



Upper Iowa Beef LLC
EST. # 45321

4614 Highway 63
PO Box 27
Lime Springs, IA 52155
563-566-2202
www.upperiowabeef.com

2026 Upper Iowa Beef Producer Sustainability Survey

There are two portions included in this survey: The US Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB) and the Upper Iowa Beef Producer Survey.

The U.S. Beef Industry Sustainability Framework was developed to identify opportunities for continuous improvement across all types of beef operations and companies. The USRSB has identified 6 High Priority Indicator sections that are most important to industry-wide beef sustainability efforts. Questions were developed with these 6 indicators in mind. They are utilized to provide action plans that can expand the sustainability of your operation and support the beef value chain.

The goal of the UIB Producer Survey is to collect additional information that highlights the sustainability efforts of our suppliers. It also helps us better understand your operation and identify opportunities to provide information and support when needed.

Please fill out the answers to this survey that best fits your operation.

Operation Information

Please fill out only one per operation, thank you!

1. Seller name

2. Farm name

3. Address

4. Email

5. Phone

Roundtable Self-Assessment Survey

High Priority Indicator: Air & Greenhouse Emissions

6. Are pen surfaces managed for both wet and dry conditions?
 - a. There are no specific management practices in use.
 - b. There are limited management practices for one or both conditions.
 - c. There are practices for both wet and dry conditions, as applicable to the location.
7. Are road and alley management strategies in place?
 - a. There are no specific management practices in use.
 - b. Minimal management practices are in use.
 - c. Established management to reduce or eliminate dust and improve air quality.
 - d. Not applicable.
8. Are dust management strategies in place for feed processing and/or storage activities and areas?
 - a. There are no specific management practices in use.
 - b. There are minimal management practices used.
 - c. There are strategies established for management of the feed mill, storage, loading area, and/or unloading area.
 - d. Not applicable.
9. Are technologies (implants, ionophores, beta agonists, etc.) utilized during the finishing phase to optimize growth?
 - a. We do not utilize any of these technologies.
 - b. We utilize one of these technologies.
 - c. We utilize technologies extensively, which reduces GHG emissions.
 - d. Not applicable.
10. Is energy consumption measured and is there a process in place to look for more efficient energy utilization?
 - a. Yes, we review energy use in all areas, and look for ways to reduce usage and be more efficient (e.g., through preventative maintenance, equipment replacement, etc.)
 - b. Yes, when we replace equipment, we look to upgrade to more efficient equipment.
 - c. No real effort is made to review/reduce energy use other than price.

High Priority Indicator: Animal Health & Well-Being

11. Are employees that work with animals Beef Quality Assurance (BQA), or equivalent, certified?
 - a. No one associated with the feedyard is BQA or equivalent certified.
 - b. At least one person associated with the feedyard is BQA or equivalent certified.
 - c. All employees that work with animals are BQA or equivalent certified.
 - d. All employees are BQA or equivalent certified.

12. Is there training and oversight in place to prohibit animal abuse?
- a. No formal training is given.
 - b. We have some training, but there isn't a formal process for reporting.
 - c. We have training and an established reporting process.
13. Does the feedyard have a procedure for non-ambulatory animals and humane euthanasia?
- a. There is not an established procedure.
 - b. There is not a formal procedure, but there is a designated person or personnel to euthanize.
 - c. There is an established procedure and only trained personnel are allowed to euthanize animals.
14. Is there a plan for antibiotic use and effective review and oversight to ensure proper use?
- a. No review is made and no training is given.
 - b. We have a veterinarian create our protocols, but there is no follow up or training.
 - c. We have a veterinarian create our protocols and have a designated, trained person provide training and oversight.
 - d. We have a veterinarian prepare our protocols and provide training and oversight.
15. Are written or electronic records of animal treatment and associated medicines maintained?
- a. No formal treatment tracking system is used, or minimal notes are kept.
 - b. We have a treatment tracking system, but it is not consistently used.
 - c. We have an established treatment tracking system, employees are trained on its use, and it is consistently used.
16. Does the facility utilize professionals to provide oversight for cattle care?
- a. No, we only use a veterinarian in rare circumstances.
 - b. We sometimes use a veterinarian, but don't have one routinely providing oversight or training.
 - c. Yes, we contract routinely or employ a licensed veterinarian.
17. Does the facility utilize professionals to provide oversight for cattle nutrition?
- a. No, we only use a nutritionist or consultant in rare circumstances.
 - b. We sometimes use a nutritionist or consultant, but don't have one routinely providing oversight or training.
 - c. Yes, we contract routinely or employ a nutritionist or consultant.

High Priority Indicator: Efficiency & Yield

18. Do you utilize closeout and performance metrics and track them over time?
- a. Yes, we are continually looking at the data and attempting to get more efficient.
 - b. No attempt to review the data is made.
 - c. Not applicable. We contract feed cattle.
19. If yes, which close out and/or performance metrics do you track? [Select all that apply]
- a. Average daily gain (ADG)

- b. Feed conversion
 - c. Death loss
 - d. Percent of animals that are treated (for illness, etc.)
 - e. In weight and out weight
 - f. Days on feed
 - g. Not Applicable
 - h. Other [Please describe]
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20. If select 19D, do you provide an analysis of performance to your customer?
- a. Yes
 - b. No, but we provide raw data.
 - c. No, we do not provide analysis or data back to the customer.
 - d. Not applicable.
21. Do you receive carcass data from the packer and use that data to make replacement cattle purchasing decisions?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
22. If yes, do you provide this information back to your cattle supplier to support their selection decisions?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not applicable
23. Are feed rations formulated to optimize resources and performance?
- a. Yes, rations are optimized to improve nutrition and/or performance, while minimizing cost and resources.
 - b. Yes, we attempt to provide basic nutrition at the lowest cost for performance.
 - c. No, we meet basic needs and rarely review our formulas.
24. Is there a management system in place for feed ingredient storage?
- a. Yes, we have a program in place for **all** our feed ingredients.
 - b. Yes, we have a program in place for **some** of our ingredients.
 - c. No, we do not have a program in place other than basic management to keep feed from going bad
25. Are feed ingredients stored to prevent or minimize spoilage?
- a. Yes, we have a program in place for **all** our feed ingredients.
 - b. Yes, we have a program in place for **some** of our ingredients.
 - c. No, we do not have a program in place other than basic management to keep feed from going bad
26. Are feed ingredients stored to minimize shrink?
- a. Yes, we have a program in place for **all** our feed ingredients.
 - b. Yes, we have a program in place for **some** of our ingredients.

- c. No, we do not have a program in place other than basic management to keep feed from going bad
- 27. Are feed delivery and bunk management monitored for efficiency and reviewed for improvements?
 - a. Feed delivery and bunk management are reviewed frequently, and we are always looking for ways to improve through advanced technology, training and practices.
 - b. We read bunks daily but only train the drivers when they start.
 - c. We deliver the feed as best we can, but do not have the resources for updates or training.

High Priority Indicator: Employee Safety & Well-Being

- 28. Does the feedyard have a written safety plan and is it provided to the employees?
 - a. Yes, we have a written plan that is updated routinely along with mandatory training.
 - b. We have a written safety plan that we got from a state or industry labor group.
 - c. We do not have a written safety plan.
- 29. Are regular safety meetings held and is job specific training provided?
 - a. Regular, mandatory meetings are held, and additional area-specific training is provided.
 - b. We have training, and some area-specific training is provided but isn't mandatory.
 - c. Occasionally, someone comes by and talks about safety.
 - d. We do not hold any safety trainings and no job specific training is provided.
- 30. Are accidents and injuries documented and reported to OSHA, if required?
 - a. We are fully compliant with OSHA reporting, have robust records, and review internally.
 - b. We report required OSHA accidents and have a compliant system for reporting.
 - c. We report serious accidents if Worker's Compensation is needed.
 - d. We do not document or report accidents and injuries.
- 31. Does the feedyard or its parent organization support community activities and encourage employee involvement?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

High Priority Indicator: Land Resources

- 32. Are you required to have any state or federal water and/or environmental permits?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

33. If yes to Q32, does the feedyard have applicable state and/or federal water and/or environmental permits?
- a. We have all required licenses and/or permits and are fully compliant.
 - b. We are working on our permitting compliance.
 - c. Not applicable.
34. If yes to Q32, are records required for the permit(s) being properly maintained and reported?
- a. Yes, we have the minimum required records and have passed our routine inspections and annual reporting requirements.
 - b. We are working on developing a record management system that works for our operation.
 - c. Not applicable.
35. If no to Q32, have you considered the benefits of the risk mitigation through an EPA water permit (or state equivalent)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not applicable.
36. Does the feedyard have a documented Nutrient Management Strategy or Plan in place?
- a. Yes, we have a written Nutrient Management Plan and we adhere to it.
 - b. We don't have a written plan but are taking measures to be good stewards of the land.
 - c. We do not have a plan.
37. Do you have an employee training program for nutrient management?
- a. Yes, we routinely train applicable employees in all aspects of nutrient management.
 - b. Our employees are generally aware of nutrient management practices.
 - c. No, we do not conduct employee training.

High Priority Indicator: Water Resources

38. Does the feedyard track its annual water use/consumption?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
39. Does the feedyard have all required water permits and is it fully in compliance with permits and required management practices?
- a. Fresh water is permitted, requirements documented and compliance is assured.
 - b. Fresh water is permitted and most requirements are met or corrected if deficient.
 - c. We are exempt from permits.
 - d. I am not sure if we have any requirements on fresh water permits.
40. Is there a documented water management strategy that is updated regularly?

- a. Yes, we have an extensive strategy that we track and update regularly.
- b. We have a water strategy and we try to check it periodically.
- c. We do not have a strategy.

Upper Iowa Beef Producer Survey

41. What type of environment do you raise your cattle in? [Select all that apply]

- a. Confinement with deep pit
- b. Confinement with bedding
- c. Open feedlot on concrete
- d. Open feedlot with shed concrete
- e. Dirt pens (no sheds/ no concrete)
- f. Pens with shade & concrete
- g. Pens on concrete

42. How long has your operation been in your family?

43. What generation is currently running the operation?

44. What do you use for risk management? [Select all that apply]

- a. Cash Trade
- b. Futures Options
- c. LRP Options
- d. Packer Forward Contracting

45. Are your cattle home raised? [Select all that apply]

- a. Yes
- b. No

46. If no, where do you purchase your feeder calves?

- a. Local (<100 miles)
- b. 100-200 miles
- c. 200+ miles
- d. Not applicable

47. Would you be willing to participate in marketing efforts at any point in the future?
(producer spotlights, customer tours, etc.) [Selecting yes allows name to be utilized]

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Maybe, I'd love to learn more
- d. Other _____