



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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South America Import Rules

The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) published final rules June 29 to allow the importation of deboned, fresh beef (chilled or frozen) from regions of Brazil and Northern Argentina under specific conditions that mitigate the risk of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). These rules address potential animal health risks, the first step in a process for these regions to gain access to the U.S. market for beef.

Brazil and Argentina also must meet U.S. food safety standards prior to being able to export any beef. The USDA Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) will assess the regions' equivalence with U.S. standards through a review of their regulatory programs as well as an in-country audit of their food safety systems. FSIS also must audit and approve each beef plant that wishes to export product to the U.S.

Fresh beef from both of these regions will follow the same import conditions imposed on fresh beef and ovine meat from Uruguay, which also has a history of FMD and was approved for import by APHIS in 2003.

States Challenging EPA Regulation

The Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on Monday. In response, 27 states, including Texas and New Mexico, sued the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers in three different Federal District Courts to block implementation of the rule.

A number of industry groups, including the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, have also filed a lawsuit against the agencies in the Galveston Federal District Court.

In related news, U.S. Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Clarendon) held a roundtable and press conference Wednesday in Amarillo to discuss the Federal Regulatory Certainty for Water Act (H.R. 2705) with local constituents. Rep. Thornberry introduced this bill to clarify the definition of "navigable waters" in the Clean Water Act. This is designed to help protect private property owners from the rule and other regulatory expansion by the EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"Those who live and work in our part of Texas, especially the farmers and ranchers, understand the importance of clean water and work hard to be good stewards of the environment, but we also understand that personal property and water rights are fundamental to the American way of life, a family's business, and many people's livelihoods," said Thornberry.

TCFA members and staff attended the roundtable and took the opportunity to talk with Rep. Thornberry about TCFA Members' concerns.

To read the full press release, visit <http://tinyurl.com/thornberry-7-2-15>.

Trade Promotion Authority Signed into Law

The President signed the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 into law on June 29. The law grants the President trade promotion authority (TPA), which is the ability to negotiate trade agreements that would be subject to an up-or-down vote by Congress. TPA will allow U.S. trade negotiators to craft the best deal possible for U.S. goods while providing our trading partners with the assurance that once a deal has been reached, it will not be changed by Congress.

"TCFA strongly supports fair trade, and I am pleased that TPA has finally been signed into law," said TCFA Chairman Tom McDonald. "Negotiating a trade agreement without TPA is almost impossible, and trade agreements are the only way we can level the playing field and secure more market access for U.S. beef."

2015 Junior Fed Beef Career and Leadership Program

The 2015 Junior Fed Beef Career and Leadership Program was held this week, June 29 – July 1. Hosted with Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension and West Texas A&M University, the Junior Fed Beef Career and Leadership Program, also known as Feedyard Camp, is designed for high school juniors and seniors with an interest in pursuing a career in the fed beef industry. This year's program consisted of 18 students from across the state of Texas, and one student each from New Mexico and Oklahoma.

On Monday, students visited the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory in Amarillo for a tour and necropsy demonstration. They had supper with the TCFA staff, learning about the many facets of the Association as well as various job opportunities in the cattle feeding industry. Following supper, they had in-depth interactive media training with WTAMU agricultural communications professor, Dr. Tanner Robertson. Tuesday's activities encompassed a full feedyard tour at Wrangler Feedyard hosted by Manager Walt Garrison, agricultural science and leadership trainings with WTAMU faculty at Nance Ranch, a tour of a beef processing facility, and a panel discussion with feedyard professionals including Jim Lovell with Bartlett Cattle Company, Meredith McGowan with Cargill Cattle Feeders – Bovina, and Surcy Peoples with Cactus Feeders, Inc. Wednesday morning, students learned about beef carcass anatomy and fabrication and were able to cut their own steaks to be prepared for lunch, wrapping up the program.

TCFA thanks all who helped to make this event possible through sponsorships and volunteering. The students had a meaningful and memorable experience because of your generosity.



Pictured above from left to right: (back) Dr. Kevin Williams, WTAMU; Jason Slane, TCFA; Blake Koepke, Katy; Tanner Christie, Brady; Jacob Hatfield, Palestine; Hunter Smith, Amarillo; Cole Grisham, Van Vleck; Colton Leopold, Nada; Jaxon Lee, Muleshoe; Will Pettit, Abilene; Colton Eichler, Inez; (front) Robert Devin, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension; Cesar Armas, Boise City, Okla.; Katy Richardson, Adrian; Hadley Thompson, Miami; Drake Tolbert, Pampa; Erin Haley, Donie; Addison Stuver, Teague; Wilsey Wendler, College Station; Aveye Ferris, Hereford; Tiffany Jesko, Hereford; Katelin Spradley, Nageezi, N.M.; Caitlyn Harmon, Weimar; and Walt Garrison, Wrangler Feedyard.

McDonald's Launches Beef Sustainability Program in Canada

McDonald's has launched a pilot program in Canada targeted at advancing sustainable practices in beef production by purchasing a portion of its beef from "verified sustainable sources." This program involves implementing principles from the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB) and uses an independent verification process. According to McDonald's, nearly 100 Alberta ranchers have expressed interest in the program, and 19 of those have completed the verification process.

"Sustainability means different things to different people, but at its core, it's about being great stewards of the land and animals for future generations," said Cherie Copithorne-Barnes, rancher and chair of the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB). "Our ability to define it through the work of the CRSB means defining the future of the Canadian beef industry."

To read the full press release from McDonald's, visit <http://tinyurl.com/McDonalds-7-2-15>.

Jet Fuel Produced from Farm Waste

United Airlines has committed to purchase 15 million gallons of biofuels over a three-year period produced by AltAir Fuels. The biofuel is converted from oils from animal fats and other agricultural waste. The fuel is expected to be used at Los Angeles International Airport for flights to San Francisco. Starting out, the mixture will be 30 percent biofuel and 70 percent traditional jet fuel.

Other airline companies are joining the movement as well. Alaska Airlines plans to begin using biofuels in 2020 in at least one airport. British Airways has been instrumental in building a biofuel refinery to be completed in 2017. Southwest Airlines plans to purchase approximately 3 million gallons per year of jet fuel made from wood residues.

To read more about biofuels in the airline industry, visit <http://tinyurl.com/jetfuel-7-2-15>.

Environmental Impact Statements Emphasize Sage Grouse Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service have finalized their Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for resources management and land use plans. According to a press release from NCBA, the EISs claim a need for more restrictive management for sage grouse on federal lands. Though the EISs stresses the need for increased regulation on grazing, neither BLM nor the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have found evidence that current livestock grazing practices pose any threat to the sage grouse population or habitat.

To read the full press release from NCBA, visit <http://tinyurl.com/sagegrouse-7-2-15>.

Maui County GMO Ban Overturned

Maui County, Hawaii, introduced an ordinance last November placing a moratorium on growing genetically modified crops in the county until more scientific studies could be conducted on their safety and benefits. That rule was overturned on Tuesday by a federal judge, stating that it is pre-empted by federal and state law. Sponsors of the initiative say they intend to appeal the order.

Hawaii is a popular research location for growing genetically modified crops. Monsanto Co. and Dow Chemical Co. unit Agrigenetics Inc. both have stations in Maui County. Other counties throughout the state have adopted measures putting limitations on genetically modified crops and pesticide use that are also being disputed at the state level.

To read more about GMO controversy in Hawaii, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Maui-GMO-7-2-15>.

NCBA CEO Announces Resignation

Forrest Roberts, CEO of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), has announced his resignation, effective July 31. According to a press release from NCBA, Roberts is leaving to pursue other opportunities in the cattle industry and agribusiness. Roberts has been CEO of NCBA since 2009.

"Even as our leadership changes, our commitment does not," said NCBA President Philip Ellis. "At this critical time in the beef business, the NCBA directors and staff will move forward aggressively to protect the interests of our members and the industry."

"Forrest made many significant contributions to NCBA and the beef industry during his tenure," stated TCFA CEO Ross Wilson. "Under his leadership, NCBA has expanded and enhanced its influence in several important industry issues, including sustainability, international trade and consumer confidence in beef. We wish Forrest the best as he takes his strong skills to the next opportunity in the cattle industry."

NCBA Chief Operating Officer Kendal Frazier will serve as interim CEO until a new CEO is selected. To view the full press release on Roberts's resignation, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NCBA-CEO>.

Average Summer Cookout Costs Decrease

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) hosted its informal summer cookout survey in preparation for the Independence Day holiday. This year's findings resulted in an average of a three percent decrease in the summer cookout menu from last year's prices. Their survey includes food for 10 people with products consisting of hot dogs and buns, cheeseburgers and buns, pork spare ribs, deli potato salad, baked beans, corn chips, lemonade, chocolate milk, watermelon for dessert, and ketchup and mustard. The overall price per menu collected from 88 supermarket visits in 30 states averaged at \$5.58 per person.

To read or listen to the full survey results, visit <http://tinyurl.com/AFBF-7-2-15>.

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