

BEEF COUNCIL bullhorn

JOHN WENZEL, NMSU Extension Veterinarian Receives 2019 Beef Backer Honor

The Beef Backer Award is presented annually by the New Mexico Beef Council, for outstanding efforts to advance the New Mexico Beef industry through Promotion, Education and Research.

This year's recipient, Dr. John Wenzel, is no stranger to the New Mexico beef community. Dr. Wenzel is a native New Mexican and earned his Bachelor's in Agriculture from New Mexico State University, and his Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from Kansas State University. He began his career in Veterinary Medicine in 1986 in Albuquerque, but left city lights for starlight in Bayard, NM, serving as an Associate Veterinarian, and soon opening his own practice, the Arenas Valley Animal Clinic which he operated for twenty years. Since then, Dr. Wenzel has practiced in Silver City.

In 2006, Dr. Wenzel's veterinary career expanded, when he was hired as New Mexico State University's first Extension Veterinarian. This charged him with delivering educational programming to NM Livestock producers old and young, and county agent's clientele, covering livestock disease, veterinary care and teaching best practices through the industry's critically important Beef Quality Assurance Program. Dr. Wenzel serves as the State Coordinator of the BQA program, a national and voluntary program started in the 80's by beef producers and supported through Beef Checkoff dollars.

The goal of Beef Quality Assurance is to assure consumers that all cattle shipped from a beef production unit are healthy, wholesome, and safe; their management has met FDA, USDA, and EPA standards; they meet quality requirements through-

out the production system; and are produced using animal well-being, worker safety, and environmentally-sound production practices. The foundation of BQA is regular, high-quality training and certification for cattle producers on the key practices that include; cattle care, biosecurity, herd health, transporting, nutrition, environmental stewardship, record keeping, worker safety and emergency action planning.

Dr. Wenzel's role in BQA goes back to the inception of BQA in New Mexico, in the early 90's, when the beef community sought help from NMSU Cooperative Extension Service to establish New Mexico's BQA Program. Dina Chacón-Reitzel, NM Beef Council executive director says, "Dr. Wenzel 'was arm-deep' in his private veterinary practice when we asked him to teach our producers the principles behind BQA and the management techniques to help solve pressing quality and beef safety issues, and do the trainings chute-side. Dr. Wenzel traveled thousands of miles conducting BQA training across the state for hundreds of beef producers, on his own time and without compensation. Early on, he demonstrated his ability to provide quality instruction for producer audiences, impart his knowledge and expertise in veterinary medicine, and his willingness to partner with the industry and the college."

Dr. Wenzel's contribution to Beef Quality Assurance since the 90's, has helped the industry reduce injection site lesions in fed cattle from 21.6 percent to 2.5 percent, and reduce injection site lesions in breeding stock from 31 percent to 7 percent among many other significant accomplishments.

The New Mexico Beef Council has worked with Dr. Wenzel on the Youth Ranch Management Camp, and the U.S. Beef Academy, which has provided the opportunity to witness Dr. Wenzel's ability to effectively teach and communicate with the youth of our state. Each student in attendance at the camp, becomes BQA certified. Student evaluations always rate

his presentation's the highest and the most impactful on the student's future in production agriculture.

Due to Dr. Wenzel's leadership, the U.S. Beef Academy, conducted at the NMSU Corona Range and Livestock Research Center, will continue to grow in attendance and stature in the U.S. and International beef industries. The five-day intensive college-level course focuses on current methods and technology used in beef production.

The first day, "Beef Day" sponsored by the beef council, presenters speak on food safety, proper cooking methods, and how genetics and production methods can influence the quality of the product. Through a taste panel the students witness for themselves differences between various grades, production practices and genetics. In 2019, the roster included students from seven states. Graduate and undergraduate students, as well as veterinary students participated in the academy. The beef academy has hosted students from fourteen states and Mexico.

Dr. Wenzel is responsible for additional livestock disease and veterinary care programs including; the "Trich" Education and Control Program, New Mexico ALIRT and Enhanced Passive Surveillance Program, and the New Mexico Rural Veterinary Practice Relief Program to name a few. The success of all of these programs, are indicative of Dr. Wenzel's professional influence, his ability to teach and inspire students and collaborate with industry partners and peers.

Thank you, Dr. Wenzel! The beef industry is grateful to you for teaching us how to raise healthy animals, and continue to be viable producers of safe and wholesome beef for consumers at home and abroad. Because we at the Beef Council know that a job well done is rare, it is a privilege to honor Dr. John Wenzel, NMSU CES, as the 2019 Beef Backer. ■

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Joint Stockman Convention 2019

1. Sarah Metzler, Cattlemen's Beef Board, discusses "The Reality of the Beef Checkoff." What it does, why we need it, and what it is doing to put Beef on the table, at recent Joint Stockman Meeting.
2. Dr. John Wenzel, NMSU-CES was presented The 2019 Beef Backer Award. NMBC Directors, Matt Ferguson, Cole Gardner and Kenneth McKenzie present the award along with NMBC Executive Director, Dina Chacón-Reitzel.
3. Tamara Hurt was recognized for her outstanding leadership on the NMBC, while serving as a Director on the New Mexico Beef Council. "Along the Santa Fe Trail," a National Geographic print, from March 1991, is presented to retiring NMBC Directors. (L-R): Jeff Witte, NM Secretary of Agriculture, Tamara Hurt, and Matt Ferguson, NMBC Chairman.
4. 2019 Beef Backer Honoree, John Wenzel, DVM, is flanked by Bruce Hinrichs, NMSU-CES and Dolly Wenzel.
5. Council Directors Dan Bell, Matt Ferguson and Cole Gardner prepare for the crowd.
6. Welcome Stockmen!
7. Friends old and new enjoy the Welcome Reception sponsored by the NM Beef Council.
8. Beef sliders were one of several beef hors d'oeuvres on the menu for the Welcome Reception.



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2019-2020 DIRECTORS – CHAIRMAN, Matt Ferguson (Producer);
VICE-CHAIRMAN, Zita Lopez (Feeder); **SECRETARY**, Susie Jones (Dairy Producer).

NMBC DIRECTORS: John Heckendorn (Purebred Producer); **BEEF BOARD DIRECTOR**, Bill King (Producer);
 Jim Hill (Feeder); Kenneth McKenzie (Producer); **FEDERATION DIRECTOR**, Matt Ferguson
 Cole Gardner (Producer); Marjorie Lantana (Producer); **U.S.M.E.F. DIRECTOR**, Kenneth McKenzie
 Dan Bell (Producer)

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