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News Release
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Global Conference Advances Beef Sustainability

Global Conference on Sustainable Beef a Success in Banff Springs, Alberta, Canada

BANFF, Alberta, October 14, 2016 – Advancing zero deforestation in beef production, assessing the overall sustainability of the beef value chain and connecting consumers and sustainability were just a few of the topics discussed at the 2016 Global Conference on Sustainable Beef (GCSB) held October 4–7 at the Fairmont Hotel in Banff Springs, Alberta, Canada. Nearly 225 beef value chain stakeholders from 15 countries around the world participated in seminars and moderated discussions focused on advocating for continuous improvement in the global beef value chain. The Conference was co-hosted by the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB) and the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB).

“We were delighted with the mixture of people that attended the conference,” said Dennis Laycraft, president of the GRSB. “We covered a number of critical industry topics on beef sustainability and fostered discussions that brought people together. With that, I think we achieved what we had hoped for – we are bringing more interest and recognition to sustainability and the role of the beef industry.”

The Conference, themed “Building On Experience: Regionally and Globally,” offered more than 15 interactive sessions and 50 presentations on areas of beef sustainability and continuous improvement. Dr. David Hughes, Emeritus Professor of Food Marketing at Imperial College London, began the Conference with a keynote presentation entitled “What Do You Want with Your Beef,” which addressed the history of consumer consumption and marketing of beef and current consumer expectations of the industry. Regional roundtables, including the U.S., Canada and Brazil among others, gave presentations on how they are adapting sustainable beef practices within their geographical areas and measuring the impact on a local level. Panel discussions provided a sounding board for open dialogue on beef sustainability practices and progress throughout the world.

“Canada was honored to co-host this forward-thinking conference and pleased to showcase the work being done here,” said Cherie Copithorne-Barnes, a rancher from Alberta and Chair of the CRSB. “The conference was a great opportunity to exchange information and learn from our global partners and stakeholders.”

During the Global Conference, the CRSB launched its National Beef Sustainability Assessment and Strategy. The Assessment is a farm to fork study examining the environmental, social and economic performance of the Canadian beef industry. The Sustainability Strategy sets goals, baselines, key performance indicators and action items to help the CRSB target its efforts and move sustainability forward.

“The sustainability of agri-food systems is critical as consumers look for safe, healthy and affordable food that is raised in an environmentally sound, socially responsible and economically viable way,” said Fawn Jackson, Executive Director of the CRSB. “The Assessment provides the CRSB with a benchmark and important communication tool as we implement the Sustainability Strategy.”

The CRSB also held its annual general meeting (AGM) on October 7. The AGM saw the election of the following individuals to Council, the CRSB’s governing body:

- **Bob Lowe**, Canadian Cattlemen’s Association and Alberta Beef Producers, and **Greg Bowie**, Alberta Beef Producers, Producer/Processor Organization seats.
- **Frank Middleton**, Processor seat.
- **Jeff Fitzpatrick-Stilwell**, McDonald’s Canada, Retail and Food Service seat.
- **Tim Hardman**, World Wildlife Fund, non-governmental organization seat.
- **Jodi Banks**, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, and **Sean Royer**, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry were both appointed by Council to the ex-officio seats.
- **Cherie Copithorne-Barnes**, Chair of the CRSB.

“The Canadian Roundtable has shown practical examples of beef sustainability at the conference,” added Ruairaidh Petre, executive director of the GRSB. “They are actually putting GRSB’s criteria and principles, which are very high level, into more practical implementation on the ground. But even beyond that, they are also demonstrating how you measure the impact.”

In 2014, the GRSB held its first ever Global Conference on Sustainable Beef in Sao Paulo, Brazil. At the Conference, GRSB adopted five core principles that define global sustainable beef including natural resources; people & the community; animal health & welfare; food; and efficiency & innovation. These principles were at the center of discussion during the Conference in Banff, as members presented efforts to contribute to sustainable practices on a local level in the production, processing, and merchandising of beef.

Membership of GRSB spans five constituency groups: beef producers & producer organizations; civil societies (non-governmental organizations); retailers; processors and commerce; as well as the regional beef roundtables from around the world. GRSB also provides the ability for observers to be a part of all functions.

“The conference is critical not only to the beef industry but to consumers as well,” said Petre. “It brings the beef industry together to share ideas and learn of how sustainable practices are being implemented around the world. It also allows us to address consumer interest around sustainable beef. Consumers may not be directly involved in the industry, but they have questions. And we want to engage in that conversation, we have been able to demonstrate that we are working on it, we are on top of it, and we are coming up with solutions and are able to show them what it looks like in a local context.”

Video presentations from the Conference will soon be made available online. For more information on the Global Conference for Sustainable Beef and GRSB, please visit www.grsbeef.org. To join the conversation online, follow #GCSbeef16.

For more information on the CRSB’s National Beef Sustainability Assessment and Strategy, visit <http://crsb.ca/our-work/sustainability-benchmark/>.

About GRSB

The Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef is a global, multi-stakeholder initiative developed to advance continuous improvement in sustainability of the global beef value chain through leadership, science and multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration. GRSB envisions a world in which all aspects of the beef value chain are environmentally sound, socially responsible and economically viable.

About CRSB

The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) is a multi-stakeholder organization focused on advancing sustainability efforts within the Canadian beef industry. The CRSB is the go-to forum on sustainable beef in Canada. It has defined ‘sustainable beef’ and is rapidly setting the parameters for what sustainable beef will look like.

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