

County Agent News  
Dan Folske  
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Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/melodycampbell/265648036>

## Dreams

All of us have dreams about our future. Our farms, ranches and businesses are led by our dreams. The products we produce and sell from our farms and ranches are also led by our dreams and while those products may be very different and how we produce them can be very different we need to remember that each dream can be right. Here is an article by Kris Ringwall, NDSU Extension Beef Specialist

### BeefTalk: Dreams, Opportunity Make the Future

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Dreams are part of the human psyche, framed by thoughts, ambitions and hopes of our current and past situations.

But at day's end, one needs to ask, "What happened to my morning dream? Did I make progress? Did I lose it? Did I sell it?" After all, others need what we have; therefore, if we are not careful, at day's end, we find out we sold our dream.

By selling, we return to what we had. I always can remember each fall as a child when the calves and lambs were sold off, wishing we could keep more, do more and grow. Perhaps wishes and dreams are a bit of the same: a desire to do.



Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calf>

Beef production is a buy-sell business in which people produce beef and, we hope, sell to the high bidder. The calves conceived on a cattle unit may be sold many times because when the price goes up, the tendency is to sell.

Sale time often is directly related to the price. And there go dreams. Those childhood memories repeat: How often do we watch the calves go down the road to market and mutter, "There is always next year"?

All right, I can feel the reality checkers. Buy low, sell high, but you missed and bought high, sold low. In more current times, after a public presentation is made, the fact checkers remind us quickly of our mistakes or what may be termed a "misguided" dream. And so, do we sell our dreams for fear that the reality checkers will arrive before our next night's sleep?

The world of beef has so much room for more dreams. Price seems to be a driving factor in selling or buying and we understand that. Opportunities in the beef business abound, and the development of future operations that are products of what we dream can help us reach our desire to do, to achieve.

Perhaps for some, the dream is to achieve the maximum dollar value to generate maximum return on the dollars invested. But what we dream should mean more than only dollars. Those shipped calves, once sold, are now someone else's opportunity.

What about dreams that integrate beef production in a sensible and sustainable system while practicing good stewardship of all the resources? What about dreams of producing a solution that enables more people to consume beef? What about the goals to improve soil health, the source of cattle production, to offer more living diversity per acre of land utilized by cattle, to generate more pounds of forage per acre that results in more pounds of beef per acre and to put more family spendable dollars into the operation and community?

Dreams are what will drive the beef industry, changing, molding and fitting it into the rest of the world in due time. Dreams are what improve and sustain the very world in which we live. We need to stay on track and remain focused on our desired outcomes.

The other night, I enjoyed a good meal of grilled barbequed chicken. The uniqueness was the source of the chicken: two distinct genetic types. One type represented the typical chicken available today to the average consumer. The chicken was excellent, with a large proportion of white meat from a heavily breasted broiler.

This chicken represented the fine-tuned genetics produced within a modern poultry operation. The poultry used would have had the genes that resulted from extensive selection models based on rapid growth and specific production line objectives.

Production of the chicken could have been in someone's backyard or a small, medium or large poultry facility because poultry production breeds have been selected for extensive hatchery production to assure availability and survivability in all management scenarios around the world. Those same birds are available at local grocery stores across the world, so regardless of management system, the opportunity for tasty, locally flavored barbequed chicken is readily available, with little difference in the poultry used.

I said we had two types of chicken that evening. The other chicken was a product of breed-specific production with no modern selection models applied. The chicken lacked the large proportion of white meat with thinner, longer muscles throughout the chicken's frame. Some would say the second chicken was bony, when compared with the more commercially available chicken.

Both birds were served as grilled barbequed chicken. They differed in taste, texture and all other attributes of satisfying the human palate. Both were good but uniquely different. As people, when we mention that something is different, we may be quick to be defensive, to put off or even make sure a negative note is added to the conversation.

The variation that exists in the beef industry, just like in the chicken industry, is an opportunity waiting to happen. Do not sell a dream, but persevere to bring the dream to life. Opportunity makes the future.

May you find all your ear tags.