

Video Tour and Q&A Session with Erika Stewart

October 13, 2021

Viewing + Listening Guide

Highlights of the Year Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yevFR7y8uZM>

A Year in the Life of Pine Ranch full video series:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kj9T7X8hREY&list=PLwgu-ZNbwnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM

Direct links to full video of monthly featured content are also shared with related content below

In preparation for the live Q&A with Pine Ranch's Erika Stewart, we recommend viewing the 'Highlights of the Year' Summary video, linked above. Pre and post viewing questions have been provided below. If time allows, we have also provided several questions that focus on the monthly content and may help address some of the vocabulary and concepts from the highlight video. If you prefer not to use the suggested "During Video: Ranching by the Month" questions, you may choose to have students share questions they have from the video. Any questions that are not answered by classmates can be posed to Erika during the Q&A on October 13, 2021.

Additional Resources:

Elementary:

- **Where Beef Comes From** (electronic resource):
<https://www.sherrigrant.ca/p843154174#ha54f7a29> (Print resource, lesson plans and guided reading available from Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan:
<https://aitc.sk.ca/resources/find-order-resources> - Search for "Where Beef Comes From")
- **Foundations of Saskatchewan Agriculture** (pdf fact sheets and interactive e-learning modules) from Agriculture in the Classroom-SK
<https://aitc.sk.ca/resources/foundations-of-sk-agriculture>

- **Explore Saskatchewan Agriculture** (kids' agriculture website) from Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan: <https://exploresaskag.ca/present/farm-animals/>

Secondary/Teacher Reference:

- **snapAG fact sheet** on Beef Protein and the Environment: <https://aitc-canada.ca/en-ca/learn-about-agriculture/category/plant-and-animal-proteins/beef-protein-and-the-environment>
- **snapAG fact sheet** on Grass-Fed and Grain-Finished Beef: <https://aitc-canada.ca/en-ca/learn-about-agriculture/category/food/grass-fed-and-grain-finished-beef>
- **Real Dirt on Farming** (answers to common consumer questions about farming) <https://www.realdirtontfarming.ca/> (Print version and teacher guide available from AITC-SK)
- **Canadian Food Focus:** videos on several types of farming, cooking techniques and more <https://canadianfoodfocus.org/>

Before Viewing

1. **Have you ever visited a farm with beef cattle?**
Answers specific to each student.
2. **Do you eat beef as part of your regular diet? Why or why not?**
Answers specific to each student.
3. **What is your favorite food made with beef?**
Answers specific to each student.

During Viewing: Ranching by the Month

1. **How many generations have operated Pine Ranch? About how many years would this be? (0:05)**



Erika Stewart is a third-generation cattle rancher. This means that Erika Stewart's parents and grandparents were also ranchers. A "generation" means a group of people that have been born and are living at about the same time and is usually about 20 to 30 years, so Pine Ranch has operated for approximately 60 years. Erika and Cyle's daughters are the fourth-generation ranchers.

2. How many animals are in the Pine Ranch cattle herd? (0:22)

- 300 cows (mothers)
- 300 calves (babies from most recent calving season)
- 15 bulls (adult males for breeding)
- 60 replacement heifers (a heifer is a cow that hasn't had a calf yet. Replacement heifers are female calves selected from the previous calving season that a ranch will keep for future breeding)

3. Erika described Pine Ranch as 34 "quarters" or 5440 acres. What is a "quarter"? How big is this? (0:36)

A "quarter" refers to a "quarter section". Farm and ranch sizes are typically described in terms of sections or acres. A section of land is one square mile, or 640 acres. A quarter section is 160 acres. Having 34 quarter sections is the equivalent land area of 5440 acres. In comparison, a regulation CFL football field is a little more than 1 acre. The City of Moose Jaw covers about 11000 acres, so Pine ranch is about half the land area of Moose Jaw.

4. What does Erika say is their job at Pine Ranch? (0:43)

Erika says it is their job at Pine Ranch to take care of their animals and their land every single day of the year, no matter the weather.

Tour a Canadian Ranch Introduction video here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kj9T7X8hREY&list=PLwgu-ZNbwnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM&index=1



- 5. In November, Erika describes weaning steer calves as an important day on the ranch. That is the day the ranch makes most of its income (money) for the year. What is happening? (1:06)**

The steer calves (male calves that have been castrated so will not be used for breeding) that were born in the spring and spent the summer on pasture with their mothers are separated from the herd and sold to a backgrounder where they will spend the winter growing to market weight before they become food for us. Selling the steer calves to eventually become meat is one major way that the ranch earns money.

November video (Steer Calves): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgNYwRozEPM>

- 6. In December, Erika showed the pen of weaned heifer calves (young female calves that no longer rely on milk from their mothers for food). What did she say helped keep the heifers comfortable in wintry weather? (1:43)**

Bedding the cows down with straw gives them a dry place to lay. The pen also has wind-break panels on the North and West sides to protect the heifers from wind and “ugly” weather.

December video (Heifer Pen): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxI3O66GKgs>

- 7. In January, the video showed Cyle working with a bull. What was he doing? Why was he doing it? (2:17)**

Cyle was vaccinating the bull or injecting it with a kind of medication that protects the bull from certain viruses and bacteria to keep the animal and the herd healthy. The way the vaccine is administered protects the bull and the quality of the meat and using the squeeze chute equipment and neck extender helps keep both the animal and the rancher safe.

January video (Vaccinating Bulls): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arABKkTetEc>

8. In February, Erika showed the water trough. Why was she checking it? (2:48)

The weather was very cold, so she was checking to make sure that the drink holes had not frozen over. Animals need access to fresh water every day, so even though it was freezing outside, Erika was still working to make sure the cattle had what they needed.

February video (Daily Winter Chores): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjITPaaDYIM>

9. In March, the cows were moved closer to the barn. Why? (3:15)

The cows were brought to the "calving field" close to the barn. "Calving" is when the mother cow has a baby. Erika and Cyle move the cows when the mothers are getting close to calving or getting ready to have their babies. Erika and Cyle brought them to the field close to the barn so they could keep an eye on the animals and help them, if needed. It is much more difficult, and dangerous, for the ranchers to have to go to the winter fields to check the animals in the night or in harsh weather. Bringing the animals close to the barn for calving is safer for everyone.

March video (Moving to Calving Field): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kP5_4zHxEmo

10. In April, Erika was doing a night check in the barn. What was happening? Why were they in the barn? (3:38)

The cows inside the barn were "calving" or delivering their babies. Some were born in the barn, others were born outside and brought in afterward so they could be protected from the freezing weather. Ranchers check on their cows and new calves day and night to make sure they are safe and having a healthy start.

April Video (Night Check): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8CckFUOk2A>

11. Also in April, replacement heifers were picked. What does this mean? (4:03)

Replacement heifers are female calves that are chosen from the animals born in the previous calving season. They haven't had a baby yet but are chosen to join the herd for future breeding. When a mother cow has been retired from the breeding stock, a replacement heifer will take over for her. The heifers that are not chosen to be



replacements will be sold to become food for us. After cows are retired from the breeding stock, they are also sold to become meat.

April video (Choosing Replacement Heifers): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-H4DBMEmHmk&list=PLwgu-ZNbnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM&index=14

12. In May, they were seeding a silage crop. What does that mean? (4:25)

Silage is feed for livestock. It is usually made from grass crops such as oats or alfalfa and may also contain grain. The crops are seeded in the spring, then harvested green (not dry). The whole plant, not just the seed is used and is typically fermented to preserve the quality for feed over the winter.

May video (Feed Crops): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvJODwW5I-A&list=PLwgu-ZNbnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM&index=17

13. At the end of June, the bulls were "turned out". What does that mean? (5:00)

The ranchers move the bulls to the breeding field where they live with the heifers for the summer. The purpose is to breed the cattle for April calves.

June video (Putting the Bulls Out): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUO9XtgRmxg&list=PLwgu-ZNbnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM&index=16

14. In July, Erika showed the field of oats and peas. She said that it is going to be a tough year for the agriculture industry. What did she mean? (5:18)

Erika showed the crops growing and noted that they were much smaller than the previous year because of the drought. Without rain, there is no water for the crops to grow. 2021 was a record drought for many areas in Saskatchewan and across the country. Poor crops mean that grain farmers have little to sell, and ranchers have little to feed their animals over the winter, making it a tough year for the agriculture industry.

**Note: The white plastic is used as a cover for fermenting the silage. Covering the crop material allows fermentation to happen. The tires are used to weigh the plastic down to keep it in place.*

July video (Drought Conditions): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3EatPYucbU&list=PLwgu-ZNbnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM&index=21



July/August video (Making Silage): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PxtBgd-FzYg&list=PLwgu-ZNbwnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM&index=22

15. In August, the bulls are moved out of the heifer field. Where did they go? (5:45)

They are moved to the bull field for the winter, away from the pregnant heifers. Why do you think they were fighting?

August video (Moving the Bulls): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEdZDUgzxps&list=PLwgu-ZNbwnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM&index=25

16. In September, calves are vaccinated. Why? (6:10)

The "pairs" (cow and calf) are brought to the "handling facility" (an area set up with pens and a squeeze chute to keep both the animals and the ranchers safe), where they are given a vaccination to prevent illness from certain viruses and bacteria. This is done before the calves are weaned to make sure that they are well protected and have a better chance to fight the illness.

September video (Pre-weaning Vaccination):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zL0vgWhAd5c&list=PLwgu-ZNbwnbsAf3S1_pg_m94R90tYC2kM&index=26

After Viewing

- 1. What is one new thing that you learned about ranching today?**
- 2. Do you think ranching would be a good job?**
- 3. Why do you think Erika and Cyle love being ranchers?**