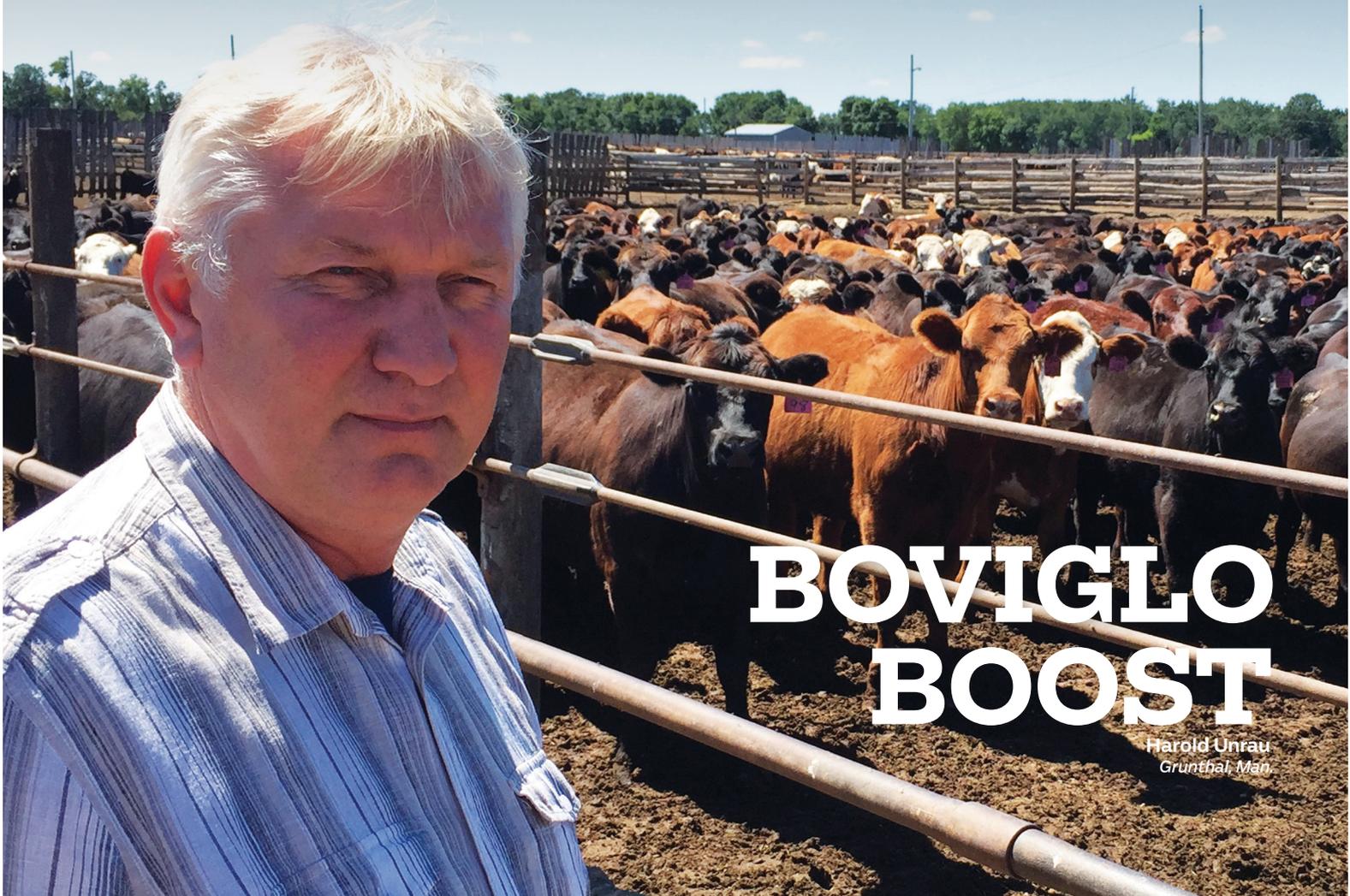
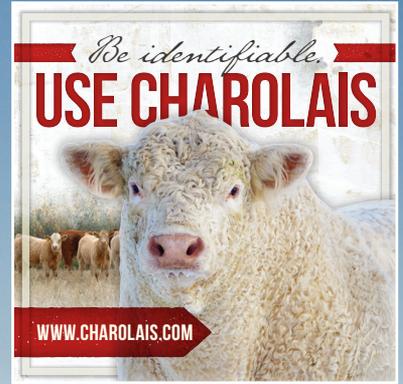


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## BOVIGLO BOOST

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### I AM A RANCHER



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# THE BOVIGLO BOOST



Harold Unrau looks in on his brother's feedlot where Boviglo is given on arrival and in the ration for the first 90 days on feed. PHOTO: KAREN EMILSON

**T**he results of a backgrounding and finishing trial at Lethbridge Research Centre appear to reflect what producers who supplement their cattle with Boviglo have been seeing over the past year or two.

Harold Unrau of HU Livestock at Grunthal, Man., took on the Western Canada distributorship of Boviglo and Eberglo because Boviglo is the first supplement he has seen in his 25 years of feeding cattle that contains a complete lineup of prebiotics and probiotics, vitamins, minerals and plant enzymes that work to build immunity first and then promote gut health.

The all-natural ingredients in Boviglo are in readily available forms for quick absorption. The 12 vitamins are water-soluble; the minerals are chelated; the plant enzymes are naturally occurring from barley extracts; and the prebiotics

and probiotics derived from *Lactobacillus acidophilus* are in a fermented, dormant state. The guaranteed analysis is available on his website.

During the initial on-farm demonstration in Western Canada at his brother's custom feedlot, Rocking U Feeders near MacGregor, Man., one of the first changes they noticed was that calves that received an oral dose of Boviglo at processing on arrival went to water right away.

It could be the taste, Unrau says, but whatever the reason, rehydration of tissues and blood cells is the all-important first step in mending the effects of stress from weaning, transport, commingling and new surroundings. When calves drink, they eat and when they are eating they are much less likely to get sick.

Fewer calves showed signs of digestive problems, such as diarrhea, when Boviglo

was added to the daily feed, suggesting that it helps smooth the transition from milk and fresh forages to the unfamiliar feedlot ration. Most calves started gaining right away, which is another good sign that the digestive system is functioning as it should to make the best use of nutrients in the feed.

When weak calves that received Boviglo on arrival and in their feed did go downhill, they perked up right away when given an antibiotic to treat overall illness, he adds. They saw fewer re-treats, chronics and deaths among calves on Boviglo.

The ingredients in Boviglo were selected by Eli Ebersol, a horse breeder from Milverton, Ont., and Murray Bast, founder of Bio-Ag Consultants and Distributors of Wellesley, Ont., who set out to formulate a supplement to improve the overall vitality of Ebersol's horses. Bast fine-tuned the formula and their first product,

Eberglo, was licensed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for horses in 2013 and for swine and poultry in 2016. Boviglo was formulated along the same line specifically for ruminants and licensed in 2015. Both products are made at the Bio-Ag facility and distributed in Canada and the U.S. under the Nature's Wave banner.

### STICKING WITH IT

Norman Unrau continues to use Boviglo at Rocking U Feeders and in his cow-calf operation.

Newly weaned calves receive an oral dose of 10 ml of Boviglo on arrival and he mixes it at a rate of five ml per head per day in the total mixed ration (TMR) for the first 90 days on feed. The pull rate is about half of what he'd expect when following his usual protocol calling for an injection of antibiotic on arrival for high-stress calves. During the first 90 days, the calves on Boviglo held their own and then gained better than those not receiving Boviglo.

When he ups Boviglo to 20 ml on arrival and eliminates the antibiotic, the pull rate is about the same as with the use of antibiotic. The deciding factor is that it's a lot more economical to bump up Boviglo than to give an antibiotic.

His feedlot veterinarian suggested that with all of the vitamins in Boviglo, it would be okay to eliminate the usual vitamin A/D and selenium shots on arrival as well.

On the cow-calf side, he has done away with the same two needles when he gives each newborn five ml of Boviglo in the mouth at tagging. Of the 380 calves born this spring, only one calf was treated for scours and two for coccidiosis, in which case he doubles the dose for two days in a row.

Boviglo has also been very effective and economical for treating cows with retained placentas. The cleanings are expelled within 36 hours of receiving an 80 ml oral dose.

"It all boils down to gut health. With a balance of vitamins and minerals and fed the right things, the body has a better chance to heal what's gone wrong. These calves are bouncing back from things we fought for years," Norman says.

"I've lived with cattle all my life and I can see these things change in front of my eyes so, yes, I am pleased with the results all around on health and gains. I think it's working and it is cheaper than antibiotics. I've really noticed we are using less antibiotics and without a needle that has to be better."

Sid Wilkinson at Wilkinridge Stock Farm near Ridgeville, Man., runs purebred Maine-Anjou and Red Angus and was one of the first beef producers out west to try this new product in 2015.

It was the semen test results after starting the bulls on Boviglo partway through that first winter that really caught his attention. They had better averages, measured better and a higher percentage passed on the initial test.

Last year, he fed Boviglo to all of the bulls and replacement heifers starting from weaning when he mixed it with the grain, and continuing with it through winter by mixing it with the corn silage in the feed wagon.

The calves had very few health issues at weaning last year, which he says could very well be attributed to Boviglo and, or picking a period of good weather between rains for weaning.

He also gives an oral dose of seven ml of Boviglo to any spring calves that look off or slow and those treated for scours or pneumonia.

When treating an older animal, such as a cow that hasn't cleaned after calving, he simply mixes Boviglo with its individual silage ration.

"Boviglo is an all-natural product, but we don't have anything against antibiotics. We just try to do as many things right as we can to keep our cattle healthy. When the rumen is working, they get the full value of what they eat and their general health will be better," Wilkinson says.

Also near Ridgeville, Warren Graydon, runs his dad's Walking Plow Charolais herd with his own commercial herd and has put Boviglo to the test in almost every way possible over the past two years.

Graydon's interest in the product stemmed from a scours problem in spring 2015 when he gave it a try, but didn't use it full out. Now he faithfully gives each calf five ml of Boviglo in the mouth after it has had colostrum. Any calf that show signs of being off gets a 25 ml oral dose to bring the gut back into balance.

In his experience, Boviglo does boost immunity because the treatment rate for scours dropped from around 12 per cent in past years to four per cent and this spring, only four calves had to be treated. Of those, only one ended up having to be given antibiotic and fluids intravenously.

"It doesn't work on everything, but when I look at the cost of an IV treatment plus the trouble of having to bring the mom into the barn versus Boviglo, even if Boviglo doesn't work it only costs me \$1.25 for the 25 ml to give it a try," Graydon says.

He has also done away with the traditional routine for newborns, which costs about \$9.50 per calf for the BioMycin, vitamin A/D, selenium and Vitamaster injections. Now the calves receive their Boviglo orally and only selenium by injection. On pasture, he continues to provide Deccox with diatomaceous earth for the calves to help control coccidiosis.



Sid Wilkinson was one of the first in Manitoba to use Boviglo on his herd.

PHOTO: KAREN EMILSON

## FEEDING



Warren Graydon gives Boviglo to his newborn calves and now feeds it at weaning time as well.

PHOTO: KAREN EMILSON

### ► RESEARCH

## Boviglo shows positive results

A nine-month feeding trial at Lethbridge Research Centre shows that average daily gain (ADG) during the 110-day backgrounding period for steers that received Boviglo was 1.11 kilograms per day (kg/d). This was a bit better than that for the control group and a little less but not statistically different from the group that received an implant and the group that received an implant plus antibiotic and Monensin in the feed. All groups received vaccinations but no injection of antibiotics on arrival.

During the 112-day finishing trial, the ADG of 1.64 kg/d for the Boviglo group was right in line with that for the steers that received the implant plus antibiotic and better than that of the control and implant-only groups.

It took another 44 days for the steers to finish to slaughter weight. From the start of the finishing trial to day 156, the ADG for the Boviglo steers was 1.53 kg/d and they finished out at 671 kg. The control group gained 1.47 kg/d finishing out at 657 kg. The implant-only group averaged 1.40 kg/d finishing at 677 and the implant-plus antibiotic group gained 1.46 kg/d finishing at 676 kg.

While the difference in the final numbers isn't statistically significant in scientific terms, the 14-kg difference in final weights between the control and Boviglo steers would be significant for cattle feeders, explains ruminant nutrition research scientist WenZhu Yang.

Yang says this is really positive for beef producers because they could very well see more improvement with the use of Boviglo in commercial settings where conditions can be quite variable and challenging compared to the ideal, controlled conditions of the research setting with each of the 15 animals in the four treatment groups housed in its own pen.

The length of this study reinforces the positive findings, he adds, confirming that there were no detrimental effects associated with Boviglo.

There were no real differences in carcass quality, except the marbling score for the Boviglo steers was a bit better. Likewise, there were no important differences in the liver scores, manure analysis or blood tests, other than Boviglo had somewhat of a positive antioxidant effect.

All of the feeder heifers, steers and bull calves receive Boviglo in a total mixed ration throughout the winter. Free-choice minerals are available year-round and the ration topped off with Boviglo to feed the rumen bugs to make better use of the minerals and feed ingested, he explains.

Graydon claims Boviglo also seems to have a calming effect on those cows that lose all respect for people after calving. It's easy to mix 25 ml into a bucket of water and after two waterings the difference in temperament is noticeable. By the next day, he feels at ease watering and feeding as usual.

He also appreciates the long shelf life of the product without the need for refrigeration. He buys his supply in five-gallon containers each fall and stores them in a heated room in the barn. Boviglo can withstand temperature fluctuations, but letting it freeze solid could damage the live plant enzymes.

"Boviglo is definitely not a snake oil, but it's not a miracle cure for everything. It definitely has its place. I won't quit using it because it is relatively inexpensive and so far it is working for me," says Graydon.

GENEX representative Allan Malenko of Winnipeg says a dozen of his dairy customers have started using Boviglo within the past year since GENEX became a dealer.

Typically, each calf receives three ml per day in its milk for the first 30 days and then again for a couple of weeks leading up to weaning when the calf moves into group housing. At that point a measured amount of Boviglo is hand sprayed onto the total mixed ration in the feed bunk each day. Overall, Malenko says, these dairy clients report the calves have shinier hair coats and seem more aggressive in that they drink more and eat more.

It is also used on show cattle. Oftentimes it's difficult to convince cattle to drink city water, but an oral dose of 15 to 20 ml of the supplement before leaving seems to keep them drinking and eating.

Unrau continues to add retailers across the West and the list is available on the website at [www.hulivestock.com](http://www.hulivestock.com), or contact him at 204-871-0250.

The list of dealers in Eastern Canada and the U.S. is available on [www.nature-swave.ca](http://www.nature-swave.ca), or by calling 1-800-591-9404. ❖