



# TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

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# NEWSLETTER

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Volume 50, Number 11

March 18, 2016

## **Antibiotic Resistance Discussed at D.C. Forum**

Farm Foundation and USDA's Economic Research Service hosted a workshop Thursday and Friday of this week to examine incentives and disincentives of developing new antimicrobial drugs and non-antibiotic alternatives for food animals. Input from agricultural producers, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and others has led to an engaging forum on the importance of antibiotics and what all parties involved are doing to maintain the effectiveness of antibiotics.

"Our goal is not to eliminate antibiotics in animal agriculture; our goal is to eliminate inappropriate use of antibiotics," said Dr. William Flynn, deputy director for science policy at FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine. "We want to make sure that the uses that are out there are necessary, are appropriate, and are aligned with our current thinking on judicious use."

TCFA, NCBA and others will continue to engage in these discussions to further progress on combating antibiotic resistance.

## **Canada Maintains COOL Retaliation Rights**

Canada is maintaining its right to retaliate against the U.S., should any new form of country-of-origin labeling (COOL) be introduced. The U.S. repealed mandatory COOL for pork and beef at the end of 2015.

NCBA President Tracy Brunner acknowledged the possibility of the issue coming back up at the Canadian Cattlemen's Association's (CCA) annual meeting saying, "There is always a minority who feel restrictions of trade can be in the best interest of business."

John Masswohl of the CCA said, "We need to have the tools to retaliate if we need it. We can keep that authorization indefinitely."

## **GMO Labeling Bill Stalls**

The U.S. Senate failed to advance the Biotechnology Labeling Solutions Act, a bill designed to create a nationwide voluntary labeling system for biotech crops. The bill would override state mandatory labeling requirements and prevent a patchwork of varying labeling laws across the nation.

"Make no mistake, it's not Republicans these Senators have opposed, it's the American farmer and rancher," said House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-Texas). "These Senators have refused to move from their position calling for a mandatory warning label for products of biotechnology. They have chosen to side with activists who have publicly acknowledged their objective is to stigmatize a safe and valuable tool for America's farmers and ranchers."

Proponents of the bill were 11 votes short of the 60 necessary to limit debate and proceed to a vote on the bill. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) voted against the legislation, using a procedural tactic that will allow him to potentially bring it back up. The House passed a similar piece of legislation last year.

## **USDA Suspends July *Cattle* Report**

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is suspending the July *Cattle* report scheduled for July 22 and the *U.S. and Canadian Cattle* report scheduled for Aug. 23. The January *Cattle* report was released on Jan. 29.

In a statement about the decision to suspend the summer reports, NASS says, "The decision to suspend this report was not made lightly, but was necessary, given our available fiscal and program resources. We will continue to review our federal agricultural statistical programs using the same criteria to ensure we provide timely, accurate and useful statistics."

To read the full statement from NASS, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NASS-3-18-16>.

### **FDA Introduces Grant Program to Collect Antimicrobial Use Data**

The FDA announced a funding opportunity this week for cattle, swine, chicken and turkey producers to collect antimicrobial use data. The Cooperative Agreement Program for Antimicrobial Use & Resistance Data Collection will fund up to two awards with a maximum of \$300,000 provided to any individual awardee. This project is intended to provide needed information on antimicrobial use practices in various animal production settings and provide important information on data collection methodologies to help optimize long-term strategies for collecting and reporting such data.

Applications for funding are due June 24. To apply, visit <http://tinyurl.com/FDA-3-18-16>.

### **Beef Industry Committed to Safety**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Beef Industry Safety Summit was held earlier this month in Austin, Texas. A key part of the Summit is sharing research between industry experts on how to continually improve beef safety across every segment of the beef supply chain. According to NCBA's Executive Director of Legislative and Government Affairs Kristina Butts, the Beef Checkoff invests approximately \$30 million annually on research specific to beef safety. That amount combined with the total spent on beef safety and intervention efforts across the entire industry reaches approximately \$550 million each year.

For a list of the research presented, visit [www.bifsc.org/2016researchsessionabstracts.aspx](http://www.bifsc.org/2016researchsessionabstracts.aspx).

### **FDA Finalizes BSE Rule**

The FDA issued a rule this week finalizing three interim rules from 2004, 2005 and 2008 to further reduce the potential risk of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in human food. The final rule identifies and defines cattle materials which are prohibited in human food, dietary supplements and cosmetics. FDA also finalized the process for designating a country as not subject to BSE-related restrictions applicable to FDA-regulated human food and cosmetics. This rule only further confirms that the risk of human exposure to BSE is negligible.

To read the full rule, visit <http://tinyurl.com/BSE-3-18-16>.

### **Japan Begins TPP Ratification Process**

The Japanese government announced this week that it would begin legislative efforts toward the ratification of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The government intends to deliberate and pass the bills aimed at ratifying TPP during the current Diet's (Japan's Parliament) session, which ends June 1. The U.S. is unlikely to formally consider TPP until after the November election. Canada has also not committed to a timeline for ratification.

The TPP agreement will take effect 60 days following the ratification of all 12 member nations. If all member nations have not ratified it after two years, it will take effect 60 days after it has been ratified by at least six countries that account for 85 percent of the combined gross domestic product of the 12 original countries. In order for this to happen, both the U.S. and Japan must ratify the agreement.

### **APHIS Seeking Information from FMD Vaccine Manufacturers**

As a part of its foot and mouth disease (FMD) preparedness plan, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) published a "sources sought" notice to identify vaccine manufacturers who can supply the types of FMD vaccine needed in the case of an outbreak. The information provided by the manufacturers will help APHIS make decisions on how to increase FMD preparedness. APHIS will also use this information to determine future budget needs to enhance the vaccine stockpile. Over the coming years, APHIS is looking to incrementally increase the amount of stored FMD vaccine that is readily or quickly available for the agency to use should it be necessary to vaccinate.

To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/APHIS-3-18-16>.

### **Study Shows Ag-Gag Laws Reduce Public Trust in Farmers**

A recent study out of the University of British Columbia showed that learning about "ag-gag" legislation reduced the public's trust in farmers. The researchers found that perceptions of farm animal welfare were more negative among participants exposed to information about ag-gag laws than participants in the control group. Exposure to the laws also had a negative effect on public perception of environmental stewardship. It did not show impact in perceptions of worker rights or food safety.

### **U.S. Secures Full Access for Beef Exports to Peru**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman announced this week that the U.S. government has reached agreement with the government of Peru to remove barriers for U.S. beef exports to Peru that have remained in effect since 2003. According to a news release from USDA, Peru is one of the fastest growing markets in Latin America to all American beef and beef products. In 2015, the United

States exported \$25.4 million in beef and beef products to Peru. With burdensome certification requirements now removed, U.S. beef exports to Peru are expected to grow even more.

To read the full press release from USDA, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Peru-3-18-16>.

### **Governor Abbott Declares State of Disaster in Texas Counties**

Due to the impact of continued flooding in parts of East and Southeast Texas, Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of disaster in the following counties: Angelina, Erath, Gregg, Hardin, Harrison, Hood, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Marion, Newton, Orange, Parker, Sabine, San Augustine and Tyler. According to a press release from the Governor's office, Abbot also elevated the activation level of the State Operations Center (SOC) in Austin, and is urging Texans to stay on high alert and immediately heed any warnings from their local officials related to this severe flood threat.

To learn more about the disaster declaration, visit <http://gov.texas.gov/news/press-release/22058>.

### **TCFA BQA Cattle Care & Handling Seminar**

TCFA, in conjunction with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, will host three upcoming Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Cattle Care & Handling seminars for member feedyards. The date and locations options will be as follows: April 19 at Bartlett I, Tulia; April 20 at Dawn Custom Cattle Feeders, Dawn; and April 21 at Cactus Feedyard, Cactus.

Each one-day program will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Attendees will receive signed training logs that can be used to fulfill the TCFA BQA requirements for annual employee training. The registration fee is \$30 per person or \$100 per feedyard for unlimited employees. The deadline to register is April 15. For more details and to register, including how to register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/BQA-2016-03-11>.

### **2016 Cattle Raisers Convention**

The 2016 Cattle Raisers Convention will be held at the Fort Worth Convention Center on April 8-10. Cattle producers will network while discussing current issues facing the industry.

For more information about the 2016 Cattle Raisers Convention, visit [www.cattleraisersconvention.com/](http://www.cattleraisersconvention.com/).

### **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.

The deadline to enter the contest is Friday, April 1. Visit [www.tcfa.org/news-events/fbc.html](http://www.tcfa.org/news-events/fbc.html) for contest rules and the printable entry form. Contact Brady Miller at (806) 358-3681 or [brady@tcfa.org](mailto: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 scholarships, cash and prizes by participating in four phases of the event, including carcass merit, record keeping, written exam and oral presentation or interview. Steers can be validated March 1 – March 28. Find all contest details at [www.tcfa.org/news-events/fbc.html](http://www.tcfa.org/news-events/fbc.html), or contact Brady Miller at (806) 358-3681 or [brady@tcfa.org](mailto:brady@tcfa.org).

### **2016 TCFA Feedyard Camp**

TCFA, in conjunction with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and West Texas A&M University, will host the 2016 Junior Fed Beef Career & Leadership Program, also known as "Feedyard Camp." The program is open to incoming high school juniors or seniors who are interested in a career in the fed beef industry.

Participants will receive hands-on instruction about feedyard operations, as well as career opportunities in the fed beef industry. The registration fee for camp is \$100, which covers all costs excluding travel to and from Canyon. Students may obtain an application, which must be returned to TCFA by May 1, online at <http://tinyurl.com/fy-camp>. Contact Brady Miller at [brady@tcfa.org](mailto:brady@tcfa.org) or Rachel Hernandez at [rachel@tcfa.org](mailto:rachel@tcfa.org) with any questions.