



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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2014 TCFA Feedyard Camp

On Monday, fifteen incoming high school juniors and seniors, who were selected to participate in the 2014 TCFA Feedyard Camp, traveled from near and far to West Texas A&M University (WTAMU) in Canyon to spend three days learning all aspects of the cattle feeding industry. TCFA, in conjunction with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and WTAMU, provided the students with an all-inclusive, hands-on learning experience of a lifetime.

The group toured Quality Beef Producers in Wildorado, Tyson Fresh Meats in Amarillo, as well as the WTAMU Research Feedlot where they learned about feeds and feeding, live evaluation of cattle, waste management and animal health, which included the students' participation in a necropsy.

Students received an overview of TCFA and the fed beef industry from TCFA staff, engaged in Q&A discussion with a panel of feedyard professionals, and they also enjoyed an outdoor media training, which used real-life scenarios in a team setting to teach the importance of the decisions that are made every day in regard to the media and the beef industry.

As in previous years, the campers completed their Feedyard Camp experience at the WTAMU Meats Lab where they learned about carcass anatomy and fabrication. The students participated in a beef palatability demonstration and fabricated their own sirloins that they ate for lunch at the conclusion of camp on Wednesday. As an added segment this year, the students were trained in food safety and handling, where they earned certification during camp.

A big thank you goes to all that were involved in putting on the different parts of camp and to our generous Allied Industry companies that donated and prepared meals for the students throughout camp. To view pictures from Feedyard Camp, visit Texas Cattle Feeders Association on Facebook.

USDA Announces New Measures for Beginning Producers

USDA on Monday announced the implementation of policy changes and measures authorized by the 2014 *Farm Bill* designed to help new farmers and ranchers get started in an occupation where the average age is 58 and rising, reports *AgriPulse*.

The policy announcements include:

- Waiving service fees for new and beginning farmers or ranchers to enroll in the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the 2014 crop year.
- Eliminating payment reductions under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for new and beginning farmers that will allow routine, prescribed and emergency grazing outside the primary nesting season on enrolled land consistent with approved conservation plans.
- Increasing payment rates to beginning farmers and ranchers under Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). Under this provision, beginning farmers can claim up 90 percent of losses for lost livestock, including bees, under ELAP. This is a fifty percent increase over previously available payment amounts to new and beginning farmers.

Find more information for beginning producers at <http://tinyurl.com/usda-new-farmer>.

Chipotle Comments After Invitation From Todd Staples

In an open letter, founder of Chipotle, Steve Eells, has agreed to give explanation for the company's decision to import Australian beef. This response came from an open letter that Texas Agriculture Commissioner, Todd Staples, wrote last week. Staples invited Eells to further explain the company's reasoning on selecting Australian beef.

"We are always happy to engage in dialogue with industry leaders and policy makers about our food culture and the decisions we make with regard to the food we serve," Ells wrote to Staples in a letter dated June 24. Ells then goes on to state that Chipolte will continue to use American beef. "...the majority of the beef we serve our customers will continue to come from the U.S."

Staples states that since Texas is home to the largest cattle herd, 249,000 farms and ranches that stretch across 103.2 million acres, it should be an obvious source of beef. "I am shocked by your recent decision to start serving meat that's been shipped in from more than 8,000 miles away."

Ells gives some explanation to the company's decision in an editorial from May 28. "Rather than serve conventionally raised steak, we recently began sourcing some steak from ranches in Southern Australia, which is among the very best places in the world for raising beef cattle entirely on grass. Furthermore, we respect the right of every farmer, rancher and grower to follow practices that make sense for their business, even if they do not make sense for ours."

Staples respond to Ells with, "Your decision to forego American beef is premature. In fact, the decision seems to abandon the work you and your company have accomplished in supporting local farming."

To read the entire story, visit <http://tinyurl.com/k8c4ydo>.

Food Waste Study Spotlights Meat, Poultry, Fish

A recent USDA study shows that in terms of overall volume, Americans waste a disproportionate amount of meat, poultry and fish. *Meatingplace* reports on the study, which reveals that while an estimated 31 percent of all food available for consumption in the U.S. (133 billion pounds) went uneaten in 2010, 58.4 billion pounds of that amount were in the "meat, poultry and fish" category. The USDA Economic Research Service's report broke out the waste of meat at 31.6 billion pounds, poultry at 22 billion pounds, and fish and shellfish at 4.8 billion pounds for the year studied.

The food loss statistics in the "Food Loss – Questions About the Amount and Causes" report also show that the "meat, poultry and fish" category represented 30 percent of the total value of wasted food, but just 12 percent of the total volume. Two-thirds of the total food loss occurred in homes, restaurants and other out-of-home sites while the other third took place in grocery stores or other food retailers.

The report cited the expected reasons for food waste, including spoilage, processing issues, contamination and waste by consumers who cook too much food for a single meal. But it added that the 290 pounds of food wasted per capita makes U.S. consumers among the most wasteful in developed nations.

Kansas State Develops Genetics Test to Detect E. coli

Researchers at Kansas State University (K-State) have developed a genetic test that could help the beef cattle industry more rapidly detect pathogenic Shiga toxin-producing E. coli O157:H7, and according to the university, could save the cattle industry millions of dollars annually by developing earlier and accurate E. coli detection.

According to *Drovers CattleNetwork*, the project is part of a bigger research project studying preharvest food safety in cattle and is being led by graduate student Lance Noll, T.G. Nagaraja, university distinguished professor of diagnostic medicine and pathobiology, and Jianfa Bai, assistant professor in the K-State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

"Developing a method to detect E. coli before it can potentially contaminate the food supply benefits the beef industry by preventing costly recalls but also benefits the consumer by ensuring the safety of the beef supply," Noll says.

The new test is a molecular assay that has been developed and validated to detect and quantify four genes specific for E. coli O157:H7. Specifically, it detects bacteria based on genetic sequence. K-State says the test is rapid, less labor intensive, can be used in a diagnostic lab to accurately test many samples for E. coli and can also be automated to help with quality control in cattle facilities. The project is being funded by a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant. Find the story at <http://tinyurl.com/kstate-ecoli>.

Vote for the 2014 Cattle Feeders Hall of Fame

Cast your vote for the 2014 Cattle Feeders Hall of Fame inductees now at www.cattlefeeders.org. This year's group of nominees showcases five unique pioneers and visionaries for the cattle feeding industry. From the five nominees, two inductees will be announced during the Cattle Feeders Hall of Fame banquet this summer in Denver, Colo. Among the five individuals nominated is Robert "Bob" Josserand of AzTx Cattle Co. in Hereford.

In addition to the 2014 Hall of Fame nominees, voting is also open for the 2014 Industry Leadership Award nominees. The 2014 nominees for the Industry Leadership Award have contributed to the cattle feeding industry through outstanding advocacy and leadership. Nominees for this award include Betty Jo Gigot of *CALF News*, Randy Blach of CattleFax and Topper Thorpe, former CEO at CattleFax.

For more information on the inductees and award winners, or about the Cattle Feeders Hall of Fame, visit www.cattlefeeders.org and www.facebook.com/cattlefeeders.

Taiwanese Customers Look for More Affordable U.S. Beef Cuts

The price of a high quality beef dinner in Taiwan can top \$100, leaving restaurant operators struggling to find menu options to reach the full economic range of their customers. In response, restaurants and hotels have partnered with the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) to develop creative new dishes with more affordable cuts, including the petite tender and the clod heart.

With support from the Beef Checkoff Program and the USDA Market Access Program, USMEF recently hosted seminars for Taiwan's food service operators, retailers and importers to educate them about the quality and value of these two U.S. beef cuts. Cooking demonstrations, product information and recipes showed the participants how the petite tender and clod heart could add menu alternatives at a variety of price points.

Taste, variety and price point of the petite tender and clod heart are gaining popularity in Taiwanese restaurants. Both cuts will be featured at Taiwan's Ambassador Hotel in a special "Great American BBQ Beef" promotion that started running in mid-June and will continue through the end of July at nine restaurants. For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/taiwanese-customers-beef-cuts>.

USFRA Searching for New "Faces of Farming & Ranching"

The U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance (USFRA), funded in part by the beef checkoff, recently announced that they will begin looking for the new "Faces of Farming & Ranching." To help put a real face on agriculture, in early September, USFRA will select standout farmers and ranchers who are proud of what they do, eager to share their stories of continuous improvement and who are actively involved in sharing those stories in public and on social media. Farmers and ranchers who grow and raise an assortment of foods through various methods, on differing scale and across all regions of the country are encouraged to apply.

To apply, you can visit FoodDialogues.com between Thursday, July 10 and Sunday, Aug. 10 to complete an application entry form and to submit a video no longer than three minutes that shows your operation and your role on the operation.

Sponsor Spotlight

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

This week's spotlight shines on



RAMP and Sweet Bran, proud sponsors of TCFA, help cattle feeders across Texas minimize their cost of gain and maximize their profit. RAMP is a complete starter ration that changes the way cattle eat and the way they gain – all the way through finishing. Sweet Bran is a valuable part of the finishing diet that provides higher, more consistent feed intake and promotes better rumen health and reduced cost of gain. For more information on RAMP and Sweet Bran, call (866) 798-2726.

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