



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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TAKE ACTION: Submit Comments Supporting Repeal of WOTUS

Comments to withdraw the Obama-era 2015 Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule are due

Wednesday, Sept. 27. TCFA is urging all members to submit comments at tinyurl.com/TCFA-WOTUS-2017. An example comment letter for members to use is available at tinyurl.com/2017-Example-WOTUS-Comments.

"Agriculture scored a big victory in April when President Trump issued an executive order for the EPA and Administrator Pruitt to do away with the 2015 WOTUS rule," said Tom McDonald, TCFA past chairman.

"Right now EPA has officially put the rule out to rescind," he continued. "What we will have is a two-step process going forward; the first to rescind and the second to replace it with a new definition that is more workable for America's farmers and ranchers. We need a definition of WOTUS that will stand the test of time, and not be fighting it again in four years."

The U.S. House has also put repeal of WOTUS on the fast-track, adding provisions in the 2018 funding bill that would allow the current EPA administrator and Secretary of the Army to withdraw the rule altogether. While this bill has passed the House, it has yet to pass the Senate.

"It is crucial that TCFA members submit comments urging repeal," McDonald said.

In order to file comments, here is what you need to do:

Step 1 - Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/EPA-WOTUS-Rule>.

Step 2- Copy and paste (or modify) the following sample comments:

I am writing to support the proposal to repeal the 2015 "Waters of the U.S." rule.

As a cattle producer, I strongly support this effort. Water is important to me and to my family's farming operation. I am glad that you recognize the flaws of the current WOTUS rule. It is overly broad and creates heavy burdens and costs, legal risk and tremendous uncertainty for farmers, ranchers and others, like me, who depend on the land. Under the 2015 rule, farmers, ranchers and other landowners across the country face new roadblocks to ordinary land-use activities.

I applaud EPA for taking this important first step toward developing a new definition of waters of the United States that will protect water quality while also promoting economic growth, minimizing regulatory uncertainty, and respecting the proper roles of Congress and the states under the Constitution.

The WOTUS rule has never been implemented because it was stayed by both a federal district court and a federal court of appeals due to its flaws and violations. Challengers raised numerous substantive and procedural defects in the rule, including that the rule exceeds EPA's statutory authority, imposes burdensome regulatory uncertainty, was finalized in violation of mandatory procedural requirements designed to ensure a well-informed result, and is otherwise unlawful. In all, the rule was challenged in multiple courts by all sides (31 states and 53 non-state parties, including environmental groups, state and local governments, farmers, landowners, developers, businesses, and recreation groups).

The EPA should move forward and ditch this rule once and for all, then go back to the drawing board and write a new rule that protects water quality without trampling the rights of landowners, businesses, and the states.

Sincerely,

[Add your name here.]

[Add your Cattlemen's Association here.]

APHIS Outlines ADT Concerns from Producers

According to a new report issued by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), producers agree that the general traceability framework has been successful at improving the official identification of covered livestock and the documentation of interstate movement and availability of records.

In addition, the report states that producers remain concerned about confidentiality and security of information when it comes to animal disease traceability and would be more likely to support a program where information was held on a state rather than a national level.

It also states that producers are concerned about the difficulty of manually reading tags but have similar concerns about the cost associated with electronic ID (EID) technology.

TCFA attended USDA-APHIS listening sessions in Oklahoma City and Fort Worth over the summer, and reiterated that while TCFA members have long been supportive of animal identification for animal health purposes, the goal of any identification program should be to enable the cattle industry, state and federal animal health officials to respond rapidly and effectively to animal health emergencies.

In comments filed in July, TCFA urged APHIS, "to better coordinate their actions with the states to collectively address challenges and gaps in the current data management process."

To read the full report from APHIS, visit tinyurl.com/APHIS-ADT-Summary.

TCFA Convention: Hotel Room Deadline

Hotel rooms are filling up quickly for TCFA convention. If you plan to stay at the convention hotel, we encourage you to book your room as soon as possible. You can make reservations at tinyurl.com/tcfa-conv-embassysuites.

TCFA has secured a special room rate available through Sept. 24 or until rooms are sold out. There will not be an extended deadline for this room block.



We have also secured overflow hotel rooms at the Courtyard Marriott Downtown Amarillo and the Holiday Inn West Medical Center. Courtyard Marriott rooms can be reserved by calling (806) 553-4500 and asking for the TCFA block. The Holiday Inn rooms can be reserved by calling (806) 322-4777 and ask for the TCFA rate.

To register for convention, visit www.tcfa.org/news-events/convention.

Notice of Annual Meeting

TCFA's Annual Business Meeting will be held Tuesday, Oct. 10 during the TCFA Annual Convention Closing General Session. All members are encouraged to attend.

Assistance Available for Flood Damaged Ag Land through NRCS

The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting EQIP applications from producers in the Harvey disaster-declared counties to apply for funds for conservation practices and to address resource concerns due to Harvey as well as agricultural livestock mortality carcass disposal. The first funding deadline is **Oct. 6, 2017**, with additional funding dates of Nov. 3, 2017, and Dec. 3, 2017.

Farmers and ranchers seeking NRCS financial and technical assistance can sign up for EQIP at their local NRCS office or if already a USDA client, online via the Conservation Client Gateway. For more information, visit www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov or call (888) 489-8732.

Report: Changes Needed to Dietary Guidelines Development Process

A new report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NAS) recommends that USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) redesign the process of developing the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). The report was mandated by Congress after the last DGA reauthorization process.

Dietary guidelines are reviewed every five years beginning with an evaluation and review by the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC), whose recommendations are submitted to USDA and HHS. USDA and HHS then develop the guidelines.

This new report recommends that the DGAC redistribute its duties to three separate groups: one to monitor for and curate new evidence, identify and prioritize topics for inclusion in the DGA, and provide strategic planning support across DGA cycles; a set of technical expert panels to provide content and methodological consultation; and a scientific advisory council to interpret the scientific evidence and draw conclusions.

The NAS report says that among other changes, this should improve transparency in the process. To read more, visit tinyurl.com/TCFA-NAS-DGARReport.

2018 Government Spending Bill Includes Key Provisions for Agriculture

Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the FY2018 omnibus appropriations bill by a vote of 211-198. The 12-bill package provides \$621.5 billion for defense (a 13% increase) and \$511 billion for nondefense discretionary spending (1.7% decrease), including \$1.57 billion for a border wall.

USDA discretionary spending totaled \$20 billion, which is \$4.5 billion below the FY2017 level but \$2 billion above the President's request.

Specifically, the bill provides \$1.1 billion for Agriculture Research Service, \$830 million for National Institute for Food and Agriculture, \$906 million for Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and \$1.038 billion for Food Safety Inspection Service.

In addition to the funding provided, the bill includes a number of policy riders supported by TCFA and NCBA. These include riders to:

- Authorize fast-track of WOTUS repeal.
- Prohibit EPA enforcement of CERCLA-EPCRA reporting for agriculture.
- Prohibit RCRA regulations for animal feeding operations.
- Prohibit Clean Air Act Title V permits for emissions from livestock.
- Prohibit mandatory greenhouse gas reporting for manure management systems.
- Prohibit 404 dredge & fills permits for agricultural activities.
- Delay implementation of the 2015 Ozone rule.
- Delay for 1-year the Electronic Logging Device compliance deadline for livestock haulers.

The Senate is still working on its version of the bill. A final bill, adopted by both chambers, is not expected before December. TCFA and NCBA will continue to work with the House and Senate throughout the process.

Secretary Purdue, Chairman Conaway and Senator Cruz Addresses Producers in West Texas

USDA Sec. Sonny Perdue, U.S. House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-Midland) and U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) addressed the Southwest Council of Agribusiness (SWCA) in Lamesa, today.

TCFA staff attended the event and had an opportunity to speak with them about immigration reform, tax reform, Farm Bill priorities and other issues important to TCFA.



USMEF Holds Beef Showcase in China

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) will showcase U.S. beef in some of China's largest cities at the end of the month, Dan Halstrom, USMEF's senior vice president of marketing, told Ron Hays of the *Oklahoma Farm Network*.

"We're actually holding three different showcases, or kick-offs," Halstrom said. "One in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou at the end of September."

As U.S. beef begins to hit China, Halstrom says that showcasing cuts to the Chinese food service sector is the best way to familiarize China's food industry with U.S. products. Producers and packers in the U.S. are

working on efforts to produce beef that qualifies under the strict Chinese regulations, but the potential for growth is big, he said. To listen to the full interview, visit tinyurl.com/TCFA-Halstrom-China.

Jobs Added to TCFA Job Listing Website

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.

New Research: Cattle Plays Key Role in Sustainable Food System

New research from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) says that cattle-raised beef production plays a key role in maintaining a sustainable food system.

The research counters claims that beef production consumes too much human-edible feed, noting that 86 percent of the feed livestock animals consume is grown on marginal lands and not edible by humans. This counters frequent claims that beef production requires a very high consumption of grain — as much as 20 kg per 1 kg of beef produced.

As cattle scarcely eat what would be edible to humans, FAO researchers found that 1 kg of protein in meat and milk only requires 0.6 kg of protein from human food, and the protein in meat and milk has a higher nutritional quality than the protein in grain that cattle eat.

Livestock also plays a key role in preventing a likely environmental challenge, researchers said, noting that they eat leftovers from human food, fiber and biofuels production that would otherwise be an environmental burden.

Sponsor Spotlight

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This week's spotlight shines on:



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Texas Cattle Feeders Association

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