



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

5501 I-40 W. • AMARILLO, TEXAS • PHONE (806) 358-3681 • www.tcfa.org • info@tcfa.org

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Perdue to Scratch Michelle Obama's School Lunch Program

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced that USDA would give schools more flexibility in meeting federal nutritional requirements in order to make food choices both healthy and appealing for students.

In one of his first regulatory acts as Secretary, Perdue is effectively rolling back regulations imposed by former first lady Michelle Obama that required school nutrition programs to meet certain federal mandates, including an almost total elimination of salt, multiple servings of raw fruits and vegetables, and a reduction in meats and fats. A 2014 government audit of the program revealed that more than 1 million students had stopped buying their school lunch because the food wasn't appealing or too expensive, according to the *Washington Times*.

Perdue says that restoring local control of nutritional guidelines will allow schools to provide food choices that are both healthy and that students will actually eat.

"This announcement is the result of years of feedback from students, schools and food service experts about the challenges they are facing in meeting the final regulations for school meals," Perdue said. "If kids aren't eating the food, and it's ending up in the trash, they aren't getting any nutrition — thus undermining the intent of the program." To read the full release from USDA, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Perdue-School-Lunch>.

Tyson Foods Will Stop Using Human Antibiotics in Chicken

Tyson Foods said it will stop using human antibiotics in its U.S. chicken operations by the end of the year.

The move to end antibiotic use in chickens only applies to operations in the U.S.; however Tyson says its international businesses were "committed" to taking similar measures. The pledge will apply to poultry it sells in supermarkets under its own Tyson label, according to a *USA Today* article. The move is being driven by consumer demand for food free of anything deemed unnatural, whether it's antibiotics, preservatives or something else, the article said.

Tyson follows its competitors like Pilgrim's Pride, Perdue Farms and Cargill, who announced similar moves after facing global pressure to end antibiotic use. To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Tyson-Antibiotics>.

Perdue Says Farmers and Ranchers Will Not Be Worse Off After NAFTA Renegotiations

USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue says that U.S. farmers and ranchers will not be worse off after the Trump Administration renegotiates the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"I can assure you that neither this president, nor [Commerce Secretary Wilbur] Ross nor I, are going to negotiate or accept a worse deal," Perdue said in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal*. "Our goal is to make it better for all producers."

According to the article, Perdue and Ross helped convince Trump to renegotiate — rather than terminate — the trade pact, after they showed Trump a map of states where jobs would be lost if NAFTA ended.

Cattle Losses Could Be in the Thousands After Weekend Blizzard

Countless cattle are dead and thousands are struggling to feed after a weekend blizzard hit cattle feeding country in Oklahoma and Kansas.

According to *Drovers*, death losses will number in the thousands at feedyards and to pasture cattle, many of which were displaced by the storm that hit western Kansas, eastern Colorado, and parts of the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles. The National Weather Service reported 15-18 inches of snow fell in the hardest hit areas of western Kansas, and as much as 75 percent of the U.S. cattle on feed were affected. To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Cattle-Blizzard>.

State Inspection Legislation May Not Meet Federal Requirements

State legislative changes to meat and poultry inspection services could be inconsistent with federal requirements, the U.S. Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) said in a letter to state meat and poultry inspection directors.

State inspection programs must be “at least equal to” the federal program on nine components: statutory authority and food safety regulations; inspection; product sampling programs; staffing, training, and supervision; humane handling; compliance; laboratory methods and quality assurance programs; civil rights; and financial accountability.

Most of the draft legislation we have seen exempts inspection requirements and labeling certain types of food products, including meat and poultry, depending on the manner and place of sale and the type of purchaser or end consumer. Some of these proposed exemptions appear to be consistent with Federal statutory and regulatory requirements, but many do not, the letter said. For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/FSIS-Inspection>.

Fever Ticks Confirmed on Webb-Zapata County Premises

Cattle fever ticks have been confirmed on cattle originating from a premise located in parts of Webb and Zapata counties, said the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) in a statement released Monday.

According to TAHC, the fever ticks were found on two calves undergoing voluntary inspection and treatment at a dipping vat. The premise has been quarantined and an investigation is underway.

“When producers observe ticks on their livestock, it is imperative that they contact their local TAHC Livestock Inspector or region office, USDA Inspector, private veterinarian or local Texas A&M AgriLife Extension office to arrange for collection and submission of tick samples to the TAHC laboratory in Austin,” said Dr. Andy Schwartz, TAHC executive director. “This extra surveillance protects the Texas cattle industry.”

Cattle fever ticks are a significant threat to the United States cattle industry. These ticks carry the disease commonly known as cattle fever. To learn more about the quarantine areas, visit <http://tinyurl.com/tahc-ticks>.

Harmful Beef Checkoff Legislation Not Likely to Pass

Colin Woodall, NCBA vice president of governmental affairs, says there is little chance that legislation aimed at altering the National Beef Checkoff would pass in Congress.

Sens. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Cory Booker (D-NJ) introduced the Opportunities for Fairness in Farming Act and the Voluntary Checkoff Act earlier this year.

“Fortunately, these bills will go through the House and Senate Ag committees, and we have two chairmen that understand the Checkoff,” Woodall said in an interview with *Oklahoma Farm Report*. “So, what we’re trying to do is bolster their efforts in order to educate all the new members of Congress and new staffers to let them know these are not taxpayer dollars. These are producer dollars and ultimately it’s producers who make the decision on where that money is being spent.”

Woodall pointed out that all producers benefit the same, and it was the industry that came together in 1985 to form the Checkoff. TCFA proposed the first checkoff in 1974. Fourteen years and three referendums later, it remains the \$1 beef checkoff we have today. To listen to Woodall’s interview, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Woodall-Checkoff>.

Brazil JBS to Import Fresh U.S. Beef

Brazil’s JBS, the world’s largest meat processor, will import 150 tons per month of fresh beef from the U.S., company executives told *Reuters* Tuesday. This is approximately 10 percent of JBS’s production of top sirloin cap (a Brazilian premium cut known as “picanha”) in Brazil.

Brazilian imports of U.S. fresh beef were authorized last year in a bilateral deal that also allowed Brazilian beef to enter the United States, according to reports.

“With Brazil’s large market reopened to the United States, U.S. beef exports are poised for new growth,” Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said in a news release. “I look forward to Brazilians getting the opportunity to eat delicious American beef, because once they taste it, they’ll want more of it.”

TCFA 50th Anniversary Resource Guide on Its Way to Members

Be on the lookout for the 50th Anniversary edition of the *Cattle Feeders Resource Guide*. In it, you’ll find feedyard, industry associate, service and product directories, as well as the 2017 Beefacts. Make sure to read the feature article, “TCFA History: A Look Back at 50 Exciting, Tumultuous and Hard-Won Years.” The resource guide should be hitting mailboxes next week.

Attention Junior Fed Beef Participants

As a reminder, feed samples must be taken for May, June and July. May feed samples **must be postmarked** to Servi-Tech Laboratories by May 11. The following feed samples must be postmarked to Servi-Tech by June 7 and July 6. For more information, visit <https://www.tcfa.org/news-events/jfbc.html>.

TVMDL to Host Seminar on Bovine Respiratory Disease

The Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory will host a seminar on the recent advances in understanding the Bovine Respiratory Disease Complex (BRD) Saturday, July 18, at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Amarillo.

“BRD is a complex and constant challenge to the livestock industry,” said Dr. Gayman Helman, TVMDL. “The syndrome is the leading cause of sickness and death for cattle and calves in the U.S. This year’s seminar will focus on new information on prevention research, pathogens and treatment protocols.”

The seminar will offer attendees 7 continuing education credits while also hearing the latest information on the disease. To register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/AgriLife-Register>. Find a complete conference agenda and registration flyer at <http://tinyurl.com/TVMDL-2017>.

2017 TCFA Feedyard Camp Application Due May 12

Applications for TCFA Feedyard Camp must be received in the TCFA office by May 12 in order to be considered for admittance into the 2017 Junior Fed Beef Career & Leadership Program, also known as Feedyard Camp.

The program is open to incoming high school juniors and 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 except travel to and from Canyon. To download an application, visit <http://tinyurl.com/FeedYardCamp>. Contact Brady Miller at brady@tcfa.org or Rachel Hernandez at rachel@tcfa.org with any questions.

New Farm Journal Wildfire Fund Doubles Your Donation for Wildfire Recovery

Farm Journal announced a new fundraising effort for producers affected by the March wildfires. The Million Dollar Wildfire Relief Challenge will enable donors to help ranching families rebuild by doubling donations through July 31, 2017. To learn more and/or donate, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Wildfire-Fund>.

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

TCFA is turning 50! Save the date for TCFA’s 50th Anniversary Reception May 18. Join members and friends of the Association at the Amarillo Civic Center Grand Plaza from 4 - 6 p.m. for a come-and-go reception celebrating this historic occasion. Invitations have been mailed. We ask that attendees RSVP by **May 10** by emailing shannon@tcfa.org or calling (806) 358-3681.

Also, mark your calendars for TCFA’s 50th Anniversary Convention, which will take place October 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. To view a “Save the Date” flyer for these events, visit <http://tinyurl.com/TCFA-SaveTheDate>.

New Jobs Posted to TCFA Member Feedyards Job Openings Web Page

New job postings have been added to the TCFA Member Feedyards Job Openings web page. To view the web page and current listings, visit www.tcfa.org/news-events/jobs.html. If you have any additional questions, please contact Carmen Fenton at carmen@tcfa.org.

Texas A&M AgriLife Research and U.S. Forest Service Conference May 12 in Kerrville

Producers can attend a conference offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Research and the U.S. Forest Service that will address strategic supplementation strategies to enhance Texas rangelands and reduce livestock costs. Registration is open until May 10 and cost is \$15 a person. For more information and to register, visit <http://sanangelo.tamu.edu/sss-conf>.