



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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States File Temporary WOTUS Injunction

Texas, Oklahoma and Mississippi are the latest states to seek to join the injunction to block enforcement of the “waters of the U.S.” (WOTUS) rule. They are arguing that the citizens of their states will suffer irreparable harm if the rule is enforced. Though a nationwide stay is currently in effect on the WOTUS rule, it could be lifted by the Sixth Circuit at any time. This injunction would protect these states if that stay were to be lifted.

If these states are successful in their injunction, they will join 13 others who received an injunction from a federal judge in August 2015. To view the preliminary injunction, visit <http://tinyurl.com/2-19-16-WOTUS>.

2016 Texas Primary Elections – One Week Left in Early Voting

Early voting for the 2016 Texas Primary Elections is open now through next Friday, Feb. 26. Election Day is Tuesday, March 1.

Early voting locations will be available through the Texas Secretary of State's Online Voter Central at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml>, and polling place hours vary at each early voting location. Registered and eligible voters may vote at any early voting location located in their county of residence.

Visit <http://tinyurl.com/BEEF-PAC-2-12-16> for a list of BEEF-PAC supported candidates. Please contact Josh Winegarner at (806) 358-3681 or josh@tcfa.org with questions about these candidates or to find out more information about the candidates from your area.

It's Not Too Late to Apply for Winter Storm Disaster Assistance Through FSA

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) office in Washington, D.C., has informed TCFA that cattle producers who incurred losses as a result of the winter storm in December 2015 are still encouraged to file a Notice of Loss with their county office. While these notices technically will be filed after the 30-day deadline, confusion about program eligibility created an extenuating circumstance that will be given consideration. The FSA staff is currently working on amendments to their handbook that should remedy the confusion – clarifying that cattle feedyards and cattle feeders without an FSA number are eligible for disaster assistance through the Livestock Indemnity Program.

In addition, FSA has extended the deadline for filing the Application of Payment (documentation of the livestock loss) to March 30, 2016.

TCFA has been working with the county, state and national FSA staff for the past month to clarify these issues. Please contact TCFA Director of Government Relations Josh Winegarner at (806) 358-3681 or josh@tcfa.org with any questions.

Center for Food Integrity Seeks to Close Animal Agriculture Understanding Gap

The Center for Food Integrity (CFI) is seeking to close knowledge gaps related to the understanding of how food animals are cared for in the U.S. CFI's latest consumer trust research found that 60 percent of people “strongly agree” with the following statement: “If animals are treated decently and humanely, I have no problem eating meat and eggs.” However, only 25 percent of those surveyed actually believed that U.S. meat comes from humanely treated animals.

Due to this consumer evidence, CFI will be making this topic the focus of its 2016 North American Strategy Conference on Animal Agriculture, focusing on key areas within this issue. Topics that will be covered include animal housing, emerging genetic advancements and antibiotic use. Expert speakers and panelists from varying backgrounds will share their perspectives on these and other subjects.

The conference is free to attend and will be held May 18-19 at the McDonald's Hamburger University in Chicago. To learn more or to register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/CFI-2-19-16>.

USMEF Compiles Beef Export Data

According to the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), December U.S. beef exports totaled 94,586 metric tons (mt), down 6 percent from a year ago and slightly lower than in November, while export value fell 21 percent to \$507.3 million. In 2015, beef exports were down 11 percent from a year ago in volume to 1.07 million mt. Export value was \$6.3 billion, 12 percent below the 2014 record of \$7.14 billion.

U.S. beef exports to Mexico topped the \$1 billion mark for the second consecutive year. Mexico reclaimed its position as the leading destination for beef variety meat exports, which increased 8 percent in volume (110,085 mt) and 9 percent in value (\$290.3 million).

To read more highlights from the USMEF data, visit <http://tinyurl.com/USMEF-2-19-16>.

Research Suggests New Effects of Freezing Beef

New research out of Kansas State University suggests that freezing certain cuts of beef may actually improve tenderness by up to 10 percent. While many restaurants advertise “never frozen” beef products, this study shows that may not always be a benefit. Researchers tested six major muscles from the hind quarter, and the strip loin and inside round steaks were the cuts found to improve in tenderness due to freezing.

This research will be presented at Kansas State University’s Cattleman’s Day on March 4. For more information on this study or to attend the event, visit <http://tinyurl.com/KSU-2-19-16>.

President Obama Uses Antiquities Act to Lock off Additional 1.8 Million Acres

According to a press release from NCBA, for the 22nd time in his Administration, President Obama has improperly leveraged the Antiquities Act of 1906 to lock up millions of acres of the American West. This Administration has locked off 265 million acres without formal review, economic analysis or public comment.

“When designations like these take place, multiple use and valid existing rights like grazing always lose,” said NCBA President Tracy Brunner. “If this Administration believes this land is in need of protection, they should do so through the proper democratic channels, not a stroke of the pen that bypasses the American people.”

To read the full press release, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NCBA-2-19-16>.

Beef 4 Kids Initiative in Need of Funds

The Beef 4 Kids initiative is greatly in need of funds to purchase beef sticks for the Snack Pak 4 Kids program. Please contact Jayce Winters at jayce@tcfa.org today if you are interested in donating to help provide nutritious beef to a child in need in the Texas Panhandle.

Knowing the importance of beef in a child’s diet, TCFA teamed up with Snack Pak 4 Kids in 2012 to ensure that beef is provided in weekend snack packs for children at risk of hunger in the Texas Panhandle. Since that time, TCFA members have rallied to make sure that kids who face the possibility of missing meals over the weekend – 17 to 31 percent of kids in the Texas Panhandle – have access to a high quality beef product as an excellent protein source. There are now approximately 7,000 students in the program.

Please help us continue this program that is vital to the children of the Texas Panhandle with a donation to the Beef 4 Kids program. For more information, visit <http://www.tcfa.org/news-events/giving-back.html> or contact Jayce Winters at jayce@tcfa.org or (806) 358-3681.

Miss America Promotes Agriculture

Miss America 2016 Betty Cantrell, Georgia native and former 4-H member, will use her year of service to promote her platform Healthy children Strong America. Cantrell has specifically teamed up with the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) to promote healthy lifestyle and food choices for kids as well as teach them where their food comes from.

“Nobody ever sees farmers; nobody sees all the work they do. People just picture Old McDonald,” said Cantrell. “I don’t think the modern farmer and his family are appreciated for everything they do.”

She recognizes AFBF as the “perfect partnership” to get into classrooms to promote her platform. To read more about how Cantrell is advocating for agriculture, visit <http://tinyurl.com/AFBF-2-19-16>.

APHIS Seeks Comment on Biotech Regulation

USDA’s Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) published a notice of intent in the *Federal Register* this week indicating plans to prepare an environmental impact statement on the introduction of the products of

biotechnology. The statement will include “potential changes to the regulations regarding the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of certain genetically engineered organisms.”

APHIS is now seeking public comment on this action through March 7. To learn more or to submit comments, visit <http://tinyurl.com/APHIS-2-19-16>.

2016 Fed Beef Challenge

The best cattle in Cattle Feeding Country will make their way to the historic Amarillo Livestock Auction on Wednesday, April 13 for the 2016 TCFA Fed Beef Challenge. Feedyards from throughout the TCFA area will bring their top quality steers, heifers and Holstein steers to compete for awards, cash and bragging rights. In addition to the carcass contest to determine the best beef, there will be a live evaluation contest, steak feed and special activities benefiting the TCFA Education Foundation. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/tcfafbc> for contest rules and the printable entry form. Contact Brady Miller at (806) 358-3681 or brady@tcfa.org for more information.

Calling All Junior Cattle Feeders

The start of the 2016 Junior Fed Beef Challenge is just around the corner. Junior cattle feeders from all across Cattle Feeding Country will compete for more than \$20,000 in scholarships, cash and prizes by participating in four phases of the event, including carcass merit, record keeping, a written exam and oral presentation or interview. Steers can be validated March 1 – March 28. Find all contest details at <http://tinyurl.com/tcfafbc>, or contact Brady Miller at (806) 358-3681 or brady@tcfa.org.

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.

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, TALL XV, are due March 15, 2016. Application forms are online at <http://tall.tamu.edu>.

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.

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