

Wisconsin Grass-fed Beef Cooperative Annual Meeting

Held at Wintergreen Resort on February 11th, 2023.

Introduction- President Brett Danke called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Rod Ofte introduced the members of the Board of Directors and the Management Team. There were 52 members from 23 farms in attendance. Each farm gave a brief introduction of themselves.

Approve 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes- Greg Nowicki, Secretary provided the minutes from the 2022 Annual Meeting in a written newsletter sent to all members in January. Motion by Bob Pesz to approve the minutes, second by Russ Endres. MC

Guest Speaker- Jason Cavadini, who is a WGBC member and the State Grazing Specialist, gave a presentation on grazing and soil fertility.

Board Member Nominations and Election Results- Three seats were open for election. Darren Yahnke had decided not to run again, and Brett thanked him for his service on the Board. Russ Endres and Dan Wiederholt ran for re-election. Nominations were taken from the floor. Nominated were Kerry Barnett and Mel Abel. Russ, Dan, and Kerry were elected to two-year terms.

2022 Summary- Rod Ofte – General Manager, presented a summary and highlights of 2022. Sales were up 16% and over \$3 million for the first time in Co-op history.

2023 Business Approach- For 2023, the Co-op is looking for a 15% increase in sales to \$3.5 million.

Strategic Planning Update- Tera Johnson gave an update on the strategic planning that her and her team have been doing with the Board of Directors. She highlighted what they did, what they learned and developed 3 strategic objectives for 2022-2027 and a leadership succession plan. The strategic objectives are to grow digital sales to \$1.25 million and pork sales to \$250,000 by 2027 and to build trim sales outside our region to increase carcass utilization and gross margin.

Website and social media- Angie Lindloff gave an update on the websites and social media. She highlighted the 2022 marketing plan that involves funds from the USDA grant and the 2023 marketing plan.

B2C and Procurement Update- Josh Miner gave an update on the 2022 B2C sales and the projected 2023 B2C sales. He then highlighted the 2022 cattle procurement numbers. Over 1000 head were shipped to the Co-op in 2022 and approximately 1/3 of them graded choice.

Awards Presentation- Rod presented the “Jon Lee-WGBC Member of the Year Award to Russ Endres. The WGBC Service Award was awarded to Paul Beskar.

Guest Speaker- UW Professor Randy Jackson gave a presentation on the Grassland 2.0 Project. The aim of the project is to restore grazing’s role in the future of agriculture.

Sponsors- Sponsors of the meeting this year were Lorentz Meats, Byron Seed, Nordik Meats, WI Farmers Union, and The Grassland 2.0 Project.

Adjournment- The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm. Members turned in their surveys in exchange for a box of steaks. A social hour was held in the Wintergreen Bar with complimentary food and drinks.