



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

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Has Global Warming Been Nothing But A Lie? It has not yet become a major scandal for most of the mainstream media, but various news outlets have reported on what appears to be a joint effort by leading scientists to create and sustain fears about climate change, even if it meant squelching evidence that undermined their cause.

Real Clear Politics – an early leader in investigating what has come to be called "Climategate" – reports that thousands of emails were obtained and posted on the internet showing that some leading climate scientists, including some in the U.S. and the U.K., have been colluding to manufacture evidence of global warming.

U.S. News & World Report says some of these same scientists were involved in writing the 2007 report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which summed up the state of current knowledge on climate change and is often used to support public policy positions on carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions.

According to *Real Clear Politics*, the emails and other data show that scientists at the Hadley Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia in Britain had cherry-picked data to create a "hockey stick" graph showing a dramatic, but illusory, runaway warming trend in the late 20th Century. In one email, a prominent global warming alarmist admits to using a statistical "trick" to "hide the decline" in temperatures.

These emails also revealed private admissions of doubt or scientific weakness in the global warming theory, *Real Clear Politics* reports. In acknowledging that global temperatures have actually declined for the past decade, one scientist asks, "Where the heck is global warming? The fact is that we can't account for the lack of warming at the moment and it is a travesty that we can't." In addition, the emails provide extensive evidence of scientists hijacking the peer review process to enforce global warming dogma and conspiring to evade legal requests for data under the Freedom of Information Act.

U.S. Senator Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), the Ranking Member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, is pushing for a full-blown investigation and hearings. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, Inhofe has publicly said that the emails should be a cautionary note as world leaders prepare to gather in Copenhagen for climate talks.

TCFA believes these emails are evidence of a serious breach of public trust. In recent years, untold amounts of taxpayer money have been spent on research and other endeavors to respond to a threat for which there might not be any legitimate evidence to prove its existence. Until the concerns raised by these emails are fully investigated, the entire body of work on climate change has to be considered suspect. TCFA will work aggressively with NCBA and members of Congress to make sure all of the implications of Climategate are thoroughly examined, any wrongdoing is punished, and no more laws or regulations are promulgated on the basis of what might be nothing more than a hoax.

EPA Has Put Off A Decision On The Ethanol Blend Limit Until "Mid-2010." The announcement was made on Dec. 1, which was the deadline for EPA to respond to a request from ethanol producers who want the blend limit raised from the current 10% to 15%.

More tests are needed before a decision is made, EPA said in a news release. However, EPA also said results of two completed tests indicate that engines in new cars likely can handle an ethanol blend higher than E10.

TCFA continues to work to defeat the proposed blend limit increase. In a letter to EPA during the comment period, TCFA pointed out that the federal government's unnecessary subsidization of the ethanol industry has forced livestock producers to pay higher costs for feedgrains.

The Black-Tailed Prairie Dog Does Not Warrant Protection as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced this week. USFWS says the determination was made after a thorough review of all available scientific and commercial information regarding the status of the black-tailed prairie dog and the potential impacts to the species.

TCFA submitted comments earlier this year to encourage USFWS to focus on conservation and management plans for the black-tailed prairie dog developed by Texas and other states that are members of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. TCFA stated, "We oppose any actions to list the black-tailed prairie dog as threatened or endangered. We believe that listing of the prairie dog could have a negative impact on the successful voluntary conservation efforts already underway." TCFA staff will continue to closely follow any future actions by the USFWS regarding the prairie dog.

Black-tailed prairie dogs are typically found in Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico as well as other states east of the continental divide including Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska. For more on the USFWS decision, go to <http://www.fws.gov/SOUTHWEST/docs/BTPD12-moFINALnr.pdf>.

The Completed Corn Genome Has Been Published in the journal *Science* by a team of scientists led by The Genome Center at Washington University School Of Medicine in St. Louis. The decoding of corn's DNA is an accomplishment that will accelerate efforts to develop better corn varieties and meet the growing demands for food, feed and fuel, according to a University news release.

"Seed companies and maize geneticists will pounce on this data to find their favorite genes," said senior author Dr. Richard K. Wilson, director of Washington University's Genome Center, who led the multi-institutional sequencing effort. "Now they'll know exactly where those genes are. Having the complete genome in hand will make it easier to breed new varieties of corn that produce higher yields or are more tolerant to extreme heat, drought or other conditions."

To read more on the project, go to <http://mednews.wustl.edu/news/page/normal/15093.html>.

The corn genome data is available at <http://maizesequence.org/index.html>.

TCFA Displeased With Death Tax Measure Passed By House: The U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday approved the Permanent Estate Tax Relief for Families, Farmers, and Small Businesses Act of 2009 (H.R. 4154) by a vote of 225-200. Every Republican representative and 26 Democrats voted against the \$234 billion bill which makes permanent the current estate tax levels – a 45% rate on assets valued over \$3.5 million per spouse.

TCFA is extremely disappointed that Congress has ignored repeated calls for significant estate tax reform. TCFA and NCBA oppose H.R. 4154 and urged all members of the House of Representatives to vote against the bill. TCFA has consistently supported efforts to either repeal or significantly reform the estate tax. While permanent repeal of the estate tax is the preferred option, TCFA recognizes that goal is financially and politically unobtainable at this time. What TCFA advocates at present is a compromise solution that includes a higher exemption level indexed to inflation and a decreased tax rate. TCFA does not believe that the provisions of H.R. 4154 provide sufficient relief. A copy of the letter TCFA sent to House members is available at http://www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/h.r.4154_dec09.pdf.

The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration, but it is unclear when or if it will have an opportunity to debate and pass a reform measure before the end of the year. If Congress fails to pass a bill before Jan. 1, existing law passed several years ago calls for the estate tax to be completely repealed for one year (2010) before reverting in 2011 to a staggering 55% tax rate on estates valued at \$1 million or more. TCFA will continue to work with Senators and other stakeholders to craft and pass a measure that provides meaningful relief for family-owned farms, ranches and other small businesses facing this onerous tax.

USA Today Has Begun A Series Of Articles On Food Safety, which included two articles this week focused on the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Tuesday's front-page article, "Why a recall of tainted beef didn't include school lunches," raised concerns about how USDA handled a salmonella-related ground beef recall last summer. The 825,769 lb. recall included ground beef sent to retailers but not meat sent to schools through the NSLP. Reportedly, *USA Today* secured USDA documents that call into question whether the agency ensured the safety of the meat sent to school children.

USA Today published a second food safety article in Wednesday's newspaper, "Family's nightmare began with secondary infection." The article detailed the ongoing health problems of an eighth grader who caught an *E. coli*-related secondary infection from another child who ate contaminated ground beef through the NSLP.

As the newspaper continues its research, representatives of the beef industry, including TCFA Chairman Mike Engler, have been communicating with *USA Today* to talk about ongoing efforts to continue enhancing beef safety protections. Engler and other experts including Dr. Mandy Carr, NCBA's executive director of beef safety research, have been interviewed for an article on pre- and post-harvest interventions, which is expected to appear later this month.

NCBA says the series is expected to run through the end of this month, but there's no information on how many articles are planned. NCBA has been working with *USA Today* reporters to make sure the industry's perspective is heard. Dr. James O. "Bo" Reagan, NCBA's senior vice president of research, education and innovation, spoke with a reporter about beef safety efforts, new research and industry best practices. The reporter also spoke with Beef Industry Food Safety Council (BIFSCo) members Dave Theno and Tim Biela. Commentary from those three interviews may appear in future articles.

To read the *USA Today* articles that appeared this week, go to http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-12-01-beef-recall-lunches_N.htm and http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-12-01-lunch-tainted-beef_N.htm.

EPA Is Renewing The Charter For Its Agricultural Advisory Group. Former TCFA Board Member Tom McDonald currently represents cattlemen as an original member of the advisory group, which was created in 2008. Formally known as the Farm, Ranch and Rural Communities Committee, the 25-member group meets twice yearly to provide advice, information and recommendations to the EPA administrator on a broad range of environmental issues that are important to agriculture and rural communities.

Pathogen Labeling Bill Introduced In Senate: U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) has introduced the Processed Food Safety Act (S. 2819) to amend USDA inspection rules to mandate pathogen treatment and expand labeling requirements on meat and poultry. Specifically, the bill would amend the Poultry Products Inspection Act, the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the sale of any processed poultry, meat and FDA-regulated food that has not either undergone a pathogen reduction treatment or been certified to contain no verifiable traces of pathogens.

In addition, the bill would require labels on ground beef, or any other ground meat product, specifically naming every cut of meat that is contained in the product. It also would prohibit producers from adding coloring, synthetic flavorings and spices to their products without informing the consumer.

The 2010 Cattle Industry Annual Convention & NCBA Trade Show will be in San Antonio Jan. 27-30. As a co-host of the event, TCFA has room blocks at the Marriott Rivercenter and the Marriott Riverwalk. The rooms in these blocks will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact TCFA Administrative Assistant Shannon Standley at shannon@tcfa.org or (806) 358-3681 to reserve rooms in these blocks. Shannon will need your hotel preference, arrival and departure dates, the type of room you desire and a credit card number to guarantee the reservation. The deadline is Friday, Dec. 18. If you want to stay at a different hotel, visit NCBA's website at <http://www.beefusa.org> and follow the link to make your housing arrangements online and instantly confirm your hotel.

Restaurant Operators Continue To Have Mixed Expectations About Sales Growth in the months ahead, according to a survey by the National Restaurant Association. During the next six months, 29% of restaurant operators expect to have higher sales, compared to the same period in the previous year, which matches the percentage that anticipate lower sales over that period. Last month, 25% of restaurant operators said they expected their sales volume in six months to be higher than it was during the same period in the previous year, while 32% anticipated lower sales in six months.

The outlook for the restaurant industry improved somewhat in October, as the Association's comprehensive index of restaurant activity registered its first gain in three months. The Restaurant Performance Index (RPI) – a monthly composite index that tracks the health of and outlook for the U.S. restaurant industry – stood at 98.0 in October, up 0.5% from its September level. However, the RPI still remained below 100 for the 24th consecutive month, which signifies contraction in the index of key industry indicators. RPI values above 100 indicate that key industry indicators are in a period of expansion, while index values below 100 represent a period of contraction for key industry indicators.

Beef 706, a two-day program on beef quality management, will be offered Jan. 12-13 at Texas A&M University. Topics to be covered include evaluation of beef carcasses and live cattle, meat cutting, grid marketing and branding programs.

The registration deadline is Jan. 1. For more information, go to <http://texasbeef.info/706/>.

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