



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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GMO Labeling Bill Moves to President's Desk

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the GMO labeling bill by a vote of 306-117, which was introduced by the Senate and passed by that body last week. This bill would establish a national labeling standard, preempting any existing or future state labeling laws, for genetically engineered foods that would require companies to disclose such ingredients through the use of text, symbols or a QR code. Meat from animals fed genetically modified feeds is exempt from this labeling.

President Obama has indicated that he will sign the legislation into law. Upon enactment, USDA will have two years to create a rule that defines the exact standards for the label.

To view the full language of the bill, visit <http://tinyurl.com/GMO1-7-1-16>.

TCFA Comments on Organic Marketing Proposed Rule

TCFA submitted comments on the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program; Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices proposed rule on Wednesday encouraging the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service to withdraw the current proposed rule and work with all producers to draft a rule that gives consumers choice and producers marketing opportunities that do not disparage conventional products.

While the Beef Quality Assurance Program is recognized as the gold standard in cattle care and handling, there is concern that setting welfare standards through the National Organic Program proposed rule will mislead consumers and support standards that do not have a basis in science.

To view TCFA's submitted comments, visit <http://tinyurl.com/TCFA-Organic-Comments>.

House Passes Interior Appropriations Bill, Blocks WOTUS

The U.S. House passed, by a 231-196 vote, the FY 2017 Interior, Environment Appropriations bill (H.R. 5538) on Thursday, that includes a provision that would block the enactment of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) Rule, which is currently being litigated in federal court.

The bill also includes language, supported by NCBA, the Public Lands Council and other industry affiliates, intended to prohibit the use of funds by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Department of Interior to treat any Gray Wolf in the 48 contiguous states as an endangered or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and prohibit the use of funds to pay attorney fees in a civil suit under the ESA pursuant to a court order that states such fees were calculated at an hourly rate in excess of \$125 per hour.

NCBA also was successful in defeating an amendment that would have removed a provision that prevents the EPA from monitoring greenhouse gas emissions from manure management systems.

For more information on the bill, visit <https://rules.house.gov/bill/114/hr-5538>.

House Agriculture Committee Examines CFTC Proposed Rule

The House Agriculture Committee held a hearing this week to examine the Commodity Futures Trading Commission's (CFTC) proposed rule on Regulation Automated Trading (Reg AT). The CFTC claims the proposed rule contains "a series of risk controls, transparency measures, and other safeguards" while witnesses at the hearing contended that the rule instead does not accomplish this goal and could give the CFTC access to proprietary information.

"Computer networks have slowly replaced traditional trading pits, often eliminating the human element altogether. With that comes the challenge of appropriately regulating these markets," said Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-Texas). "While the intent of Reg AT is to reduce the risk of market disruptions and increase the transparency of algorithmic trading systems, this rule falls short of the CFTC's goals.

To listen to a webcast of the hearing, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbeKjR2u5ZY.

USRSB Holds Second Annual General Assembly Meeting

The U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB) held its second annual general assembly meeting this week in Denver, Colo. The multi-stakeholder initiative was launched in March of 2015 to provide a venue for all segments of the supply chain to collectively develop an acceptable framework for U.S. beef sustainability. Key accomplishments in the first year include: approved a strategic plan and by-laws; officially recognized the importance of the U.S. beef industry life cycle assessment (LCA), identified six high priority beef sustainability indicators, and agreed to a tiered assurance framework.

In 2013, the beef checkoff published the beef industry's first LCA for the entire beef supply chain. That LCA continues to form the basis for measuring changes in key areas of sustainability, such as water use, water quality, air emissions, land use, worker safety, among other areas. The USRSB has also aligned to six priority areas that include animal health and well-being, efficiency and yield, land resources, water resources, air emissions, and worker safety and well-being. Also at the meeting this week, the group agreed to a tiered assurance framework that will start with development of resources, education/training materials and self-assessment tools. The organization will not have a role in second party or third party verification of any production practices. The concepts around verification or certification of sustainability programs or practices will be the role of individual business-to-business supply chain arrangements.

Over the next year, the roundtable will continue to build the details around indicators and measurements that are reasonable, attainable and meaningful throughout each of the segments of the supply chain. The group will also further define the assurance framework and how the USRSB can support and encourage adoption and implementation of the work products developed by the roundtable in the supply chain.

TCFA, other NCBA state affiliates, and several TCFA feedyards are founding members of the organization. USRSB has nearly 100 members that represent cattle producers, packers/processors, retailers/food service, allied industry and civil society (universities and non-governmental organizations). A 10-person Board of Directors oversees the work of the roundtable. TCFA is represented on the Board by Ben Weinheimer, TCFA Vice President and Tom McDonald, JBS Five Rivers Cattle Feeding. Weinheimer also serves as co-chair of the USRSB's Indicator Working Group.

For more information on the USRSB visit www.usrsb.org or contact ben@tcfa.org.

Survey Confirms Consumers Don't Understand Animal Welfare Marketing Labels

A recent survey commissioned by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) polled 1,000 U.S. adults who purchase food animal products and found that consumers do not understand the meanings of labels such as "cage free" and "free range."

Drovers published an article this week addressing this survey as well as the issue of misinformed consumers and labeling in general. The survey claims there is a lack of understanding when it comes to "free range" labels and third party verification of animal welfare issues. The *Drovers* piece addresses these issues and gives some alternative perspectives and also indicates other areas where consumers are often misled by labeling claims in the areas of hormones and antibiotics.

To read the full article from *Drovers*, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ASPCA-7-15-16>.

Website Provides Livestock Transport Requirements

The U.S. Animal Health Association and the National Institute for Animal Agriculture have launched a new website that provides anyone involved in cattle movements to easily prepare and meet the necessary requirements to cross state lines. The site features cattle movement regulations for all 50 states and includes a tagging site finder to help ensure that livestock are properly identified when they reach their destination.

Visit www.interstatelivestock.com to learn more.

Derrell Peel Dives into Feeder Cattle Markets for Weekly Commentary

Dr. Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist, devoted his weekly "Cow Calf Corner" to feeder cattle markets and discussing what the job of the market really is.

"Cattle production is ultimately one production process that is completed in different sectors with different producers in many different places and using different resources," Peel wrote. "Anything that impacts any of the sectors must ultimately be transmitted and coordinated across all sectors. It is basic supply and demand but so much more complicated than just a question of how much should be produced."

To read Peel's full article, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Peel-7-15-16>.

WTO Launches Trade Outlook Indicator

The World Trade Organization (WTO) has launched its World Trade Outlook Indicator (WTOI), which will provide real-time information on trends in global trade. This tool will show the performance of world merchandise trade volumes, including their current direction and where they're headed.

"...the World Trade Outlook Indicator responds to strong interest from policy-makers and the business community for more immediate, real-time information on trade and trading conditions," WTO director-general Roberto Azevedo said. "The WTOI should provide an early signal if trade is likely to slow or accelerate in the near future. At present, it suggests that trade growth will remain weak into the third quarter of 2016."

To learn more about WTOI, visit www.wto.org/english/news_e/news16_e/wtoi72016_e.pdf.

FSIS Finalizes Requirements to Export U.S. Meat to Cuba

USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) established its requirements for exports of U.S. meat, poultry and eggs to Cuba. The country has been open to U.S. exports since 2015, but this action by FSIS is expected to ease the process and increase exports.

To view the new requirements, visit <http://tinyurl.com/FSIS-7-15-16>.

Facebook Tips for Ranchers

Tierra Kessler with Ranch House Designs compiled a list of five helpful tips for ranchers/beef producers looking to get started on Facebook. The site has 1.65 billion monthly users, which she highlights as great free advertising, but also requires strategy to get your content out to more users.

She explains how to get started and create a page for your business. Once your page is set up, it's important to start generating good content that people want to see. Sharing photos of your operation in action or your family working are great examples. Kessler recommends posting on your business Facebook page two to three times per week, and to be sure to engage with your audience. If someone asks a question or comments on a post, reply to them and help share more about what you do.

To read all of Kessler's tips, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Facebook-7-15-16>.

W.D. Farr Scholarship Now Accepting Applications

The National Cattlemen's Foundation is now accepting applications for the W.D. Farr Scholarships for the 2016-17 school year. The scholarship was established by the National Cattlemen's Foundation to honor the successful career of the late W.D. Farr. Two annual \$12,000 grants will be awarded to outstanding graduate students that demonstrate superior achievement in academics and leadership and will allow the students to further their study in fields that benefit the cattle and beef industry.

Applications are due Aug. 31. To learn more or to apply, visit <http://tinyurl.com/2016-WDFarr>.

OCA Annual Convention & Trade Show

The Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association is hosting its 64th Annual OCA Convention and Trade Show July 21-23 at the Embassy Suites in Norman, Okla. This year's event will entail committee meetings, Cattlemen's College sessions, trade show, live entertainment and a number of speakers, including Tom Fields, Tracy Brunner, Donnell and Kelli Brown and more.

To register for the convention, visit www.okcattlemen.org/ocaannualconventiontradeshow.aspx.

Make-A-Wish Delicious Wishes Burger Bash

The North Texas chapter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation is hosting its inaugural Delicious Wishes Burger Bash on Friday, Oct. 21, at Cornerstone Ranch Event Center in Bushland. They hope to raise \$50,000 to help grant wishes of children in the Amarillo and Panhandle area. They are currently recruiting restaurants and cooking teams to donate delicious burger tastings for 300 people, along with an auction item.

If you are interested in participating in or sponsoring this event, please contact Alba Austin at aaustin@ntx.wish.org or (806) 358-9943. For an event flyer, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Burger-Bash-2016>.

FSA County Committee Elections

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is now accepting nominations for members to sit on FSA county committees. Nominations are open through Aug. 1, 2016. A person may nominate his or herself or anyone of legal voting age who participates or cooperates in an FSA program.

For nomination forms and other information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course

The 2016 Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course (BCSC) is scheduled for Aug. 1-3 on the Texas A&M University campus in College Station.

Topics to be discussed include animal health, nutrition, reproduction, breeding, genetics, selection, research, marketing and handling. Management sessions will cover business, forage, range and purebred cattle. Topics such as landowner issues and fence building will be featured at this BCSC. Sessions are designed for everyone, from the newest member of the industry to the most seasoned producer. A number of pesticide CEUs, veterinarian CECs and BQA credits are available to attendees.

Registration is \$180 per person and includes educational materials, trade show admittance, admission to the prime rib dinner, lunches, breakfasts and daily refreshments. Registration information and a schedule can be found at <http://beefcattleshortcourse.com>.

Feeders and Feedyards in the News

The Turkey Track Ranch, Amarillo, owned by the Whittenburg and Cole families and operated by TCFA members **Jay O'Brien** and **Dale Smith**, was selected as one of six regional honorees of the NCBA Environmental Stewardship Award Program. The award, announced during the 2016 Cattle Industry Summer Business Meeting, recognizes the outstanding stewardship and conservation efforts practiced on the ranch. This year's regional winners will compete for the national award, which will be announced during the Annual Cattle Industry Convention in February 2017.

To learn more about the award, visit www.beefusa.org/newsreleases1.aspx?NewsID=5860.

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Texas Cattle Feeders Association

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