



# TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

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# NEWSLETTER

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## **NCBA Takes Stand Against HSUS Attempt to Weaken Beef Checkoff**

As part of an effort to protect the beef industry and stop the frivolous and divisive work of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), NCBA will seek intervenor status in a lawsuit filed by HSUS against USDA's Office of Inspector General (OIG). The lawsuit filed on behalf of the Organization for Competitive Markets (OCM), seeks the release of documents related to two OIG audits of the beef checkoff and its contractors, including NCBA. Both audits found that producer investments in the checkoff are protected by the firewall, which prevents beef checkoff dollars from being used for policy activities. Two full OIG audits and multiple random audits by USDA have found contractors, including NCBA, to be in full compliance with the laws which protect checkoff funds.

"This witch hunt is another prime example of HSUS and similar groups grasping for ways to tear down the good work of animal agriculture," said TCFA Chairman David Baumann.

According to NCBA, the lawsuit is another attempt by HSUS to further its political agenda. It diverts attention from beef promotion activities and wastes precious resources at a time when cattle prices and the profitability of the beef industry are under tremendous pressure.

"This is an unwarranted attack on our industry, and I am proud of NCBA for rising to the occasion to face this head-on. HSUS is desperately trying to weaken the beef checkoff and slow our good work, but they will not succeed," Baumann said.

To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NCBA-9-16-16>.

## **House Agriculture Committee Passes Packers and Stockyards Modernization Bill**

The House Agriculture Committee advanced legislation this week to modernize the Packers and Stockyards Act (PSA). The bill (H.R. 5883), introduced by Chairman of the Livestock and Foreign Agriculture Subcommittee Rep. David Rouzer (R-N.C.), would amend the PSA to expand the definition of "marketing agency" and update acceptable payment methods to include electronic transfer of funds.

In an opening statement, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-Texas) stated, "The Act has not been thoroughly revised in decades, resulting in various outdated requirements. This bill updates definitions to clarify that PSA provisions apply to online and video auctions. It also updates the acceptable payment methods to include electronic transfer of funds."

## **U.S. Senate Passes Water Resources Development Act**

On Thursday, the Water Resources Development Act (S. 2848) gained final Senate approval by a vote of 95-3. The bill, which authorizes money for waterway improvement projects and improvements made to drinking water delivery systems, also included an amendment offered by Sen. Deb Fischer (R-Neb.) that would exempt agricultural producers from the Environmental Protection Agency's Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) regulation for on-farm fuel storage.

The bill would exempt animal feed storage tanks from the SPCC rule, both in terms of aggregate storage and single-tank storage. Additionally, it exempts up to 2,000 gallons of storage capacity on remote or separate parcels of land as long as those tanks are not larger than 1,000 gallons each.

The legislation must now be considered and passed by the U.S. House of Representatives.

## **U.S. Initiates WTO Trade Complaint Against China**

During a press conference on Tuesday, U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and a bipartisan group of congressional members announced the U.S. has launched a formal complaint against China at the World Trade Organization (WTO) asserting that China's use of "market price support" for rice, wheat and corn is in excess of China's commitments under WTO rules. In 2015, China's "market price support" for these products is estimated to be nearly \$100 billion in excess of the levels China committed to during its accession.

“These programs distort Chinese prices, undercut American farmers and clearly break the limits China committed to when they joined the WTO,” said Ambassador Froman. “As this Administration has consistently and repeatedly shown, we will not stand by when our trading partners fail to follow the rules like everyone else. We will aggressively pursue this challenge on behalf of American farmers and hold the Chinese government accountable to the standards of fair global trade.”

To read the full press release, visit <http://tinyurl.com/WTO-9-16-16>.

### **EPA Violates FOIA Against CAFOs**

The 8<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis unanimously ruled that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) violated the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) by releasing the personal information of farmers from 29 states who own concentrated animal feeding operations. The case was brought against EPA three years ago by the National Pork Producers Council and the American Farm Bureau Federation after EPA released tens of thousands of farmers’ information to environmental groups.

According to the court, “EPA’s release of the complete set of data on a silver platter, so to speak, basically hands to the requesters a comprehensive database of their own, whatever their motives might be.”

To learn more about the case, visit <http://tinyurl.com/EPA-9-16-16>.

### **FDA Seeks Public Comment on Steps to Ensure Judicious Use of Antimicrobials in Agriculture**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced this week that it is entering the next phase of its efforts to mitigate antimicrobial resistance by focusing on medically important antimicrobials used in animal feed or water that have at least one therapeutic indication without a defined duration of use. Once FDA’s Guidance for Industry #213 is fully implemented, it will limit the use of these antimicrobials to therapeutic use only under the oversight of a veterinarian. FDA is now looking at additionally addressing antimicrobials that may currently be used in food animal production for no defined length of time.

FDA is accepting public comment for 90 days following the beginning date of Sept. 14. To submit comments, visit [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), and to learn more about this proposal, visit <http://tinyurl.com/FDA-9-16>.

### **TCFA Annual Convention – Speaker Spotlight**

Registration for the 2016 TCFA Annual Convention is now open! This year’s Convention will be held Nov. 6-8 at the Omni Fort Worth Hotel in Fort Worth, Texas. The program will offer dynamic speakers delivering crucial information to beef producers, and as always, there will be plenty of opportunities to make memories and have a great time. Visit [www.tcfa.org/news-events/convention.html](http://www.tcfa.org/news-events/convention.html) to register.

This year’s keynote speaker is **Paul DePodesta**, Chief Strategy Officer for the Cleveland Browns and subject of the movie, “Moneyball.” DePodesta has made a career of evaluating, measuring and assigning value to talent, as documented in Michael Lewis’s book, *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game*. The Moneyball methodology has become a mainstay strategy for business leaders looking for new approaches for overhauling stagnant systems. Formerly the Vice President of Player Development and Amateur Scouting for the New York Mets, DePodesta helped lead the team to the 2015 World Series for the first time since 2000. Mets GM Sandy Alderson said DePodesta was a “huge factor” in the Mets’ success. In January 2016, DePodesta began his current position with the NFL’s Cleveland Browns as Chief Strategy Officer. DePodesta is also an Assistant Professor of Bioinformatics at the Scripps Translational Sciences Institute.



TCFA is offering an incentive to those attendees who register early. Those registered by Sept. 28 will be entered in a drawing to win an Ozark cooler, so don’t delay!

Visit the TCFA website for more details on registration and the full Convention schedule at [www.tcfa.org/news-events/convention.html](http://www.tcfa.org/news-events/convention.html).

## **FAO to Help Battle Antimicrobial Resistance**

The United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released its Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance to help countries develop strategies for tackling the spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in their food supply chains. The plan highlights four key areas for action in the food and agriculture sphere, which include improving awareness of AMR issues among farmers and producers, veterinary professionals and authorities, policymakers, and food consumers; building national capacities for surveillance and monitoring of AMR and antimicrobial use (AMU) in food and agriculture; strengthening governance related to AMU and AMR in food and agriculture; and promoting good practices in food and agricultural systems and the prudent use of antimicrobials. In addition, the UN General Assembly will be meeting next week, and AMR will be a point of discussion and debate among governments.

To read the full press release from FAO, visit [www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/433096/icode/](http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/433096/icode/).

## **Report Examines Roles of Sugar and Saturated Fat in a Healthy Diet**

A report recently published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Internal Medicine* questions the commonly portrayed roles of sugar vs. saturated fat when it comes to heart disease. The report suggests that the sugar industry manipulated information so that it would not look like a primary cause of heart disease by shifting the blame to other foods, such as saturated fats in meat and dairy.

This is not the first time this misrepresentation has been brought to light. Nina Teicholz's 2014 book, *The Big Fat Surprise: Why Butter, Meat and Cheese Belong in a Healthy Diet*, gave an in-depth look at the evidence for the healthfulness of saturated fats in improving HDL cholesterol levels and the lack of evidence for its assumed contribution to heart disease.

To view the report in JAMA, visit <http://tinyurl.com/JAMA-9-16-16>.

## **Ag Groups Launch Antibiotic Education Website**

A coalition of agricultural groups, including NCBA, the Animal Health Institute, Animal Agriculture Alliance and the National Pork Producers Council, launched a new educational website to provide information about how antibiotics are used to raise healthy animals for food production as well as information on the U.S. Food & Drug Administration's new Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD). This will be a tool to aid producers in their understanding of the VFD as well as an educational platform to help the general public understand how antibiotics are used in agriculture.

Visit the website at [www.togetherABX.com](http://www.togetherABX.com).

## **BLM Advisory Board Recommends Steps to Managing Increased Wild Horse Population**

The Bureau of Land Management estimates the population of free roaming horses and burros has grown to 67,000 head, which is nearly 40,000 over the appropriate management level. The herd is growing by 20 percent annually and is currently 150 percent above manageable levels. Additionally, 45,000 of these animals are being held in long-term storage situations, which is an approximate \$50,000 per animal cost to taxpayers.

The BLM Advisory Board has recommended that the BLM sell horses for private ownership and euthanize those that cannot be sold in order to control the population.

## **NAMI Environmental Achievement Awards and Environmental Recognition Awards**

The North American Meat Institute (NAMI) is accepting applications for its 2016 Environmental Achievement Awards and its 2017 Environmental Recognition Awards. The Environmental Achievement Awards recognize companies that go beyond compliance in their sustainability and environmental efforts, while the Environmental Recognition Awards honor companies that demonstrate a dedication to continuous environmental improvement, as witnessed by the development and implementation of Environmental Management Systems.

Applications for the Environmental Achievement Awards must be submitted by Oct. 3, 2016, and applications for the Environmental Recognition Awards must be submitted by Oct. 14, 2016.

To learn more and download applications for both awards, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NAMI-9-16-16>.

## **2016 Eng Symposium**

The 2016 Eng Symposium will be held Oct. 5-6 at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, Neb., with the theme being "Innovations in Intensive Beef Cow Production, Care and Management." The Symposium is used for universities to present their latest research findings that targets improvements in beef cow efficiency and profitability by intensive and semi-confined production systems. Research is conducted through the Dr. Kenneth and Caroline McDonald Eng (-K-) Trust Fund.

For more information or to register for the symposium, visit <http://animalscience.unl.edu/eng-symposium>.

## Sponsor Spotlight

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