



# TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

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# NEWSLETTER

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5501 I-40 W. • AMARILLO, TEXAS • PHONE (806) 358-3681 • [www.tcfa.org](http://www.tcfa.org) • [info@tcfa.org](mailto:info@tcfa.org)

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## **EPA Finally Hands Over Maps Revealing the Extent of WOTUS Proposal**

The House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology released maps Wednesday of waters and wetlands the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has to-date refrained from making public. After multiple requests, the Agency finally handed over the maps to the committee, which appear to detail the extent of the “Waters of the United States” (WOTUS) proposal.

“The newly released maps clearly illustrate a blatant violation of private property rights and expose the severity of how detrimental the proposed WOTUS rule would be to the livelihoods of producers. It’s deplorable that EPA has lied this whole time in their claims of being transparent, and it’s appalling that they knew this when addressing cattlemen in D.C. in April,” said TCFA Chairman Jason Hitch. “It is crucial that cattlemen take action immediately. We need your help to send a strong message to the EPA, the Army Corps of Engineers and the current administration that this expansion of regulatory authority over water on our private property is wrong and unacceptable.”

In a letter Rep. Lamar Smith (R-Texas), Chairman of the House Science Committee, sent to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, he said, “Given the astonishing picture they paint, I understand the EPA’s desire to minimize the importance of these maps, but EPA’s posturing cannot explain away the alarming content of these documents. While you claim that EPA has *not yet* used these maps to regulate Americans, you provided no explanation for why the Agency used taxpayer resources to have these materials created.”

Knowledge of the maps came as the Committee was doing research in preparation for a hearing regarding the proposed “Waters of the United States” rule. The maps were kept hidden while the Agencies marched forward with rulemaking that fundamentally re-defines private property rights, said Chairman Smith.

These maps, which are available on the House Committee website at <http://tinyurl.com/epa-maps>, are very similar to the maps produced by NCBA and other agricultural groups, which also showcase the EPA’s extensive attempt to control land across the country. These maps show individual states facing upwards of 100,000 additional stream miles that could be regulated under the proposed regulation.

TCFA urges you to help “Ditch the Rule” by submitting comments to EPA and the Corps opposing the proposal. Simply go to [www.tcfa.org](http://www.tcfa.org) and click on the WOTUS banner at the top of the page. Fill in your contact information and click submit to pull up pre-populated comments that can be personalized with your thoughts or sent as is. The last day to submit comments is Oct. 20, 2014.

## **Start Convention Off With a Little Fun**

As you slide into Oklahoma City on Sunday, Oct. 26, come on over to the Cox Convention Center to pick up your registration packet for the 2014 TCFA Annual Convention and stop by TCFA’s Welcome Party and Sports Lounge from 4-9 that evening. Reconnect with fellow cattlemen while enjoying snacks, cold beverages and NFL action on the big screens. Kick back, stay a while and get ready for the cattle feeding event of the year.

Members of the BEEF-PAC Feeders 500 Club will be invited to attend a reception Sunday evening from 6-8 p.m. atop the city skyline on the 50<sup>th</sup> floor of the Devon Tower in downtown Oklahoma City. For more information about becoming a member of the BEEF-PAC Feeders 500 Club, contact Shannon Standley at [shannon@tcfa.org](mailto:shannon@tcfa.org) or (806) 358-3681.

Registrations are flowing in, and we are anticipating a great crowd in Oklahoma City. **Register before Sept. 18 at <http://tinyurl.com/tcfa-conv-reg> for a chance to win a \$500 Cabela’s gift card!**

Make your hotel reservations today at the Renaissance Hotel using this direct link or phone number, and request the Texas Cattle Feeders Convention block: <http://tinyurl.com/renaissance-hotel-convention> or 1-800-468-3571. **This room block expires Sept. 25.** TCFA also has a block of rooms reserved at the Skirvin Hotel, which **expires Sept. 23.** If you would rather reserve a room at the Skirvin, use this direct link or phone number: <http://tinyurl.com/skirvin-hotel-convention> or 1-888-490-6546.

## **APHIS Makes Two Announcements Regarding Trade with Argentina**

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced on Thursday two announcements regarding trade with Argentina. First, APHIS is adding the Patagonia South and Patagonia North B areas of Argentina to the lists of regions that are considered free of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and rinderpest. This will allow the importation of ruminant and ruminant commodities from the region into the United States.

Through completing a qualitative risk assessment to evaluate the risk of importing FMD in susceptible species and products from the Patagonia Region of Argentina, APHIS determined FMD is not present and that the surveillance, prevention and control measures implemented by Argentina in that region were sufficient to minimize the likelihood of introducing FMD into the U.S. Rinderpest has never been established in South America. No South American country has ever reported the disease except Brazil, and it was quickly eradicated nearly a century ago.

The Region will be subject to certain restrictions designed to mitigate the risk of introducing FMD into the U.S. by ensuring that there is no commingling of products from nearby regions with a lesser animal health status. Any meat imported for human consumption would also have to comply with USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service regulations.

Second, APHIS is proposing to amend the regulations to allow the importation of fresh (chilled or frozen) beef from Northern Argentina, a region located north of Patagonia South and Patagonia North B. APHIS conducted a comprehensive, science-based risk assessment at the request of the government of Argentina, which indicates that fresh (chilled or frozen) beef from Northern Argentina can be safely imported, provided certain conditions are met to ensure beef will not harbor FMD. The risk assessment included five site visits, most recently in 2013.

In April, TCFA submitted comments to APHIS questioning the findings of the risk assessment for the Patagonia Region of Argentina. Third-party, scientific experts identified problems with the risk analysis that demonstrated a failure to follow international risk assessment standards and inadequate supportive data and methodology to demonstrate completion of all of the risk assessment steps. Additionally, the process lacked transparency and failed to adequately account for the potential economic impact of an FMD outbreak in the U.S. Read all of TCFA's comments at <http://tinyurl.com/patagonia-comments>.

## **Millions in Agriculture Lost as Rails Neglect Grain Surplus**

North Dakota farmers are experiencing a crisis situation with their grain shipments being held up by rails' prioritization of the transport of oil, causing millions of dollars in agricultural losses and slower production for food companies like General Mills.

"If we can't get this stuff out soon, a lot of it is simply going to go on the ground and rot," said Bill Hejl, soybean, wheat and sugar beet farmer, to *The New York Times*. Farmers expect the upcoming harvest will yield a record crop of wheat and soybeans, meaning the problem is only expected to get worse.

The region's railroads are occupied by shipments of oil, and as of Aug. 22, reports indicate that the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (the state's largest railroad) had a backlog of 1,336 rail cars waiting to ship grain, while Canadian Pacific railroad had a backlog of 1,000 cars.

Companies like General Mills that depend on these shipments have lost at least two months of production time and four percent of its output, while food company Cargill has also reported a net drop in earnings. If farmers remain unable to move their crops, studies suggest that they stand to lose \$95 million, on top of millions in lost revenue earlier this year. Find the full story at <http://tinyurl.com/nyt-grain-trains>.

## **Obama Looks to Skip Senate on New U.N. Climate Change Deal**

On Tuesday, *The New York Times* reported President Obama is working to create a new international climate change deal that would get other nations to reduce their carbon emissions in a way that would not require the deal to be ratified by the Senate.

Since the Senate would be unlikely to ratify a treaty on global warming, the administration is combining fresh voluntary pledges with legally binding 1992 treaty conditions, creating an updated version of an existing deal that would not require ratification by the Senate.

*The Hill* reports that delegates are to discuss the proposal next month at a U.N. meeting in New York and hope to draft the agreement in December at a meeting in Lima, Peru. The work at the U.N. comes as it prepares its newest climate change report that warns of "irreversible changes" due to global warming.

"Unfortunately, this would be just another of many examples of the Obama administration's tendency to abide by laws that it likes and to disregard laws it doesn't like – and to ignore the elected representative of the people when they don't agree," Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) told the *Times* in a statement.

On Wednesday, the Obama administration denied trying to bypass Congress in forming a global agreement to mitigate climate change. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki claims officials have not begun writing the U.N. climate change agreement to reduce international greenhouse gas emissions, so it is too early to say if the agreement will or will not require Senate approval.

In a statement, Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) said, "Once again, the president is circumventing the wishes of the American people and their elected representatives, and doing so in a fashion that will destroy more jobs." Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/nyt-obama-climate> or <http://tinyurl.com/obama-bypass-congress>.

### **TCEQ Accepting Applications for 2015 Texas Environmental Excellence Awards**

Applications are now being accepted for the 2015 Texas Environmental Excellence Awards, the state's highest environmental honor. These annual awards recognize achievements across Texas that significantly reduce waste, conserve natural resources and prevent pollution.

The Texas Environmental Excellence Awards are presented annually by the governor's office and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. A governor's blue ribbon committee identifies outstanding contributions in nine diverse categories. Each year, applicants consist of individuals, communities, companies or organizations whose bold efforts within the state contribute to the protection of Texas natural resources.

The deadline for applications is Oct. 3. To nominate an exemplary environmental effort for the 2015 awards, apply online at [www.teea.org](http://www.teea.org). For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/2015-teea>.

### **Strong Early Results for Digital Campaign**

Millennials initiate more than 5 million online food-related searches each day, which is a tremendous opportunity for the beef checkoff's consumer digital advertising campaign. Just 12 weeks into the new campaign, the results are impressive indeed!

The "Beef. Its What's For Dinner." website reached more than 1 million consumers during the first 12 weeks of the campaign; the five "no-recipe recipe" YouTube videos on the site were viewed 1.5 million times; and associated social-media sites hosted a total of 434,000 engagements (likes, comments, shares, re-tweets and click-thrus to checkoff resources such as recipes).

"At the end of the day, the checkoff aims to shift consumers' perceptions of beef," said Terri Carstensen, chairwoman of the checkoff's Domestic Consumer Preference Committee. "The data shows that 97 percent of consumers have positive opinions about beef after visiting the site. That's a result to be proud of!"

For more information about your beef checkoff investment, visit [MyBeefCheckoff.com](http://MyBeefCheckoff.com).

### **Last-Minute Holiday Weekend Buying Boosts Total Beef Sales**

Ed Czerwien, USDA Market News reporter in Amarillo, Texas, offers the latest outlook on boxed beef prices and the weekly cattle trade, presented by *Beef* magazine.

Czerwien reports that boxed beef prices were lower again, but the total sales volume jumped even more as retailers continue to buy product for the Labor Day weekend. This was a critical week for sales, because very little product had been booked ahead for the Labor Day holiday and there needed to be good last-minute buying to take advantage of this major grilling weekend.

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/holiday-wkend-beef-sales> to hear Czerwien's full market update.

### **Strong Performance in South Korea for U.S. Beef**

One of the top-performing markets for U.S. beef and pork in 2014 has been South Korea, where exports have posted strong year-over-year gains. Beef exports to Korea in the first half of the year totaled 56,478 metric tons – up 11 percent from a year ago – valued at nearly \$380 million, up 40 percent.

Dan Halstrom, U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) senior vice president for marketing and communications, explains to *Drovers CattleNetwork* that although the U.S. industry has come a long way in combating misperceptions among Korean consumers about the safety of U.S. beef, this is still an ongoing challenge. Listen to Halstrom's comments at <http://tinyurl.com/s-korea-beef>.

### **OSU Researching Water Consumption in Cattle**

A million dollar research grant recently given by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture to Oklahoma State University (OSU) provides the university the opportunity to research water utilization of beef cattle and methods by which the cattle industry can reduce water demands.

The cattle industry has worked for decades on feed usage and feed intake, but research on water usage has been relatively limited and in the past has been based on groups of animals. According to the *Oklahoma*

*Farm Report*, lead researcher Dr. Megan Rolf, animal science assistant professor of OSU's Division of Agriculture, this particular study will collect individual animal water intake on a large number of animals.

The OSU research project is focused on natural resource usage in terms of feed efficiency, water-use efficiency and water as an economically important use. The data collected from this research could potentially lead more producers to select cattle based on water consumption similar to docility or carcass traits.

Rolf believes the research project will aim to look at intake as well as cattle performance and that there is certainly some opportunity for producers through this study. Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/ofr-osu-water>.

### **Landowner Forum: Tools and Strategies for Lesser Prairie-Chicken Recovery**

The Texas Agricultural Land Trust, in conjunction with the National Ranching Heritage Center, will co-host the Landowner Forum: Tools and Strategies for Lesser Prairie-Chicken Recovery, on Sept. 11 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock. The event is free to the public and is intended to bring together landowners who want to learn more about the tools and strategies available to them as part of the Lesser Prairie-Chicken recovery efforts. Visit [www.txaglandtrust.org](http://www.txaglandtrust.org) to view the full agenda.

To register, call (210) 569-6972 or email [TALTrsvp@cegrouppinc.net](mailto:TALTrsvp@cegrouppinc.net).

### **Webinar to Help Producers Expand Profitably**

CattleFax will hold a *CattleFax Trends+* webinar at 6:30 p.m. CT on Wednesday, Sept. 17 to provide producers and industry leaders with decision-friendly information to assist in making intelligent marketing decisions and to help navigate through the next six to 12 months of market activity. Gain CattleFax's insight on the market trends that will have the biggest influence on profitability over the next few years.

To participate in the seminar and access program details, visit [www.cattlefax.com/meetings.aspx](http://www.cattlefax.com/meetings.aspx).

### **Dr. Kenneth and Caroline McDonald Eng Foundation Symposium**

"Innovative Intensification in Cow-Calf Systems" is the second annual symposia of its kind to be sponsored by the Dr. Kenneth and Caroline McDonald Eng Foundation. Texas A&M University will host the event on Sept. 18-19 at the Embassy Suites in San Antonio.

Topics include Managing Energy Requirements in Confined Cows; Cow Efficiency: Implications for Beef Sustainability; Nutritional and Management Considerations When Merging Cow-Calf and Feedyard Operations; and more. For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/eng-symp>.

### **Missouri's 'Right to Farm' Heads to Recount**

Missouri Secretary of State Jason Kander announced on Tuesday he would grant a statewide recount of the Missouri's Right to Farm amendment, which makes farming an official, constitutional right – similar to existing protections for the freedom of speech and religion. The recount is expected to begin in the coming days.

The amendment passed by a margin of less than three-tenths of a percentage point, and one of the opposing groups requested a recount, which Missouri law allows whenever the margin of victory is less than half a percentage point.

The right to farm measure was hotly debated in Missouri. Agricultural industry groups spent nearly \$1 million on the campaign to support the measure, fending off attacks from HSUS and other activist groups. HumaneWatch reported that 90 percent of the funding for the opposition to the amendment came from HSUS. Find more information at <http://tinyurl.com/missouri-recount>.

### **USFRA Announces "I Am Farmland" Campaign**

U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) launched on Wednesday a new campaign, "I Am Farmland," which is geared to help support the expanded distribution of "Farmland," the new feature length documentary about the lives of young farmers and ranchers.

USFRA will use the funds raised in this campaign to continue to heighten the energy of "Farmland" by offering screenings on college campuses, a curriculum-based program for high schools, and screening kits for farmers and ranchers who would like to conduct outreach in their local communities.

Find more information on the campaign and how to get involved at [www.iamfarmland.org](http://www.iamfarmland.org).

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