



Thomson Meats Hires New CEO

Thomson Meats, home of the Saskatchewan Toll Processing Centre, has appointed Paul Kowdrysh as the new CEO to help advance its operations and build the province's meat processing industry.

"Paul has experience nationally and internationally as a turnaround specialist assisting organizations in developing profitable ventures," said Catherine Folkersen, the Food Industry Unit Manager with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food. "He has a terrific resume in the area of turning around companies in both Asia and North America, so we're feeling extremely fortunate to attract this level of expertise to Saskatchewan."

As the new CEO of Thomson Meats, part of Kowdrysh's responsibilities will be to increase the client base for the Toll Processing Centre and expand the province's value-added meat processing sector at the same time.

"Getting into the food processing industry can be very expensive," Folkersen noted. "Our goal has been to make that process easier and more feasible for people who want to take a raw commodity — grown or raised here in Saskatchewan — and turn it into a value-



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added product they can then market on the world stage. The Centre is the first step in that effort."

The Saskatchewan Toll Processing Centre is a federally registered processing plant. It was

established at Thomson Meats as part of the Government of Saskatchewan's \$3.3 million Meat Processing Strategy, announced in 2005.

Entrepreneurs who have an idea for a value-added meat product can have it processed into a final state without having to construct a separate facility. Consequently, this will allow entrepreneurs to focus their efforts on further developing markets for new consumer products.

Clients enter into a contract with the centre to have their products processed on a custom processing fee basis. Clients can provide the raw product to the centre if it comes from a federally registered facility, or the centre can simply procure it on their behalf. The client then arranges for the final product to be picked up when processing is complete.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Thomson Meats in Melfort at 306-752-2802; or
- Contact Catherine Folkersen, Manager, Food Industry Unit, SAF at 1-306-933-5768, or e-mail cfolkersen@agr.gov.sk.ca.

SHOULD YOU CONSIDER RETAINED OWNERSHIP FOR YOUR CALVES?



By Grant Zalinko
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SAF

Low feed grain prices and a low Canadian dollar relative to the United States' dollar through much of the previous decade supported strong prices for most classes of feeder cattle. In response, cattle producers marketed the majority of their calf crop during the fall calf run. The increase in feed grain prices during the final quarter of 2006 increased cost of gain for cattle feeders and resulted in declining feeder cattle prices. As the price spread between feeder and finished cattle has narrowed, producers need to carefully assess their cattle marketing strategy for 2007.

When comparing the price of barley FOB Lethbridge, Alberta for corresponding weeks in July 2006 to July 2007, the price has increased \$80 per tonne (\$1.74 per bushel) and resulted in increased cost of finishing a yearling steer by approximately \$100. Consequently, cattle feeders are purchasing heavier feeder cattle to reduce the number of days cattle are on feed in the feedlot. Lighter calves will continue to be purchased, but the cost of a feeder calf will

reflect the increase in cost of gain resulting from higher feed grain prices. Therefore, 2007 may be a good year to consider retaining ownership of lighter feeder cattle, while marketing heavier calves to meet fall cash flow requirements.

Several factors need to be considered regarding the decision to retain ownership of calves. Financial partners, including your lender and accountant, should be consulted to determine cash flow requirements and taxation implications of delayed cattle marketings into the subsequent year. On-farm feed resources, facilities and labour are important factors that should be assessed if producers are considering feeding their own calves. Alternatively, producers can choose to utilize the services of custom feedlot operators. Saskatchewan's cattle feeding industry includes several custom feedlots. Producers should contact the Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association for a current listing.



SAF's regional network of Livestock Development Specialists can help beef cattle producers to evaluate cattle marketing and feeding strategies. Producers are encouraged to contact their local specialist early this fall for planning assistance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit www.agr.gov.sk.ca and click on Regional Development Teams/Offices & Locations to contact your local Livestock Development Specialist; or
- Contact Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association at 306-382-2333; or
- E-mail office@saskcattle.com; or
- Visit www.saskcattle.com.

