



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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NCBA Elects New Leadership, Adopts New Policy

On the last day of the Cattle Industry Convention in San Diego, NCBA passed the reins from outgoing President Philip Ellis of Wyoming to Tracy Brunner of Kansas. The new NCBA president-elect is Craig Uden of Nebraska. Kevin Kester of California is the new vice-president. Steve Hanson of Nebraska was elected chairman of the NCBA Federation Division, and Jennifer Houston of Tennessee is the new NCBA Policy Division chair.

In addition, the NCBA Board of Directors adopted several new and amended policy resolutions. One of the policies, sponsored by TCFA and five other state affiliates, concerns efforts to address volatility in the cattle futures markets and the role of algorithmic and high frequency traders. Specifically, the policy requests that the CME Group take the following actions: 1) monitor, measure and control livestock contracts through the CME Globex Messaging Efficiency Program, 2) implement latency between trade actions (cancel, cancel/replace, etc.), 3) implement proactive procedures to more quickly identify, monitor and address spoofing, layering and quote stuffing / excessive messaging, 4) develop and implement robust procedures for monitoring market manipulation, acting on violations and reporting violations to stakeholders, 5) release annual audit trail data for independent analysis, which includes firm-level generic identification while maintaining confidentiality of individual trades and traders and 6) evaluate effectiveness of market maker and trading incentive programs.

Other adopted policies include efforts to clarify and standardize regulations governing transfer of title and release of liens when transactions are completed using electronic funds transfer, expand the use of private sector verification programs to meet the needs of animal disease traceability and collect and report ionophore use data separately from antibiotics medically important to humans.

Cattlemen's Beef Board Announces New Leadership

Cattle producers Anne Anderson of Austin, Texas, Brett Morris of Ninnekah, Okla., and Joan Ruskamp of Dodge, Neb. are the new leadership team for the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB), elected unanimously by fellow Beef Board members during the 2016 Cattle Industry Convention in San Diego on Jan. 29, 2016. Anderson will serve as chairman, Morris as vice chairman and Ruskamp as secretary/treasurer of the Cattlemen's Beef Board to lead the national Beef Checkoff Program for the coming year.

The Board also elected members to serve on the CBB Executive Committee and CBB seats on the Beef Promotion Operating Committee (BPOC). The 12-member CBB Executive Committee includes the Board's three officers and eight members elected at large. The CBB elected the following members to its 2016 Executive committee: Vice Chairman Brett Morris, who will serve as chairman of the Executive Committee; and members Anne Anderson (CBB chairman); Joan Ruskamp (CBB secretary/treasurer); Laurie Bryant, an importer representative; Chuck Coffey of Oklahoma; Barbara Jacques of Oklahoma; Jana Malot of Pennsylvania; Paul Moss of Tennessee; Kent Pruisman of Iowa; Mike Smith of California; Janna Stubbs of Texas; and, as immediate past CBB Chairman, Jimmy Maxey of California will serve as an advisor to the committee.

The BPOC was created by the Beef Promotion Research Act to help coordinate state and national beef checkoff programs. The 20-person committee includes 10 members of the Cattlemen's Beef Board, among them the Board's three officers and seven others elected directly by Beef Board members. The other 10 members are appointed from the Federation of State Beef Councils.

CBB members elected to the 2016 BPOC during the annual meeting in San Antonio include: Chairman Anne Anderson; Vice Chairman Brett Morris; Secretary/Treasurer Joan Ruskamp; Jared Brackett of Idaho; Sara Childs of Florida; Joe Guthrie of Virginia; Jeanne Harland of Illinois; Chuck Kiker of Texas; Stacy McClintock of Kansas; and Gary Sharp of South Dakota.

To learn more about new CBB leadership, visit <http://tinyurl.com/CBB-2-5-16>.

TPP Agreement Signed

U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman along with representatives from 11 other met in New Zealand this week to sign the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. Though this signing marks a major milestone according to the representatives, the U.S. is still several steps away from approving the agreement. U.S. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) clarified in a speech earlier that day that due to Trade Promotion Authority the Obama Administration still had several steps to complete before the trade agreement could be submitted to Congress for consideration.

“No one should be under any illusions that, because the TPP is being signed today, an up or down vote on the agreement is imminent or that our oversight responsibilities are at an end,” Hatch said. “If history has taught us anything, it’s that this process can, and often does, take a very long time to complete. In fact, it’s not an exaggeration – or even all that remarkable – to say that it can take years to get an agreement through Congress after it is signed.”

To learn more about the steps going forward on TPP, visit <http://tinyurl.com/TPP-2-5-16>.

Trade Agreement Could Harm U.S. Beef Exports to Japan

According to USDA’s Economic Research Service (ERS), the terms of a new trade agreement between Australia and Japan could cause the U.S. to lose \$100 million in beef exports to Japan. The Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement, which took effect early last year, begins the process of tariff reductions for Australian beef going to Japan to be phased over a 15-year period.

“Assuming that no other events intervene to influence trade, the scenario indicates that imports of Australian beef would rise by \$100 million over baseline values, while imports of U.S. beef would fall by about \$100 million,” concluded the report developed by ERS.

To read the full ERS report, visit <http://tinyurl.com/JAEPA>.

House Ag Committee Approves Budget Views and Estimates

According to a press release from the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture, the Committee has approved its Budget Views and Estimates letter for fiscal year 2017 and has sent it to the House Budget Committee.

Requests made in the letter include that the budget committee “give careful consideration to the significant contributions toward deficit reduction already made by the Committee on Agriculture, the substantial reforms these savings entailed, the troubled economic conditions facing farm country that are exacerbated by regulatory burdens and trade and tax uncertainties, as well as our Committee’s work ahead, when determining from which congressional committees and mission areas any future budget savings should come.”

The letter also emphasized that ag spending has been reduced by nearly \$5 billion as a result of sequestration since fiscal year 2013, and significant savings have been achieved as a result of the 2014 Farm Bill reforms.

To read the full press release, visit <http://tinyurl.com/House-Ag-2-5-16>.

NASS to Gather Data on Organic Agriculture Production

USDA’s National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) has begun conducting the 2015 Certified Organic Survey to collect data on USDA certified organic crops and livestock. This is intended to help determine the economic impact of organic production in the U.S. In addition to acreage and production data, this survey will also collect information on marketing practices used by the organic producers.

The data collected in this survey will be used by USDA’s Risk Management Agency to evaluate crop insurance coverage to help provide adequate pricing for organic producers. The report is to be released in September 2016. To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NASS-2-5-16>.

USDA Announces Research Grants to Address Food Safety

According to a press release from USDA, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced this week the award of \$30.1 million in competitive grants to fund 80 research projects to improve food safety, reduce antibiotic resistance in food and increase the resilience of plants in the face of climate change.

“In the face of diminishing land and water resources and increasingly variable climatic conditions, food production must increase to meet the demands of world population projected to pass 9 billion by 2050,” said Vilsack. “Funding in research to respond to these challenges should be considered as an investment in our nation’s future, an investment which will pay big dividends in the years to come.”

To read the full press release, visit <http://tinyurl.com/USDA-2-5-16>.

Agriculture Subcommittee Holds Hearing to Discuss Direct Marketing

U.S. House Agriculture Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture and Research held a hearing this week to discuss the opportunities and challenges agricultural producers face in direct marketing of their products. Farmers and ranchers shared their experiences with subcommittee members about direct sales ventures and building relationships with consumers through transparency.

“Today, the average individual is at least three generations removed from production agriculture, which only stresses the importance of building an urban-rural coalition so people are able to trust and understand how their food is produced,” said Agriculture Committee Chairman K. Michael Conaway (R-Texas). “At the committee, we will continue to engage the public so we can have the input and support of all stakeholders from both urban and rural America and continue to enact policies that maintain and enhance food security and transparency.”

To read more about the subcommittee’s discussion on these matters, visit <http://tinyurl.com/AG-02-05-16>.

TCFA Dues Rebate Criteria and Forms Available

If you fed 10,000 head or more in 2015, you may apply for a dues rebate. The rebate applies to the cumulative number of cattle fed by a single feeding entity. Rebate applications must be completed and returned to the TCFA office by April 15.

For information or to request an application, contact Brady Miller at (806) 358-3681 or brady@tcfa.org.

Texas Youth Cattle Conference Seeking Applicants

Texas Beef Council announced this week its inaugural Texas Youth Cattle Conference to be held June 13-15 in San Antonio and South Texas regions. This conference is designed for youth who have a desire to expand their knowledge about the Texas beef industry. Students will have the opportunity to hear from experts in the beef industry and experience hands-on learning covering various aspects of the industry including nutrition, beef cattle science, management and marketing.

The program is checkoff-funded and free to attendees. Applicants must be at least 16 years old as of January 2016. Applications are due March 4. To apply, visit <http://www.texasbeefcheckoff.com/texasyouth>.

NCBA, PLC Accepting Applications for Summer Positions

NCBA and Public Lands Council’s government affairs office in Washington D.C., is now accepting applications for a 2016 summer public policy intern as well as a summer law clerk. Interns will have the opportunity to work alongside staff on issues of concern to cattle producers in public policy.

These positions will begin May 23 and end August 19. To apply, visit www.beefusa.org.

Oklahoma Excellence in Agriculture Awards Accepting Nominations

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry is accepting nominations for the Oklahoma Excellence in Agriculture Awards through Feb. 12. Four award recipients will be announced on March 30 at the state capitol as part of the state’s annual Oklahoma Ag Day celebration.

Eligible nominees include individuals involved in livestock and crop production, agribusiness, forestry, horticulture and nursery management. In addition to considering the nominee’s production agriculture involvement, the application also recognizes leadership in agricultural and state organizations, as well as additional awards and honors. The winner will be someone with at least 25 years in agriculture who derives the bulk of his or her income from agriculture or has retired from an agricultural enterprise.

To nominate someone for this award, visit www.oda.state.ok.us/odaff-halloffame.htm.

Serve Beef for Super Bowl 50

Super Bowl 50 is this Sunday, Feb. 7. While football will be the main attraction, food is a major highlight of Super Bowl parties across the country. If you are attending a Super Bowl party this weekend, be sure to take a delicious beef dish that everyone is sure to enjoy.

Visit www.txbeef.org for an array of crowd-pleasing recipes to share with your friends and family.

