



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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WTO Authorizes Retaliatory Tariffs Against U.S. for Mandatory COOL

This week, the World Trade Organization (WTO) authorized Mexico and Canada to assess over \$1 billion in retaliatory tariffs on U.S. products, which could start as early as next week.

The announcement is the result of a dispute brought by Mexico and Canada seven years ago claiming that the U.S. Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) law for red meat violated international treaty obligations. On four occasions, WTO dispute panels ruled in favor of Mexico and Canada, concluding that COOL discriminates against imported livestock in violation of our trade agreements.

The WTO has announced a special meeting of the Dispute Settlement Body for Dec. 18 during which they will approve the retaliations lists and allow Mexico and Canada to implement the tariffs that day.

“This discriminatory policy has run its course, and there’s no more time for talking,” said TCFA Chairman David Baumann. “The U.S. has exhausted its appeals, and the WTO has authorized retaliation. The only way to prevent the tariffs is for Congress to take immediate action and repeal COOL.”

TCFA and NCBA continue to work with members of Congress to pass language to repeal COOL. To view the full press release from TCFA, visit <http://tinyurl.com/COOL-12-7-15>.

New Highway Bill Signed Into Law

Late last week, the Senate voted to pass a five-year, approximately \$305 billion surface transportation reauthorization bill, just hours before the former Highway Bill was to expire. It was subsequently signed into law by the president.

The new bill includes language permanently exempting livestock transportation from the mandatory 30-minute rest break requirement. TCFA and NCBA have worked diligently to ensure that this was included in the legislation, communicating to Congress that the previous requirement did not consider the health and well-being of the livestock being transported that may not get proper ventilation during these mandatory breaks.

To view the new Highway Bill, visit <http://tinyurl.com/HWY-12-11-15>.

USDA Proposes Regulatory Changes to the Brucellosis and Bovine Tuberculosis Programs

The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on Friday issued a 236 page proposed rule to update the brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis (TB) program regulations. The changes outlined in the proposed rule were developed over several years of close collaboration between APHIS, state animal health agencies and industry partners, including TCFA.

“Under the proposed rule, states and tribal nations would no longer be categorized by the disease prevalence in their state, and APHIS would no longer rely solely on whole-herd depopulation. Instead, APHIS is proposing to establish standards for disease surveillance, epidemiological investigations and affected herd management,” according to the agency’s press release. “States and tribes would develop and implement an animal health plan that outlines how they will meet those standards. States and tribes would be categorized by whether they have an animal health plan, whether APHIS has approved this plan, and whether they are following the activities outlined in their plan.”

The press release went on to say, “By using program compliance rather than disease prevalence to determine statuses in the proposed rule, states and tribes will no longer run the risk of status downgrades and state-wide restrictions and testing requirements when sporadic cases may appear. Rather, they can focus their disease control efforts on specifically designated herds or areas.”

APHIS will accept public comment on the proposed rule for 90 days after its publication in the *Federal Register*, which is expected within a week. A prepublication copy of the proposed rule is currently available for review at www.aphis.usda.gov.

TCFA staff is reviewing the proposed rule and participated in a conference call on Friday with APHIS personnel who explained certain provisions of the rule. TCFA staff will continue to work with state animal health agencies, NCBA and other stakeholders to develop detailed comments on the proposed rule.

FDA Releases 2014 Antimicrobial Sales Data for Food-Producing Animals

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released this week its 2014 annual report summarizing sales and distribution data for antimicrobial drugs approved for use in food-producing animals. This data only represents sales and distribution of product entering the market; it does not provide any type of use information. FDA reported an increase in antimicrobial drug sales of four percent from 2013 to 2014 and a three percent increase for antimicrobials classified as medically important.

To read the full report from FDA, visit <http://tinyurl.com/FDA-12-11-15>.

Red River Private Property Protection Act Passes House

The Red River Private Property Protection Act (H.R. 2130) passed the U.S. House of Representatives this week by a vote of 253-177. According to a press release from Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Clarendon) who introduced the bill, it would provide legal certainty to landowners by ending any questions about the federal government's ownership of disputed land along the Red River.

"This is a big victory for the landowners along the Red River and also for property owners everywhere who deserve to know that the federal government cannot come in and take away what they own. I hope we can use this momentum to get the bill passed in the Senate and then signed into law by the President," Thornberry said.

Watch a video announcement from Thornberry at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaQmmhJKZ4w>.

Scientists Dispute WHO in Glyphosate Carcinogenicity Ranking

A 16-member panel of scientists, assembled by Inertek Scientific and Regulatory Consultancy, is disputing a report by the World Health Organization (WHO) that ranked glyphosate as probably carcinogenic to humans. The panel will present its findings to the Society for Risk Analysis next week and plans to publish the study for peer review at a later date. The panel claims that the WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) misinterpreted or ignored some of the data that was reviewed in reaching their conclusion. Last month the European Food Safety Authority came to conclusions very similar to those of the panel in finding that glyphosate is "not likely carcinogenic."

"IARC's equivalent working groups' reviews suffered from significant weaknesses such as: selectivity in the choice of data reviewed, failure to use all relevant biologic information to evaluate relationship to treatment in animal bioassays, and failure to use weight-of-evidence evaluations using all available data and appropriate weighting," the panel said.

To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/IARC-12-11-15>.

Scientists Develop Pigs Resistant to Incurable Disease

Researchers from the University of Missouri, Kansas State University and Genus plc have bred pigs that are not harmed by the Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) virus. No effective vaccine has ever been developed for the virus, and the disease costs North American farmers more than \$660 million annually. Once a pig has contracted the disease, it doesn't gain weight, has difficulty reproducing and has a high mortality rate.

"Once inside the pigs, PRRS needs some help to spread; it gets that help from a protein called CD163," said Randall Prather, distinguished professor of animal sciences in the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. "We were able to breed a litter of pigs that do not produce this protein, and as a result, the virus doesn't spread. When we exposed the pigs to PRRS, they did not get sick and continued to gain weight normally."

The scientists edited the gene that makes the CD163 protein so that the pigs could no longer produce it. According to the scientists, "this discovery could have enormous implications for pig producers and the food industry throughout the world."

To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/PRRS-12-11-15>.

Concerns Growing Over Drone Use vs. Private Property Rights

As unmanned aircraft systems make their way into the hands of more Americans, the questions of privacy and property rights are becoming a growing concern to land owners. Tom Dougherty, a lawyer in Colorado Springs, addresses some of these questions in a recent article in the High Plains Journal.

He recommends always contacting your local law enforcement immediately if you see a drone flying over your property that you are concerned about and to gather as much information as you can about the drone and its operator while you await their arrival. The more information you can provide will help law enforcement in filing a formal complaint with the Federal Aviation Administration.

A proactive step that he recommends is a private database where private property owners can enter their locations if they do not want drones flying over their land. They can register at www.noflyzone.org to be included in that database. With drones being such a new technology, there is lots of talk about them, but not many answers. Over 150 bills related to drone use were considered in 2015 with more likely to come in 2016.

"We know what the answers are to when a manned aircraft is flying over your property," he said. "We know when a manned aircraft trespasses onto your property when it constitutes a nuisance. There is no law in these areas where I'm talking about drones. This is brand new."

To read more about what Dougherty has to say, visit <http://tinyurl.com/UAS-12-11-15>.

Foodborne Illness Linked to Chipotle Mexican Grill

Chipotle Mexican Grill had to close its restaurant in Boston's Cleveland Circle this week after a Norovirus outbreak connected to food consumed at the restaurant sickened at least 80 Boston College students. The company says the illnesses are unrelated to an outbreak of E. coli cases that sickened 52 people in nine states in October and November, causing the company to temporarily close 43 restaurant locations in Washington and Oregon. Additionally, Chipotle stock has fallen 30 percent since the outbreak was first detected.

Chipotle CFO Jack Hartung said that the government and the media were largely to blame for the problem this has cause for the company. "It's been fueled by the sort of unusual, even unorthodox, way the CDC has chosen to announce cases related to the original outbreak in the Northwest," Hartung said. "Because the media likes to write sensational headlines, we can probably see when somebody sneezes that they're going to say, 'Ah, it's E. Coli from Chipotle' for a little bit of time."

To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Chipotle-12-11-15>.

Texas Beef Council Publishes List of Beef-Related Gift Ideas

With the holiday season upon us, it is the time to be thinking of gifts for family and friends. Texas Beef Council is here to help with a list of eight gift ideas complete with helpful links for the beef lover on your list. Grill accessories, marinades, steak knives and Dutch ovens are just a few of their suggestions.

See their full list at <http://tinyurl.com/Beef-Christmas>.

USDA Safety Net Coverage Enrollment Period Open

The enrollment period for USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) safety net programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) began this week and will be open until Aug. 1, 2016. Both ARC and PLC are authorized under the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial price drop for covered commodities.

To learn more about these programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

NCBA Cattle Industry Convention Registration Open

The 2016 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show will be held Jan. 27-29 in San Diego, Calif. Convention participants will hear from industry leaders, gather insight on industry trends, enjoy an evening of stars and stripes on the USS Midway, and this year's Cowboy Concert Series will feature Martina McBride. NCBA President Philip Ellis said this convention is a must for everyone involved in the cattle industry.

Early registration is open through Jan. 4. Visit <http://www.beefusa.org/convregistration.aspx> to register.

USDA Announces 2016 Agricultural Outlook Forum

The USDA will host the 92nd Annual Agricultural Outlook Forum in Arlington, Va. on Feb. 25-26, 2016. The theme for this year's forum is "Transforming Agriculture: Blending Technology and Tradition."

The Forum's keynote address will be delivered by Howard Buffett, CEO of the Howard G. Buffett Foundation. Mitch E. Daniels, Jr., President of Purdue University and former Governor of Indiana will be the dinner speaker. USDA Chief Economist Robert Johansson will present "The 2016 Economic Outlook for Agriculture." The Plenary panel, "Providing Leadership for Present and Future Generations in the Transformation of Agriculture," will feature remarks from Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden. Deputy Secretary Harden will also host a session on opportunities in agriculture for new and beginning farmers ranchers, and she will and host a Women's Agriculture Networking event.

The event, which attracted 1,600 attendees last year, will be hosted at the Crystal Gateway Marriot Hotel in Arlington, Va. To learn more or to register, visit www.usda.gov/oce/forum/.

Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership Program Seeking Applicants

The Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) Program is a two-year leadership development program managed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The program invests 455 hours of intensive training in seminars, speakers and domestic and international study trips over two years. The typical class size is about 26, and tuition is \$3,000.

"Texas agriculture has a need for individuals who can lead our industry as it faces new and unique challenges. These individuals will provide the leadership, insight and direction to ensure agricultural viability for the future," said Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz, AgriLife Extension leadership program director.

Participants include traditional crop producers, ranchers, bankers and attorneys, as well as those who work in lumber, food processing, agricultural corporations and horticultural industries. Applications for the newest class, Class XV, are due March 15, 2016. Application forms are online at <http://tall.tamu.edu>.

2016 Cattle Feeders Resource Guide – Advertise Today!

The deadline for advertising in TCFA's 2016 *Cattle Feeders Resource Guide* has been extended to Friday, **Jan. 15**. The revamped publication better serves TCFA supporting sponsors, while TCFA members also benefit from receiving timelier product and service recommendations from allied industry partners.

Advertisers who purchase a full-page, four-color ad in the *Cattle Feeders Resource Guide* receive a free bonus web ad on TCFA's website, www.tcfa.org, a great opportunity to target potential buyers.

View the rate card at <http://tinyurl.com/2016-TCFA-RateCard>, or contact Scena Snider for more details at (806) 358-3681 or scena@tcfa.org.

Feeders and Feedyards in the News

Johnny Trotter, owner of **Bar-G Feedyard**, received an honorary doctorate of agricultural business and economics from West Texas A&M University at the December commencement on Dec. 11 at 3:00 p.m. To read more about this honor, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Trotter-Johnny>.

Tom Portillo, DVM, of **Friona Industries** was recognized as the Academy of Veterinary Consultants 2015 Consultant of the year at their recent winter conference in Kansas City for outstanding achievements in beef-cattle medicine. To read more about this honor, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Portillo-Tom>.

Please join us in congratulating these outstanding individuals and thanking them for their contributions to the beef industry and their local communities.

Sponsor Spotlight

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

This week's spotlight shines on



Micro Technologies, an MWI Animal Health company, is a proud and long-time sponsor of TCFA!

Since 1971, Micro Technologies 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 Technologies is best known for its unparalleled commitment to customer service. Please contact your Micro Technologies representative by calling (800) 858-4330.

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