RINGING IN
TCFA’S 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY
1967-2017

SAVE THE DATE: OCT. 8-10, AMARILLO
2017 50TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
DETAILS INSIDE
The Ghost of GIPSA Rule Past and Present
Despite promises to the contrary, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack delivered a special Christmas present, several hundred pages of GIPSA anti-competition rules, to his populist supporters on Thursday. The rules, gift-wrapped under the name “Farmer Fair Practices Rules,” consist of an interim final rule on competitive injury, which perpetuates USDA’s position “that it is not necessary to demonstrate that an unfair practice harms the entire market in order to prove a violation of the Packers and Stockyards Act,” and two proposed rules concerning unfair practices/undue preferences and the poultry grower ranking system. The interim final rule takes effect 60 days from publication in the Federal Register, while the other two rules are open for public comment for 60 days.

“Sec. Vilsack claims these rules are common sense and provide consistency, but there is nothing common sense about government restrictions on how producers can market their livestock; and the only thing consistent with regard to the GIPSA rules is the overwhelming opposition from producers, Congress and the courts,” said TCFA Chairman Jim Lovell. “USDA received tens of thousands of comments opposed to the previous version of the GIPSA rule. Congress rejected amendments dealing with competitive injury and undue preference during the last Farm Bill debate, and U.S. appeals courts, on numerous occasions, have found that it is necessary to prove injury under the Packers and Stockyards Act.”

“This rulemaking will drastically limit the way our producers can market cattle and open the floodgates to baseless litigation,” said NCBA President Tracy Brunner. “If USDA was interested in real solutions rather than increased government regulations, they wouldn’t have rushed these rules out the door at the very close of the Administration’s term, bypassing any input from industry.”

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-Texas) issued a statement expressing his disappointment in the last minute effort to push through a partisan trio of rules and said, “I will make it a priority to roll back these, and other midnight regulations from the Obama Administration, as soon as Congress returns in January.”

“This last minute stunt by a lame duck ag secretary is the same overreach this administration has been forcing on us the last eight years. We won’t sit idly by; we will continue to fight this, as we have in the past,” said Lovell. TCFA and NCBA will continue to work with Chairman Conaway, other Members of Congress and the Trump Administration to rescind or repeal these rules.

To read the scope of sections 202(a) and (b) PSA interim final rule, visit http://tinyurl.com/GIPSA1-12-16.
To read the Unfair Practices and Undue Preferences Violation PSA proposed rule, visit http://tinyurl.com/GIPSA2-12-16.

Congress Passes Continuing Resolution Budget
In an effort to avoid a pending government shutdown, the U.S. Senate and House have passed a short-term continuing resolution budget for fiscal 2017 that will fund the government at a rate of $1.070 trillion through April 28, 2017. Pertaining to agriculture, the bill included a provision to ensure the Farm Service Agency maintains adequate funding to cover farm operating loans in the coming months.

To read the full language of the bill, visit http://tinyurl.com/Budget-12-16-16.

Iowa Passes State Beef Checkoff
Iowa cattlemen voted in favor of a referendum to reinstate a 50 cents per head state beef checkoff on Nov. 30, by a positive vote of 56 percent to 44 percent. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship must certify the results of the referendum by Dec. 30, and collection of state checkoff funds will begin March 1, 2017.

Checkoff participation is mandatory, but refund options will be available. The top priorities for the checkoff, as compiled by the Iowa Cattlemen’s Association from producer input, include marketing and promoting Iowa’s beef and beef products; enhancing Iowa’s beef industry image; production research; expanding international trade relationships; and providing producer, consumer and youth educational opportunities.

To learn more about the Iowa state checkoff, visit http://iacattlemen.org/iowabeefcheckoff.aspx.

TCFA Celebrating 50th Anniversary in 2017
TCFA will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2017, and we want you to be part of it! We would love to hear of any memories you have over the last 50 years of cattle industry news or TCFA events. You can submit the form enclosed or email your ideas to info@tcfa.org. TCFA will be sharing major milestones and events via social media and in Newsletters throughout 2017.

Also, be sure and save the date for TCFA’s 50th Anniversary Annual Convention! Join us in Amarillo, Oct. 8-10 for a great time of celebration and looking to the future.

Contact TCFA with any questions related to 50th anniversary celebration activities.
Trump Administration Continues to Grow
President-Elect Donald Trump nominated former Texas Governor Rick Perry as Energy Secretary this week. Perry served as governor of Texas from 2000-2015 and Texas Agriculture Commissioner prior to that. He also holds a bachelor’s degree in animal science from Texas A&M University.

Also this week, Trump nominated former Navy SEAL commander Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-Mont.) to serve as Secretary of Interior and Exxon Mobil President and CEO Rex W. Tillerson to serve as Secretary of State.

Trump has yet to nominate an Agriculture Secretary. TCFA will continue to engage with the Trump transition team throughout the remainder of the nominating process to promote qualified nominees and issues of importance to cattle feeders and U.S. agriculture.

TAHC Accepting Nominations for Geographic Veterinary Shortages
The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) is accepting nominations for geographic areas of Texas experiencing a shortage of veterinarians that work in food animal medicine, rural private practice or public practice. According to a news release from TAHC, areas selected as having a qualified veterinary shortage may benefit from the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) by having a practicing veterinarian locate to the area.

The VMLRP will accept nominations in three categories representing different types of veterinary practice. The Type I Shortage, which is most relevant to area beef producers, is a veterinarian who spends at least 80 percent of time working on food animal species in a private practice setting.

To learn more or to submit a nomination, visit www.tahc.texas.gov/vets/VMLRP.pdf.

Beef Industry Engages with Physicians on Cancer, Diet
Beef industry representatives engaged with physicians in Boston last week at the 2016 Pri-Med East Annual Meeting. Dr. Kevin C. Maki, epidemiologist and chief science officer of MB Clinical Research, presented a seminar to northeastern physicians on scientific evidence on diet’s impact on cancer risk. A need for this type of education and discussion among physicians has become increasingly important since the release of the 2015 International Agency for Research on Cancer’s red meat classification on its carcinogenicity scale of questionable reliability.

Following the presentation, attendees dined on a sirloin beef dinner where they also learned about the variety of lean beef cuts and cooking methods that can be part of a healthy diet. This event was made possible by the Northeast Beef Promotion Initiative and the New York Beef Industry Council.

NPD Group Conducts GMO Awareness Survey
According to a recent survey from NPD Group, consumers are gaining knowledge and interest about genetically modified (GMO) foods. Only one-third of those surveyed said they had little to no familiarity with GMOs. In 2013, one-half of those surveyed answered the same, so this is a significant shift in awareness over a short amount of time. Despite having a knowledge of GMOs, consumers are not particularly well-informed on the details, as only 11 percent said they were aware a federal GMO labeling law was passed this year.

NPD Group says the media has some influence on this. According to NPD, “TV news coverage and social media have informed consumers about GMOs and the benefits of their use, but the same channels have also fueled fears. Of those consumers aware of and concerned about GMOs, their worries center around food safety and their interest in eating foods that are authentic and ‘real.’”

To learn more from NPD, visit http://tinyurl.com/GMO-12-16-16.

Report Recommends Research on Effective Science Communication
The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine released a report this week highlighting the challenges of communicating science issues to the public and calling for increased research on communication methods in order to be more effective. The scientists behind the report say this is particularly important when it comes to contentious scientific issues such as vaccinations or hydraulic fracturing, as people rarely make decisions based on scientific information alone, but rather take into account their own interests, goals, values and beliefs.

The report also mentions the importance of science communication keeping up with the changing forms of media from which consumers are getting the majority of their information. With consumers turning to blogs, podcasts and social media to get their science news, scientists need to take advantage of these platforms to ensure their messages are reaching their audience.

The report also identified some communications tactics that need further research and evaluation, such as the process of debunking myths, correcting misinformation and using narrative to explain complex issues.

To learn more about the report, visit http://tinyurl.com/Science-12-16-16.
TCFA Education Foundation
Help make a difference in the life of a student and for the future of the beef industry by donating to the TCFA Education Foundation. The TCFA Education Foundation awards scholarships to graduate students involved in research projects on cattle feeding. Working through the Consortium for Cattle Feeding and Environmental Sciences, students apply for the scholarships through their major professors. The consortium is comprised of faculty from West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Amarillo, and New Mexico State University in Las Cruces.

Please consider making a donation to the TCFA Education Foundation as a part of your year-end giving. Contributions are tax deductible and an excellent way to make a memorial or recognize anniversaries, holidays and other special events. Special acknowledgement will be made to the family or person being honored.

Contact Shannon Standley at TCFA for details at shannon@tcfa.org or (806) 358-3681, or give online at http://tinyurl.com/2016-TCFA-Education-Foundation.

Southwest Beef Symposium
Registration is open for the Southwest Beef Symposium to be held in Roswell, N.M., Jan. 11-12, 2017. The event, which is co-hosted by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service, will feature topics such as global factors affecting U.S. beef demand, sustainability, performance indicators, feed efficiency, improving through technology and more.

Registration is $75 per person if registered by Jan. 2 and $95 thereafter. Register at http://swbs.nmsu.edu/.

2017 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show
Registration for the 2017 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show is open. The 120th annual convention will be held in Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 1-3, 2017. Advanced registration is open until Jan. 4, 2017. Convention participants will hear from industry leaders, gather insight on industry trends, and enjoy an evening of stars and guitars at the Country Music Hall of Fame as well as an exclusive event at the Grand Ole Opry.

To learn more or to register, visit http://convention.beefusa.org/registration-hotels.

Advertise in the 2017 Cattle Feeders Resource Guide
TCFA is accepting advertising contracts for the 2017 Cattle Feeders Resource Guide. Take advantage of this unique advertising opportunity by celebrating TCFA’s 50th anniversary in this special edition. This publication will highlight the history of the industry as well as celebrate the future. Feel free to tailor your advertisement to reflect TCFA’s 50th anniversary.

Advertisers who purchase a full-page, four-color ad in the Cattle Feeders Resource Guide receive a free bonus web ad on TCFA’s website, a great value in which advertisers have the opportunity to target potential buyers more precisely with ads that may reflect seasonal or market-focused messages.

The deadline to reserve advertising space has been extended to Jan 13. You certainly do not want to miss this rare advertising opportunity! View the rate card at http://tinyurl.com/2017-TCFA-RateCard, or contact Scena Snider for more details at (806) 358-3681 or scena@tcfa.org.