



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

5501 I-40 W. • AMARILLO, TEXAS • PHONE (806) 358-3681 • www.tcfa.org • info@tcfa.org

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FSIS Notified of COOL Changes

The USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) released a notice to its inspection program personnel to make them aware of the changes to the country-of-origin labeling (COOL) law. Following the repeal of the law, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the Agricultural Marketing Service's COOL regulations for muscle cuts of beef and pork and ground beef and pork will no longer be enforced at the retail level. The notice to FSIS inspectors said that they no longer need to take "any independent action on enforcement of these rules other than to notify their supervisor if they have concerns."

To read the full FSIS notice, visit <http://tinyurl.com/FSIS-12-31-15>.

Study Finds New Possible Causes for Antibiotic Resistance

Dr. J. Vaun McArthur, senior research scientist at the University of Georgia, has tested his hypothesis that there is more to antibiotic resistance than the misuse or overuse of antibiotics. He believes that environmental contaminants may be partly to blame. He conducted his experiment in the streams on the U.S. Department of Energy's Savannah River Site in an area that was closed to the public in the early 1950s to produce materials used in nuclear weapons.

"The site was constructed and closed to the public before antibiotics were used in medical practices and agriculture," McArthur said. "The streams have not had inputs from wastewater, so we know the observed patterns are from something other than antibiotics."

McArthur tested five antibiotics on 427 strains of *E. coli* bacteria found in the streams, collecting samples from 11 locations in 9 streams with metal contamination levels ranging from little to high. The results found high levels of antibiotic resistance in 8 of the 11 water samples. Of the areas tested, the contaminated streams with no source of antibiotic input had the highest level of antibiotic resistance. McArthur attributes this to the environmental contaminant metals, cadmium and mercury.

McArthur's results were published in the journal *Environmental Microbiology*. To read the study abstract, visit <http://tinyurl.com/EM-12-31-15>.

Retail Options for Meat Purchases Continue to Expand

According to a recent article in *Meatingplace*, consumers are increasingly taking advantage of a proliferation of places and ways to buy their groceries. Different types of niche grocery stores are popping up across the country to accommodate varying consumer preferences. Foods such as beef and other fresh meats have advantages in two growing types of stores – fresh format (Sprouts Farmers Market or local equivalent) and limited assortment (Trader Joe's). With these growing retail options, competition and marketing opportunities will also be increasing.

"Everyone has more options," said Bill Bishop, founder of Willard Bishop. "The best thing that meat and other perishable suppliers can do to help retailers move through the transition is to provide them with good product content that helps the retailer sell their products, including in the digital environment."

To read the full article, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Retail-12-31-15>.

FDA Extends Comment Period on "Natural" Food Labeling

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has extended the public comment period for the Use of the Term "Natural" on Food Labeling to May 10, 2016. FDA has received three Citizen Petitions asking the agency to define the term "natural" for use in food labeling and one Citizen Petition asking that the agency simply prohibit the use of the term "natural" on food labels.

FDA is specifically asking for public comment in a few main areas including whether or not it is appropriate to define the term "natural," how the term should be defined and how the agency should determine appropriate use of the term on food labels.

To learn more or to comment, visit <http://tinyurl.com/FDA-12-31-15>.

2015 Food Trends Show Continued Popularity of Meat

NPD Group released its 2015 list of foodservice trends. The U.S. foodservice industry had a total traffic volume of 61 billion this year, with visits up one percent and an increase in consumer spending of three percent compared to the same time last year. NPD Group cites the continuing strength of breakfast foods and all things steak, bacon and barbecue as driving factors behind this year's foodservice growth.

Total foodservice traffic is expected to increase by another one percent in 2016. To read more from NPD Group, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NPD-12-31-15>.

Texas State Veterinarian Announces Retirement

Dr. Dee Ellis, Texas State Veterinarian and Executive Director of the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), has announced his retirement to be effective today, Dec. 31. He has served for over 30 years in the state's livestock and poultry health regulatory agency. TAHC's longtime Assistant Executive Director of Epidemiology & Laboratory Systems, Dr. Andy Schwartz, has been appointed as Interim Executive Director.

To read the full announcement from TAHC, visit <http://tinyurl.com/TAHC-12-31-15>.

Cattlemen's Beef Board Appointments Announced

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has appointed 37 new members to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board. Among the newly appointed members are Bill King, Moriarty, N.M.; Brett Morris, Ninnekah, Okla.; Charlie Price, Oakwood, Texas; Charlie Risinger, Terrell, Texas; Dave Edmiston, Brady, Texas; and Don Smith, Sulphur Springs, Texas.

To view the full list of appointees, visit <http://tinyurl.com/CBB-12-31-15>.

NCBA Cattle Industry Convention – Early Registration Deadline Approaching

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.

This year's Cattlemen's College will be held Jan. 26-27. Attendees must register in advance and purchase a full-day registration to the Convention for Wednesday. Tickets to Cattlemen's College are \$195.

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

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, cattle producers, 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.

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