on corn, December 2, 2011.  
Photo credit: Russ Klitch

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## Upcoming Events

february

feb/march

6 & 8

Breeding for Profit - Bull Selection Workshops  
Alameda & Maple Creek

[Poster](#)

10

Rancher Day...Improving Your Bottom Line!  
Moose Jaw, SK

[Poster](#)

10

Moose Mountain Ag Days  
Arcola, SK

[Poster](#)

21 february

Statistics Canada  
Cattle Statistics Report  
Release Date

[Website](#)

1 march

Sask Beef Review  
Deadline for Written Submissions

[Website](#)

28-30

2012 SIA Conference & Annual Meeting  
Yorkton, SK

[Brochure](#)

Want to receive the WBDC e-newsletter?

Simply email us at [info.wbdc@pami.ca](mailto:info.wbdc@pami.ca) and ask to be added to the listserv



Connect with us on [YouTube!](#)  
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Juanita Kopp (Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives)

## Feed Testing - Know What You've Got!

A group effort by the SK Forage Council, SK Ministry of Agriculture, WCVN and FACS has put together an informative publication on the importance of feed testing. To read the publication, [click here](#).



## 2011 Cost of Production

Data collection for the 2011 Cost of Production Study begins February 6th! Western Beef's economist, Kathy Larson, will be traveling around Saskatchewan to collect producer data until April. There are currently 40 operations signed up.

If you are interested in being in the study, there still is time to get on the list. To find out more about the study, [click here!](#)

## Smartphone Savvy

Western Beef now has its own barcode that can be scanned by a smartphone to help easily direct people to our website. We will be adding this barcode to all of our printed materials - Fact Sheets, brochures, posters, etc.