

BCRC announces 2015-16 Beef Researcher Mentorship Program participants

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The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) is pleased to announce a new group of participants in the Beef Researcher Mentorship Program, an initiative that launched in 2014 to facilitate greater engagement of upcoming and new applied researchers with Canada's beef industry.

Following a successful pilot phase in 2014-15, the BCRC accepted applications from beef-related scientists across the country vying for an industry mentorship. Four participants were selected for the 2015-16 term. Each has been paired with two notable industry leaders.

Angela Canovas, PhD is the recently hired Assistant Professor of Beef Cattle and Small Ruminant Genomics at the University of Guelph. She is focused on expanding her scientific research program to the field of animal systems biology combining statistical genomics and bioinformatics with further functional validation of regulatory target genes. Her mentors are Mike McMorris, General Manager of BIO, and Daniel Doerksen, a cow-calf producer near Gem, Alberta.

Argenis Rodas González, PhD is an assistant professor in Meat Science and Food Safety at the University of Manitoba. His research is focused on the evaluation of meat composition and quality, with special interest in meat shelf life and palatability. His mentors are Betty Green, provincial coordinator of the Verified Beef Production program in Manitoba, and Trevor Atchison, a producer near Pipestone, Manitoba who currently sits as Vice-Chair of Canada Beef Inc.

Claudia Narvaez Bravo, PhD is an Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba in the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences. Her research is focused on the development of suitable pre-harvest and post-harvest interventions to reduce the presence of pathogenic organisms within meat production. Her mentors are Mauricio Arcila, Food Safety Quality and Regulatory Superintendent for Cargill Meat Solutions in High River, Alberta, and Tom Teichroeb, a cow-calf producer near Langruth, Manitoba.

Shaun Dergousoff, PhD is a research scientist at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Lethbridge research station. His work is focused on better understanding the risks associated with different arthropods (ticks and biting flies) that transmit livestock diseases of current and potential concern. His mentors are the Coaldale Veterinary Clinic, and the Allied Marketing Group (five feedlot operators near Lethbridge, Alberta).

"We have been so pleased to hear last year's participants explain all of the industry learning and networking they experienced thanks to this program", said Tim Oleksyn, Chair of the BCRC and a producer from Shellbrook, Saskatchewan. "We look forward to continuing to work with them and supporting this new group with many opportunities to discuss and observe our industry's challenges, which will be so valuable for them and the industry as they plan, conduct and communicate their research", added Oleksyn.

The Beef Researcher Mentorship Program provides upcoming and new applied researchers with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the needs of the beef industry in practical and meaningful ways. Participants are paired with an innovative cattle producer and another industry professional for a one year mentorship along with a travel budget to attend industry meetings, producer workshops, and farm tours. The program complements similar programs in existence but for which some researchers may not be eligible. Funding is made available through the technology transfer initiative within the second Beef Cattle Industry Science Cluster.

For further information, contact:

Tracy Herbert

Beef Extension Coordinator

Beef Cattle Research Council

306-850-5026 | herbertt@beefresearch.ca

<http://www.beefresearch.ca/about/mentorship-program.cfm>