



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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Beef Industry Stands Firm in TPP Negotiations

Japan may be the top export destination for U.S. beef, but that doesn't give them a free pass to exclude themselves from playing the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) game by the same rules as everyone else.

That, in essence, was the message delivered loud and clear yesterday during a news conference discussing the ongoing TPP negotiations with specific focus on Japan's unwillingness to negotiate on all agricultural products, including beef and pork.

"Japan does not deserve special treatment and must be treated the same as all of the other TPP countries," said NCBA President Bob McCan. "If the United States is going to open its market to competition from other TPP countries, then so should Japan. NCBA will support a TPP agreement with Japan as long as the terms are based on full market access and sound science."

McCan added that if the United States accepts Japan's current TPP offer, which would continue high tariffs on beef, pork and other commodities, it would have long-lasting negative consequences for U.S. farmers and for agricultural jobs and, just as important, for future U.S. free trade agreements.

"Japan seems to believe that they're entitled to keep five sacred agriculture products off the table," said Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), stating his strong opposition to Japan's negotiation position. "The third largest economy in the world can't make protectionist moves like that without it having a ripple effect."

Supreme Court Rules in Favor of Private Property Rights

Earlier this week, the Supreme Court made an 8-1 ruling in favor of property rights. With private property rights crucial to the livelihoods of livestock producers, NCBA along with Public Lands Council, the American Farm Bureau Federation, and the free-market think-tank, Cato Institute, filed amicus in this case.

Known as the "rails-to-trails" case, *Marvin Brandt Revocable Trust v. United States*, explored whether or not the federal government may assert ownership over land upon which it once granted a right-of-way easement. In the late 1800s, when the U.S. was expanding westward, the government granted railroad companies thousands of miles of easements over what was (or was to become) private property. Over the years, as railroad companies have begun pulling up ties and abandoning their right-of-way easements, the federal government has claimed ownership over many of these tracts of land and converted them into public trails.

As the Supreme Court Justices made clear this week, the government has been sorely mistaken in this brash assertion of ownership of private property.

Chief Justice John Roberts said basic common law principles resolved this case and classified the right-of-way as an easement, meaning it was temporary right to cross the land, ending when the railway was abandoned.

In an amicus brief to the Supreme Court, NCBA quoted the highly-acclaimed economist, Thomas Sowell, who stated, "Nations prosper when private property rights are well-defined and enforced."

Check Out Your Checkoff

Ensuring beef is the preferred protein choice by educating and engaging influential athletes and fitness professionals on the positive benefits of beef continues to be a priority for the beef checkoff in Texas. The Texas Beef Council (TBC) has once again placed checkoff-funded print ads that are featured in *Austin Fit Magazine*, *IDEA Fitness*, *Competitor*, and *Texas Runner and Triathlete*, reaching 1.1 million fitness and health enthusiasts. The campaign includes a total of 26 ads with a rotation of six "Above All Else – Beef It's What's for Dinner." ads and four "Healthy People Eat Beef" ads featuring four Texas BEEF Team members. In conjunction with the campaign, TBC has also received blog posts, banner ads and Facebook posts from *Austin Fit Magazine* and *Competitor* as part of an added value from the campaign. View one of the checkoff-funded ads at

<http://tinyurl.com/checkoff-ad>.

TCEQ Issues Proposed CAFO Permitting Rules

Today, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) issued proposed rules in the *Texas Register* to renew and amend the existing permitting rules for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). In addition to the rule proposal, the TCEQ also issued a notice to renew and amend the General Permit for CAFOs in Texas.

“We appreciate the efforts of TCEQ management and staff to issue these proposals on a timeline that will allow the agency to complete the administrative process over the next four months and adopt the rules and General Permit prior to the July 20 expiration date of the current permit,” said Ben Weinheimer, TCFA vice president.

The proposed amendments to the rules and General Permit will implement changes that EPA adopted in 2003 and 2008 to the federal regulations for CAFOs. TCEQ is required to make those changes in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement with EPA, regarding delegation of the federal CAFO permitting program. Some of the key changes will require: (1) a nutrient management plan to be included in permit applications; (2) a review of the NMPs by TCEQ staff; (3) incorporation of the terms of the NMP into each CAFO’s permit; and (4) that TCEQ establish a list of changes to the NMP that would constitute a substantial change, which would require a permit amendment and public notice.

View the proposed CAFO rules at <http://tinyurl.com/cafo-rules> and the updated CAFO General Permit at <http://tinyurl.com/gen-permit>. TCFA staff will review and comment on the proposals and will participate in a public hearing, which will be held April 8 in Austin.

Pruitt Warns Oklahomans of Misleading Solicitations by Animal Welfare Organizations

Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt on Wednesday issued a warning to Oklahomans regarding solicitations and advertisements by national animal welfare organizations. Attorney General Pruitt is concerned such groups are giving Oklahomans the impression their donations are assisting Oklahoma animal shelters, when in fact the donations of Oklahomans may go toward unrelated efforts like lobbying in other states or at the federal level.

According to the Attorney General’s (AG) office, Pruitt is looking into concerns over fundraising advertisements in the wake of the May 2013 tornadoes. “Oklahomans are caring people and gave generously to assist our friends and neighbors devastated by the deadly May 2013 tornadoes,” Pruitt said. “In the wake of the storm, there are concerns some national animal welfare organizations may have misled Oklahomans by giving the impression their donations would help displaced animals and animal shelters in Oklahoma. Our review has found the Oklahoma shelters have not received assistance from national groups.”

The AG’s Office is reviewing information from national animal welfare organizations to help resolve and clarify these concerns. To ensure their donations go to help local animal welfare organizations, the AG encouraged Oklahomans to give directly to state-based causes and organizations. Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/pruitt-warns-ok>.

HumaneWatch.org has launched a week-long ad campaign in Oklahoma warning residents about HSUS’ deceptive fundraising practices. Watch the ad at <http://tinyurl.com/ok-cons-alert>.

Attorneys General in Six States Filed Egg Lawsuit Against California

Attorneys General for five states have joined Missouri in its lawsuit challenging egg production standards in California. The original suit was filed Feb. 3 in U.S. District Court in Fresno, Calif. Alabama, Iowa, Kentucky, Nebraska and Oklahoma joined the suit seeking to bar implementation of new regulations regarding cage sizes for egg-laying hens.

Oklahoma AG Scott Pruitt says Oklahoma joining in on this lawsuit is the right thing to do. “With this law, California is telling farmers in our state they must operate their Oklahoma farms according to California’s egg-producing regulations. That places an undue burden on Oklahoma farmers and violates the spirit of the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution which prohibits states from regulating business and industry outside their own borders,” Pruitt said.

The regulations on cage size are the result of a 2008 ballot initiative called Proposition 2 that HSUS heavily promoted. Some agricultural groups say the initiative was an attempt by HSUS to harm animal agriculture producers, according to the *Oklahoma Farm Report*. Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/lawsuit-calif-egg>.

Corn Acres Down, Planting Intentions Survey Shows

The annual Allendale Acreage Survey, which this year yielded results from 28 states, shows corn planting intentions of 92.349 million acres. While that’s down roughly 3 million acres from the 95.365 million acres planted last year, it would be the fourth largest since 1944, when 94.473 million acres were planted. Using Allendale Inc.’s estimate of harvested acreage, and a 163.06 bushel/acre trend yield, it would imply the second largest production of 13.781 billion bushels. Last year’s production was 13.925 billion bushels.

To read more, go to <http://tinyurl.com/planting-intentions>.

Red Meat Exports Start 2014 on Positive Note

U.S. beef, pork and lamb exports all opened 2014 on a positive note, although market conditions suggest this could be a challenging year for U.S. red meat exports, according to statistics released by the USDA and compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

Beef exports continued the strong performance set in 2013, rising 13 percent in volume and 16 percent in value for the month, bolstered by double-digit growth to Mexico, Japan and Hong Kong. However, USMEF CEO Phil Seng noted that with U.S. beef production expected to drop 5 percent this year, and already running below last year's levels, it will be challenging to maintain export levels.

January exports of 97,824 metric tons (mt) were up 13 percent. Export value rose 16 percent year-over-year to \$514.5 million. Exports accounted for 13 percent of total beef production (muscle cuts plus variety meat) and 10 percent of muscle cuts alone – increases of 2 and 1 percent, respectively. The export value per head of fed slaughter was \$219.73, up \$14.79 from last year.

Top-performing beef export markets in January were:

- Mexico: 20,228 mt (up 23 percent) valued at \$93.6 million (up 27 percent)
- Japan: 15,655 mt (up 53 percent) valued at \$92.9 million (up 28 percent)
- Hong Kong: 12,811 mt (up 83 percent) valued at \$80.9 million (up 118 percent)
- Central/South America: 2,843 mt (up 26 percent) valued at \$12.4 million (up 32 percent)
- Chile: 975 mt (up 25 percent) valued at \$4.7 million (up 26 percent)
- Colombia: 369 mt (up 258 percent) valued at \$1.3 million (up 243 percent)
- Indonesia: 1,741 mt (up 3,314 percent) valued at \$4.6 million (up 879 percent)

Complete export results are available at www.usmef.org/news-statistics/statistics.

China Seeks Data on U.S. Mad Cow Cases Before Imports

China, the biggest buyer of U.S. agricultural products, said it needs more information from its trading partner on the outbreaks of mad cow diseases before granting access to its beef market, reports *Bloomberg News*.

U.S. officials haven't shared all the epidemiology data with China on four cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE, since 2003, Vice Agriculture Minister Niu Dun said in an interview in Beijing. Niu repeated that China hopes for an agreement on U.S. beef by July, while also seeking the removal of barriers to exports of Chinese poultry.

"If the U.S. doesn't give the information to us, and we can't do the evaluation, then I can't allow imports," Niu said, adding he is directly involved in the negotiations. He didn't elaborate on the specific information that's lacking. For more, go to <http://tinyurl.com/china-seeks-data>.

Got Hogs? There's an App for That

For many farmers and ranchers, it may seem as though feral hogs are well on their way to taking over the country. But now at least, the new app, Feral Hog Management, developed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, is here to help landowners learn the legal strategies available to impede this apparently unending flow of unwanted porcine invaders.

"Even as feral hogs become 'public enemy No. 1,' their population relentlessly continues to explode. In Texas alone, their numbers are now estimated at a conservative 2.6 million, with \$52 million in damages chalked-up to them annually. And, with an estimated 134 million acres of suitable habitat in Texas for feral hogs, their skyrocketing numbers are ripe for some major expansion," said Mark Tyson, AgriLife Extension wildlife and fisheries associate at College Station.

For 99 cents, Tyson said the AgriLife Extension app, available at <http://tinyurl.com/hog-phone-app>, provides landowners with the key to a wealth of the very best information now available on various control measures.

Alert: Ticks are Working for Vegans

The lone star tick has apparently teamed up with one or more vegan advocate groups and is working to turn avid meat-eaters into reluctant vegans. One bite from these reddish-brown parasitic arachnids and your meat-eating days are over, according to *BEEF Today's Grazing the Net*.

While the headline has fun with the issue, it's a serious problem. A bite from the lone star tick is causing people to develop a serious allergy to red meat. More specifically, people develop an allergy to a sugar called alpha-gal, which is present in red meat. If you develop this allergy, it can cause rash, swelling, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea and all-around nastiness when you eat anything involving red meat. Unfortunately, this sudden allergy brought on by tick bites is becoming more and more commonplace.

To read more, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ticks-working-vegans>.

The United Steaks of America

L.V. Anderson is outraged that only four states – Louisiana, Maryland, Oklahoma, and Texas – name meaty dishes among their official state foods. “And Maryland doesn’t really count – its state food is the blue crab, which is more like an edible bug than a meat.”

In an attempt to right this injustice, Anderson set out to assign a meat to every state – and not just any meat. “Red meat is what makes Americans red-blooded. Chicken, fish, and turkey? Off the table.” So Anderson’s map links a red meat dish to each state with this ground rule: The food must come from hair-growing, milk-producing, four-legged animals. Anderson, however, breaks this rule by linking Florida with alligator meat using this rationale: “Is the alligator a mammal? No, it is not. But is Florida a normal state? No, it is not,” he says. Case closed, says *Beef Today’s Grazing the Net*. Find more at <http://tinyurl.com/united-steaks>.

Animal Proteins Provide Health Benefit to Aging Individuals

A diet high in protein, particularly animal protein, may help the elderly maintain a higher level of physical, psychological and social function, according to a study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. Research suggests that as people age, their ability to process protein may decline. To compensate for this, protein requirements may increase with age. Researchers in Japan ran trials to find out, reports *Feedstuffs*.

“Identifying nutritional factors that contribute to maintaining higher-level functional capacity is important for prevention of future deterioration of activities of daily living,” said Dr. Tsubota-Utsugi. “Along with other modifiable health behaviors, a diet rich in protein may help older adults maintain their functional capacity.”

To read more, go to <http://tinyurl.com/animal-protein-benefit-aging>.

History Can Teach Southern Plains Ranchers Valuable Lessons

Texas rancher and past TCFA president Jay O’Brien of Amarillo says he’s not really so much a rancher as a farmer. His spread in the Texas Panhandle doesn’t so much produce beef as it produces grass. That may not seem like an important distinction, but he says it makes all the difference in how the land is cared for and how ranches can be profitable in good times and in bad.

“There is so much to learn from history, but, unfortunately, humans are not good at learning from history,” O’Brien told those attending the “Surviving the Elements” symposium sponsored by the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum recently. “We all like to be optimists. We all like to think that everything is going to be OK. Sometimes, we reach out a little far in our optimism and assume things that aren’t necessarily true.

“As ranchers, we only have one real asset and that’s the grass. And so we have to take care of that grass so that we can produce this high quality product, this beef, from this renewable resource of grass. If we don’t take care of it, we won’t be able to do as good of a job of producing beef.”

Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/soplains-rancher>.

Sponsor Spotlight

TCFA is proud to recognize its top sponsors whose efforts help deliver top-notch service.

This week’s spotlight shines on



Merck Animal Health has been a faithful supporter of TCFA, with sponsorships of the TCFA Annual Convention and Summer Meeting, Fed Beef Challenge, Junior Fed Beef Challenge, and TCFA Best Safety Practices Awards. They will continue the strong commitment to the success of TCFA members, delivering innovative animal health products such as ZILMAX[®] (zilpaterol hydrochloride) feed supplement, REVALOR[®] (trenbolone acetate and estradiol) implants, Zuprevo[®] (tildipirosin), Resflor Gold[®] (florfenicol and flunixin meglumine), NUFLOOR[®] (florfenicol), Vista[®] vaccines, Vision[®] vaccines, SAFE-GUARD[®] (fenbendazole) dewormer and ULTRA SABER[™] (lambdacyhalothrin/piperonyl butoxide) pour-on, all supported by the industry’s top technical service and sales teams. For more information, please go to www.merck-animal-health-usa.com.

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