



Nicholas Meat Quarterly

Company News and Updates for the Loganton Community

SPRING 2025

COMMITTED TO ANIMAL WELFARE

Animal welfare is a core priority for Nicholas Meat as the company celebrates having its state-of-the-art cattle barn in operation for almost a year. After breaking ground in 2022, Nicholas Meat opened the doors to the facility in spring 2024. The completed barn can hold more than 1,000 head of cattle and enables delivery of animals 24 hours a day.

“A larger facility provides ample space to hold more cattle at one time than in the past. This gives animals time to adjust to their new surroundings. The added space improves their comfort and helps them remain calm,” said Duane Eichenlaub, Nicholas Meat Regulatory and Sustainability Manager. “The new barn benefits farmers, truck drivers, cattle and Nicholas Meat alike. We also have faster, more efficient unloading times.”

According to Penn State Extension, when an animal becomes stressed, it depletes muscle glycogen, leaving the meat a dark red color rather than the normal bright red. It can also cause the meat to be dry. Thus, it was important for Nicholas Meat to design a system that is as low-stress as possible for cattle. The system is based on the work of Temple Grandin, Ph.D., a designer of livestock and handling facilities and a professor of animal science at Colorado State University.

The new barn measures roughly 40,000 square feet and has rubber floor mats to help cushion animals’ hooves while also helping prevent slips, trips and falls, which could potentially take an animal out of production. Additionally, the barn features industry-leading technology and design for humane handling. For example, there are no sharp corners or 90-degree turns, which helps animals as they adjust to their new surroundings.

TRAINING IMPORTANT FOR EMPLOYEES

Working in the new barn is a job reserved for those with some tenure at Nicholas Meat. Training on animal welfare is done for all Nicholas Meat employees, but additional training is a must if you’re going to be working out in the barn.

“We vet employees for a minimum of six months so we can assess the person’s demeanor and attitude,” Eichenlaub explained. *“There is a distinct personality that we want in our barn employees and that’s someone that is calm, quiet and takes the time to do the right thing.”*

Once it is determined that an employee will start working out in the barn, they undergo additional training based on the Meat Institute Recommended Animal Handling Guidelines. The overall humane handling training program is overseen by facility management certified through the [Professional Animal Auditors Certification Organization](#) (PAACO).



To learn more about how Nicholas Meat approaches animal welfare, go to nicholasmeat.com/animal-welfare.



THANKS FOR ASKING:

WHAT IS BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE?



Quality is a word synonymous with Nicholas Meat. It is something that we strive for daily at our facility as we believe that whatever we do today, we can do better tomorrow. That is why Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is important to us and the farmers and truckers we work with daily.

What is BQA? It's a nationally coordinated, state implemented program that provides information to beef farmers and consumers alike on how best management practices can be used to raise animals humanely and ultimately provide safe, wholesome, quality beef to the public. In short, the guidelines provided by BQA are designed to provide peace of mind to beef consumers and provide trust and confidence in the beef industry.

Originally started in 1982 as the Pre-Harvest Beef Safety Production Program by the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS), BQA provides farmers an opportunity to learn best practices while avoiding additional government regulations.

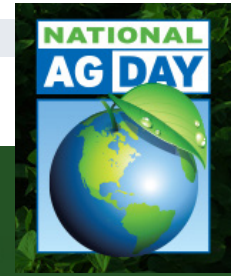
BQA programs have evolved over the years and today include best management practices around cattle handling, facility management, cattle transportation, good record keeping and protecting herd health. Today, in Pennsylvania, there are more than 7,300 beef and dairy farmers that are certified in the state's BQA program. While Nicholas Meat does not require farmers to be BQA-certified, we do strongly encourage it. Additionally, we do require that those selling to us complete a variety of affidavits that focus on best management practices including the prohibited use of antibiotics, growth hormones or certain feeds.

“Ensuring we put forth a quality product is what we strive for each and every day,” said Duane Eichenlaub, Nicholas Meat Regulatory and Sustainability Manager. ***“We appreciate when beef producers take that extra step with BQA certification to ensure that best practices are being followed and a quality product is being shipped to our facility.”***

There are many aspects to BQA – whether you are a beef farmer, dairy farmer or someone that hauls cattle to our facility. For instance, the Pennsylvania BQA program has evolved to include best practices around good record keeping and protecting herd health. Why? Because healthy animals mean everyone benefits – the producer, our business and you, the consumer.

There is also certification for haulers. These trainings teach and remind those transporting animals techniques to ensure animals arrive in the safest conditions. Principles taught include: cattle well-being and meat quality and are meant for both professional drivers as well as farmer and rancher haulers.

The National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) program works with dairy farmers, cooperatives, processors and industry partners to provide training that demonstrates the highest care standards on U.S. dairy farms. The FARM program, which works in partnership with BQA, has five program areas: animal care, environment, antibiotics, workforce development and biosecurity.



AG DAY 2025

AGRICULTURE:
**Together
We Grow**

March 18, 2025

CELEBRATE NATIONAL AG WEEK – MARCH 16-22

We've said it before, but we celebrate agriculture every day at Nicholas Meat. However, sometimes it's nice to stop for a minute and recognize this integral part of our business, our community and our daily lives. We invite people to celebrate agriculture and its many contributions with the theme, "Together We Grow" during National Ag Week March 16-22 and more specifically, National Ag Day on Tuesday, March 18.

Why should we celebrate agriculture?

There are many reasons: Agriculture provides food, fuel and fiber for our daily needs. For Nicholas Meat, it is the backbone of our business and the lifeblood of our community. And for Pennsylvania, it's an integral part of the state's economy, contributing \$132.5 billion in 2024. This is especially true when it comes to beef production with Pennsylvania being the top cattle-producing state in the Northeast United States. In fact, we have 12,000 beef cattle farms and 25,000 total cattle farms in the state.

With stats like these, it's easy to see that agriculture – especially when it comes to beef – is important to all of us!

JOBS AT NICHOLAS MEAT:

MORE THAN PRODUCTION

When thinking about [employment at Nicholas Meat](#), most people likely don't realize the diverse roles available at the facility. Now employing more than 450 people, Nicholas Meat is a top employer in Clinton County.

"Most people think that a beef harvest and fabrication facility like Nicholas Meat only employs meat cutters or butchers," Doug Nicholas, Nicholas Meat vice president and COO. "Yes, we employ these positions, and they are the backbone of our organization. But we have a variety of other departments and employees that enable the operation to run smoothly throughout the day."

In addition to production roles, Nicholas Meat has a diverse range of support departments including maintenance, food safety, quality assurance, transportation, sanitation, office personnel and more. These departments all work together with the goal of putting out a quality product in the safest and most humane manner possible.

"Of those support departments, maintenance is integral to the operation of Nicholas Meat," he continued. "We have a significant amount of industrial equipment that needs to be maintained – whether it's fixing something that may have broken down to scheduled maintenance that helps things run smoothly."

Overseeing everything from live animal handling to customer correspondence are members of the food safety and quality assurance team. These individuals work to ensure our overall process adheres to our policies and procedures. Of course, there's office personnel that handle accounting as well as human resources and safety. And a transportation and logistics department that arranges the delivery of cattle as well as delivery of customers' products.

"Of course, we can't forget about sanitation, either," Nicholas continued. "We only run one production shift a day, but then we have maintenance come in to take care of preventative maintenance that can't be done during operations. Once maintenance is completed, our sanitation crew cleans and sanitizes the entire facility in preparation for the next days' production."



10+ YEAR EMPLOYEES

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Julio Cruz | Maribel Ulloa Moreno |
| Amy Mowery | Jairo Azair Rodriguez |
| Irma Argueta | Carlos Galindo |
| Jose G. Vasquez | Erick Aguilar |
| Adam Corral | Gerald Way |
| David Torres | Karla Alfaro |
| Tomas Vasquez | James Daldo |
| Marcos Ortiz | Duane Eichenlaub |
| Michael Tompkins | |



Meat our People JULIO CRUZ

With some 450 employees, there is bound to be a great amount of diversity. At Nicholas Meat, in addition to English and Spanish, employees can also be heard speaking Haitian, Creole and French. This means that all training materials must be translated

to ensure proper communication and onboarding for the employees.

Longevity can also be found in the ranks. Take Julio Cruz as an example – an employee who has worked his way up through the organization to become a harvest superintendent with 25 years of experience under his belt.

"I like learning something new every day and I like meeting and getting to know all of the other employees," Cruz explained. "For those just starting out, I say, don't give up! The potential rewards of success greatly outweigh the risks of failure."



At Nicholas Meat we are all about the beef! We hope you enjoy the recipe below from the Pennsylvania Beef Council.



Classic Corned Beef with Cabbage & Potatoes

This recipe is a St. Patrick's Day favorite, but you can enjoy any time of the year you'd like. Corned Beef Brisket is slow cooked with cabbage, potatoes and carrots for a hearty family meal.

Ingredients:

- **1 Corned Beef Brisket (2-1/2 lb.)**
- **5 c. water, divided**
- **1 med. head cabbage (about 2 lb.), cut into wedges**
- **8 oz. Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into 8 wedges**
- **8 oz. carrots, cut into 1-in. pieces**
- **2 T. butter, melted**
- **1/2 t. salt**
- **1/2 t. pepper**

Cooking:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Place Corned Beef Brisket and 3 c. water in large stockpot or Dutch oven, fat-side up. Bring to a simmer. Do not boil. Cover tightly and cook in 350°F oven 2.5-3 hours or until fork-tender. If seasoning packet is included with Corned Beef Brisket, pour over brisket after the water is added.
2. Transfer brisket to cutting board, reserving any liquid in stockpot; cover brisket with aluminum foil. Let stand 15 to 20 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, add 2 c. remaining water to same stock pot with reserved liquid. Place steamer basket in stock pot. (Liquid should not touch bottom of basket). Place cabbage, potatoes and carrots in basket. Bring to a boil. Cover tightly; reduce heat and steam vegetables 20-25 minutes or until fork-tender.
4. Remove fat from brisket, if desired. Carve brisket into thin slices across the grain. Combine butter, salt and pepper in small bowl. Drizzle over vegetables. Serve brisket with vegetables.

Alternate Cooking Method:

This recipe can also be made in a 6-quart electric pressure cooker. Place Corned Beef Brisket and 1/2 c. water in pressure cooker. If seasoning packet is included with Corned Beef Brisket, pour it over the beef after water is added. Close and lock pressure cooker lid. Use beef, stew or high-pressure setting on pressure cooker; program 70 minutes on pressure cooker timer. Use quick-release feature to release pressure; carefully remove lid. Remove beef; keep warm. Add potatoes, carrots and cabbage to pressure cooker. Close and lock pressure cooker lid. Use beef, stew or high-pressure setting on pressure cooker; program 3 minutes on pressure cooker timer. Continue as directed in Step 4.

For more information about this recipe, go to www.PABeef.org.