



News Release

Alberta Beef Quality Starts Here
1-866-242-7404
www.beefsafety.ab.ca

50/50 Funding for Verified Beef Audit in Alberta

March 26, 2008, Medicine Hat, AB – Alberta beef producers who choose to become verified in 2008 through the Verified Beef Production (VBP) program can now access funding that will pay for half of the audit fee.

“We believe the audit funding will not only help producers in Alberta defray the cost of an independent audit, but will also encourage as many producers as possible to become VBP verified,” says Eileen Leslie, Alberta Beef Quality Starts Here (ABQSH) provincial coordinator.

The audit is conducted by an independent third party trained in audit procedures. The cow/calf audit fee is \$500. The audit fee for a feedlot with medicated feeds is \$1,000. Half of each amount will be picked up by ABQSH if undertaken in 2008. All operations that become verified must attend a VBP workshop, implement the program must dos and participate in an on-farm audit of these food-safety related practices.

“Producers who have an on-farm audit now in 2008 could potentially not be subject to another on-farm audit for 8 years,” says Leslie. “Once an operation is audited, the program is designed with a cycle of record assessments or self-declarations annually over the subsequent 7 years”

VBP verification provides immediate and long-term benefits for Alberta beef producers that include: proof of responsible actions, improved awareness of food safety risks, market readiness should it be required, improved use of animal health products, a basis for training staff/family members, and verification can be used as a tool to develop branded products.

For more information, please call Eileen at **1-866-242-7404** or go to **www.beefsafety.ab.ca**. Verified Beef Production is a national cattle industry initiative created to help implement and verify good production practices on-farm that minimize food safety risks. This program is similar to food safety programs being implemented in other agriculture commodities, as part of the Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Program.