

Chairman's Message

What's your issue? For many of us, the issue of the day has been the market, and that's understandable. Cattle feeders had a rough 2002, and 2001 wasn't much better. When you're seeing a lifetime of equity drain away faster than water through a trough on a hot summer day, it's easy to become single-minded in your outlook.

But what's important to remember is that TCFA isn't a single issue organization. When our founding fathers formed TCFA back in 1967, they did so with foresight and forethought, building an association capable of handling any issue that came cattle feeders' way. They developed a policy-making process that ensures issues are fully discussed, completely thought through and analyzed from several perspectives before deciding on a course of action.

This process has been the source of TCFA's remarkable strength for nearly four decades because it involves TCFA members at several levels. First, the general membership brings a diversity of ideas and suggestions to the table. Then the appropriate committee discusses the situation and makes recommendations to the board of directors. The board then discusses the issue and sets policy that officers and staff follow as they deal with issues affecting you and your industry.

This process works, and it works for all issues, not just market-related situations. It has allowed TCFA to strongly deal with issues ranging from taxes to endangered species to quality assurance to the market.

What's the mission of TCFA? Our mission statement says, "The mission of TCFA is to serve and advance the economic, political and social interests of the cattle feeding industry of Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico." And that it does. But TCFA does much more than that.

Did you know that TCFA was the first cattle association to develop and implement a beef quality assurance program? That TCFA developed a model Pollution Prevention Plan that not only put Cattle Feeding Country ahead of the curve on environmental regulations, but has been adopted by other CAFO groups as the foundation for their environmental programs? That TCFA has been keeping cattle feeders "environmentally friendly" since the early 1970s, before EPA was even created?

TCFA has been doing this and much, much more, all on your behalf, all designed to keep Cattle Feeding Country the pre-eminent place to feed your cattle.

We've been through some tough times. But we've been through tough times before and we'll have tough times again. Just as always, TCFA will be there, firm and strong, resting on its bedrock of policy—carefully reasoned and thoroughly discussed—just as it always has. And that's very reassuring.

Scott Keeling
2003 Chairman