

The Gold Standard



Latest News and Developments



July 2005 — Issue #2

NEWS

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Retained Ownership – A Profitable Alternative?

Producers face many decisions when it comes to strategic marketing opportunities for their calves. One option for producers to consider is retained ownership. [Read more...](#)

PRODUCER PROFILE

Marketing Advantages with the Pfizer Gold Program

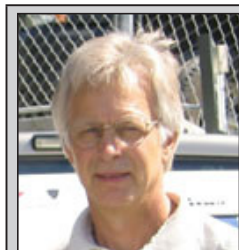


Stephen Cook

Four years ago cattle producer Stephen Cook along with his brothers of Triple C Charolais had to make a decision about their herd management strategies. They wanted a vaccination program that would cover a wide range and protect the healthiness of their herd. It was then that their veterinarian recommended the Pfizer Gold program. [Read more...](#)

ASK YOUR VETERINARIAN

Dr. Bruce Kay has been in veterinary practice for 28 years at Williams Lake in the heart of the Cariboo-Chilcotin region of British Columbia. The area is comprised primarily of commercial cow-calf operations. Dr. Kay answers questions that he has been asked by a few of his clients regarding such issues as Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) infection, loss in calves on range and how producers can help to ensure the Canadian herd maintains its minimal risk status for BSE. [Read more...](#)



Dr. Bruce Kay
Williams Lake
Veterinary Hospital

SURVEY



We hope you enjoyed the second issue of The Gold Standard. As this is a new feature for Pfizer Gold customers, we would like to know what you liked and did not like about The Gold Standard. Your feedback is very important to us. [Read more...](#)

Pfizer Gold Cattle Listings Now Available for Posting!

Take advantage of promoting your Pfizer Gold calves - let us help you attract potential buyers! It's as easy as the click of a mouse!

As a valued Pfizer Gold producer we are providing an easy tool to promote your Pfizer Gold calves to potential buyers. This is a new way for you to let buyers know when and where you are selling your Pfizer Gold calves.

How do I add my Pfizer Gold calves to the Cattle Listings section of the website?

- Visit the Pfizer Gold website at www.pfizergold.com
- Click on the "Cattle Listings" tab at the top of the home page
- Click "add your own cattle listing" – A form will be displayed that will allow you to **fill out key details** such as sale location, sales agent and more!

You can even **add comments** with any additional information you feel will help with the sale of your animals for potential buyers. Plus you can **include up to 2 digital photos!**

After you have filled out the form Pfizer will promote your calves on the Pfizer Gold website for up to 30 days before the sale until the day after the sale.

Please post your listing a **minimum of 72 hours prior** to the sale date to allow for the design and development of your custom page.

Looking for a sale?

Use our search guide in the Cattle Listings section of the website to find Pfizer Gold cattle sales. Click "search the Pfizer Gold Cattle listings" – We offer 3 search options:

- By region using the drop-down menu to the left.
- By type (ie. Steers, etc.) using the drop-down menu to the left.
- Click on "Show all listings" to view all current listings.

If you have any questions or need further assistance please contact your local Pfizer Territory Manager or call **1-866-GOLD-007 (1-866-465-3007)**.

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NEWS

Pfizer Introduces the Next Generation in BVD Protection Now Part of Pfizer Gold

Kirkland, Quebec – July 15, 2005: Pfizer Animal Health has set a new standard for Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) protection with the development of Bovi-Shield® GOLD™, an advanced line of modified-live cattle vaccines.

“Bovi-Shield GOLD is the result of the addition of a Canadian Type 2 strain of BVD to our tried and trusted line of Bovi-Shield vaccines,” says Dr. Pete Knight, Senior Manager Technical Service, Cattle Products, Pfizer Animal Health.

The Canadian Type 2 strain of BVD contained in Bovi-Shield GOLD was chosen for its ability to stimulate a strong immune response when administered to cattle. When tested against an extremely severe BVD Type 2 challenge model, Bovi-Shield GOLD excelled.

Pfizer Animal Health also wanted to develop a vaccine that would increase the level of fetal protection against Type 2 BVD, and thus prevent the birth of Type 2 Persistently Infected (PI) calves.

“Bovi-Shield GOLD products offer a broad range of protection,” says Dr. Knight. “With Bovi-Shield GOLD, Canadian cattlemen not only have enhanced BVD protection, they now have a tool for preventing abortions due to IBR, the birth of persistently infected calves caused by BVD Types 1 and 2, and respiratory disease caused by IBR, parainfluenza 3 (PI₃) and BRSV.”

Bovi-Shield GOLD fetal protection products offer viral protection from one generation to the next, and are safe for use in pregnant cows* and calves** nursing pregnant cows.

For added value, Bovi-Shield GOLD 5 is part of the Pfizer GOLD health management program and fall boosting will provide precise antigen matching for Pfizer GOLD calves. Bovi-Shield GOLD products are available in convenient 5, 10, 25, and 50 dose vials.

Pfizer Animal Health is committed to enhancing the animal health industry by delivering innovation to the veterinary profession and producers. To determine an effective vaccination protocol for your herd, Pfizer Animal Health recommends speaking with your veterinarian. For more information on Bovi-Shield GOLD or other cattle health products, talk to your veterinarian or call your local Pfizer Territory Manager.

*Provided they were vaccinated with one of the following within the past 12 months: Bovi-Shield FP 4 L5, Bovi-Shield GOLD FP 4 VL5, Bovi-Shield GOLD FP 5 L5, Bovi-Shield GOLD FP 5 VL5, PregGuard FP 9 or PregGuard GOLD FP 10. Follow label directions.

**Provided their dams were vaccinated with one of the following within the past 12 months: Bovi-Shield FP 4 L5, Bovi-Shield GOLD FP 4 VL5, Bovi-Shield GOLD FP 5 L5, Bovi-Shield GOLD FP 5 VL5, PregGuard FP 9 or PregGuard GOLD FP 10. Follow label directions.

Bovi-Shield® is a registered trade-mark of Pfizer Products Inc.; Pfizer Canada Inc., licensee.

GOLD™ is a trade-mark of Pfizer Products Inc.; Pfizer Canada Inc., licensee.

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NEWS

Retained Ownership – A Profitable Alternative?

Producers face many decisions when it comes to strategic marketing opportunities for their calves. One option for producers to consider is retained ownership.

What is Retained Ownership?

Retaining ownership involves continued ownership of cattle as they continue on through the finishing stage. There are many options available to producers from feedlots buying into any percentage of the calves, to different marketing options and contracts. It all depends on market conditions, herd quality and the level of risk producers are willing to take. Producers can partner to increase the size of their herd for a retained ownership program, but typically to gain from a program such as this they should have a minimum 100 cattle.

Why Consider Retained Ownership?

Retaining ownership in most cases can gain a higher profit for producers. This is especially true when the calves are healthy and good quality.

How Retained Ownership Works For Two Producers

Roy and Agnes Jackson have been involved in retained ownership for over five years. They have about 250 cows and vaccinate the calves using the Pfizer Gold program. "It is important to have confidence in how your calves will do at the feedlots," says Jackson. "I believe it all starts with the vaccination program you use."

The Jackson's started finishing their steer calves on a custom feedlot in 1997 and have been involved in backgrounding their calves for over twenty years. "The retained ownership program has been profitable for us," said Jackson. "Using a custom lot has increased our pounds of production using some one else's expertise. Whether you retain ownership or you sell them there's always got to be an expectation that there's profit in these cattle."

At the Mitchell Cattle Co. in Barriere, BC they calve about 320 cows. This family operation has pure bred Simmental, pure bred Red Angus and some commercial cows. Their first serious entry into retained ownership happened last winter, in part due to BSE and their desire to find other alternatives.

They decided to keep a load of calves and send them directly to a feedlot in Alberta. Their plan was to keep their heaviest calves and hit the early market before it dropped into a summer market. The calves were put on feed and fully retained. "We were offered a contract when we put the calves in; we just felt that we were maybe better off going into the early market without one," said Ian Mitchell.

"We didn't feel that there was any downside to doing it and we were keen to get some feedback on how the calves performed and their health. So it seemed like a suitable time to do it, other than being short of cash, it didn't seem like it was much risk price wise."

All of their retained cattle went to slaughter and they have received positive feedback. "Just on the rough numbers it looks like we came out about \$100 a head better than if we would have sold them last fall," said Mitchell. "The yields, grades and performance were all super, and that's nice to see."

Pros And Cons

Mitchell evaluated the advantages and disadvantages of a retained ownership strategy. A key advantage is the potential for more profit. "There's a bit more profit in it than just letting them go as calves. There was this time, I'm sure that's not always the case, but I think in general a person would come out ahead through retained ownership," added Mitchell.

Retained ownership also allows producers to take advantage of good blood lines. "We're a pure bred and commercial operation, so it is nice to get some feedback on how the genetics are working," said Mitchell. "It's kind of rewarding to be able to follow that through."

On the other hand, retained ownership includes delays in initial profits and income. "It's a bit of a cash flow adjustment, putting cash another six months out, especially if you are dealing with borrowed money. And if the calf prices go back to \$1.30 or \$1.40, it will make it look like more of a downside."

- Continued -

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NEWS

Retained Ownership – A Profitable Alternative? (continued)

Other Considerations

With retained ownership producers assume more production and marketing risks, and it requires them to make more management decisions. It's also important for producers to know their individual costs for each production stage so they can closely evaluate the link between calf prices and cost of gain.

An additional consideration is selecting the right calves. "Healthy calves certainly make more money, there's no two ways about it," said Mitchell. "The health protocol I think would be one of the main reasons that the feedlot would be interested in sharing in the calves, that's extremely important to them."

There is less risk and less work involved for feedlots when they have healthy calves. "Treating sick cattle in the feedlot is a lot of work and it takes money out of the calves." Mitchell agrees that a proper health management program is a good investment and used Pfizer Gold on the retained cattle: "It certainly made a difference."

Jackson also agrees that having healthy calves will make a difference. "It is very important that producers be on a preventative herd health program."

Advice For Producers Considering Retained Ownership

Mitchell recommends that producers do their research. Look into where the cattle would go, what marketing options are available from that feedlot, and what services would be provided. "I think it's really important if producers can talk to people that have cattle in the feedlots they're planning on going into because they will get a bit of an idea about what to expect."

From his first hand experience with retained ownership, Mitchell will continue incorporating retained ownership as a marketing management strategy. "We will probably maintain at least some component of retained ownership and factor that into our risk taking."

Retained ownership is yet another business strategy for Canadian cattlemen – another option for diversification that can be tailored to individual operations. In the end, it comes down to selecting the right strategy for your farm.

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PRODUCER PROFILE

Marketing Advantages with the Pfizer Gold Program



Four years ago cattle producer Stephen Cook along with his brothers of Triple C Charolais had to make a decision about their herd management strategies. They wanted a vaccination program that would cover a wide range and protect the healthiness of their herd. It was then that their veterinarian recommended the Pfizer Gold program. Triple C Charolais is an operation of 800 beef cattle and 150 pure bred Charolais located in Northern Interlake, Manitoba.

They had never had an auction before, but with the help of their Pfizer Territory Manager, Triple C Charolais started their own annual feeder sale. "One stipulation of the sale is that they all have to be on the Pfizer Gold program," explains Cook.

The majority of Northern Interlake producers rely on the Pfizer Gold program for their herd health, so it is certainly a popular vaccination program in their area. This exclusive sale has offered many benefits.

"The advantage of having a Pfizer Gold only sale is that it provides buyers with an opportunity to purchase cattle that are genetically similar. They can put loads of cattle together that are all vaccinated the same way," says Cook. "And having them all vaccinated the same takes a lot of the confusion out of things."

In the past four years they have noticed a difference over the long-term. "It definitely makes a difference. Since we started the program we have been getting great feedback on the healthiness of the calves," said Cook. "The longer we seem to do this, the better our health situation has become in the feedlot."

Cook is pleased to say that they have really seen the benefit of promoting their herd as Pfizer Gold cattle. He explains that feedlots have started to look more towards vaccinated cattle now for health reasons. "Everybody is starting to realize that this program is worth its money and then some."

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ASK YOUR VETERINARIAN

By Dr. Bruce Kay, Williams Lake Veterinary Hospital

Question: I recognize the severe economic losses that can occur with Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) infection and the need to protect my herd with a preventative herd health program. I would like to know what your recommendations are regarding implementation of a program for the cows with respect to our annual cow-calf production cycle.

Answer: BVD is a very complex disease. The goal of a BVD prevention program is to prevent the production of the persistently infected (PI) calf. A PI calf results from BVD virus exposure in the cow early in gestation with subsequent infection of her unborn calf (fetus). At this stage of gestation the fetus does not recognize the BVD virus as a harmful pathogen. If it survives birth, the calf will shed the virus throughout its life constantly exposing the virus to other animals it comes in contact with. PI calves usually go to the feedlot but may also be selected for replacements in your herd.

With an understanding of the peculiar characteristic of BVD virus behaviour we recognize that BVD prevention in a herd is best achieved by vaccinating the cow herd just prior to or as close as possible to the beginning of the breeding period. Vaccination at this time provides the most effective protection for the fetus during this vulnerable period. I would recommend that you consider this information when implementing a BVD control program in your herd.



Question: What role can I personally play as a producer to help ensure that the Canadian herd maintains its minimal risk status for BSE with respect to our world trading partners?

Answer: To maintain our minimal risk status in Canada the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) must test a designated number of animals each year for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). Producers can help by providing selected animals, greater than thirty months of age, with health problems from their premises for testing. Animals submitted for testing must fall into one of the following categories. They include animals found dead, non-ambulatory animals, animals euthanized for humane reasons, and animals that display acute and chronic deviations from normal behaviour or appearance like weakness or abnormal neurological symptoms. Testing tissues from animals exhibiting these symptoms are of more value in maintaining our minimal risk status than testing healthy animals. The result of testing carried out by CFIA is confidential. As well there is some compensation to the producer for providing test animals. Call your regional CFIA office for more information regarding the National BSE Surveillance Program.

Question: In the past I have experienced considerable death loss in calves on range after turn out. The cows come home in the fall without their calves. We can think up lots of reasons for the losses like predation and theft but rarely see evidence of the cause. Do other producers have these problems?

Answer: Losses on range have always been an issue especially in our area where range conditions are rugged and access is limited. We have become aware that Bovine Respiratory Disease Complex (BRD), a group of viruses and bacteria causing pneumonia, plays a big role in the losses that producers experience on range each year. Young calves with developing immune systems cannot always respond effectively to the fluctuations in temperature and weather changes associated with range conditions and to the pneumonia pathogens in the environment. Recent trials and research have indicated that vaccinating calves at branding for BRD results in a marked reduction in death loss from these diseases in young calves. Since calf vaccination programs for BRD have been implemented in our area we have seen a reduction in calf loss on range. One producer in our area went so far as to say that implementing this program put the fun back into ranching for him!

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PFIZER GOLD SURVEY

Help Us Make the Gold Standard Even Better!

We hope you enjoyed the second issue of The Gold Standard. As this is a new feature for Pfizer Gold customers, we would like to know what you liked and did not like about The Gold Standard. Your feedback is very important to us.

Please take a few minutes to answer our short survey. We would like your feedback on such topics as content and quality, so that we will be able to provide an e-newsletter that is of most benefit to you and your operation.

I found the articles in this issue of The Gold Standard to be:

- Highly Informative
- Somewhat Informative
- Not Informative

I think the information contained in The Gold Standard is useful to my operation:

- Totally agree
- Agree somewhat
- Do not agree

What type of information would you like to see in future issues of The Gold Standard?

Your email address

Submit

Your feedback is important to us. Thank you!