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COUNTRY LIFE IN BC

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Passing the test

Now that's a soil sample! Kristina Anderson, left, watershed planner with the Kootenay Boundary Regional District, and Kootenay & Boundary Farm Advisor team member Rachael Roussin demonstrate a soil probe at a soil workshop in Grand Forks. See story on page 23. TOM WALKER

Beef herd drops

Record cattle prices make it challenging for ranchers to rebuild

PETER MITHAM

KAMLOOPS – Two years of high cattle prices and low moisture have triggered a dramatic drop in BC's cattle herd, but the bottom is in sight.

The latest data from Statistics Canada indicates a 4% drop in Western Canada's beef herd since 2022, not far off the national decline of 3%.

But within BC, the decline on beef operations as of July 1

Massive sell-off ▶

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Dairy faces trade threats

PETER MITHAM

LANGLEY – The dairy sector is facing increased pressure from Canada's international trade partners with New Zealand's decision to escalate a long-standing complaint regarding Canada's allocation of tariff rate quotas.

New Zealand trade minister Todd McClay called Canada back to the negotiating table on October 18 regarding the issue, with discussions required by early November.

"The New Zealand government expects our trade partners to treat our exporters fairly and within the rules of our agreements," McClay said in a statement. "Canada is not doing that in respect to the dairy quotas that were negotiated and agreed with New Zealand."

Signed in 2015, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) gave New Zealand and Canada's other Pacific Rim trading partners access to 3.25% of Canada's

domestic dairy market. Tariff rate quotas defining market access for 16 different dairy products were established, and soon came under fire.

New Zealand and others argued that Canada was allocating TRQs to domestic processors, further processors and distributors in ways inconsistent with its treaty obligations. An arbitration panel last fall upheld Canada's right to set TRQs, but ordered it to address New Zealand's

Domestic demand ▶

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