

2025 Minnesota Top of the Class

THE MISSION

To develop the skills of Minnesota's beef industry leaders so they may maximize their impact and effectiveness in local, state, national, and international arenas.

THE PROGRAM

A dynamic year-long educational experience featuring a couple of two-day in-state seminars along with an out-of-state experience to conclude the program.

WHAT IS THE FOCUS?

The program will equip Top of Class participants with the training, knowledge, and experience they need to be sources of information for local, state, and national media outlets, journalists, and consumers looking for more information about beef production. Participants will be extensively trained in media interviews, culinary demonstrations, impactful presentations, social media, and other timely topics.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Each class is comprised of a small group of participants. Beef producers and others who are professionals involved in agribusiness or rural leadership positions may be eligible to participate.

TUITION

Tuition is a fraction of the true cost of each class participant.

Tuition costs for the 2025 Minnesota Top of the Class program is \$300 and must be paid prior to the first seminar. This covers lodging (based on a lodging rotation with double occupancy), some travel expenses, and most meals during the program.

Out-of-pocket costs include travel to in-state seminar locations and points of departure (normally MSP International) for out-of-state seminars as well as some independent meals.

WHAT IS THE PROGRAM SCHEDULE?

The seminar calendar is designed to accommodate the busy schedules of participants. Most of the activities occur in two-day increments.

- In-state seminars: Session I – October 22 & 23, 2025 (Maple Plain/St. Paul, MN)
Session III – March 4 & 5, 2026 (St. Paul, MN)
- Out-of-state seminar: Session II – January 13-16, 2026 (Denver, CO)

Application Deadline: September 4th, 2025



2025 Minnesota Top of the Class

Are you ready to step up to the challenge and expand your world of influence? Are you willing to reach “beyond the choir” and serve as a premier spokesperson for the beef industry and lifestyle? If so, please fill out the application below and submit it to Kelly Schmidt at kelly@mnbeef.org by September 4, 2025.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Please answer the following questions. Each answer should be kept to 200 words or less and should reflect a level of professionalism, grammar, and critical thinking associated with a national spokesperson.

- Describe your involvement in the beef community.
- Why do you want to be a participant in the Top of the Class program?
- Tell us about one of the previous advocacy efforts that you believe has been particularly successful in reaching “beyond the choir”.
- Are you active in social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogging)? If so, please list and provide hyperlinks to your social media properties.
- How do you think the Top of the Class training will help you enhance your advocacy efforts?

If you have any questions about the program or application process, please contact Kelly Schmidt at kelly@mnbeef.org or call 763-479-1011.

Highlights from last year:

- Media Training
- Trade and Foreign Marketing
- State and National Policy
- Global Food Experiences
- Beef Carcass Fabrication
- Beef Safety & Nutrition
- Culinary Training
- Gate to Plate Tours of various sectors of the beef industry

Testimonials:

“I learned so much at the feedlot and packing tour. By seeing that process, I am better able to talk about those sections of the beef business.”

“I am very thankful and appreciative of the great opportunity.”

“I learned tons of great information that can be helpful when interacting with consumers. Overall a wonderful learning experience.”