



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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FY 2017 Agriculture Appropriations Bill Clears Committee

The U.S. House Appropriations Committee approved the FY 2017 Agriculture Appropriations bill on Tuesday. The bill provides \$21.3 billion in discretionary funding, which is \$451 million lower than the FY 2016 enacted level and \$281 million below the President's budget request, to fund programs that support U.S. agriculture, rural communities and food and drug safety.

The bill provides \$2.85 billion for agriculture research programs, \$934 million for Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), \$1.51 billion for the Farm Service Agency, \$1 billion for Food Safety and Inspection programs, \$2.7 billion for the Food and Drug Administration and \$250 million for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

In addition, the bill includes a provision to prohibit the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration from working to implement their anticompetitive livestock marketing rule and a provision requiring USDA to develop a prioritization process for APHIS to conduct audits of countries that have received animal health status recognitions and evaluate a number of factors designed to determine the disease status and monitoring capabilities of those countries. Unfortunately, the bill also includes a provision to prohibit the use of funds to inspect horses at slaughter, which effectively bans the processing of horses in the U.S.

To view the full summary of the bill, visit <http://tinyurl.com/House-Appropriations>.

Sixth Circuit Denies Request

Thursday, the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals denied a request for a full court hearing from a coalition of agriculture and other industry groups, including NCBA, made in early March to rehear arguments regarding jurisdiction to decide the numerous legal challenges to the waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule. The request was made to the Sixth Circuit after two of the three judges on the panel concluded that sufficient jurisdictional precedent existed for the Sixth Circuit to hear the consolidated, initial challenges to the WOTUS rule, rather than individual District Court cases around the country. Over 20 separate challenges were filed against the WOTUS rule by numerous states and business groups, including a coalition involving NCBA that filed suit in the Southern District of Texas.

The denial of the request will result in the WOTUS case proceeding on the merits in the Sixth Circuit, therefore, the district case in the Southern District of Texas will likely be dismissed. However, the temporary, nationwide stay, imposed by the Sixth Circuit, will remain in effect.

The denial comes the same day the U.S. Senate failed to pass an amendment to block the WOTUS rule. Senators voted 56-42, failing to reach the required 60 votes to attach the amendment to the fiscal 2017 funding bill for the Army Corps of Engineers, defeating Senate republicans attempt to stop the overreaching rule from being implemented, should it survive court challenges.

The White House had threatened to veto the entire Energy-Water spending bill if the WOTUS amendment were approved.

Froman Stresses TPP a Win for Beef

Last week, as part of NCBA's annual Legislative Conference, Ambassador Michael Froman, U.S. Trade Representative, stressed the cost of inaction on the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) while addressing cattlemen and women from across the country.

"For the past seven years, the Obama Administration has worked together with NCBA to expand export markets for American beef and cattle," said Froman. "In that time, United States beef exports have more than doubled, rising from \$3.1 billion to \$6.3 billion last year. However we have more work to do together – most especially, guaranteeing that American ranchers and farmers across this country see the full economic gains the TPP will mean for them and their communities."

Froman stressed that U.S. beef exports would increase by 444 million pounds once TPP is enacted, resulting in increased cash receipts totaling \$1.14 billion. In 2014 the U.S. exported almost \$4 billion of beef to

the TPP region. Under the agreement, tariffs across the region will be cut, offering new market access opportunities to U.S. beef producers and exporters.

Without the TPP agreement, U.S. beef exports face a competitive disadvantage to Australia. As a result of the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement, Australia is able to export beef to Japan at lower tariff rates. Japan is the largest export market for U.S. beef and beef products, valued at almost \$2 billion in 2014. The TPP will immediately reduce Japanese tariffs on U.S. beef, from 38.5 percent to 27.5 percent, and continue to decline to 9 percent in 15 years.

U.S. House Responds to EPA Anti-Agriculture Billboard

This week, 145 members of the U.S. House of Representatives sent a bipartisan letter to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy requesting answers on the EPA-funded advocacy campaign in Washington promoting increased regulation on agriculture.

"This is one more example of the lack of appropriate oversight by EPA," said House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-Texas). "I applaud Rep. Newhouse and many of my colleagues for holding EPA accountable for the unlawful misuse of federal funds. America's farmers and ranchers deserve a government that will defend their cause and work to make sure it has a thriving future. These actions by EPA, however, do the opposite."

Meanwhile, members of the U.S. Senate received correspondence from EPA Inspector General Arthur A. Elkins, Jr., this week on the same issue. The letter, addressed to Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) and Sen. Pat Roberts (R-Kan.), noted that their concerns would be addressed during the Office of the Inspector General audit, which is to begin soon. In the letter, Elkins says they will "seek to determine whether the costs claimed under the grants are reasonable, allowable and allocable in accordance with applicable laws, regulations and grant terms and conditions, and the objectives of the grant were met."

To read the letter sent by the House to EPA, visit <http://tinyurl.com/2016-04-House-Letter>. To read the letter sent by EPA Inspector General Elkins to Senate members, visit <http://tinyurl.com/2016-04-EPA-Letter>.

Investigative Article Questions IARC Processes

Reuters published an article questioning the processes used by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in determining which carcinogen category various substances match. This investigation comes after a controversial decision by IARC to place processed meats in the "carcinogenic" category and red meats in the "probably carcinogenic" category. Of the 989 substances and activities IARC has analyzed, the group has only ever categorized one item as "probably not carcinogenic."

Not everyone in the scientific community agrees with IARC's methods, and even its parent group, the World Health Organization, had to make a statement following the red meat classification helping to clear up what IARC's findings really meant. Many have questioned whether or not IARC members are too biased on certain issues to give an objective analysis.

Bob Tarone, a statistician formerly at America's National Cancer Institute and now Biostatistics Director at the International Epidemiology Institute, said of the way IARC works, "It's not good for science; it's not good for regulatory agencies. And for people? Well, they are just being confused."

Geoffrey Kabat, a cancer epidemiologist at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the U.S., says the classifications do the public a disservice. "What the public wants to know is: What are the agents in our surroundings that are likely to have palpable effects on our health? Not theoretical exposures which might, under some far-fetched conditions, possibly have an effect,"

Tarone went on to further criticize IARC saying, "It's absurd to assert there are no issues of bias related to self-interest, reputation or careerism. It has nothing to do with bad motives; it's just human nature."

To read the full article from *Reuters*, visit <http://tinyurl.com/2016-04-22-IARC>.

NAMI Criticizes World Resources Institute Recommendation

The World Resources Institute (WRI) released a report recommending a reduced consumption of red meats and dairy products as a means of lowering environmental impacts. The report argues that most people in developed nations consume more protein than they need and could easily cut back on meat and dairy while still meeting their nutritional needs.

The North American Meat Institute released a statement strongly refuting the information in the report saying it is "riddled with factual flaws about protein consumption and, in turn, the environmental impact of balanced diets that include meat." The report relies on "utilization data," which tends to overestimate actual per capita consumption, because it disregards such factors as food waste and non-human uses, such as pet food. NAMI says this was the wrong type of data to use in developing the report.

Read NAMI's full statement at <http://tinyurl.com/2016-04-22-NAMI>.

Fallin Signs Cattle Theft Bill

Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin signed into law a bill this week which addresses penalties related to livestock theft. HB 2504 passed the Oklahoma Senate last week without any “no” votes. The bill sets the financial penalty at three times the value of the stolen cattle and makes clear that each stolen animal can be a separate felony penalty.

“We are very appreciative of the Governor signing this bill as she recognizes the importance of helping cattle producers protect their cattle,” said Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association Executive Vice President Michael Kelsey.

To view the final bill, visit <http://tinyurl.com/2016-04-22-Fallin>.

TCFA and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Completed BQA Trainings

Sessions on the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Cattle Care & Handling program for member feedyards were held in the TCFA membership area on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday this week. Over 350 people participated in the trainings, with 50 feedyards being represented. The trainings were hosted by Bartlett I Feedyard; Dawn Custom Cattle Feeders; and Cactus Feedyard. Presentations and demonstrations included cattle processing by Dr. Ron Gill; proper handling and moving of cattle on foot and horseback by Curt Pate; and BQA Best Management Practices for the feed, cattle and yard departments by Dr. Ted McCollum.

“We were very pleased with the level of interest and participation in the trainings by feedyard owners, feedyard managers, feedyard employees, nutritionists, veterinarians and custom processing crews,” TCFA Vice President Ben Weinheimer said. “That clearly demonstrates a commitment to beef safety, beef quality and cattle care and handling by our members.”

TCFA’s educational programs are sponsored by the TCFA Allied Industries Committee with both financial and in-kind contributions. Lunches at the trainings this week were provided by Allflex USA, Inc., Bayer HealthCare, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Micro Technologies and MS Biotec. “TCFA is fortunate to have strong support of our education and training programs by the Allied Industries Committee members, and we very much appreciate all the time and effort provided by several company representatives this week that allowed us to conduct these trainings on-site at three feedyards,” commented TCFA Market and Membership Manager Brady Miller.

Grain Grading Workshop

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will hold two one-day workshops at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Amarillo that will focus on grain grading, grain grading standards, proper sampling techniques and how to identify different types of damage. Participants may choose to attend the workshop on either May 3 or 4, as they are identical programs. The workshops, which are co-sponsored by TCFA, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Panhandle Grain and Feed Association, will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and can count toward the TCFA BQA training for feedmill/feed department employees. The cost of the workshop is \$75 per participant. Pre-registration is required.

View the brochure at <http://tinyurl.com/2016-Grain-Grading>.

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 or Rachel Hernandez at rachel@tcfa.org with any questions.