



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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Trump Sends NAFTA Renegotiation Notice to Congress

The Trump Administration sent a letter to Congress yesterday officially notifying them of plans to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

“The current NAFTA agreement has been a huge success for U.S. beef, cattle and other agriculture products,” said Jim Lovell, TCFA chairman. “NAFTA has significantly added value to our industry, and we urge the Administration to not renegotiate the terms of the agreement that are already working.”

In the letter to Congress, penned by U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, the Administration said its goal is to update and modernize NAFTA with new provisions that address intellectual property rights, regulatory practices, state-owned enterprises, services, customs procedures, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, labor, environment, and small and medium enterprises.

Earlier this week, Dan Darling, president of the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association; Oswaldo Chazaro Montalvo, president of the Confederacion Nacional de Organizaciones Ganaderas; and Craig Uden, president of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, asked the leaders of all three countries to “not jeopardize the success we have all enjoyed as partners of the North American Free Trade Agreement.”

The groups also urged them to reject efforts to use NAFTA as a platform to resurrect failed policies like MCOOL.

According to the U.S. Meat Export Federation, since NAFTA was implemented in 1993, exports of American-produced beef to Mexico have grown by more than 750 percent. To read the full letter send to Congress, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NAFTA-Announcement>.

Texas Cattlemen Optimistic About New China Deal

Experts in the Texas cattle industry see the lifting of trade restrictions with China as a potential boon for Lone Star beef producers, according to the *Dallas Morning News*.

“The market is huge,” said Jason Bagley, senior manager of beef resources with the Texas Beef Council. “The potential is limitless. The middle class is growing and there are folks that are going to be buying our product. There’s a real demand for it there.”

According to NCBA, 15 percent of the beef produced in the U.S. is exported annually, and with the addition of China, those export numbers should increase. While the announcement is a good start, producers say it is too early to quantify what this means for the Texas beef industry.

Ross Wilson, TCFA president and chief executive office, said he appreciates the Trump administration putting a priority on beef.

“But there is a very important round of consultations that has to be completed before we can quantify what this will mean,” Wilson told the *Dallas Morning News*. “Until those are finalized, we won’t know how many producers, feeders and packer processors will be willing to offer beef to China.”

The difference between now and previous attempts to re-open the Chinese market is a deadline. The agreement between the two governments calls for restrictions to be lifted as soon as possible, but no later than July 16. To read the full story, visit <http://tinyurl.com/TCFA-China>.

Perdue Talks Trade, Labor and FMD at Committee Hearing

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said USDA’s new Undersecretary for Trade will be a dealmaker who is constantly on the road meeting with potential buyers to promote U.S. agriculture products around the world.

In a hearing before the House Ag Committee, Perdue said that the undersecretary will be tasked with figuring out where U.S. products can be sold, who wants them, who can pay for them and how do we strike a deal.

“This guy is going to be a million-mile flyer,” Perdue said in testimony. “Foreign buyers want to see you in person. The presence is important.”

Perdue's testimony comes after an announcement last week from USDA that a new Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs position had been established. The position has yet to be filled; however, cattlemen are hopeful it will help fill the gaps left by the previous Administration.

"This position will play a vital role in leading USDA's efforts to capitalize on foreign demand for U.S. agriculture products," said Craig Uden, National Cattlemen's Beef Association President. "We look forward to working with the undersecretary to break down trade barriers and expand our ability to meet the growing demand for U.S. beef in key markets like Asia."

Perdue also spoke to the committee about the ag labor force. He said he is aware that the H-2A program in its current state is "essentially unworkable," and USDA plans to present the Administration with some ideas to streamline the program in order for it to be more dependable and more reliable.

Another topic discussed was the livestock industry's call for vaccine banks for both foot and mouth disease (FMD) and highly pathogenic avian influenza. Perdue noted that, as a former veterinarian, he understands the benefits of vaccinations and that the nation cannot afford an FMD scare.

"We should look at vaccine banks as insurance. You can't have a house burn down and take insurance after the fact," Perdue commented. To read more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Trade-Labor-FMD>.

May 18 Officially Declared TCFA Beef Day

More than 400 people gathered together in Amarillo Thursday to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Texas Cattle Feeders Association and Cattle Feeding Country.

The day began with a group of twenty TCFA past chairmen and presidents that met at Amarillo PBS to discuss and reminisce about the past 50 years of the industry, the changes that have occurred, and the challenges and opportunities from then vs. today.

Amarillo Mayor Ginger Nelson and TCFA Chairman Jim Lovell hosted a press conference with local media where they talked about the importance of cattle feeding to the three-state regions of Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico. Nelson closed the press conference by reading a declaration from the Amarillo City Council officially declaring May 18, 2017, as TCFA Beef Day.

"We are proud of these men and women who make up Cattle Feeding Country," said Amarillo Mayor Ginger Nelson. "We are proud of their contributions, their determination, and the spirit that they pass on from generation to generation.

"And we are proud of the Texas Cattle Feeders Association, and the service and support they've provided to the industry over the past 50 years. I am honored to declare today, May 18, 2017, as TCFA Beef Day," she continued.

State Reps. John Smithee (R-Amarillo), Four Price (R-Amarillo), and Ken King (R-Canadian) and State Senator Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) also recognized the association on the floor of the State Capitol in Austin. A state flag was flown over the Capitol to commemorate the day.

"The fortitude of the men and women that make up Cattle Feeding Country has seen us grow and thrive for the past 50 years. And that fortitude is what will propel the industry forward for the next 50 years," Lovell said in his address to the crowd. "Today we celebrate the 50th anniversary of TCFA and Cattle Feeding Country, and all the people in the industry who will be up for the opportunities and challenges that the next 50 years are sure to bring."



Jim Lovell: Cattle Feeding Country Celebrates 50 Years

“The feedyards within the three-state region of Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico have been leaders in the fed beef production for 50 years,” said Jim Lovell, TCFA chairman, in a letter that ran in Wednesday’s *Amarillo Globe News*. “And for those 50 years, the Texas Cattle Feeders Association has been the dedicated organization that supports them.”

“It began in 1967 when a few cattle feeders got together in Amarillo. Feedyards were just beginning to rapidly expand in the High Plains area, and with that fast growth came a vast set of opportunities and challenges including financing, grain supplies, market information, and legislative and regulatory issues,” Lovell wrote. “The need for an association was apparent. TCFA was born, and the association began serving the cattle feeders in the area with market information, beef promotion and legislative representation.” To read the entire editorial, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Lovell-50th>.

Livestock Industry Calls for Immediate Action on EPA Regulations

The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and the Public Lands Council filed comments this week to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) calling for action on burdensome regulations put forth by the previous Administration.

The groups said that the regulations, “inhibit job creation, are ineffective, are unnecessary or impose costs that exceed the environmental benefits. Often these regulations impose federal requirements on cattle producers that discourage innovation and impose rigid requirements that do not work on cattle operations and, moreover, defy common sense.”

Specifically, the groups called on the agency to replace the Waters of the United State rule with a rule that will clarify federal jurisdiction over water without overreaching. The associations also called for a repeal of the Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) rule for manure management.

“According to the EPA, beef cattle production is only responsible for 1.9 percent of the total U.S. GHG emissions,” said Ben Weinheimer, TCFA vice president. “The science speaks for itself. Cattle are a very small contributor of GHG emissions, most of which are generated from natural digestion of forages and feed. Mandatory reporting of GHGs places unnecessary burdens on producers. It is an added cost with negligible environmental benefits.”

Ibotta App Campaign Boosts Sales of Beef

Nationwide sales of fresh beef received a boost earlier this year as the result of a beef industry partnership with the mobile rebates app Ibotta, according to a statement from the Federation of State Beef Councils.

Ibotta is a consumer mobile app that has a subscriber rate of 22 million mostly-millennial consumers and growing. Results from the ground beef Ibotta campaign significantly surpassed standard Ibotta campaigns. The redemption rate for ground beef was nearly 40 percent, almost double the average Ibotta redemption rate of 23 percent. There were approximately 1.45 million consumer engagements. Of those, more than 576,000 consumers redeemed the rebates. The 4-week campaign resulted in more than 631,000 pounds of ground beef sold.

SAVE THE DATE for TCFA’s 50th Anniversary Convention

Mark your calendars for TCFA’s 50th Anniversary Convention 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 this special event.

TVMDL to Host Seminar on Bovine Respiratory Disease

The Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) 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 seven 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>.

Applications for Texas Family Land Heritage Program Due June 1

Applications are due June 1 for The Family Land Heritage Program. The program recognizes families who have owned and operated a continuous agricultural operation for 100 years or more.

Applications are due June 1. For more information, including qualifications and an application, visit <http://tinyurl.com/Family-Land-Heritage>.

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>.

2018 National BQA Application Due June 2

Guidelines for the 2018 BQA Award nominations are now available. The application is due no later than June 2, 2017. Award applications should be downloaded, completed and emailed in the format specified on the application to gwebb@beef.org. To download the application, visit <http://tinyurl.com/BQA-Award>.

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.

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