

Farmers who raise cattle are losing money in areas from western Canada to the states of northern Mexico.

They are having trouble finding enough food for their animals because of very dry conditions known as drought.

Some farmers are buying feed for their animals from other parts of North America, but it is too costly for others.

Dianne Riding raises cattle in Lake Francis, Manitoba.

She is a rancher.

She told the Reuters news agency that she recently had to sell 51 of her cattle, about 40 percent of the herd.

Some of the cattle were young females who were supposed to give birth to many babies in the future.

She said selling the young cows was "gut-wrenching," or sad.

She may get money now for selling the cattle, but her earnings will not be as high in years to come.

"That's your future," she said about the young cows.

Other ranchers and cattle experts said if people like Riding keep selling their animals, the supply of beef will go down and the cost of meat in North America will go up.

The drought is affecting areas throughout western North America.

Fields where cows eat grass are dry.

Fruit is not growing well in Washington.

And California is suffering its worst wildfire season.

Climate scientists say global warming will make droughts happen more often.

But some farmers think the current drought is part of a cycle that will end sometime soon.

Even Riding, who had to sell her cows, thinks the drought will soon ease.

Gloria Montano Green works for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

She said there is a clear link between the drought and climate change.

"We're seeing climate change," she said.

With dry fields, some farmers in western Canada brought in food for their cattle from Prince Edward Island, which is over 3,000 kilometers to the east.

Brian Perillat works for CanFax, a company that follows the market for cattle in Canada.

He said in a normal year, ranchers cull about 10 percent of their older animals. But because of the drought, they will probably cull two or three times more than that.

His company has no record of such big reductions in herds in one year going back to 1970.

Cattle live throughout the U.S. so not all herds are affected.

But research from U.S. Drought Monitor shows that ranchers in some areas are going to reduce the size of their herds by more than usual this year.

Pat Boone raises cattle in New Mexico.

He said he reduced his herd by about half this year.

"Our land is hurt, and it's hurt badly," he said.

It will take time for him to buy and raise more cattle.

"We're not going to be in any hurry," he added.

Mike von Massow studies agricultural economics in Ontario.

He said reducing the number of cows today affects the supply of cattle for many years.

"You have this hangover," he said.

Riding, the rancher in Manitoba, said even if the weather gets better soon and the fields turn green again, it will take several years for young cows to start having babies.

And if the ranchers have trouble, people in the U.S. will pay more for beef.

Von Massow said in Canada, after a 2014 drought, meat prices rose by 25 percent and stayed high for another two years.

Fernando Cadena is head of Mexican ranching company Carnes Ribe, based in the Mexican state of Chihuahua.

He said farmers must wait for the fields to get healthy again.

"For months, it just didn't rain," he said.

Greg Schmidt is chair of a group of businesses in Alberta, Canada, that feed cows right before they are killed for food.

He said all parts of the cattle business will have problems.

"This is going to ripple through our industry for years," Schmidt said.

Steve Arnold is a rancher in California.

His land is about 300 kilometers northwest of Los Angeles.

He said there has been less rain than usual for 12 of the last 15 years.

But this year is the worst.

"We've had dry stuff but not like this," he said.

I'm Dan Friedell.

从加拿大西部到墨西哥北部各州，养牛的农民都在赔钱。

由于非常干燥的天气，也就是所谓的干旱，他们很难为他们的牲畜找到足够的食物。

一些农民从北美其他地区为他们的牲畜购买饲料，但这对其他人来说太贵了。

黛安娜·里丁在曼尼托巴省的弗朗西斯湖养牛。

她是一名牧场主。

她告诉路透社，她最近不得不卖掉了 51 头牛，约占牛群总数的 40%。

其中一些是小母牛，它们将来应该会生很多小牛。

她说，卖掉这些小母牛是“令人痛心的”，或者说是可悲的。

她现在可以卖牛赚钱，但她的收入在未来的几年内就不会这么高了。

“那是你的未来，”她谈到这些小母牛时说。

其他牧场主和养牛专家说，如果像里丁这样的人继续出售他们的牲畜，牛肉供应量将会下降，北美的肉类价格将会上升。

干旱正在影响整个北美西部地区。

母牛吃草的土地是干的。

华盛顿的水果长得不好。

加利福尼亚州正在遭受最严重的野火季节。

气候科学家说，全球变暖将使干旱更频繁地发生。

但一些农民认为，目前的干旱是即将结束的周期的一部分。

就连不得不卖掉母牛的里丁也认为旱情很快就会缓解。

格洛丽亚·蒙塔诺·格林在美国农业部工作。

她说，干旱和气候变化之间有明显的联系。

她说：“我们正在目睹气候变化”。

由于土地干燥，加拿大西部的一些农民从东部 3000 多公里的爱德华王子岛为他们的牛带来了食物。

布莱恩·佩里拉特就职于 CanFax，它是一家追踪加拿大肉牛市场的公司。

他说，在正常年份，牧场主会宰杀大约 10% 的大牲畜。

但由于干旱，他们可能会宰杀比这多两到三倍的牲畜。

自 1970 年以来，他的公司还没有在一年内牲畜数量大幅减少的记录。

牛生活在美国各地，所以并不是所有的牛群都受到影响。

但是，美国干旱监测机构的调查显示，今年一些地区的牧场主将比往年缩小更多的牛群规模。

帕特·布恩在新墨西哥州养牛。

他说，今年他减少了大约一半的牛群。

他说：“我们的土地受到了伤害，而且伤得很严重”。

他需要时间来购买和饲养更多的牛。

他补充说：“我们不会着急”。

迈克·冯·马索在安大略省研究农业经济学。

他说，现在减少母牛的数量会影响多年的牛的供应。

他说：“会有遗留影响”。

曼尼托巴省的牧场主里丁说，即使天气很快变好，土地再次变绿，小母牛也需要几年时间才能开始生小牛。

如果牧场主遇到麻烦，美国人会花更多的钱买牛肉。

冯·马索说，在加拿大，2014 年的干旱之后，肉类价格上涨了 25%，并在接下来的两年居高不下。

费尔南多·卡德纳是墨西哥奇瓦瓦州 **Carnes Ribe** 牧场公司的负责人。

他说，农民必须等待土地恢复健康。

他说：“好几个月都没下雨”。

格雷格·施密特是加拿大阿尔伯塔省一家企业集团的董事长，该集团在母牛被宰杀为食物之前给它们喂食。

他说，养牛业的所有部门都将面临问题。

施密特说：“这将在未来几年波及我们的行业。”

史蒂夫·阿诺德是加利福尼亚州的一位牧场主。

他的土地在洛杉矶西北约 300 公里处。

他说，在过去的 15 年里，有 12 年的降水量比往常少。

但今年是最糟糕的一年。

他说：“我们经历过旱灾，但没有像这样严重的”。

我是丹·弗里德尔。