



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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TCFA Files Comments Opposing GIPSA Rules

Earlier today, TCFA and NCBA filed comments urging USDA to withdraw the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Act interim final and proposed rules, collectively labeled with the misleading title, Farmer Fair Practices Rules.

“This repackaging of the 2010 GIPSA rule is just as bad as the original,” said TCFA Chairman Jim Lovell. “These rules will encourage frivolous lawsuits based on accusations of harm rather than economic evidence and require buyers to justify all transactional price differences to disprove undue preference or advantage.”

GIPSA admits that it is “unable to quantify the benefits” of these rules, yet the negative impacts are clear. “These rules have the potential to take the beef industry back 30 years by jeopardizing alternative marketing agreements and stifling the innovative efforts of U.S. cattle producers to add value, manage risk and enhance the quality and safety of their products,” said Lovell.

These rules, which ignore seven federal court decisions and go well beyond what Congress authorized in the last Farm Bill, were published by the Obama Administration on Dec. 20, 2016, and subsequently postponed for 60 days by the Trump Administration. The comment period for the rules ends today.

To read TCFA’s comments, go to <http://tinyurl.com/GIPSA-3-24-17>.

Wildfire Assistance Update

Livestock Supply Points at the three Texas Panhandle locations will begin winding down over the next coming weeks, so producers in need of supplies are being advised to visit their local Livestock Supply Point to gather the supplies that they need while they are still available. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/LSP-3-24-17> to contact your location to see what supplies they have available to meet your individual needs.

TCFA encourages members who are interested in continuing to give to the ongoing relief efforts to contact one of the following organizations as local supply points will soon be closing.

To help those in Texas, Oklahoma or Kansas, please send donations to:

Working Ranch Cowboys Foundation Wildfire Relief Fund

Donate online at <https://wrca.wildapricot.org/wrcadonate2016/> (indicate “WRCF Wildfire Relief Fund”)

Send checks to WRCF Wildfire Relief Fund, 408 SW 7th Ave., Amarillo, TX 79101

(806) 374-9722

To help those in Oklahoma, please send donations to:

Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Foundation

Donate online at <http://okcattlemen.org/firerelieffund.aspx>

Send checks to PO Box 82395, Oklahoma City, OK 73148 (indicate “fire relief” in memo)

(405) 235-4391

To help those in Kansas, please send donations to:

Kansas Livestock Foundation

Donate online at www.kla.org/donationform.aspx

Send checks to 6031 SW 37th Street, Topeka, KS 66614 (indicate “fire relief” in memo)

(785) 273-5115

Resources Available for Wildfire Recovery

Several government resources available to assist wildfire victims in recovery efforts, which are authorized under the 2014 Farm Bill, include the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). LIP provides benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather or disasters, and ELAP provides

benefits to livestock producers for livestock losses that are not covered under other disaster assistance programs. The Farm Service Agency has also authorized a request from Gov. Greg Abbott to allow the emergency use of the Conservation Reserve Program for grazing. Assistance may also be available for fence rebuilding through the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP).

For more information on LIP, visit <http://tinyurl.com/LIP-3-24-17> For more information on ELAP, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ELAP-3-10-17>. For more information on ECP, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ECP-3-10-17>. Contact your local Farm Service Agency office with any other questions related to disaster assistance. You can find your local office contact information at <http://offices.usda.gov>.

U.S. Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Clarendon) has also made a request to USDA Acting Secretary Michael Young to provide a 60-day extension for the Emergency Use of CRP Lands for the Texas Panhandle Fires in addition to the 30-day window that has already been granted by USDA.

“Along with falling prices for cattle and our recent lack of rain, this disaster has certainly added additional uncertainty to affected producers. An extension of the Emergency Use of CRP Lands would provide a better opportunity for fencing to be rebuilt while providing a safe home for livestock. It will also help these struggling producers recover and get back on their feet,” said Thornberry in the letter to Young.

Senate Holds Confirmation Hearing for Perdue

The U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee held a hearing this week to consider the nomination of former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue to be the next U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Perdue’s nomination will likely be brought to a vote next week to determine confirmation.

House Subcommittee Considers Livestock Perspectives for Next Farm Bill

The U.S. House Agriculture Committee’s Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture held a hearing this week to gain perspectives from leaders in livestock production to learn more about their needs and priorities for the upcoming farm bill. GIPSA rules, foot-and-mouth disease preparedness, and mandatory country-of-origin labeling were all topics discussed at the hearing.

“Beyond contending with the challenges of Mother Nature, including the devastating wildfires that spread across parts of Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas over the past two weeks, livestock producers have also been plagued with a variety of ill-conceived regulatory burdens like the failed mandatory country-of-origin labeling experiment and the so-called GIPSA rules that threaten the unique marketing arrangements producers have worked so hard to develop,” said House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-Texas).

“Trade is vital to the beef industry, and protecting trade promotion programs such as the Foreign Market Development and Market Access Programs within the 2018 Farm Bill are important,” said NCBA President Craig Uden. “Ninety-six percent of the world’s consumers reside outside U.S. borders. We recognize that the growth and profitability of the U.S. cattle and beef industry is closely tied to our ability to market our products to those consumers.”

For an archived webcast of the hearing, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pi-qsiAdP-M.

Sen. Roberts Warns Against COOL Reimplementation

As the Trump Administration considers renegotiation of trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) spoke out against the reimplementation of mandatory country-of-origin labeling becoming a part of any of these renegotiations, saying that “we don’t need to go down this road again,” and highlighting the negative impacts of the legislation and its potential impact on trade and retaliatory tariffs.

To hear more of Sen. Roberts’ comments, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DVqloz2SBI.

GAO Calls for More Antibiotic Use Oversight in Agriculture

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report this week calling for more administrative oversight by the Food & Drug Administration and USDA over the use of antibiotics in food animal agriculture. The report highlights three areas in which GAO believes there should be more oversight, including collection of more on-farm data on antibiotic use, antibiotic labels that do not specify duration of use, and antibiotics used for prevention of disease (as opposed to control or treatment).

To view the full report, visit <http://tinyurl.com/GAO-3-24-17>.

USDA Announces Eradication of New World Screwworm in Florida

USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is announcing the successful eradication of the New World screwworm from Florida.

“I want to personally thank our many collaborating partners at the Federal, State, and local levels,” said Dr. Jack Shere, USDA Chief Veterinarian. “Through their dedication and professionalism close to 154 million sterile flies have been released, 16,902 animals have been inspected at checkpoints, and almost 430 hours of active surveillance in the Keys and 250 hours of active surveillance on the mainland have been completed. Their tireless work has allowed us to eliminate New World screwworm from the U.S. once again.”

To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/USDA-3-24-17>.

2017 Property Tax Dates

The following link contains information on a number of important property tax dates. Please contact josh@tcfa.org if you have any questions or need further assistance. <http://tinyurl.com/2017-03-17-TaxDates>.

SAVE THE DATE – TCFA 50th Anniversary Reception & Annual Convention

TCFA is turning 50! Save the date for TCFA’s 50th Anniversary Reception on the date of TCFA’s inception, May 18. Join members and friends of the Association at the Amarillo Civic Center Grand Plaza from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for a come-and-go reception celebrating this historic occasion. Invitations will follow, and you will be requested to RSVP. Also, mark your calendars for the TCFA 50th Anniversary Convention, which will be held Oct. 8-10, at the Embassy Suites Downtown Amarillo. An incredible speaker lineup is planned, including *Lone Survivor* author, Marcus Luttrell; TCFA-favorite and generational/millennial expert, Jason Dorsey; agricultural economist and global futurist, Dr. Lowell Catlett; and more. Back by popular demand, the Cattle Feeders Get Together will feature live entertainment from premier 80s cover band, The Spazmatics.

Make plans to join us in Amarillo for both of these special events that you won’t want to miss. To view a “Save the Date” flyer for these events, visit <http://tinyurl.com/TCFA-SaveTheDate>. To be entered for a special prize drawing, Tweet a photo of the “Save the Date” with #TCFA50.

2017 Fed Beef Challenge – Enter TODAY

The best cattle in Cattle Feeding Country will make their way to the historic Amarillo Livestock Auction on Wednesday, April 12 for the 2017 TCFA Fed Beef Challenge. Feedyards from throughout the TCFA area will bring their top quality steers, heifers, Holstein steers and new this year, a category for Mexican 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 March 31.**

Visit 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 for more information.

2017 Junior Fed Beef Challenge – Request Your Tags TODAY

Steer validation for the 2017 Junior Fed Beef Challenge is underway. Contact the TCFA office to request your tags today, and get entered in this year’s contest!

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, a written exam and oral presentation or interview. **Steers may be validated anytime from March 1 to March 27.**

Contact Brady Miller at (806) 358-3681 or brady@tcfa.org for contest information, or visit www.tcfa.org/news-events/jfbc.html.

Visit TCFA Member Feedyards Job Openings Web Page

As recommended by the TCFA Human Resources and Industry Relations Committees, TCFA has launched a web page on the TCFA website to host feedyard job openings as a service to TCFA member feedyards.

TCFA member feedyards are eligible to post jobs to the site. However, anyone in search of a job may view and access the site. The website is not designed for direct communication between job seekers and feedyards, so applicants should contact the feedyard via information listed on the posting. Job postings will expire after one month and will be removed unless extended by the feedyard.

To view the web page and current listings, visit www.tcfa.org/news-events/jobs.html. If you have any additional questions, please contact Jayce Winters at jayce@tcfa.org.

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