



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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2014 TCFA Annual Convention Registration

Good News! TCFA has extended the early registration fee until **Oct. 2**. Register today, and you can save \$50!

The Renaissance Hotel and Skirvin Hotel have very few available rooms left. The room block is filling fast, so make your reservations ASAP. For the Renaissance Hotel, use this direct link or phone number and request the TCFA block: <http://tinyurl.com/renaissance-hotel-convention> or 1-800-468-3571. For the Skirvin Hotel, use the following direct link and phone number: <http://tinyurl.com/skirvin-hotel-convention> or 1-888-490-6546.

Don't miss out on the exciting and educational tours that are being offered this year. If you are interested in taking a tour, you must sign up ahead of time. The Lopez Foods and Express Ranches Tour is almost full, so be sure you send in your registrations today!

TCFA will hold a second drawing for a \$500 Cabela's gift card for those who **register prior to Thursday, Oct. 9**. This is the final drawing! Those who have already registered are still in the running for this drawing. Go to <http://tinyurl.com/tcfa-conv-reg-2014> to submit your registration today to be entered for a chance to win.

Join fellow cattlemen at the 2014 TCFA Annual Convention and listen to the messages of this captivating lineup of speakers:

- **Eric Olson**, former Commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command and the first ever Four-Star Navy SEAL will address the topic of national security, geopolitics, building, training and leading highly effective teams in the 21st century. Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen once said, "When the history of these wars is written, the first, last and most pivotal chapters will be about Eric and the people he has led and trained and mentored his entire adult life."
- **Randy Blach**, CattleFax CEO, will return this year to provide well-researched and insightful outlooks related to cattle and grain prices, beef exports and other information vital to running your business.
- **Nina Teicholz**, investigative journalist and author of, "The Big Fat Surprise – Why Butter, Meat and Cheese Belong in a Healthy Diet" will reveal her findings in that the low-fat nutrition advice of the past sixty years has amounted to a vast uncontrolled experiment on the entire population with disastrous consequences for our health. She also shares that the very foods many have been denying themselves – the creamy cheeses and sizzling steaks – could very well be the key to reversing the epidemics of obesity, diabetes and heart disease.
- **Shalene McNeill**, Ph.D., R.D., and Executive Director of Human Nutrition Research at NCBA will present "Beef's Bad Rap and What We Can Do About It." McNeill has more than 13 years of experience in food, nutrition, agriculture research and public nutrition education. Her areas of expertise include the role of dietary protein in weight management and optimal health, the contribution of animal source foods to a healthy diet and beef's function as a nutrient-rich food.
- **Brittni Furrow**, Walmart Director of Product & Supply Chain Sustainability, Food Business; **Jason Simon**, Walmart Sr. Director of Beef; **Rod Snyder**, President of Field to Market; and **Suzy Friedman**, Director of Agricultural Sustainability at the Environmental Defense Fund will discuss their perspectives and needs for sustainable beef production, one of the hottest topics in the industry today.

Notice of Annual Meeting. TCFA's Annual Business Meeting will be held Tuesday, Oct. 28 during the TCFA Annual Convention Closing General Session. All members are encouraged to attend.

Disaster Assistance Deadline Nearing, Contact FSA by Sept. 30

Producers who have suffered eligible disaster-related losses are encouraged to contact their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office by Sept. 30 to avoid congressionally mandated payment reductions in the new fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, 2014.

Producers who register for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) with their FSA office by Sept. 30 will not be subject to the payment reduction, regardless of when their application is processed. Conversely,

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) applications must be fully completed by Sept. 30 in order to avoid the payment reduction.

As an alternative to visiting the FSA office, producers may use the online registration to put their name on the list before the deadline to prevent reductions in their LFP assistance. To place a name on the LFP online list, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/disaster-register. View the details on the 2014 Farm Bill and LFP program at www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill and <http://go.usa.gov/5JTk>.

USDA Announces New Farm Programs, Decision Tools

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on Thursday announced the implementation of two new Farm Bill programs designed to help farmers better manage risk. Vilsack also announced that new tools are available to help provide farmers the information they need to choose the new safety net program that is right for their business.

“The 2014 Farm Bill represented some of the largest farm policy reforms in decades. One of the Farm Bill’s most significant reforms is finally taking effect,” said Vilsack. “Farming is one of the riskiest businesses in the world. These new programs help ensure that risk can be effectively managed so that families don’t lose farms that have been passed down through generations because of events beyond their control. But unlike the old direct payment program, which paid farmers in good years and bad, these new initiatives are based on market forces and include county – and individual – coverage options. These reforms provide a much more rational approach to helping farmers manage risk.”

The new programs, Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC), are cornerstones of the commodity farm safety net programs in the 2014 Farm Bill, which ended direct payments. Both programs offer farmers protection when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices and/or revenues. Producers will have through early spring of 2015 to select which of the programs will work best for their businesses over the next five years.

To help farmers choose between ARC and PLC, USDA contracted with the Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M University, the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute at the University of Missouri and the University of Illinois to create online tools that allow farmers to enter information about their operation and see projections about what each program will mean for them under possible future scenarios. The new tools are now available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

Starting Monday, Sept. 29, 2014, farm owners may begin visiting their local Farm Service Agency offices if they want to update their yield history and/or reallocate base acres, the first step before choosing which new program best serves their risk management needs. Letters sent this summer enabled farm owners and producers to analyze their crop planting history in order to decide whether to keep their base acres or reallocate them according to recent plantings.

Additional program information is available at <http://tinyurl.com/plc-facts> and <http://tinyurl.com/plc-faq>.

Beef Producers, Public Differ on Animal Welfare Views

Livestock industries are faced with mounting pressure to adjust animal welfare practices in response to societal concerns. A new research project by Kansas State University is focusing on beef in an attempt to pinpoint where producers might improve, identify areas for possible consumer engagement and highlight existing points of agreement between producers and consumers.

Sixty-five percent of U.S. consumers report concerns about the welfare of beef cattle in the U.S., while 21 percent are not concerned, and 14 percent do not know what to think. Consumers are often portrayed as solely concerned about economical food, but only 15 percent of the public believes that low beef prices are more important than the well-being of cattle. While most beef producers strongly disagree that a tradeoff exists between profitability and animal welfare, consumers tend to believe that being more profitable means sacrificing on animal welfare.

Producers and consumers also differ in perception of providing overall care to cattle. Seventy-three percent of beef producers think U.S. farms and ranches are providing appropriate overall care of their cattle, but only 39 percent of consumers believe that to be true.

While differences in views exist, the study also shows that beef producers and consumers are on the same page on some items. Both groups overall do not agree with statements indicating that low beef prices are more important than the well-being of cattle, and both groups chose the same, top three, most effective and practical actions to improve animal welfare out of nine total options: access to fresh, clean feed and water appropriate for the animal’s physiological state; adequate comfort through the use of shade, windbreaks and ventilation; and promptly treating or euthanizing injured or sick animals.

Read more about the findings of this study at <http://tinyurl.com/views-an-welfare>.

White House's Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture

The White House announced on Wednesday the launch of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture. The idea was conceived eight months ago, said USDA, when an international delegation of leaders met in South Africa for the Global Conference on Climate Change, Food Security and Agriculture. The group's mission is to find a "more sustainable" path to food security that "preserves the environment while driving broad-based economic growth."

The Alliance's research will seek to develop better crop, livestock and aquaculture varieties that can tolerate extreme heat, drought and floods. The group also is testing and distributing innovative tools for farmers, such as weather-indexed crop and livestock insurance to help communities build resilience to severe weather.

"Joining the Alliance represents an ambitious step in the United States' efforts to integrate climate change policies into every area of our work," said the blog entry, posted by Vice President Joe Biden, USDA Sec. Tom Vilsack and Dr. Rajiv "Raj" Shah, director of USAID. The agriculture group will work with the newly announced U.S. Global Climate Change Initiative.

In a statement, Vilsack said, "Farmers, ranchers and other producers in the U.S. and around the world are feeling the impact of climate change now. They are experiencing production challenges from extended droughts, more severe flooding, stronger storms, and new pests and diseases. The Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture offers the opportunity to collaboratively share knowledge, make investments and develop policies that will empower all producers to adapt to climate change and to mitigate its consequences."

For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/oa-gacsa>.

Almanza Named Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety

Meatingplace reported Thursday that Alfred V. Almanza has been appointed to serve as Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS). Almanza has been serving as FSIS Administrator since 2007, leading the agency and its more than 9,500 employees in their mission of protecting public health through food safety and food defense.

During his tenure as Administrator, Almanza made several critical changes to agency policy to better ensure mission success and effective use of agency resources. He has also worked diligently to foster productive relationships with public health partners, consumer groups and the agriculture industry. He has advocated and led agency efforts to improve communication and collaboration with all food safety stakeholders, from more effective coordination with domestic and international food safety regulators to targeted consumer and industry outreach.

Almanza began his FSIS career in 1978 as a food inspector in a small slaughter plant in Dalhart, Texas. He later served in several agency management roles in Texas before relocating to Washington, D.C., to assume the Administrator position.

Drowning Property Rights

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a record of misusing the Clean Water Act to improperly block economic development projects and take away Americans' property rights, and now, they are working to take over even more authority with the proposed and looming "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) rule.

The WOTUS rule expands the federal jurisdiction to include essentially all waters across the country, subjecting landowners to increased regulation and fines of up to \$37,500 per day. The increase in liability will chill landowner participation in conservation activities by making the Natural Resources Conservation Service a regulatory compliance agency.

There is still time to help "Ditch the Rule." TCFA urges you to submit comments to EPA and the Corps opposing the proposal. Simply go to 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.**

Beef Checkoff Sets Plan of Work for 2015

The Cattlemen's Beef Board will invest about \$39 million into programs of beef promotion, research, consumer information, industry information, foreign marketing and producer communications in fiscal year 2015, if last week's recommendation of the Beef Promotion Operating Committee is approved by USDA, following review by the full Beef Board.

In action concluding its Sept. 16-17 meeting in Denver, the Operating Committee – including 10 members of the Beef Board and 10 members of the Federation of State Beef Councils – approved checkoff funding for a

total of 18 proposals for checkoff funding, in the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, 2014. To see the Plan of Work for the Cattlemen's Beef Board broken out by budget component, visit <http://tinyurl.com/cbb-fy2015>.

Area Student Participate in Feedyard Technician Program

On Tuesday and Wednesday, a total of 22 area high school students started the Machinery Operation, Maintenance & Repair portion of the TCFA Feedyard Technician program at Warren CAT in Amarillo. The students were trained on machinery safety and operation, and they all had the opportunity to operate a skid loader and a wheel loader firsthand. They will complete their certification Oct. 21 at West Texas A&M University where they will be tested in person on their proficiency in Shielded Arc Welding, Oxygen Acetylene Cutting and Heating, as well as with a written test and an interview.



Left: Koley Schaffner of Warren CAT coaches a student in the operation of the skid loader.

Right: Feedyard Technician participants observe another student operating the wheel loader.



Beef Evaluation Contest

More than \$7,000 in prizes is up for grabs in the 2014 **BEEF** Efficiency and Profit Contest, which aims to demonstrate the importance of feed efficiency and profitability. Photos and videos show six steers with a high residual feed intake (RFI) and six steers with a low RFI for readers' evaluation. Readers are to use the photos, along with the animals' individual data, found at <http://tinyurl.com/rficontest> to make their choices. The deadline to enter is Oct. 20. Find the details at <http://tinyurl.com/rficontest-details>.

Bechtol Honored by Cattle Production Veterinarian Hall of Fame

The Cattle Production Veterinarian Hall of Fame added David Bechtol, DVM, to its prestigious list of prominent and influential veterinarians during the American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP) annual conference last week. As founder and president of Palo Duro Consulting Research and Feedlot and Agri-Research Center, Inc. in Canyon, Bechtol has been one of the leading feedyard consultants and researchers over the past four decades. Read more about this year's inductees at <http://tinyurl.com/pioneering-vet-bechtol>.

Sponsor Spotlight

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

This week's spotlight shines on



Micro is a proud and long-time sponsor of TCFA! Since 1971, Micro has supplied the beef industry with innovative solutions that improve animal value and productivity while also providing process verification of management, food safety and traceability requirements. They accomplish this by uniquely integrating advanced health, feed, animal, and information management systems with consumable products technologies such as animal health and micro feed ingredient products. In addition to its track record of cutting-edge innovation, Micro is best known for its unparalleled commitment to customer service. Please contact your Micro representative by calling (800) 858-4330 or visit them online at www.microbeef.com.

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