

## **McDonald's Sustainable Beef Pilot Wrap Up**

*Submitted by AF*

McDonald's Corporation exceeds 30 billion dollars globally in purchases every year. McDonald's had made a commitment back in 2014 to begin purchasing a portion of its beef supply from verified sustainable sources in 2016. Beef is an important part of their environmental footprint, about 30%. Recognizing that there was no common global definition of 'Sustainable Beef' and there was an opportunity to understand how to measure, verify and communicate sustainability of beef production to consumers; they decided to fund a multi stakeholder pilot project in Canada to support fulfilling their commitment.

On June 1, 2016 McDonald's Canada announced the successful conclusion of their Verified Sustainable Beef Pilot. It was a wrap up celebration where all their stakeholders were invited. Andrew Brazier, McDonald's Worldwide Supply Chain Management Director said, "The end of the pilot is only the beginning of this journey; McDonald's is committed to working with the Canadian beef industry." The pilot developed a set of regionally specific indicators, in consultation with a cross-industry advisory group, that were aligned to the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef's (GRSB) principles and criteria along with a mechanism for third-party verification. A total of 183 on-site 3<sup>rd</sup> party verifications occurred across Canada in the pilot: 154 cow/calf and backgrounder operations, 24 feedlots, 2 packers, 1 patty plant and 2 dairy farms. In Alberta, 118 were cow/calf and 20 were feedlot operations. Chain of Custody was tracked through BIXS (Beef Infoxchange System) for the pilot timeframe of January 2014 through April 2016. A total of 8,967 head of cattle were tracked through the entire supply chain.

During the pilot McDonald's has sourced just over 300,000 lbs of Canadian beef trim from verified sustainable sources, enough for 2.4 million burgers. They will continue to support the development of the beef sustainability framework in Canada and are an active member of the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB). McDonalds will also be launching the start of their Farm Forward program to support the farming industry across Canada. This is a program that they have been running in the United Kingdom and Ireland since 2012. This will be another unique opportunity for the Canadian beef industry as it was obvious that producers want continued feedback on their operation and how they can improve.

The CRSB feels that the McDonald's pilot has positioned them to moving forward. Communication is key to this work is building trust in the market and with customers. The CRSB has committed to having a fully launched verified sustainable beef program by the fourth quarter of 2017. Producers involved in the Pilot will be transitioned into the new CRSB verification program.

More details can be found in the final report for McDonald's Sustainable Beef Pilot at:

<http://www.mcdvsb.com/uploads/2/4/9/5/24957525/mcd-final-report.pdf>

Also visit the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef at:

<http://crsb.ca/>