

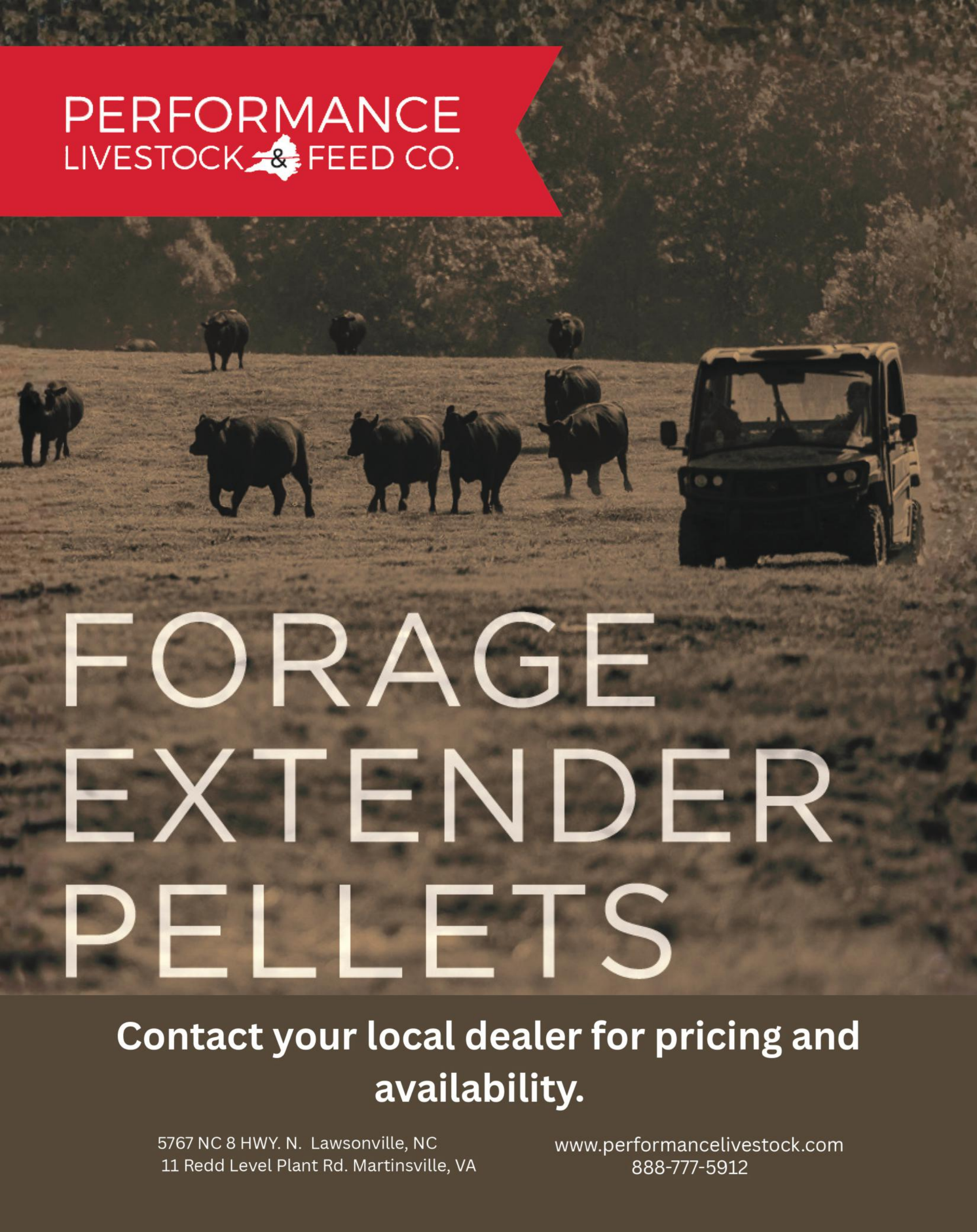


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Spotlight on
**BELTED
GALLOWAY**

JULY 2026 • Vol. 40, Issue No. 7

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CATTLE CONNECTION

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The N.C. Cattlemen's Association & S.C. Cattlemen's Association are partnering with the Livestock Advertising Network and the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources to refine our magazine and improve our communication efforts and readership across the Carolinas.

Your feedback will help us better understand what information is most valuable to you, how you prefer to receive updates, and how we can continue to improve both our communications and publication.

The survey will only take a few minutes, and your responses will play an important role in shaping future association efforts. At the end of the survey, you will have the option to enter for a chance to win a \$50 gift card provided by the Livestock Advertising Network.

To complete the survey, visit <https://piecenter.com/cattlemag/> or scan the QR Code above. You may also contact your state's Cattlemen's Association office for assistance.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO SHARE YOUR PERSPECTIVES AND FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!



By AMBER STARNES, S.C. Cattlemen's Association

Director's Report

Drought Management for Cattle Operations

Persistent drought conditions continue to pose significant challenges for cattle producers across the region. Reduced forage availability, declining water resources, increased feed costs, and heightened animal health risks are placing considerable pressure on farm profitability and long term sustainability. This report provides an overview of current drought impacts, management strategies implemented by producers, organizational support activities, and recommendations for future action.

Current Drought Conditions – During the reporting period, rainfall remained below seasonal averages across the state of South Carolina. Soil moisture deficits have reduced pasture productivity and delayed forage recovery. Many producers have reported:

- Reduced pasture carrying capacity
- Lower hay yields and forage reserves
- Increased dependence on supplemental feed
- Rising production costs
- Water shortages in ponds, streams, and watering systems
- Increased livestock stress and reduced weight gains

These conditions have required producers to make difficult operational decisions to maintain herd health and financial viability.

Impact on Cattle Operations:

- Pasture production has declined substantially, forcing many producers to implement rotational grazing systems, reduce stocking rates, or purchase additional feed resources. Hay inventories remain below recommended levels entering future production seasons.

- Reduced precipitation has lowered pond levels and limited access to reliable water supplies. Producers have invested in alternative watering systems, pipeline extensions, and water hauling where necessary.

- Feed and transportation costs have increased significantly. Some producers have initiated herd reduction strategies to lower operating expenses and preserve available forage resources.

- Heat stress, nutritional deficiencies, and reduced forage quality have increased management demands. Nutritional monitoring has become increasingly important to maintaining animal performance, as well as maintaining a good vet-client relationship.

During this reporting period, the S.C. Cattlemen's Association implemented several support initiatives:

- Partnered with Clemson Extension to offer timely webinars on drought management.
- Shared information on resources available.
- Connected producers with drought assistance programs
- Collaborated with extension specialists and agricultural agencies to develop and promote advocacy initiatives and educational resources.
- Supported emergency assistance funding requests

Recommended Management Practices – To enhance resilience during ongoing drought conditions, producers are encouraged to:

1. Monitor pasture conditions regularly and adjust stocking rates accordingly.
2. Develop forage inventories and feeding plans well in advance of seasonal shortages.
3. Implement rotational grazing to maximize forage utilization.
4. Protect critical water resources and establish backup water supplies.
5. Conduct routine herd performance evaluations and strategic culling where necessary.
6. Utilize drought tolerant forage species when feasible.

Maintain updated financial projections to support timely decision making.

Future Priorities – SCCA will continue focusing on:

- Expanding drought preparedness education programs
- Strengthening producer access to technical assistance
- Supporting forage and water conservation initiatives
- Advocating for drought relief and resilience funding
- Promoting research and innovation in drought-adaptive livestock systems

Drought conditions remain a significant challenge for cattle producers. While many operations have demonstrated resilience through proactive management and adaptation, continued support, education, and resource coordination are essential. The organization remains committed to helping producers navigate current conditions while strengthening the long term sustainability of the cattle industry.

SPOTLIGHT on *Belted Galloway*

The Belted Galloway – An Old Scottish Breed

The unique appearance of Belted Galloway cattle inspires many questions about their origins. With black, red, or dun color sandwiched about a white middle, they are familiarly known as “Belties” among breeders of the animals. Though references to “sheeted” cattle occur in literature and art as early as the 11th Century, the Belted Galloway’s first recorded history indicates that they developed during the 16th Century in the former Galloway district of Scotland, a rugged and hilly seacoast region where hardiness was necessary for survival.

The British Isles then and now raised solid colored, polled, shaggy coated Galloway cattle generally considered to have evolved from an early Celtic breed. Precisely when and where selective breeding of the Belted variety of Galloway began is shrouded in mystery, though theories abound.

In our *Herd Book Vol. I*, early U.S. breeder Mims Wilkinson, Jr. wrote, “It has been stated by some authorities that belted, or sheeted, cattle in England go back to the age of Charles II, although they are first mentioned in Scotland in the latter part of the 18th

Century. The polled characteristic of Galloways sets them apart from every other breed; they being derived from the original British polled cattle of antiquity.

“Although it is impossible to affirm with certainty whether Belted Galloways were bred from cattle imported to Britain or native cattle, or a combination of the two, the logical conclusion is that they originated from a cross of Black Galloways with Dutch Belted. Though no documentary evidence is available to substantiate the assumption, the known prepotency of the Dutch cattle lends weight to this view, and the frequent trafficking between Scotland and the Low Countries in the 17th and 18th Centuries would provide opportunities for the importation of a few Dutch Belted cattle. The horns, the only essential difference, would disappear with the predominance of Galloway blood.

“There is little doubt that the cattle of the ancient Celtic people of Britain were predominantly black and that the Highland, Galloway, and Welsh black are derived from the same stock, which has become diversified through time by selection and environment.





“In the Galloway cattle, there were originally various markings and colors [with] the polled characteristic, the coat, the conformation, and the fine carcass quality setting them apart from other breeds. Galloways originally were black, spotted, white faced, red, dun, white, and belted.

Although the white belt is a dominant genetic trait, occasionally solid black calves are born now in belted herds, and belted calves are born in Black Galloway herds.”

Mr. Wilkinson cited as authorities for the above paragraphs Lord David Stuart’s 1970 publication, *An Illustrated History of Belted Cattle*, and George Culley’s 1786 treatise, *Observations on Livestock*.

Early standards for the breed written in Lord Stuart’s book included this description:

“The cattle of the breed are of typical beef conformation. A good head, especially in bulls, is considered important, and this should be broad with the crown low and flat. The nostrils should be wide and the eyes large and prominent; the ears moderate in length, broad, pointing forwards and upwards with a fringe of long hair. The neck should be fairly long and fit well into the shoulders.

“The body should be deep and full through the heart with a level top and straight underline; the shoulders fine and straight; the breast full and deep, with the ribs well sprung; the hindquarters long. The flank should be deep and full. The thighs should be deep and fairly straight, the legs short and clean with fine bone, and the tail well set on.

“The skin should be mellow and moderately thick, covered with soft, wavy hair with a mossy undercoat. The coat is most important, as it protects the animal. Hard, wiry hair with no undercoat is objectionable, and so is a jet black coat. This should be black with a brownish tinge.”

Weights for mature Belted Galloways in North America vary in accordance with their environment. In general, the mature Belted Galloway bull at age five weighs in the 1,800–2,000 lbs range, though balance and conformation should be considered before mature weight.

There are some very fine bulls producing excellent progeny whose mature weights are less than 1,800 pounds.

The Belted Galloway heifer is generally bred at age 14–18 months, with many breeders electing to breed at 700–800 lbs

without regard to months of age. The mature Beltie cow at age three or four averages 1,100–1,300 pounds. She can be expected to annually produce a healthy calf well into her teen years. At birth, bull calves usually weigh 70–80 lbs, and heifer calves weigh about 10 lbs less.

The Beltie as a beef animal, produces exceptionally lean and flavorful meat, with carcass dressed weights well in excess of 60 percent of live weight. Winter warmth is provided by the double coat of hair, rather than the layer of backfat most breeds require. The Belted Galloways’s heritage has conditioned them to survive in very harsh climates, and U.S. breeders have discovered that the thrifty, medium sized animals more than earn their way in any beef herd.

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SPOTLIGHT on *Belted Galloway*

Reviving a Legacy

— The Story of Graham Cattle and a Family Farm Reborn

In Western Lincoln County, a quiet legacy is being brought back to life, one pasture, one herd, and one generation at a time. Graham Cattle, owned and operated by Bobby and Maggie Graham alongside their daughter Olivia, is more than just a cattle operation. It is the continuation of a family story that began more than 270 years ago.

Designated a North Carolina Bicentennial Family Farm, the land has been in Maggie's family since 1754. Over the centuries, it has seen the evolution of American agriculture firsthand. Maggie's great grandfather and grandfather once ran the farm as a commercial beef cattle operation — primarily raising Hereford — alongside row crops and later, commercial poultry. It was a working farm in the truest sense.

Following her grandfather's passing, however, the operation shifted. For nearly two decades, the farm was primarily dedicated to row crops, and the cattle that once defined it became part of its history rather than its present. But for Maggie, the dream of

restoring the farm to its roots never faded.

Her dream began to take shape in 2020, sparked by a shared passion between Maggie and her daughter Olivia. Both had long admired Belted Galloway cattle, known for their striking black coats with a distinctive white belt and their gentle disposition. When Olivia became old enough to participate in 4-H, the family purchased their first Belted Galloway, marking the beginning of a new chapter for the farm.

What started as a single animal quickly grew into a mission. Today, the Grahams are steadily expanding their herd while working to reestablish the farm as a fully operational beef cattle enterprise. Their commitment goes beyond simply raising cattle; it is about honoring tradition, preserving agricultural heritage, and creating opportunities for the next generation.

For Olivia, showing cattle has become more than a hobby — it is an education in responsibility, stewardship, and pride in her family's

legacy. She also plans to make this her career and will soon be starting college, where she hopes to become a large animal veterinarian. For Maggie, it is the fulfillment of a lifelong vision. And for Bobby, it is a shared effort to build something lasting together.

Graham Cattle stands today as a bridge between past and future. The same land that once supported generations before them is again home to grazing cattle, echoing a history that refused to be forgotten. With each calf born and each season worked, the Grahams are not just running a farm — they are restoring a heritage.

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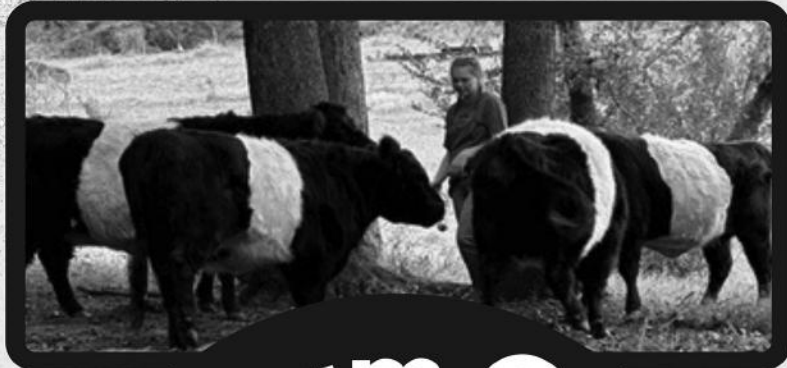


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Graham Cattle
Belted
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SPOTLIGHT on *Belted Galloway*

The Belted Galloway Society

The first recorded importation of Belted Galloway stock to the U.S. occurred in 1939 when a dozen bred heifers and a bull were transported to Mrs. McLean at East Kortright, New York. About ten years later, Harry A. Prock of Hapwood Farm in Whitemarsh, Penn., began importing purebred stock from the U.K. Mr. Prock founded the American Belted Galloway Breeders Association on July 1, 1951, along with H. Gordon Green of Quebec, Canada, and Charles C. Wells of East Lansing, Michigan. Belties were exhibited at the Ohio State Fair by Mr. Prock in 1952.

A.H. Chatfield, Jr. of Rockport, Maine, joined the Association as the fourth member on December 10, 1953. Two new members were added in 1956, Fred H. Johnson of Summitville, Ohio, and Milton A. Horner of New Bern, North Carolina. The Association grew during the late 1950s when General James A. Van Fleet enrolled and began acquiring stock for Withlachoochee Farm in Florida, later Sleepy Creek Farms in Virginia.

On January 11, 1964, the Association incorporated in Niota, Tenn., under the name Belted Galloway Society, Inc. The Society's charter is preambled, "The object is to promote the Belted Galloway breed of cattle, to preserve the purity of the breed by maintaining pedigree records and data, to disseminate information relative to said breed of cattle, and to carry on all legal and proper activities to effectuate the primary purpose of the corporation."

Fred Johnson and General Van Fleet held the first public auction of Belted Galloways in America at Summitville, Ohio, in 1967. Mr. Johnson no longer maintains a Belted Galloway herd but continues to be one of the world's largest Angus breeders.

Until his death in 1999, A.H. Chatfield, Jr. bred some of the finest Belted Galloways in the U.S. at Aldermere Farm in Maine, providing foundation stock to numerous start-up herds.

Aldermere Farm was left to the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, which continues to maintain the Beltie herd.

Though the Sleepy Creek herd was dispersed by General Van Fleet in the mid-1980s, the late H. Gordon Green's Green Arpents herd in Quebec remains in existence, managed by Cheryl Johnston Green.

Upon the death of Charles C. Wells, the organization's first Secretary, Meda McCord of Summitville, Ohio, was elected Secretary/Treasurer. Meda's efficiency and helpfulness were

assets to the fledgling Society, and membership approached 150 nationwide by 1985, when she retired from the post.

The organization has continued to grow during the tenures of subsequent secretary/treasurers Mary C. McClellan of Leeds, Ala.; Joanne Huff-Ritts of Potts Camp, Miss.; Christine Moore of Linville, Va.; Laura Glassmann of Bendersville, Penn.; and current holder Dr. Victor Eggleston of New Glarus, Wisconsin.

Membership is approximately 860, and the registered or recorded Belted Galloway population in the country is over 13,000.

Beltie Beef

The Beltie as a beef animal produces exceptionally lean and flavorful meat, with carcass dressed weights well in excess of 60 percent of live weight. Winter warmth is provided by the double coat of hair, rather than the layer of backfat most breeds require. The Belted Galloways' heritage has conditioned them to survive in very harsh climates, and U.S. breeders have discovered that the thrifty, medium sized animals more than earn their way in any beef herd.

The unique appearance of the Belted Galloway attracts many new enthusiasts to the breed. In time, breeders who purchased cattle for their ornamental qualities are delighted to learn that they produce lean, high quality beef. Many Belted Galloway breeders have waiting lists for their freezer beef. Commercial steers can gain as high as 4.5–5 pounds per day when grained. In comparison, Belted Galloway steers have shown top daily gains of 2.5 pounds per day when fed the same ration but generally eat significantly less.



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ASHLEY'S

❖ BEEF CORNER ❖

"Beef Does It All"



By **ASHLEY HERRING**, *N.C. Cattlemen's Beef Council*

What Cattle Producers Should Know About the Beef Industry's New Consumer Campaign

The beef checkoff's new national campaign, "Beef Does It All," is designed to connect today's consumers with the value beef brings to their everyday lives while reinforcing confidence in the farmers and ranchers who raise it.

Recently launched, it's already receiving positive feedback and is well received with our audiences. It's on platforms including connected TV, YouTube, Google search, audio, Pinterest, Reddit, Instagram, and Facebook.

Grounded in the industry's four brand pillars — Trust, Taste, Ease, and Well-being — the campaign positions beef as a versatile, nutritious, flavorful, and approachable protein that fits into a wide range of lifestyles, cuisines, and meal occasions.

For beef cattle producers, this campaign represents more than advertising. It is part of the industry's continued effort to protect and grow beef demand by meeting consumers where they are and addressing what matters most to them today.

Why This Campaign Matters — Consumers are making food decisions differently than they did even a few years ago. Convenience, nutrition, affordability, authenticity, and cultural relevance all play a role in purchasing decisions.



At the same time, consumers are exposed to increasing competition from alternative proteins and a constant stream of food messaging online and through social media.

The Beef Does It All campaign was created to ensure beef remains relevant in those conversations by showcasing beef as:

- An everyday protein option
- A trusted source of nutrition
- A flavorful centerpiece for meals
- A versatile ingredient across many cuisines and cultures
- A product raised by dedicated farmers and ranchers

The campaign intentionally positions beef as more than a "special occasion" food. Instead, it highlights beef's role in quick weeknight dinners, family meals, meal prep, grilling occasions, and multicultural dishes consumers regularly prepare at home.

The Four Campaign Pillars

Trust — Trust messaging centers around the work cattle producers do every day to raise high quality beef responsibly.

Consumer facing messages include:

- "Quality from pasture to plate."
- "Across miles and generations, beef farmers and ranchers make care their calling."
- "Committed to delivering quality beef you can count on, time after time."

This portion of the campaign gives producers an important opportunity to continue sharing authentic stories about stewardship, animal care, and the commitment behind raising cattle.

Taste — Flavor remains one of beef's strongest selling points, and the campaign emphasizes beef's ability to elevate meals across a variety of cuisines and cooking styles.

Messaging includes:

- "No frills. Just simply delicious."
- "Beef makes everything else just taste better."
- "From burgers to birria to bolognese, beef brings bold, juicy flavor to every meal."

The campaign also highlights beef's role in multicultural dishes, helping connect with a broader and more diverse consumer audience.

Ease — Convenience continues to drive purchasing decisions, especially among younger consumers and busy families.



The campaign positions beef as:

- Quick to prepare
- Easy to cook
- Adaptable for multiple meal occasions

Examples include:

- “Quick to cook, easy to love.”
- “Beef brings the flavor without the fuss.”
- “Always the mealtime MVP.”

By emphasizing approachable meal solutions, the campaign helps reinforce beef’s place in everyday meal planning.

Well-being – Nutrition is another major focus of the campaign. Beef Does It All highlights the 10 essential nutrients found in beef and educates consumers about how beef supports active lifestyles and overall wellness.

Key messaging includes:

- “The 10 essential nutrients in beef help you stay on top of your well-being.”
- “Beef makes wellness work for real life.”
- “Beef is an excellent source of protein, zinc, vitamin B₁₂, vitamin B₆, niacin, and selenium.”



The campaign also highlights specific nutrient benefits:

- Protein helps build and maintain muscle
- Iron supports oxygen transport and energy production
- Zinc and selenium support immune health
- B vitamins help convert food into energy

This well being messaging is designed to resonate with health conscious consumers while reinforcing beef’s nutritional value.

What Producers Can Take Away – For cattle producers, Beef Does It All serves as a reminder that consumer outreach remains critical to the long term success of the beef industry.

Today’s consumers often have little direct connection to agriculture, making industry led campaigns like this essential for:

- Maintaining consumer trust
- Reinforcing beef’s nutritional benefits
- Keeping beef competitive in the protein space
- Building demand for beef products
- Highlighting the people behind the product

Producers can support the campaign by:

- Sharing campaign content through social media
- Posting authentic stories and photos from their operations
- Engaging with consumers at local events

Continuing to prioritize stewardship and animal care

- Helping reinforce positive messaging about beef

A Unified Message for the Industry – One of the campaign’s greatest strengths is its consistency. The messaging gives state beef councils, industry organizations, retailers, influencers, and producers a unified way to talk about beef and the people who raise it.

At its core, Beef Does It All is about showing consumers that beef fits real life — and reminding them that behind every beef meal is a farmer or rancher dedicated to producing a quality product with care and pride.

As the campaign continues rolling out nationwide, cattle producers play an important role in helping amplify that message and ensuring consumers continue to choose beef for generations to come.

**Regular copy deadline
is JULY 5
for the AUGUST issue**

**Spotlight material
is due
JULY 1 for
the AUGUST issue**



❖

AMAZING GRAZING

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Alternative Feeds

for Beef Cattle During Drought

By DR. MATT POORE, N.C. State University



\ As our drought continues, so do worries about where the feed will come from to get cows through to better times. The drought of 2026 actually started in the fall of 2025, and there has been very little rain since that time. Many areas are 15–20 inches behind on rain for the year! The development of this situation took some by surprise, as in winter it only takes a little bit of moisture to give you mud. Also, rainfall is more effective in cooler weather, so timely rains in March pushed out growth of pastures and made things seem better than they were. If you keep track of your rainfall, you could see this coming for a long time.

Unfortunately, periods of warm weather pushed out early pasture growth that was subsequently damaged by late freezes. As a result, pastures and hayfields showed delayed growth, which was then challenged by very high temperatures. That green up and freeze off cycle happened two or three times for many of us, so that by the time things really should have started to grow strong in April and May, the lack of moisture became an obvious reality.

At this point, much of the pastureland in the region has been closely grazed, and many cows are being fed hay. The very short first cutting hay crop — 25–50 percent of our normal expectation — makes this situation even more dire. Some farmers have also kept more cows than usual due to the high prices they expect for calves,

and now that feed is short, this may not have been a good plan. Recent rains, especially in the mountains, have relieved some minds, but even if things are green where you are, it will take a lot of continued rain to get us out of the drought, and we will not recover that lost spring hay production no matter what.

I have received many calls and emails in the last week asking about various alternative feeding strategies. Even if we receive a lot of rain by the time this article is published, we will be in a hay shortage until at least next spring. So every producer needs to take stock of their situation and make sure they have a feed plan for the number of cattle they intend on keeping.

Fortunately, cattle prices are high, so we need to take advantage and market cattle that are ready for sale. In an earlier article in *The Carolina Cattle Connection*, we discussed culling in the face of drought, so keep in mind that is the first step in your plan — reduce the total amount of feed that will be needed. Selling in an orderly fashion will help you keep the very best cows and replacement heifers so you can build back after the drought runs its course. If you still have cows that have significant defects, they should be sold now. Later, if things continue to worsen, you can start selling the good





cows that don't need to go to slaughter.

Alternatives to local hay for beef cows – While we all wish we had enough good hay on hand or in the local area to feed our cows, that is not going to be the case for many of us this year, so consideration of alternatives needs to start now. Alternative feeds for this situation may include alternative forages and roughages, concentrates, and other unusual and underutilized feeds. Each producer needs to consider their own situation, make a feed budget, and then lay in the amount of feed they expect to need for the rest of the summer and winter. The sooner you do this, the better you will feel, and the better off you will be when the feed shortage worsens.

Currently there is a little hay around no matter where you are, so farmers are encouraged to find it and get it bought now. Many of my regular hay suppliers I have checked with had a very poor first cutting, and as most of them have their own cows, they don't want to sell any hay until they see what will happen with future rain. I hope I get some of the hay we usually can count on, but for now we need to assume that we won't.

If you are searching for hay, check out www.NChayfinder.com, a free matching service developed by extension during the response to Hurricane Helene. You can enter your zip code, and the tool will help you locate hay near your location. If you have to move hay a long distance, the delivery cost will be high, but that still may be your best option.

All purchased hay should be tested for nutritional value and nitrate. There will be some hay available from hog and poultry farms that use a high level of fertility to produce forages, especially if we get some more timely rains. Keep in mind that if your cows are not adapted to nitrate, they could be hurt by hay that would normally not be a problem where it is grown, because most cows there are adapted to nitrate. A forage test is your best way to make sure you follow established guidelines for feeding high nitrate hay.

Feeding cows concentrates – Concentrate feeds like corn and grain processing byproducts can be fed to beef cows with careful management. For example, a 1,200 lb dry cow can be maintained on about 15 lbs of corn and 5 lbs of hay per day — plus a good quality mineral free choice. Other concentrates like corn gluten feed, whole cottonseed, or soybean hulls can also be utilized if you observe established feeding limits — such as with whole cottonseed. There is a lot of research with this approach, and for many producers, it will

prove a more economical option than feeding hay hauled in from a great distance.

One problem with feeding concentrates to brood cows is that even though the cattle are receiving plenty of nutrients, they will not feel “full,” and they will be hungry, noisy, and generally unhappy. It takes a good fence to keep these “hungry” cows contained, so keep that in mind. Also, they will be very aggressive when you feed, so make sure you have plenty of bunk space and stay safe when you are on the ground with the cows pouring feed into troughs.

Alternative forages and roughages – Beef cows can be fed on forages not usually considered, including corn, sorghum, and small grain silages; crop residues like corn stover and wheat straw; and salvaged crops including soybean forage, corn “hay,” and other crops that may not have enough value to warrant normal harvest. In most years there is a good supply of corn silage in fall and winter that can be purchased. For now we are early in the drought with time left for a good corn and soybean crop if it does rain. If the dry weather continues to challenge these crops, they may be available as salvage forages later this summer. Many crop farmers don't have the equipment to harvest forages, so keep in touch with your extension agent to learn about opportunities to salvage crops in your area.

Often, row crops will be covered by crop insurance, and there are provisions for salvage that involve leaving a check strip to determine what yield would likely have been and then harvesting the remainder while it still has good value. Like with other drought impacted forages, nitrate could be an issue, especially with corn hay or stover, so make sure all feeds are tested before feeding.

I have talked to several farmers that have already hauled hay from a long distance — Pennsylvania and Mississippi — to make sure they have some on hand. As you look at that alternative, make sure you take into account the high freight cost and the fact that it is always risky to buy hay sight unseen.

Other unusual or otherwise underutilized feeds – There are other local alternatives that may be attractive in specific areas. These include food and beverage processing byproducts — like vegetable processing waste and brewer's grains. Be aware that many of these sources are already used by local farmers, as they have a high value and usually a very low price. Also, making a mix with dry ingredients often is the best way to utilize these materials.

Cotton gin byproduct — formerly known as gin trash or cotton burrs — is one of the few alternatives that is still not commonly fed, but that is increasing in interest. Only about half of this material is actually used for cattle feed, so it is officially an underutilized material. We have been conducting research with this material for growing cattle at N.C. State University in recent years, and we have a long history of experience with it as a feed for brood cows. It is well accepted by cows either in large modules, in smaller bales, or in the loose form. The loose material is much more economical near the source of production, but most producers find the baled byproduct is easier to handle and feed.

Amazing Grazing continued on the next page

Amazing Grazing continued from the previous page

Producers with a TMR wagon will find that cotton gin byproduct can be used as a part of a TMR with great success, especially when the diet contains some wet ingredient to help control dust. Feeding up to 40 percent of the diet for growing stocker cattle appears to be acceptable, and for heifers being fed for a lower rate of gain, up to 60 percent of the diet seems to work pretty well. In practice, brood cows can be provided free choice cotton gin byproduct along with limited hay and an energy supplement and do quite well.

Recycled poultry bedding — formerly known as deep stacked poultry litter — has been widely researched as a feed for beef cows. The material makes a remarkably good feed when it is supplemented with energy (corn) and some hay or other roughage. When processed as recommended, it is a safe and nutritious source of protein, minerals, and energy.

Recycled poultry bedding is made when litter is removed from the poultry house and then “deep stacked” with a plastic cover to

keep it from overheating. The stack will go through a heat, which kills pathogens and improves the palatability to cattle.

There is a misconception that this material has been banned as a feed for beef cattle. That is not the case, and this material, commonly known as “RPB,” is a legal feed described by the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). While it is no longer commonly discussed, there is still some feeding of this material. In general, it is something we don’t talk much about because many in and outside of the beef industry find it distasteful. In a situation like we are in, it may be something to consider if you have poultry houses or are in a poultry producing area. This would be especially useful if you have a TMR wagon and can mix it with several other ingredients.

Finally, there may be opportunities for grazing on neighboring forest or cropland. Consider the feed that might be in the woods on your farm or neighboring farms. Cows can make use of brush, tree leaves, and other weeds that may be on land that you can access using temporary fence technology. Also, there may be opportunities to glean crop fields, including cotton, corn, and soybean fields. This will be an opportunity later in the year as we find out more about how crops will do in these dry conditions. When grazing in unfamiliar areas, make sure you study the plants present and make sure there are no toxic weeds that the cows might consume.

Summary – For now we should continue to pray for rain. If we get back to some pretty good rainfall before midsummer, then the drought feeding plan may be focused on the wintertime. If it doesn’t rain soon, we will need to start feeding cows when the pastures are too short to adequately feed the animals. Some alternatives, like cotton gin byproduct, may still be available from last year, but expect that opportunity to pass quickly. Hay being advertised will be expensive and quick to sell, so act fast and make sure you don’t miss good local opportunities. Make sure you have some feed on hand once the pastures play out so you keep your animals in good condition. If things worsen, make sure you continue to follow a staged marketing plan and do what you can to preserve the most important genetic resources you have.



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Date

Topics

Tuesday,
July 7,
3 - 4 pm EST

Farm stewardship through succession and transition:
Opportunities, tools, and strategies.
Speaker: Dr. Noah Ranells, NC FarmLink
[Webinar registration](#)



Wednesday,
August 19,
3 - 4 pm EST

Soil carbon and nitrogen in forage and grazing lands
across North Carolina.
Speaker: Dr. Alan Franzluebbbers, USDA-ARS
[Webinar registration](#)



Thursday,
September 17,
3 - 4 pm EST

Strategies for weed management in tall fescue pastures.
Speaker: Dr. Navdeep Godara, Crop & Soil Sciences, NC
State
[Webinar registration](#)



Thursday,
October 1,
3 - 4 pm EST

Considerations for establishing an optimal breeding and
calving season in North Carolina.
Speaker: Dr. Felipe Silva, Animal Science, NC State
[Webinar registration](#)



Questions? Contact braudal@ncsu.edu

❖ E.B.'s VIEW FROM THE COW PASTURE ❖

All Being Said, We Are Blessed

By E.B. HARRIS, Warrenton, N.C.

At approximately 6:30 p.m. on May 27, I saw a storm making up back in the west. I could see a little lightning and hear some thunder. My three grandkids — Gemma, age 8; Wesley, age 6; and Waylon, 20 months old — were here in the office with Anne. Gemma does not like a storm at all.

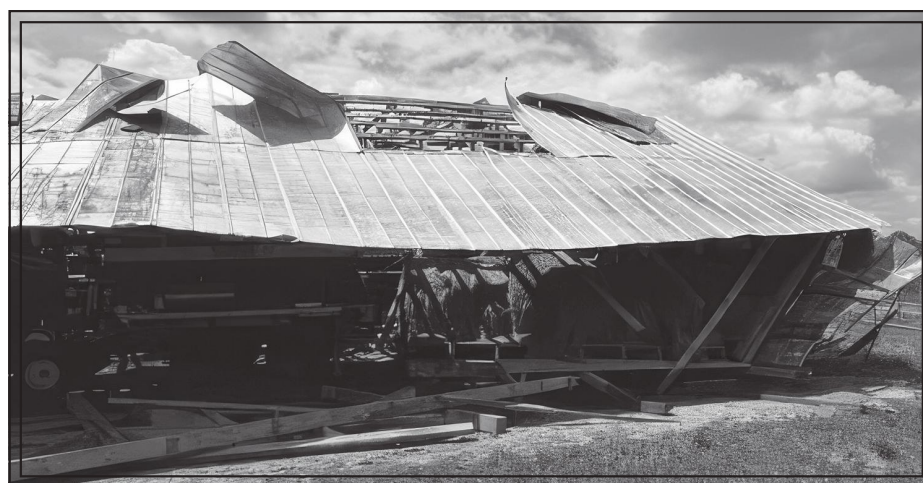
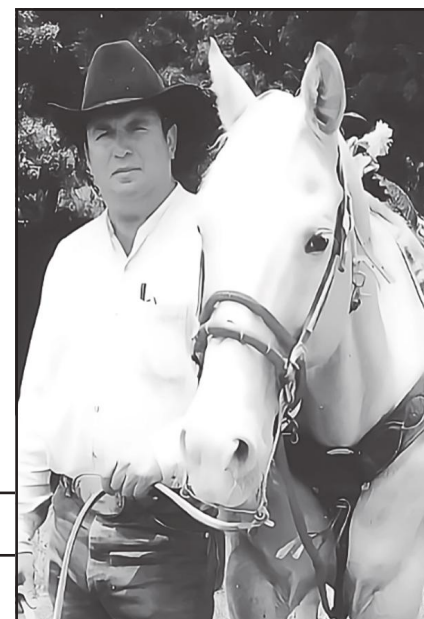
When I came in the office, I could tell she was getting upset every time she heard thunder. Waylon picked up on her being upset, so he got a little upset. Nothing bothers Wesley.

Then the rain started coming down really hard, and the wind had picked up. I could tell by the way it was hitting the windows and the metal roof that there was some hail in. We had been in the office about ten minutes, and all of a sudden a woof came one time. It was still pouring rain, and then electricity went out. In about 30 seconds, the generator kicked in. I did not know at the time that a piece of tin had been blown off the barn and gone across the road and got hung up in the power line.

When the rain slacked up, Gemma looked out the window on the door and turned back and said, “Granddaddy, we have a tree down in the yard.” At that time, we did not know the devastation that had hit here.

Shane walked out into the shop. He came back in the office and motioned for me to come out. He said, “Come on, the fuel tanks are running.” The trees had fallen on the fuel tanks and pumps, so he

went to the circuit box and cut them off. By this time the rain had stopped and the wind had stopped blowing. We could finally get out, and that’s when we saw the devastation.



The grove here has 200-year-old oak trees. We probably had 20 of those oak trees down. Hwy. 58 that we live on was blocked about a quarter of a mile north by a big cedar tree and half of a mile south by a big oak tree. The emergency service in the county, the fire department, and the state DOT were alerted.

We had a Mack truck parked in front of my granddaddy’s barn where we work cattle, and a fourth of the top of this barn had come off. The Mack truck had tin and part of the top of this barn wrapped around it. My daddy’s barn is adjacent to that barn, and half the top was off and across the road in the cow pasture. It was just a short

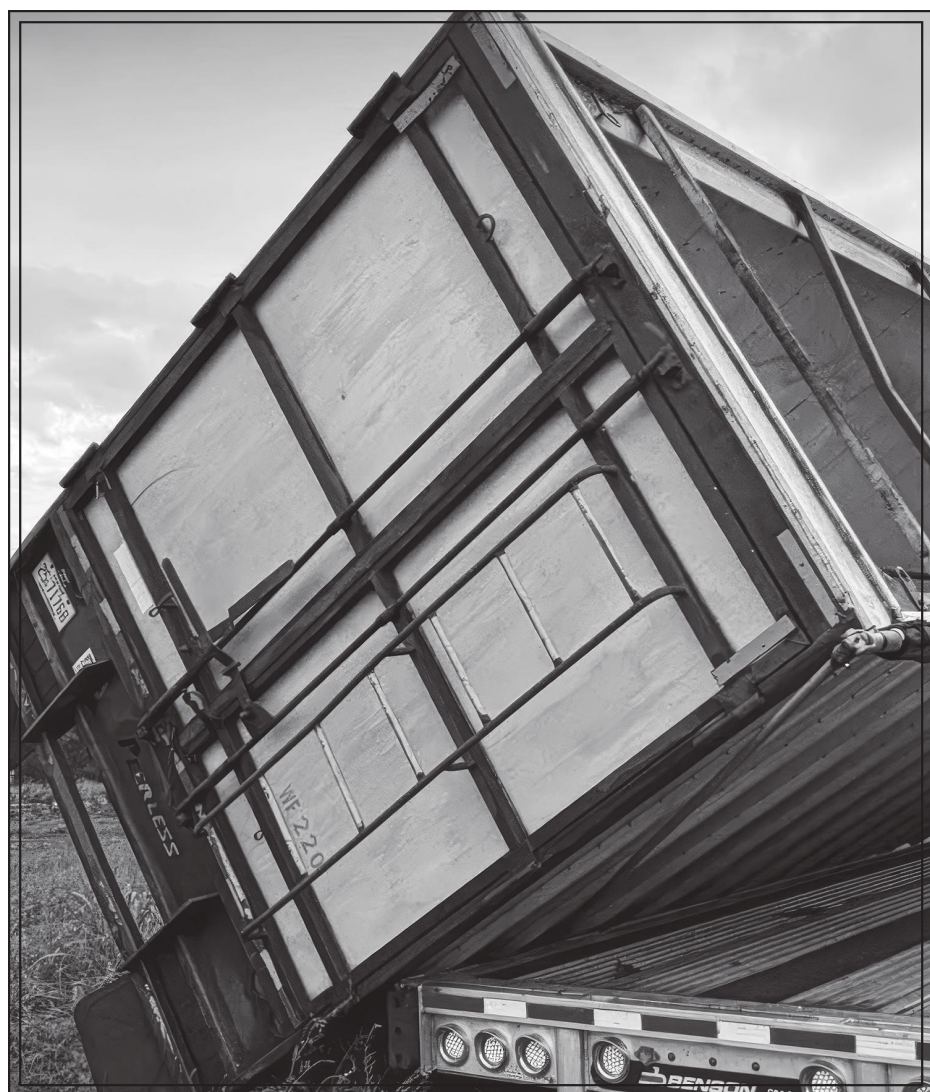




time, while we were still surveying things, that neighbors started to arrive. They worked their way around another way to get here. They came with chainsaws and help. The number of people who showed up to help and asked no questions and went to work was just unreal.

We started surveying fences and making sure the cows were secure. Shane and I went down the road to a place we call the Mayflower and the chicken house where we have our young bulls. The fence in the corner of this area was devastated. There wasn't any fixing it without a lot of effort, so we got the young bulls up, and I loaded them and brought them back and put them in a secure lot.

The next concern was the cattle across the road. Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of that fence on the back side was completely destroyed as far as trees. We secured the cattle in a small pasture on the north end for the night. A group of heifers that were in the pond pasture was brought up and put in a secure lot.



The next morning we got a better view of what had happened. It really looked like a war zone through here. My granddaddy's cotton gin is located in the corner of the back grove, and that was completely obliterated. His old woodworking shop across the road was being held up by some pieces of farm equipment we had parked there, and the equipment was damaged some. A big oak tree had fallen across the flatbed on Shane's Ford F550. Seven buildings were damaged, with two beyond repair, two pieces of farm equipment, three trucks, walking floor, four fuel tanks, and miles and miles of hi-tensile fence on the ground — most of the time cutting the trees off, the hi-tensile usually pops right back up. We had to rebuild a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of fence. It was the best solution because it was in woods with large trees twisted all different ways. Only one cow was lost due to a falling tree.



We got excavators and loaders going. Along with all the help that showed up, we cleaned out paths one tree at a time and got back going. The light line crews had worked all night to early morning getting current restored to the people who had been affected.

The county emergency manager came Thursday morning and told me the weather service showed that we had 60 mph winds. All I can say is I have seen a 100 mph hurricane hit here, and we did not get this much damage. I think the weather service needs to tune up their radar gun.

I feel mighty humble that all the people from this community, the next counties over, and Virginia showed up or called and wanted to be of assistance. It will all be put back together one stick, one limb, or one strand of wire at a time. It just takes a little time. In a situation like this, it is sure good to have friends far and wide.



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Clemson Corner

Feeder Bulls Still Sell for Less Than Steers in a Record High Market

By MATTHEW J. FISCHER, BRIAN BEER, and CHRIS TALLEY, *Clemson University*

From 2020 through early 2024, feeder cattle markets experienced one of the strongest price rallies in modern history. Declining U.S. cattle inventories, drought driven herd liquidation, and strong consumer beef demand pushed feeder steer prices to unprecedented levels.

In South Carolina auction barns, one long standing price relationship persisted — feeder bulls consistently sold at a discount to feeder steers. Looking at USDA-AMS South Carolina auction data from 2020 to 2024 to quantify the magnitude and seasonality of that discount across two common weight classes (400–499 lbs and 500–599 lbs).

Feeder steer prices rose sharply beginning in late 2022 and peaked in early 2024, as seen in Figure 1. Lighter steers consistently received modest premiums over heavier steers, reflecting backgrounding flexibility and seasonal demand patterns. Despite sharing the same upward trend, feeder bull prices tracked below steers throughout the period, confirming sex class as a primary determinant of feeder price even during extreme price strength.

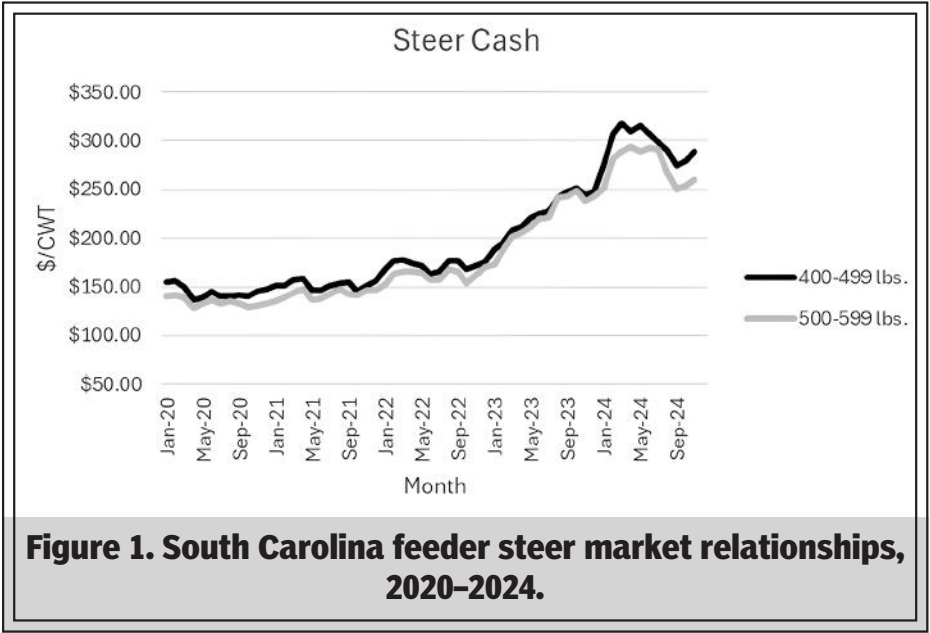


Figure 1. South Carolina feeder steer market relationships, 2020-2024.

The feeder bull discount persisted in every year and month of the study, as seen in Figure 2. Discounts were larger and more stable for heavier bulls, reflecting higher expected costs of delayed castration and health risk. Importantly, discounts widened after 2021 as cattle prices surged, indicating that buyers continued — and possibly

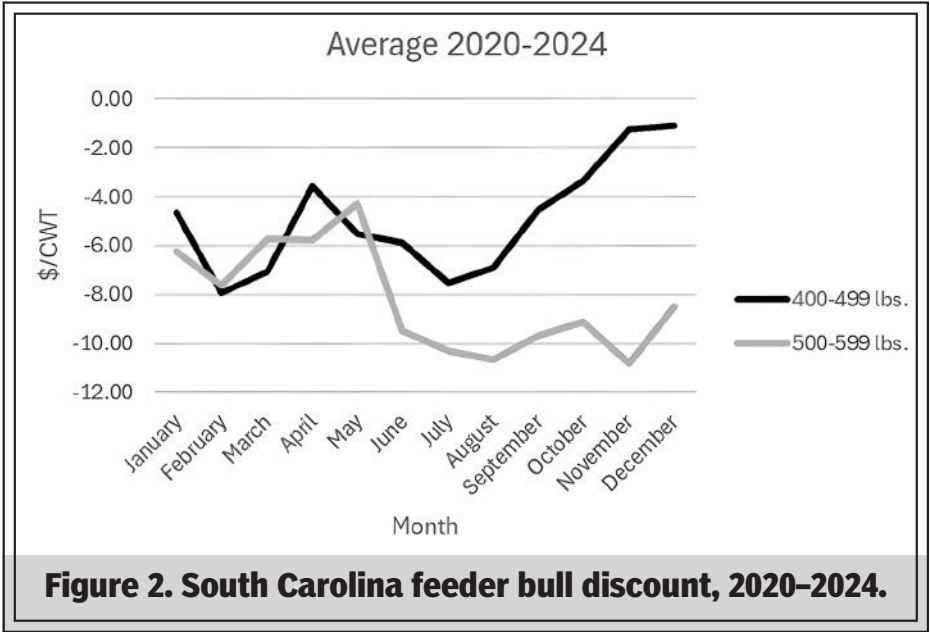


Figure 2. South Carolina feeder bull discount, 2020-2024.

intensified — risk pricing in a high value market. In practical terms, intact male calves became relatively more penalized during the price boom rather than less.

Seasonal marketing volume helps explain variation in discount magnitude, as seen in Figure 3. South Carolina auction volumes peak in late summer and fall and decline in spring. Bull discounts were widest during peak fall marketing periods, when buyers could be more selective, and narrowest in low volume spring markets. This

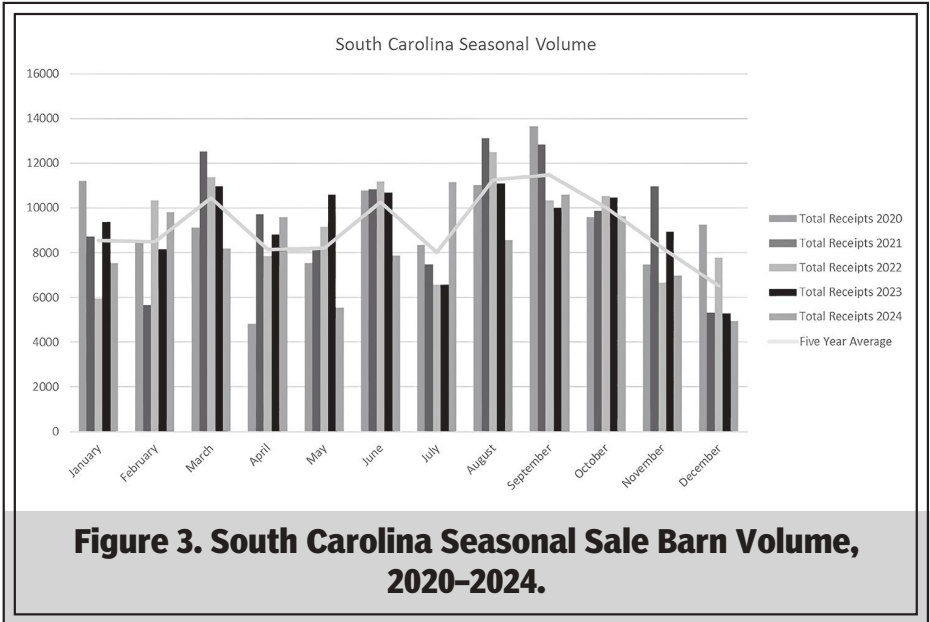


Figure 3. South Carolina Seasonal Sale Barn Volume, 2020-2024.

interaction suggests that both animal characteristics and market timing influence realized price discounts.

Persistence and widening of the feeder bull discount during historically high cattle prices carry clear implications for Southeastern producers. Management premiums do not disappear in strong markets — they grow in value. Early castration and comprehensive calf health programs remain economically important strategies for capturing full feeder calf value. High feeder prices increase the dollar impact of both premiums and discounts,

reinforcing the importance of risk reducing management practices in cow/calf operations.

Overall, South Carolina feeder markets from 2020 to 2024 demonstrate that structural price relationships remain intact even during extreme market conditions.

Sex class, weight, and management status continue to shape feeder cattle price discovery.

For producers, the message is straightforward: management decisions matter most when cattle prices are high.

COWBOYS FOR CHRIST



THE CHAPLAIN'S CORRAL

Pleasing Everyone

By JESSE BOWMAN, *Cowboys for Christ Chaplain*

Two brothers from New York City decided to make their fortune by purchasing a cattle ranch in Texas. After six months, a friend showed up for a visit. “So, what did you name this ranch?” the friend asked. One of the brothers replied, Well, we couldn’t agree on anything for months. Both sides of the family kept insisting on their choice. So, we settled on the DoubleR Lazy L Triple Horseshoe Bar-7 Lucky Diamond Ranch.” The friend said, “Wow, that’s some name! Where are all the cattle?” The brothers answered, “Well, that’s the thing. None of them survived the branding!”

This little ditty might get a chuckle. However, we all know folks who will go to great lengths to appease everyone. That’s an impossible task. Most of the time you end up upsetting the whole lot. Winston Churchill once said, “An appeaser is someone who feeds a crocodile hoping they will get eaten last.” Many people today — preachers included — are quick to tell you what they are against, but few are willing to tell you what they are for.

In John 14:6 Jesus said, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*” Note that Jesus didn’t say ‘a’ way — He said ‘the’ way! All across this country, some preachers are watering this down, making it a little easier to swallow, because they don’t want to upset people. Send them home feeling good about themselves, or you risk they won’t come back, is what many have warned me. Jesus loves everybody is what I hear so much. That’s true, of course, but they stop there and don’t tell the rest of the conditions. Or, they beat folks over the head with expectations nobody can meet. That’s truth without love, and

that is pretty brutal. What we need is truth with love. In John 14:9 Jesus makes it even clearer by telling us, “*As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now, remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love.*” People are ok with hearing that Jesus loves everybody but not so keen on hearing that we have to keep His commands.

This didn’t come easy to me either. When it comes to learning, there are three kinds of people — ones who learn from reading, ones who learn by watching, and ones like me who have to pee on the electric fence for themselves. I followed the crowd down a well marked trail and finally learned that it doesn’t mean whoever made it knew where they were going! Like an owl headed horse, I just kept looking around for the next best thing when the best thing was right under my nose.

Jesus loves everybody! You bet that’s true. He proved it on the cross — dying for every hurtful, rotten, mean, selfish, and despicable thing each of us has ever done and will do. His act of love and obedience to His Father gave us a way to get right with God. We get total forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life through Jesus’s work on the cross. When we submit our lives by believing in Him, trusting Him, and sincerely working to obey His teachings, we won’t be sinless, but we will sin less! No matter what you’ve done, God loves you so much that He was willing to send His only Son to die a cruel death for you. He is offering you the gift of salvation. Like a darned bangtail horse who begins to trust and submit to the rider, the future sure starts to look a whole lot brighter once we submit to Christ. What about you?

Focus on Forage

Understanding the Usage of Near Infrared Reflectance Spectroscopy for Forage Quality Analysis

By KATIE SILVER & LILIANE SILVA, *Clemson University*

Forage quality testing is an important tool to support diet balancing for livestock diets and is crucial to be conducted by producers. Without proper forage testing, there is no way of determining the actual nutritional value of feedstuff. We can visually inspect forages, but this does not determine nutrient values, and any attempts would just be guesses. Traditionally, a forage sample must be submitted to a laboratory for forage analysis. Once the sample is received, the laboratory can test the forages using one of two methods — wet chemistry or near infrared reflectance spectroscopy (NIRS). This is dependent on the type of equipment the laboratory is equipped with to run forage samples.

Wet chemistry is the older testing method and is the “gold standard” for forage analysis. It uses established laboratory analysis to determine crude protein, fiber, fat, and mineral concentrations in forages. On the other hand, near infrared reflectance spectroscopy uses light reflectance technology to accurately and quickly determine nutrient concentrations in forages without the need to run laboratory analysis. Large nutrient compounds, such as protein and fiber concentrations, work best with NIRS. Smaller nutrient compounds, such as minerals, can be a bit tougher to determine when using NIRS. All NIRS must be properly calibrated with equations to ensure the accuracy of the results.

Using NIRS is less labor intensive — therefore, it’s more cost efficient when compared with the wet chemistry method for forage analysis. The NIRS also has a quicker turnaround time since there is no laboratory analysis associated with it that would require running the samples through different steps of digestion, etc. Typically, producers send their forages to a university or private commercial laboratory for forage analysis. Some of these labs use NIRS benchtop machines to provide results for forage samples. However, there are technology advancements in development that may bring the laboratory to the producer’s operation. The NIRS technology is showing promising results with handheld devices that can be used at farm sites. This would help to provide faster forage analysis results supporting nutritional decisions and balancing diets more quickly.

There are some reservations when it comes to using NIRS technology. If a total mixed ration needs to be analyzed, this is

not the best use of NIRS. This would be best analyzed using wet chemistry still since there may be limited equations calibrated for those purposes. Depending on the forage species used, NIRS may not be as precise as wet chemistry either. This is due to the technology needing to be properly calibrated by thousands of forage quality values analyzed to strengthen the results generated by them. Without proper calibration, the results for the forage analysis would not be correct. This can be an issue, especially for niche forage species and those that may not commonly be analyzed as mixtures.

Ultimately, forage testing is important for producers so that they can balance diets properly to meet the nutritional needs of their livestock herds. The use of NIRS in forage analysis is a great and cost effective tool for producers. It is a viable option to generate forage quality results at lower costs, which could improve accessibility by producers in general while trying to expand the use of forage quality analysis to base hay for marketing and selling and diets for livestock. The NIRS technology provides accurate forage quality results for most forage species used and may be limited in generating results for niche species that are not evaluated as often.

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You Decide!

By DR. MIKE WALDEN, *William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor Emeritus, N.C. State University*

You Decide: How Will You Vote on New Tax Proposals? The N.C. General Assembly has been busy debating some new ideas that we will be asked to vote on. Among them are two proposals involving taxes. One would add to the state constitution a limit on the state personal income tax rate. The rate would be capped at 3.5 percent. A second proposed constitutional amendment would place a limit on how much property taxes could rise after a property

reevaluation. If approved by voters, in both cases the new limits could not be changed by future legislatures. It would take approval of new constitutional amendments to remove the limitations.

The purpose of today's column is not to take a position on the two proposals and certainly not to recommend how you should vote. Instead, in keeping with the "You Decide" tradition, I will strive to assemble information about both the pros and cons of the proposals and then let you draw your own conclusions.

The personal income tax in North Carolina is paid by households. It is distinct from the state corporate income tax paid by corporations. For much of the 20th Century, the personal income tax rate inched up, meaning households paid more on each dollar they earned. But starting in the early 2000s, the General Assembly began to move in the opposite direction by gradually lowering rates. In 2026, the personal income tax rate is 3.99 percent, and the leadership in the General Assembly wants to continue lowering the rate. If passed, the proposed constitutional amendment would mandate that the rate could never go above 3.5 percent, but it could be lowered.

Supporters of the amendment have various reasons for backing it. Some want to limit how much money is collected by the personal income tax because they want to limit the size of the state government. Others want to shift tax collections away from the personal income tax to other forms of taxation, such as the corporate income tax and sales tax. They argue corporations have greater ability than households to pay taxes, and although the sales tax is paid by households, households have some degree of control over the amount because they control their spending.

A third reason is based on an idea called "supply side economics." Supporters argue lower tax rates can motivate more people and businesses to migrate to North Carolina and also cause households to work more because they keep more of what they earn. Both impacts could limit the reduction in tax revenues that come with a lower tax rate or even could cause tax revenues to increase.

Arguments against capping the tax rate revolve around flexibility and fairness in raising state public revenues. Some worry that during economic downturns a cap on the personal income tax rate could restrict the state from obtaining enough revenue to continue its funding needs, with one example being keeping public schools functioning. Also, if the cap causes a shift to more revenue from the sales tax, this action could put a greater burden on lower income households buying necessities.

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The move to use a constitutional amendment to limit property tax increases comes from an obvious issue. Property values in the state have been rising much faster than income — in some cases, twice as fast. This means potential large increases in property tax payments by owners, often much greater than how much their income has risen. Sometimes owners may be forced to sell their property because they can't afford higher tax payments.

Therefore, supporters use his situation as the reason for a constitutional amendment that would allow the General Assembly to set a limit on property tax increases. They also argue continued ownership of property, including homes, contributes to thriving neighborhoods.

Opponents have two concerns. First is the recognition that property taxes are a major source of public revenues for local governments, including counties and municipalities. A worry is that a limit might not allow for sufficient revenues to meet local needs, especially when localities are rapidly growing. For example, counties pay for many local employees and services. In particular, counties help fund public school construction and operation.

Opponents also point out that local governments can adjust property tax rates to make property tax increases more affordable. Also, with this adjustment being done at the local level, it can be fine tuned to local situations, unlike what would happen with a constitutional amendment that applied the same restrictions to all localities.

In conclusion, North Carolinians will likely be faced with two important decisions about taxes this year. Hopefully, the information in this column will help you with this very big "you decide" situation.

You Decide: What to Expect From the New Federal Reserve? We now officially have a new chair of the Federal Reserve (the Fed), Kevin Warsh. Mr. Warsh was appointed by President Donald Trump and confirmed by the Senate. He will serve a four year term as the leader of this very important agency.

Throughout its more than 100 year history, different Feds are referenced by the name of their chairperson. Hence, recently we've had the Greenspan, Bernanke, Yellen, and Powell Feds. Now we have the Warsh Fed. What can we expect from the new Warsh Fed? I'll share some thoughts, then let you decide.

A recent question about the Fed is whether it can maintain its independence. The creators of the Fed wanted it to be independent. Hence, the Fed doesn't report to the president like most federal departments and agencies, and its budget is not funded by Congress. The Fed's creators wanted the agency to be free of political considerations so it could focus entirely on what is best for the economy over the long run.

As a result, the seven members of the Fed Board who enact Fed policy, while nominated by the president, do not have to please the president nor can they be removed by the president. Incidentally, the chair of the board has one vote on policy issues like the other members of the board. The board members also have staggered 14 year terms, meaning that at any point in time the board will have members who have been appointed by different presidents. Four members of the current Fed Board, including Warsh, were

appointed by President Trump during his two terms. My conclusion is that Fed independence will continue under Warsh.

Even with Fed independence in enacting policy continuing under Warsh, there's the follow-up question of what that policy will be. The Fed has two goals: to keep the inflation rate and unemployment rate low. In pursuing these objectives, the Fed uses two tools — its influence over interest rates and its control of the money supply.

Unfortunately, it is difficult for the Fed to pursue both objectives simultaneously. This is because the policies are the opposite for the two objectives. To moderate the inflation rate, the Fed wants to slow economic growth. To do this, the Fed will increase the internal interest rate it controls, expecting other interest rates to follow. The Fed will also slow the increase in the money supply, perhaps even reducing it.

But to reduce the jobless rate, the Fed will want to stimulate the economy by trying to push interest rates lower and increase the growth of the money supply.

Which policy will the Warsh Fed initially push? Based on Warsh's public comments, it appears he is most concerned about inflation. This will mean he will not be advocating the Fed use its powers to lower interest rates and stimulate more money growth. Walsh has also expressed concern about the size of investments the Fed owns. Reducing the Fed's investment portfolio would also be consistent with focusing on achieving a lower inflation rate.

Of course, Warsh's viewpoints could change if the Iran war ends, resulting in oil and gas prices falling and tariffs being reduced or removed. Both of these outcomes would cause the inflation rate to decline, meaning inflation would be less of an issue for the Warsh Fed.

Does this analysis mean the Warsh Fed is not concerned about economic growth and job generation? It does not. In the past, Warsh has said he thinks productivity gains are the way to achieve a faster growing economy and more jobs with better pay. Indeed, in recent years productivity has been improving, and economic and job growth have continued.

But Warsh has received some criticism for saying artificial intelligence (AI) will be the engine of economic and job growth in the future. Critics say the statement implies an implicit assumption that AI will create more jobs than it destroys. For many economists, it is not yet clear what the total job impact from AI will be.

My conclusion is the Warsh Fed will not immediately bring big changes. Indeed, the previous Fed under Jerome Powell had not been lowering interest rates, with their last rate cut occurring at the end of 2024. This implied the Powell Fed was focused on inflation, which the Warsh Fed will likely continue. One question is, will the Warsh Fed simply keep interest rates stable or ultimately raise them?

The Federal Reserve is a very, very important agency in the federal government, with powers that can immediately impact our economic lives. At this point, I expect two results from the new Warsh Fed. First, I expect the Fed will continue to preserve its independence, which the creators of the Fed deemed extremely important. Second, I forecast that the Warsh Fed will initially focus on reducing the inflation rate, just as the preceding Powell Fed did. Do you agree with my predictions? You decide.

Have You Herd

Leased, Not Limited — How to Maximize Rented Land for Grazing Cattle

By KERRIGAN BAUSERMAN, N.C. State University -- ANS 402 Beef Management

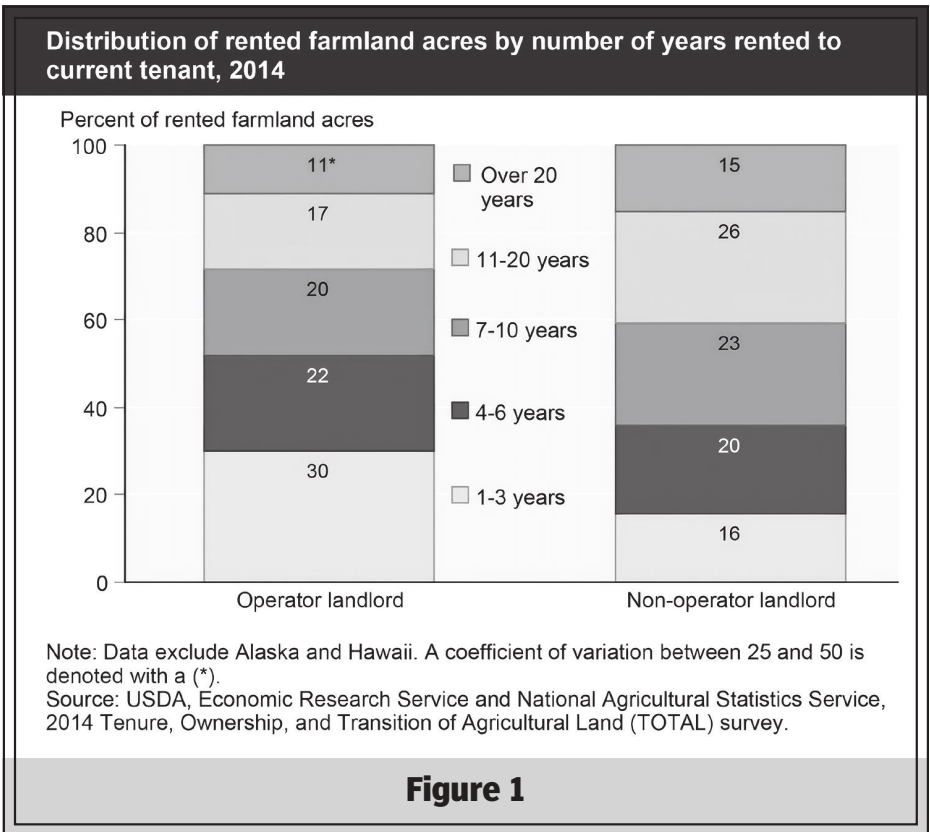
They say land is the only thing they don't make more of, so how can we ensure we leave it better than we found it? According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service,⁸ 39 percent of the 880 million acres of U.S. farmland in 2022 was rented or leased. That is a large percentage and shows how much agriculture today depends on leased land, while also pointing to the financial pressures and rising land values that can push landowners toward selling. So how can we, as producers, capitalize on rented land for grazing cattle? Here are a few ways to capitalize on the land you are leasing.

Capitalizing on rented land for grazing cattle begins with the mindset that you should take care of the land and resources as if you were going to be here forever, as long term sustainability and proper grazing management are key to maintaining productive and resilient systems.⁹ Even if the arrangement is temporary, don't do half a job just because it may be short term. When you manage rented land with the same level of stewardship as owned land, you improve forage quality, cattle performance, and the long term viability of your operation.

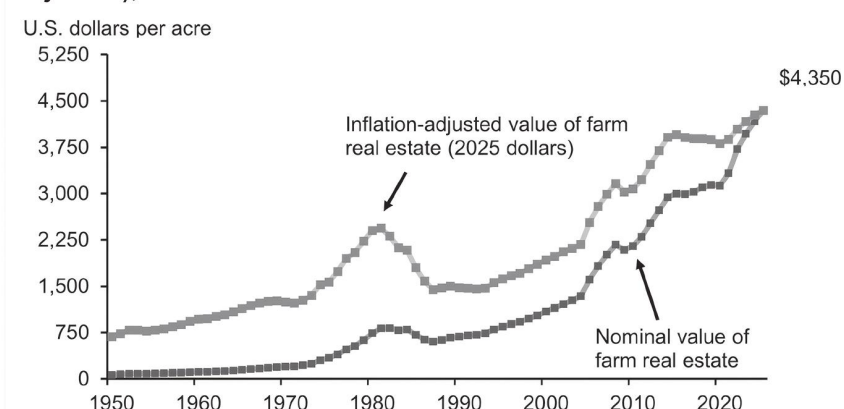
While accessing land, whether to rent or purchase, can be challenging, especially for new producers, it makes practicing good stewardship even more important. According to the USDA Economic Research Service⁶, most landlords maintain stable, long term rental arrangements. Operator landlords, those who are actively involved but rent out a portion of their land, tend to maintain consistent tenant relationships, while non-operator landlords, who own the land but are not directly engaged, often have even longer leasing arrangements. Among acres rented from operator landlords, 70 percent have been leased to the same tenant for more than three years and 28 percent for over ten years, while non-operator landlords represent even longer relationships, as seen in Figure 1. This indicates just how hard it is to gain access to land, reinforcing that once you have the opportunity to lease land, you should treat it as if you plan to operate on it forever.

Capitalizing on rented land for grazing cattle requires a clearly

written lease and a strong relationship between the renter and landowner to outline responsibilities for fencing, water, and other improvements. This is especially important when infrastructure is lacking, as both parties must agree on who will invest in these additions and how costs are handled, particularly in shorter term agreements. When responsibilities are clearly defined, it prevents confusion and protects both the landowner and the producer. Knowing who is responsible for fence repair, improvements, or added infrastructure allows you to confidently invest in management practices that improve both the cattle and the land without overstepping boundaries or absorbing unexpected costs. Sample lease agreements and additional guidance can be found through Ag Lease 101, which provides templates to help structure clear and equitable contracts.³



Average U.S. farm real estate value, nominal and real (inflation adjusted), 1950–2025



Note: Farm real estate includes land and buildings. Data reflect values as of June 1 of each year (values are adjusted for inflation using the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis Gross Domestic Product Price Index, BEA API series code A191RG, rebased to 2025 by USDA, Economic Research Service). U.S. estimates exclude Alaska and Hawaii.
Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using annual national agricultural land value estimates from USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, *Quickstats*.

Figure 2

With that clarity in place, consider using portable polywire, chargers, and step-in posts to separate your leased land into more manageable lots. Through rotational grazing and cutting your pastures down in size, you are protecting your cattle against possible parasite interaction from buildup caused by grazing the same lot continuously while also allowing recovery time for the pastures.⁵ It also allows for an extended grazing season, ultimately maximizing the value and potential of rented land for grazing cattle.

Capitalizing on leased land is increasingly important as land values continue to rise. According to the USDA Economic Research Service⁷, the average value of U.S. farmland has increased to \$4,350 per acre, up 4.3 percent from the previous year, as seen in Figure 2. While cropland typically carries a higher value per acre than grazing land due to its greater production potential, pasture and grazing land are still seeing steady increases in price per acre as competition for acreage continues. As land becomes more expensive, expansion and long term ownership become more financially challenging, reinforcing the need to maximize leased acreage.

Through Cooperative Extension, producers have access to programs, training, and informational sessions focused on practical, research based information such as grazing management strategies, cattle nutrition and health, and farm financial and business planning to help them get the information they need to succeed. If you have a lease with a landowner who gives you most of the operating power, consider educating the landowner on the benefits of incorporating best management practices through government cost share programs offered through the Natural Resources Conservation Service² and local Soil and Water Conservation Districts.¹ These cost share programs share the cost burden of implementing practices such as stream exclusions, rotational grazing, and more.⁴

When you think about leaving a legacy, you think about what you will leave behind. Start by being a steward of the land you lease and building strong relationships with landowners. Leasing land does

not have to limit your operation if you manage it with intention and take advantage of the resources available to you.

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Have You Herd is written as a portion of ANS 402 Beef Management course requirement at N.C. State University Department of Animal Science under the instruction of Dr. Carrie Pickworth. The opinions of Kerrigan Bauserman are not necessarily those of N.C. State University or Dr. Carrie Pickworth.

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UPDATE

Cade Blassingame Joins IBBA as Southeast Field Staff. The International Brangus Breeders Association (IBBA) welcomes Cade Blassingame of Chatsworth, Ga., to serve as the organization's southeast field staff, representing Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Blassingame will support IBBA initiatives at industry events and sales while advancing member engagement through clear communication of programs and services across the region.

"I'm excited for the opportunity to serve Brangus breeders right in my backyard of the southeast," Blassingame says. "As a Georgia native, I understand the beef industry here, from day-to-day production challenges to the opportunities available for producers in this region."

Blassingame earned a bachelor's degree in animal science from

Oklahoma State University after completing an associate degree in agricultural sciences at Northern Oklahoma College while on the livestock judging team. He gained hands-on experience across multiple sectors of the industry, including reproductive work at Trans Ova Genetics and semen collection with Bullnanza Stud Services, before serving as an agriculture loan officer with River Valley AgCredit.

"We are excited to welcome Cade to the IBBA team," says Rick Cozzitorto, IBBA executive vice president. "His background in the business side of things and production aspects, paired with his ability to connect with producers, positions him well to serve Brangus breeders in the southeast."

Blassingame joins Cord Weinheimer, director of field staff, genetics, and advertising, to assist with the association's member focused initiatives. He began his responsibilities on May 18.

"The Brangus breed has built a strong, progressive reputation in the southeastern U.S., and the association holds such a respected position within the beef industry," Blassingame says. "I'm honored to get to work alongside others who share this same passion and to help move the association forward."

Through its field staff, the IBBA remains committed to strengthening member relationships and delivering programs that add value to Brangus breeders across the country.

About the International Brangus Breeders Association. IBBA, headquartered in San Antonio, Tex., strives to provide the commercial cattle industry, domestically and internationally, with the best genetics possible. Founded in 1949 as the American Brangus Breeders, the organization has since evolved into the IBBA. The IBBA's purpose is to enable its members to produce quality beef for the commercial cattle industry and its consumers. For more information about IBBA, visit www.gobrangus.com.

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ANGUS

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UPDATE



Banel talks capturing added value in cattle. *The Board of Directors approved the policy during the June 2026 Board Meeting.* Donor dams who can be cleared of potential genetic conditions using information from their pedigree may no longer need to be tested for the full genetic conditions bundle to be considered a donor dam. The American Angus Association Board of Directors approved updates to Rule 104d. 2 during the June 2026 board meeting. Rule 104d. 2, referred to as the Donor Dam Rule, was previously updated in 2023 and requires all donor dams to be tested for genetic conditions, matching the requirements for A.I. sires. The rule helps ensure potential genetic condition carriers are not unknowingly widely propagated.

Following member feedback this spring, staff and board members have reviewed current testing trends and established the following updates to the section of Rule 104d. 2 addressing donor dams born on or after January 1, 2023:

- The full suite of genetic testing will be required on donor dams that are not parent qualified.
- Donor dams who are parent qualified and listed as a potential carrier for genetic conditions will be required to be tested for those genetic conditions.
- Donor dams who are parent qualified and free of potential

genetic conditions, as confirmed by their pedigree, will not need a genetic conditions test.

No changes were made to the requirements that all donor dams must be DNA marker typed or must have been blood typed prior to January 1, 2001.

These updates balance the precautionary measure of the rule with the increase in genetic information available through the Association’s database. Since 2015, the percentage of registrations that are parent qualified each year has increased from less than 15 percent to nearly 55 percent in 2025. In addition, many of those bloodlines have been cleared of genetic conditions through testing.

“The board was able to make this update, thanks to the many breeders who have implemented DNA testing in their operations over the years,” says Levi Landers, director of the Association’s Field and Member Services. “It means many pedigrees have a robust amount of information within them.”

The updates to Rule 104d. 2 will take effect immediately and can be viewed in full on page 35 of the Breeder’s Reference Guide. An animal’s genetic condition test results are noted below the registration number on the individual’s Performance Registration Certificate (PRC) and are also included in ‘Find An Animal’ on Angus.org.

ANGUS MEANS BUSINESS.

The American Angus Association is the nation’s largest beef breed organization, serving more than 21,000 members across the U.S., Canada, and several other countries. It’s home to an extensive breed registry that grows by more than 300,000 animals each year. The Association also provides programs and services to farmers, ranchers, and others who rely on Angus to produce quality genetics for the beef industry and quality beef for consumers. For more information about Angus cattle and the American Angus Association, visit www.angus.org.

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Edisto Pines

11th Annual Female Production Sale

Selling 130 Females FROM THE TOP OF THE EDISTO PINES FARM
FALL YEARLINGS AND SPRING AND FALL BRED HEIFERS



EXAR ANTICIPATION 4836B

CED +10; BW +2.2; WW +73; YW +134; SC +.69
HP +12.8; MILK +30; PAP -1.33; CW +80
MARB +1.89; RE +.85; \$AXH +277; \$AXJ +236
\$M +85; \$W +79; \$F +152; \$G +119; \$B +271; \$C +436

Anticipation 4836B joined the Edisto Pines herd sire roster as the \$400,000 lead-off of the record-setting 2026 Express Ranches Big Event and his service will headline the bred heifer division.

BNWZ VALIDITY 2491

CED +8; BW +2.4; WW +84; YW +139; SC +.05
HP +11; MILK +27; PAP +2.18; CW +95
MARB +1.46; RE +1.65; \$AXH +301; \$AXJ +299
\$M +91; \$W +92; \$F +157; \$G +112; \$B +260; \$C +440

Validity 2491 has earned his way to anchoring the Edisto Pines herd sire roster and his progeny and service will once again highlight the Edisto Pines Production Sale, with over 35 daughters headlining this offering.



Saturday • August 1, 2026 • 11AM EST
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Todd & Kerri Edwards, Owners
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The President's Letter

By JONATHAN PERRY, *American Angus Association*



Dear Members of the American Angus Association,

The American Angus Association Board of Directors met June 7–10 in Lake Ozark, Mo., along with virtual committee meetings held prior to the meeting.

I'm happy to report the Association and all its entities continue to be on solid financial ground, with forecasted bottom lines for the year in line with budgets. Most exciting is the growth in registrations, with over 12,000 more head registered year-to-date. We also evaluated the annual association operating revenue and expense head over the past years, noting an annualized increase in expense and revenue of 2.7 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively, since 2020. We are proud of the organization's cost management in the face of significant inflation and take the fiscal stability of the Association very seriously.

We approved a DNA Sample Storage Policy following an extensive evaluation of storage options, costs, and long term stability. All tissue samples will be maintained by the genomic lab for 13 months from the date received by the Association. Tissue samples older than 13 months will be disposed of on a regular basis. In addition, the Association will maintain samples on high influence sires to identify or exclude bloodlines as potential carriers if new genetic conditions

arise. The Board felt this approach best balances responsible resource management with the need to safeguard the breed for the future.

As always, we appreciate members who offer feedback and spur board discussion. We considered the increasing number of donor dams with parent-verified bloodlines free from carriers of potential genetic conditions. Consequently, in Rule 104d.2, the board approved a change that exempts those dams from testing.

A member letter on the Pathfinder designation led to a bigger discussion about the program. Ultimately, we directed staff to review the requirements and promotion of the program and bring recommendations for the next committee meeting. We also spent time discussing our thoughts, as well as member feedback, on breed improvement priorities for the future.

Another letter suggested an owned bull category for junior exhibitors. We approved this new division for Angus junior shows in 2027. We're also evaluating National Junior Angus Show locations, balancing costs with many other factors.

Staff reviewed the May 2026 genetic evaluation updates, and we discussed Structured Sire Evaluation, concluding the program continues to serve members who can nominate young sires for testing.

We heard updates on the Pathway to Progress, a cross team effort to promote how registered Angus genetics unlock programs and services making an impact on profitability for commercial cattlemen. The Pathway incorporates AngusLink, GeneMax Advantage, and Certified Angus Beef's (CAB) Targeting the Brand. Most importantly, we discussed how Association members can use these programs as a customer service tool and grow demand for registered Angus bulls.

On June 25, we will transition to paperless billing in an effort to better serve the membership with timely paperwork, as well as reduce costs. All members with an email on file and an AAA Login Account will be automatically transitioned; however, members who wish to continue to receive paper communication will be able to opt out by calling the office.

Angus Foundation – The Angus Foundation's fundraising efforts are outperforming expectations this year, allowing us to underwrite things like the educational contests at the National Junior Angus Show. Long range planning is underway, and the team is researching grants from ag and educational foundations that support the Angus Foundation's three pillars of education, youth, and research.



Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) – CAB supply and related price pressures have weighed on CAB sales, but the team is working closely on unique strategies for both independent and large retailers. While overall supply is down, quality remains high. Prime carcasses have outpaced Select for 29 consecutive weeks, leading to growth opportunities for CAB Prime. But with heavier out weights, we are seeing more carcasses exceed 1,100 pounds, and therefore not qualify for the brand. We heard an update about CAB production in Uruguay, which started in March. Overall brand consumer marketing initiatives are evolving, including YouTube video series, social media, and digital advertising.

Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) – During the AGI Board meeting, the Board of Directors approved the “Rooted in Legacy, Driven by Innovation” three year strategic plan that reflects the AGI mission of empowering genetic improvement for Angus families and the global beef industry. With the changing landscape of the industry of genomic service providers and other industry mergers and acquisitions, strengthening the position of AGI boosts our opportunities as Association members to access valuable data and genetic tools.

GeneMax Advantage sales are up over 200 percent, and we celebrated the team’s launch and work behind Parent Match, a streamlined parent qualification service. The Board has heard a resounding level of appreciation from breeders for Parent Match.

Angus Productions Inc. (Angus Media) – The team shared

fiscal year reports on advertising delivered and progress of ongoing projects, including the long range strategic planning for the entity. The board reviewed *Angus Journal’s* current and historical advertising rates in light of two decades of inflationary pressure and no change to rates. With the significant increases in paper, printing, and postage costs, the API Board moved to increase breeder advertising rates, effective January 1, 2027. While the Board prefers not to increase rates, a competitive analysis showed that the *Angus Journal* is still a great value on a cost per thousand readers basis compared to regional and state magazines.

At our June board meetings, we begin to think about the board elections in November. We encourage you to engage in the process and join us at the Angus Convention on November 13–16 in Louisville, Kentucky.

We appointed Lori Fink from Kansas and Jake Tiedeman from Nebraska to be the delegate election observers. Three of our current board members — Paul Bennett, Charles Mogck, and Jerry Theis — declared their candidacy for treasurer of the board.

Many other important topics were discussed, and I encourage members to listen to *The Angus Conversation* podcast to learn more. A more detailed summary of the board and committee meetings will be in the Board Highlights section in the *Angus Journal* and the website’s Member Center. Feel free to reach out to me or any member of the Board with your questions.

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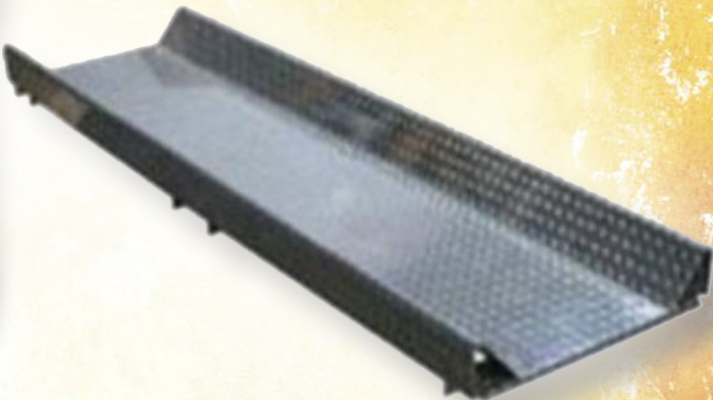
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COMMON GROUND



Two Million Genotypes — and Counting

By MARK McCULLY, American Angus Association CEO

“Exciting news for the breed.”

As this issue hits mailboxes, Angus breeders will surpass two million genotypes submitted to Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) for analysis. The milestone represents more than DNA samples, lab work, and incredibly valuable data. It reflects years of decisions by breeders who embraced new technology before the benefits were fully understood.

When genomic testing first emerged, it was anything but routine. Breeders pulled hair or collected blood samples, learned new processes, and trusted the technology would eventually deliver value. Those early adopters laid the groundwork for where we are today.

Today the American Angus Association genetic evaluation conducted by AGI includes two million genotypes linked to pedigrees and more than 82 million phenotypes. Together, they fuel the most powerful and trusted single breed genetic evaluation in the world. Genomics has improved expected progeny difference (EPD) accuracy, strengthened parentage verification, and enabled tools that would not exist without this level of participation.

One of the newest examples is Parent Match, which helps identify unknown parentage. The tool is only possible because of the depth and connectivity of genomic data breeders have built over time.

How breeders collect DNA has evolved as well. Many now use tissue sampling units, or TSUs, rather than hair or blood. TSUs offer a higher quality sample, resulting in lower failure rates and improved turnaround times at the lab due to more automation.

With hair and blood samples, DNA is extracted at the genomics

labs, and the remaining sample is sent back to the Association office for long term storage. Many members have seen this archive firsthand in two vaults during visits to the office. Those samples have proven valuable in the past, particularly to test high influence animals to clear thousands of cattle as potential genetic condition carriers.

Archiving TSU samples works differently. Our partner genomic labs use different DNA extraction methods, and they have different policies on how long they retain the frozen samples.

That reality has introduced a practical challenge. Freezer storage is limited and costly. As TSU adoption has grown, so has the need to ask some important questions — What truly needs to be archived long term? Where does retaining a sample add real value? And where does it add cost with limited benefit?

The Board has been considering different options, evaluating costs and benefits, and recognizing practical realities like the fact that many samples come from bulls that were turned out on commercial cows, where the likelihood of future retesting is relatively low.

Under the direction of the Board, staff will present recommendations at the June meeting. Those recommendations will reflect an evaluation of options and benefits, fiscal responsibility, and plans to maintain access to samples from highly influential animals should testing be needed in the future. We also plan to share breeder best practices for archiving DNA samples from high-influence animals within their own herds.

Two million genotypes is not a finish line, but it is a reminder of how far the industry has come and the responsibility that comes with that progress. As genomics has matured, so must the systems that support it, including how we thoughtfully and responsibly manage archived DNA samples for the long term.

Thanks to the breeders who submitted the first DNA samples, trusted the science, and stayed the course. This milestone belongs to them, and the work it enables will help move the breed forward for years to come.



North Carolina Angus Association

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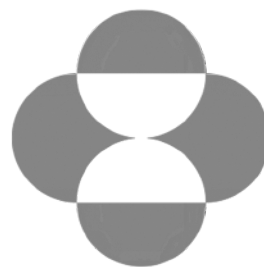
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MERCK

Animal Health

UPDATE

Merck Animal Health Reinforces Commitment to Help Protect U.S. Livestock from New World Screwworm Threat. Company underscores its ongoing commitment to strengthening cattle producer and veterinarian preparedness through collaboration, education, and innovation. Merck Animal Health recently reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the cattle industry's response to the growing threat of New World screwworm following confirmation of the first case in U.S. cattle. The company underscored the continued need for industrywide collaboration to combat this devastating parasite. As a leader in livestock health, Merck Animal Health has been at the forefront of developing innovative medicines for the prevention and treatment of NWS, facilitating information sharing and dialogue, and providing educational resources for the livestock industry.

Our commitment to collaboration and education – As part of its proactive response, Merck Animal Health recently hosted a New World screwworm symposium in San Antonio. Held April 22–24, the event brought together cattle producers and veterinarians from high risk regions. Leading researchers, academic experts, government representatives, and Merck Animal Health technical team members delivered programming focused on NWS preparedness, risk mitigation, and coordinated strategies to help protect U.S. livestock.

“The U.S. cattle industry successfully eradicated New World screwworm in the past, and renewed vigilance and collaboration across the industry are essential to preventing and managing this evolving threat,” said Rick DeLuca, president of Merck Animal Health. “Merck Animal Health is committed to being a partner in that effort by providing innovative solutions to support veterinarian and producer preparedness.”

During the symposium, experts stressed the importance of coordinated, industrywide efforts to curb the spread and minimize risk. Because NWS affects all warm blooded animals, preparedness and strong collaboration across stakeholders are critical. Key prevention strategies highlighted by industry leaders include:

- Daily observation of livestock and wildlife to detect wounds and potential infestations early
- Prompt reporting of suspected cases to enable rapid response
- A strong veterinarian relationship to support the development of an NWS management plan

Our commitment to innovation – In December 2025, Merck Animal Health received conditional approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for EXZOLT CATTLE-CA1 (*fluralaner topical solution*), the first novel ectoparasiticide introduced for beef cattle in several decades. EXZOLT CATTLE-CA1 is a pour-on product for the prevention and treatment of infestations caused by New World screwworm larvae (myiasis). The product has been available in the U.S. since early spring 2026, with distribution focused on southern border states to help ensure access in regions at the highest risk of NWS outbreak.

“Innovation plays a critical role in how we respond to emerging threats like New World screwworm,” said Justin Welsh, executive director of livestock technical services, Merck Animal Health. “EXZOLT CATTLE-CA1 represents an entirely new drug class never before used in U.S. cattle. When paired with strong veterinary partnerships and proactive management, it gives the industry an important new tool to help protect cattle herds.”

Only EXZOLT CATTLE-CA1 brings a new active ingredient and drug class to the cattle industry, with no known resistance. It is the first and only topical product conditionally approved for NWS prevention and treatment and delivers the active ingredient fluralaner systemically against infestations. EXZOLT CATTLE-CA1 is approved for use in beef cattle 2 months of age and older and in replacement dairy heifers younger than 20 months. It is also conditionally approved for the treatment and control of cattle fever tick.

EXZOLT CATTLE-CA1 is available by prescription in 1-liter and 5-liter presentations. For more information about EXZOLT CATTLE-CA1, visit ExzoltCattle-CA1.com.

Important Safety Information – Conditionally approved by FDA pending a full demonstration of effectiveness under application number 141-617. It is a violation of federal law to use this product other than as directed in the labeling.

Not for use in humans. Keep out of reach of children. Accidental exposure may cause skin and eye irritation. Highly flammable. Keep away from heat, sparks, open flame, or other sources of ignition. Use only for the prevention and treatment of infestations caused by New World screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) larvae (myiasis) and treatment and control of cattle fever tick (*Rhipicephalus microplus*) in beef cattle two months of age and older and replacement dairy heifers less than 20 months of age. Not for use in bulls intended for breeding one year of age and older, dairy calves, and veal calves. Cattle must not be slaughtered for human consumption within 98 days of treatment. If cattle are continuously exposed to temperatures at or above 60°F after product administration, then cattle may be slaughtered for human consumption 44 days after treatment. Violative residues may result if cattle are exposed to temperatures below 60°F after administration and are slaughtered at 44 days. For complete safety information and product dosing instructions, refer to the product label.

About Merck Animal Health. At Merck, we are unified around our purpose —we use the power of leading edge science to save and improve lives around the world. For more than a century, we’ve been at the forefront of research, bringing forward medicines, vaccines, and innovative health solutions for the world’s most

challenging diseases. Merck Animal Health, a division of Merck & Co., Inc., in Rahway, N.J., is the global animal health business of Merck. Through its commitment to *The Science of Healthier Animals*, Merck Animal Health offers veterinarians, farmers, producers, pet owners, and governments one of the widest ranges of veterinary pharmaceuticals, vaccines, and health management solutions and services, as well as an extensive suite of connected technology that includes identification, traceability, and monitoring products. Merck Animal Health is dedicated to preserving and improving the health, well being, and performance of animals and the people who care for them. It invests extensively in dynamic and comprehensive R&D resources and a modern, global supply chain. Merck Animal Health is present in more than 50 countries, while its products are available in some 150 markets. For more information, visit www.merck-animal-health.com.

2026 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES SCHEDULE

Most of the breed associations in North and South Carolina have stepped forward and renewed their contracts for Spotlight sections in *The Carolina Cattle Connection* for 2026. If your breed is not featured as a Spotlight section and you would like to inquire on any open months please feel free to contact me. Below is the tentative schedule for the upcoming year.

2026 RESERVED SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

JANUARY	CHAROLAIS
FEBRUARY	FORAGES
MARCH	ANGUS
APRIL	PIEDMONTESE
MAY	BRAHMAN
JUNE	HEREFORD
JULY	BELTED GALLOWAY
AUGUST	SIMMENTAL
SEPTEMBER	SANTA GERTRUDIS
OCTOBER	WAGYU
NOVEMBER	BRANGUS
DECEMBER	

**For more information
about your breed’s Spotlight Issue, contact:**

THE CAROLINA CATTLE CONNECTION

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Pasture Management Systems, Inc.

MILE OF FENCE PROGRAM

New Members by County in 2026 (as of 6-15-26)

Alamance	0	Cumberland	2	Johnston	6	Randolph	3
Alexander	5	Currituck	0	Jones	1	Richmond	1
Alleghany	1	Dare	0	Lee	3	Robeson	22
Anson	4	Davidson	1	Lenoir	0	Rockingham	3
Ashe	2	Davie	0	Lincoln	5	Rowan	6
Avery	0	Duplin	3	McDowell	3	Rutherford	19
Beaufort	2	Durham	0	Macon	6	Sampson	4
Bertie	0	Edgecombe	1	Martin	1	Scotland	0
Bladen	3	Forsyth	1	Madison	0	Stanly	1
Brunswick	0	Franklin	4	Mecklenburg	0	Stokes	2
Buncombe	23	Gaston	0	Mitchell	1	Surry	2
Burke	12	Gates	0	Montgomery	3	Swain	0
Cabarrus	1	Graham	0	Moore	2	Transylvania	2
Caldwell	3	Granville	11	Nash	7	Tyrrell	0
Camden	0	Greene	0	New Hanover	0	Union	3
Carteret	0	Guilford	23	Northampton	0	Vance	2
Caswell	2	Halifax	2	Onslow	0	Wake	5
Catawba	10	Harnett	1	Orange	4	Warren	1
Chatham	4	Haywood	15	Pamlico	2	Washington	0
Cherokee	0	Henderson	8	Pasquotank	0	Watauga	2
Chowan	0	Hertford	0	Pender	1	Wayne	3
Clay	0	Hoke	1	Perquimans	0	Wilkes	8
Cleveland	4	Hyde	0	Person	0	Wilson	11
Columbus	0	Iredell	4	Pitt	1	Yadkin	4
Craven	2	Jackson	3	Polk	0	Yancey	1

Grand Total 309



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New NCCA Members for 2026

During the Membership Committee meeting at the 2007 N.C. Cattle Conference, members decided to list the name and county of residence of **NEW** NCCA members in *The Carolina Cattle Connection*. A new member is someone who has never been a member or has rejoined after a brief break in their membership.

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Funds to Help Bolster New World Screwworm Response

By AMANDA KERR, N.C. State University

Three N.C. State University (NCSU) researchers with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) have received funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help combat the spread of the New World screwworm.

The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has awarded \$105 million for a total of 40 projects as part of its New World Screwworm Grand Challenge initiative, which focuses on four core priorities:

- Enhance sterile NWS fly production to improve program efficiency and capacity.
- Develop novel NWS traps and lures to modernize detection and early warning systems.
- Advance NWS therapeutics and treatments to reduce animal health impacts and strengthen response capability.
- Develop tools that bolster preparedness and response, including repellents, ecological modeling, wildlife surveillance, or other innovative approaches.

The New World screwworm is a flesh eating blowfly that targets living mammals, laying eggs in open wounds that can quickly turn fatal if left untreated after the larvae hatch and begin to feed. For decades, the destructive pest was eradicated from the U.S. through the use of sterilized males to prevent reproduction. However, the parasite's numbers have rebounded, and the screwworm has been found in Texas and New Mexico.

CALS faculty selected for USDA New World screwworm funding include:

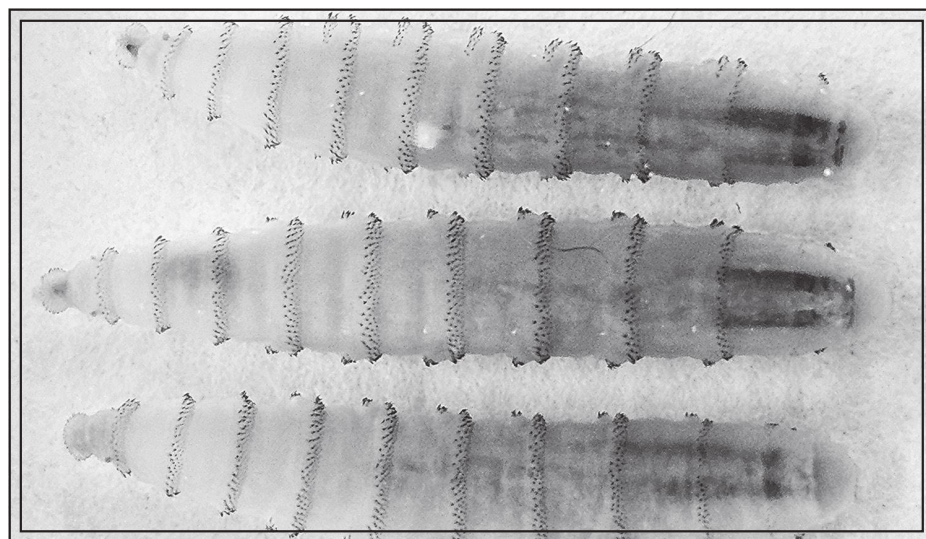
Maxwell Scott – a professor of entomology and expert in the genetics and lifecycle of the New World screwworm – “Next Generation Male Only Screwworm Strains for Enhanced Sterile Insect Technique Programs.”

Yu Takeuchi – associate director for innovations with NCSU's Center for Integrated Pest Management – “Developing a Forecast Informed Management Framework for Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) Prioritization to Prevent New World Screwworm Establishment.”

Loganathan Ponnusamy – principal research scholar who specializes in arthropod microbe interactions, will serve as a co-principal investigator with Luis Escobar, an associate professor at Virginia Tech – “Next Generation Technologies for New World Screwworm Preparedness: Advanced Forecasting, Precision Surveillance, and Social Response.”

In addition to USDA funding, Scott has also received a Rapid Outcomes from Agricultural Research grant from the Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research (FFAR), in collaboration with the biotechnology company Agragene.

Scott, whose work has helped develop genetics based solutions to control screwworm through the production of only sterile males,



is focusing his new research on several approaches to produce fit sterile males, including CRISPR based methods.

“In the new FFAR project, we are using CRISPR gene editing technologies to produce males that are already sterile and provide a fitness benefit,” Scott says. “The goal is to develop an alternative way to produce competitive sterile males without the cost and liabilities of gamma irradiation.”

Takeuchi's project involves the development of a framework called SWIFT (Screwworm Integrated Forecasting Technology) that integrates suitability modeling, detection probability, and dispersal potential. The framework will help improve national and regional capacity for early detection, rapid response, and long term management of screwworm. Ponnusamy's research aims to create a precision surveillance system for trapping New World screwworm flies using microbial attractants. Promising formulations of the lures will be deployed at agricultural sites in Guatemala to evaluate their effectiveness.

“The spread of screwworms into the U.S. emphasizes the urgent need for effective tools that monitor their movement, forecast their spread, and support rapid action to protect agriculture across North America,” Takeuchi says.



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NCSU Expert Offers Insight on Stopping the New World Screwworm

By D'LYN FORD, N.C. State University

N.C. State University (NCSU) entomologist Maxwell Scott is among a handful of people worldwide with the most thorough understanding of the genetics and lifecycle of the New World screwworm, a blowfly that lays its eggs in wounds or vulnerable spots in livestock, pets, wildlife, and humans and feeds on their living tissue.

Scott's work has helped identify genes that can be used to develop biology based solutions to control screwworm that are more effective and less expensive. Through U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funded research, his lab team developed a male only line of screwworms that's now under review with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the name NovoFly.

Scott teaches his graduate students about U.S. screwworm suppression efforts that kept the blowfly from spreading from South America up through Mexico and into the U.S. for decades. And on June 3, when USDA experts announced that a case of screwworm had been confirmed in Texas, Scott, who was visiting the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) in Edinburg, Tex., got a tour of the USDA's new sterile fly distribution center and equipment a stone's throw away — right before giving a scheduled presentation on screwworm to ranchers in Houston.

We asked Scott to provide insight on efforts to eradicate the New World screwworm and explain new genetic approaches to control the parasite.

While you were in Texas a few days ago, you toured some of the new screwworm control facilities there. What did you see?

I had two days in McAllen, and I visited the USDA APHIS facility in Edinburg. I went there primarily because we have a new project doing CRISPR and gene editing in Mexican fruit flies, which is a problem there in the Rio Grande Valley. They arranged for me to visit the new distribution center for sterile male screwworm flies, which is walking distance from the lab where the fruit flies are. They were very busy as you might expect because the first cases had just turned up in Texas, and they were being asked to distribute more sterile flies from the center.

The flies are coming up from Panama. That's the only rearing facility online and they're shipped as pupae that have been sterilized with radiation. At the distribution center in Texas, they do all the processing to get the flies distributed in the area. They can do it from trucks, such as the ones I saw, and they can also suspend pupal cases from trees and the flies come out of the pupae. I also think they were expecting at least one of the [specialized] planes to come up from Panama or Mexico. These planes are set up to distribute the flies from the air, which is the most efficient way to do it. So it was all new. Looks like a fantastic distribution facility. I was impressed by how quickly they pulled this together, and it seems to be working well.

You also gave a presentation on screwworm to members of a regional cattle association in Houston. How did it go? Yes, for two days I was in Houston for the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association summer meeting. They invited me to come there and speak about screwworm and the male only lines we'd made. As might be expected, there was a lot of interest in the work we had done and the prospect of using a male only line for future sterile releases. They seemed happy that I turned up in person.

They've had over a year to prepare — since a major outbreak began in Central America in 2025. So my sense was that the cattle ranchers are ready for this. They're well prepared, and our peer institution, Texas A&M, has been very active working through the Texas AgriLife in educating folks on staying up-to-date with what the treatments are. And at the conference, they were distributing [collection and testing] kits because it's really important that people do disclose if they've got infested livestock and collect the maggots and put them in ethanol and send them off for a formal ID.

What's happened with the male only screwworm strains that were developed by your lab with USDA funding? Since the 1950s, what we've done is sterilize screwworm pupae using radiation and then release both males and females. So people just talk about the sterile males because they're the active component, but the sterile females are there. They don't help. They're competing with the fertile females for matings. We know if we release only males that the genetic suppression from releasing the sterile males will be more effective. My lab led the development of male only strains that carry a gene that is lethal to females but is repressed by



Maxwell Scott by a new ground dispersion truck that can disperse about two million sterile flies.

adding tetracycline to the diet. So, in the mass rearing factory, the population can be expanded by using a diet with added tetracycline, but in the final release generation, omitting tetracycline from the diet causes females to die and only males to be produced. We tested the genetic systems out first at N.C. State in a blow fly that is related to screwworm. Promising genetic systems were sent to Panama for evaluation in New World screwworm. The initial work in Panama was led by Carolina Concha, a researcher from my lab, with considerable support from USDA-ARS staff.

At the risk of sounding like one of those late night TV salesmen, there are more advantages to male only strains. In 2016, the initial strains of screwworms we made in Panama produced only males. The females died at the pupal stage. But that meant that first they consumed the customized diet for larvae, which is a big cost in rearing them.

In 2020, we re-engineered the system. It took quite some effort to get this working, where the females died right at the beginning of development, so they didn't consume any diet as larvae. That meant that if you were putting 100,000 eggs on a tray of diet expecting to get 50,000 males and 50,000 females, you could now seed that tray with twice as many eggs, knowing half of them are going to die. You still produce 100,000 flies, but now instead of males and females, you have only males. So you've doubled the capacity of the mass rearing facility.

But there's more. With this fly, the dose of radiation required to sterilize females is really high, probably twice what's needed for males. If we're doing a male only release, we can reduce the radiation, which makes the whole thing easier and produces fitter males, because the radiation takes a toll on the flies. And for this technique to work, the released males have to be fit. They have to compete with fertile males for mates. And so improving their fitness helps improve the overall system. There's also a biosecurity advantage to these male only strains if you've got a big factory that's producing millions and millions of flies. With the male-only strains, if any escape, they're only going to produce males.

A final advantage of these is that they're marked with a fluorescent protein. So they're easy to identify in the field. If you have the right goggles and light, you can see them express red fluorescence because they already carry a marker.

At what point did this male only strain become ready for EPA review as NovoFly? About a year ago, the USDA decided to resurrect that strain that was made in 2017. A former postdoctoral researcher with my group, Alex Arp, had been based in Panama and worked there for a couple of years before he was hired as a research geneticist with the USDA ARS. He took the lead on this with a lot of support within the administration.

The submission to EPA was over 150 pages, and it's to the point now where the first public comment phase is finished. Once the EPA responds to the public comments, then there will be a second public comment period.

To test the strain in the field in Panama, which has not been done, they need regulatory approval from the Panamanian government. Hopefully, they'll get it because we did receive approval for an earlier field test with radiation sterilized males. And then if it

does well, then it's potentially something they could consider using in the U.S., pending EPA registration. Even if we had EPA approval, that's not approval to use it in Mexico. So the process is complex, but I'm glad it's gotten this far.

You've also done research that involves gene drives, which "drive" a trait through the population. What do we know about the effectiveness of gene drives compared to sterile male releases?

Gene drives are based on non-Mendelian inheritance, the ability to push a trait through the population. You can do the mathematical modeling that [NCSU scientists] Fred Gould and Alun Lloyd did, and the models show that far fewer males will need to be released to suppress the population. For the sterile insect technique, you've got to release about ten times as many steriles as wild type flies that are out there. You need a 10-to-1 release ratio, and you've got to keep doing it. With a gene drive, conservatively we could release one gene drive male for every four that are out there. So, 40 times less would be needed using those estimates.

What will you work on next? We have applied for funding to use CRISPR technology to sterilize the males rather than using radiation.

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Artificial Intelligence Meets the Beef Cow

– Turning Data Into Better Decisions

Artificial intelligence is quickly becoming one of the most talked about topics in agriculture, but for most beef producers, the real question isn't what AI is; it's whether it delivers value on the ranch.

The message is clear — AI has real potential in beef production, but only if it is grounded in practical application.

The biggest misconception about AI is that it starts with technology. In reality, it starts with data. Clean, timely, consistent data is the foundation. Without it, even the most advanced tools will produce unreliable results. For many operations, the opportunity is not in adopting AI immediately but in improving how data is captured and used on operations.

Where AI becomes powerful is in expanding what can be measured. The beef industry has long relied on a limited set of traits. Today, tools such as sensors, cameras, and machine learning models make it possible to capture new types of information — calf vigor, individual feed efficiency, health events, and carcass performance. These data points can reshape management decisions and genetic progress.

More importantly, AI is shifting the industry from hindsight to foresight. Rather than recording what has already happened, producers can begin using data to predict what is likely to happen next — whether that's identifying animals at risk of illness, improving breeding decisions, or optimizing harvest timing. That shift is where AI starts to deliver real economic value.

Labor challenges are accelerating this shift. Many operations are managing with fewer people and less experienced labor. AI enabled tools can help bridge that gap by identifying issues earlier and providing decision support in real time. These tools don't replace stockmanship — they strengthen it, allowing producers to focus where it matters most.

However, one point the panel strongly agreed on — AI is not a silver bullet. Technology should not be adopted for adoption's sake. The most successful applications start with a clear problem — whether improving grazing utilization, increasing reproductive efficiency, or capturing better downstream data. If AI solves that problem, it creates value. If it doesn't, it adds complexity.

Producers also need to think carefully about data ownership and access. As more technology enters the industry, producers should consider who controls the data and whether it remains accessible over time.

The beef industry is still early in this journey — closer to the early days of the internet than a finished product. But the direction is clear. The operations that will benefit most are those that focus on fundamentals, stay disciplined about data, and adopt technology with purpose.

New and emerging platforms are helping connect data across the supply chain by linking producers, feedyards and processors to turn information into better decisions and continuous improvement. AI will not replace producers, but it will increasingly separate those who can turn data into decisions from those who cannot.

*Originally published in the
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*Thank You
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Are Your Bulls Ready for Turnout?

By KACIE McCARTHY, *University of Nebraska*

As the breeding season approaches for many producers, bull readiness is critical to ensure reproductive success. With the majority of U.S. beef cows bred by natural service, bull fertility has a direct impact on pregnancy rates, calving distribution, and overall herd profitability. Preparing bulls ahead of turnout can help minimize reproductive risk and protect the genetic and economic investment producers make in herd sires.

Think 60 Days Ahead – Spermatogenesis, the production of sperm, is a 61 day process in bulls; therefore, it will take upwards of 60 days to have normal sperm again following an injury/insult. Factors that can decrease sperm production are disease, fever, injury, and extreme environmental conditions. Therefore, it is important to monitor and identify if a bull has experienced any injury to the scrotum/testis. Identifying issues early provides time for recovery or alternative management before turnout.

Breeding Soundness Exams – Timing and Expectations – Conducting a BSE approximately 4–6 weeks before turnout is strongly encouraged. This timing allows producers to retest or find a replacement bull.

During a BSE, a veterinarian evaluates:

- Physical examination, which includes a scrotal circumference measurement, foot and claw condition, and mobility scores
- Semen quality for motility and morphology
- Rectal exam to evaluate accessory sex glands
- Examination of prepuce and penis for adhesions, warts, or scarring of tissues
- Testing for venereal diseases such as Trichomoniasis

To successfully complete a BSE, a bull must have at least 30 percent sperm motility, 70 percent normal sperm morphology, and a minimum scrotal circumference based on age. Bulls meeting these minimum requirements are classified as satisfactory potential breeders. If a bull does not pass one of these tests, he is either classified as deferred (meaning it is recommended that the bull be tested again) or as an unsatisfactory potential breeder.

Value of a BSE – Does It Pay? The cost of a BSE is minor compared to the potential economic loss from reduced pregnancy rates, extended calving seasons, and open cows. A single subfertile or dominant bull could have a large impact on your breeding group if you are unaware of their breeding potential.

Considerations Beyond a Breeding Soundness Exam – While a BSE is an essential tool, it does not evaluate all factors influencing reproductive success.

• **Bull to Cow Ratio** – Bull to cow ratio refers to the number of cows a bull can successfully breed, with national averages of approximately 25 cows per mature bull and 15 cows per yearling bull. While some operations use higher bull-to-cow ratios, excessively high stocking rates can increase the risk of missed heats and later calving cows, particularly when estrus is concentrated or



terrain limits bull movement.

• **Bull Libido and Effectiveness in Breeding** – Bull libido, or willingness to breed, cannot be evaluated during a BSE and must be assessed once bulls are exposed to females in estrus. Bulls may pass all components of a BSE yet fail to actively breed cows, making early observation of breeding activity critical to identifying and correcting problems before they result in open cows. Physiologically, bulls may have high libido, but due to physical injury, structural, or behavioral issues, be unable to breed cows.

• **Social Behavior** – Bull social behavior also influences reproductive performance under natural service conditions, due to the social ranking of bulls within the herd hierarchy. Dominance is expressed more strongly in older bulls (i.e., 3–4 years of age and older) and is more related to seniority than any other factor. We may see the effects of dominance having greater impacts when we have lower bull to female ratios and limited estrus activity within a herd. Keep in mind that dominant bulls may impregnate more cows, and therefore, subordinate bulls may have limited reproductive performance and fewer calves. Conversely, if dominance is associated with low semen quality or low sex drive, then herd fertility may be compromised.

Putting it All Together – Semen quality of an individual bull will change, and periodically evaluating a bull's mating ability and libido should be considered. Consult with your local veterinarian about performing breeding soundness exams in your herd bulls. Herd bulls have a large influence on many aspects of an operation, including profitability, calf crop, and genetic improvement. With 90 percent of beef cows in the United States bred by natural service, managing bulls to optimize breeding performance is important.

New World Screwworm

– Steps to Take Against the Pest

The sterile insect technique (SIT) is the method used in the 1960s to eradicate New World screwworm (NWS) from the U.S.; it is the cornerstone of our nation’s response to this pest. According to USDA, SIT uses gamma radiation to irradiate NWS pupae and create sterile male flies. This practice does not impact the male flies’ longevity, searching behavior, or mating ability, but when produced and released, sterile male flies mate with wild female flies to lay unfertilized eggs. Since female NWS flies normally mate only once, the NWS population progressively reduces and is, ultimately, eradicated.¹

Last year, USDA announced the planned development of a new sterile fly facility in Edinburg, Tex., at Moore Air Force Base that is expected to produce 300 million flies per week, and development of the facility is expected to begin late this spring. A joint program between USDA and Panama currently produces about 100 million sterile flies per week for dispersal at the Panama–United States Commission for the Eradication and Prevention of Screwworm Infestation in Livestock (COPEG) facility in Panama.²

As U.S. producers wait for more SIT capacity and prepare for NWS cases in the U.S., cattle producers should take steps to prepare to mitigate damage from NWS. The pest is a foreign animal disease, and it is imperative that producers report NWS if suspected to stop the spread early.

Steps to take:

- Frequently inspect cattle and pay close attention to tick bites, cuts, and dehorning/branding sites.⁴
- Immediately treat any open wounds, scratches, or scabs. screwworms in wounds are killed by direct application of a wound dressing.³
- Do not let larvae fall onto the ground, as they will pupate and continue the life cycle. Larvae can be killed by placing them in alcohol.
- Closely monitor new calves and mothers. NWS often lay eggs on the navel areas of calves and the vulva and perineum of cows. On bulls and steers, monitor the sheath/prepuce as well.³
- Pay close attention to nasal passages and eyes for signs of larvae (maggot) infestation.³
- Minimize access of wild animals (birds, feral hogs, etc.) to cattle to the greatest extent possible.³
- Practice good biosecurity measures like frequently cleaning clothing, boots, vehicles, and equipment on your farm or ranch.³

To find more recommendations for biosecurity practices to implement on your operation to protect your herd, visit www.bqa.org/resources/biosecurity-resources. If you suspect NWS activity in your cattle, contact your veterinarian immediately.

References

¹Eradicating New World Screwworm with Sterile Insect Technique. www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/factsheet-eradicating-nws-sit.pdf.

²USDA Announces Completion of Sterile Fly Dispersal Facility in Texas|USDA. www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2026/02/09/usda-announces-completion-sterile-fly-dispersal-facility-texas.

³New World Screwworm Resources. www.ncba.org/education-resources/industry-updates-resources/new-world-screwworm-resources.

N.C. Cattle Receipts, Trends, and Prices
for the Month of MAY 2026

Cattle Receipts: 14,706 • Previous Month: 17,917
Feeder supply - 24% steers • 43% heifers • 33% bulls

SLAUGHTER CLASSES

	Avg. Wt.	Price
Cows - % Lean		
Breaker	1,513	\$160.73
Boner	1,279	\$173.94
Lean	1,071	\$152.94
Bulls - Yield Grade 1-2	1,534	\$198.36

FEEDER CLASSES

FEEDER STEERS (Medium and Large 1-2)

Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	425	490.16	\$2,083.18
450-500	476	469.61	\$2,235.34
500-550	522	446.71	\$2,327.36
550-600	573	428.51	\$2,455.36
600-650	624	409.44	\$2,554.91
650-700	673	387.83	\$2,610.10

FEEDER BULLS (Medium and Large 1-2)

Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	422	467.65	\$1,973.48
450-500	475	449.03	\$2,132.89
500-550	520	420.79	\$2,188.11
550-600	574	404.04	\$2,319.19
600-650	621	381.26	\$2,367.62
650-700	671	351.86	\$2,360.98

FEEDER HEIFERS (Medium and Large 1-2)

Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	424	439.15	\$1,862.00
450-500	473	424.83	\$2,009.45
500-550	522	390.99	\$2,040.97
550-600	572	368.01	\$2,105.02
600-650	622	337.88	\$2,101.61
650-700	669	322.40	\$2,156.86

Source: N.C. Department of Agriculture - USDA Market News Service
Raleigh, N.C. - 919-707-3156

New World Screwworm on-farm preparedness

New World Screwworm (NWS) is a devastating pest that can affect livestock, pets, wildlife, occasionally birds, and in rare cases, people. Adult screwworm flies are about the size of a common housefly (or slightly larger).¹

Defend your farm or ranch against NWS using proper safety and cleanliness practices.



Prevention of wounds and NWS myiasis

- Measures should be implemented to prevent animal wounds and avoid NWS myiasis.²
 - To the extent possible, eliminate or delay performing wounding procedures such as dehorning, branding, shearing, ear notching, tail docking and castration.²
 - Livestock should be handled with care, and pens should be inspected for sharp objects.²
 - Measures should be taken to protect livestock from other wound-causing parasites, such as ticks.²
 - Untreated umbilical cords of newborn animals and foot lesions are commonly infested sites.²
- Immediately treat all wounds with approved insecticides (see below); it may also be prudent to follow up with precautionary spraying of animals with insecticide before transport.²

Health/Safety/PPE of first responders or farmers & ranchers

- If responders have open wounds, those injuries should be thoroughly cleansed and covered.²
- For most responders, the appropriate level of personal protective equipment (PPE) during screwworm response efforts will be level D.²
 - Level D is the lowest level of protection, and requires only a basic work uniform to protect the body against contamination and no respiratory protection.²
 - Disposable gloves, and possibly cut-resistant gloves (if warranted by specific activities), are needed for hand protection. Some response activities may require the use of protection higher than level D.²

Cleaning & disinfection

- Because NWS larvae are obligate parasites, requiring living flesh to remain viable, it is extremely unlikely that larvae would be transported on animal products or byproducts.²
 - There is a small risk that carcasses of very recently deceased animals might still be infested, and they should be thoroughly checked before leaving the control area.²
 - Be aware that larvae typically and rapidly vacate a wound and pupate when the host animal dies.²
- NWS larvae normally pupate in about 1 inch of soil, but pupation can occur anywhere there is a slight buildup of organic material, such as in feces. Maggots can also pupate in other protected sites, like cracks and crevices, or below bedding materials.²
 - Areas where infested or susceptible animals have been held, including vehicles, must be immediately and thoroughly cleaned and treated with insecticide.²
 - Animal material that may contain viable pupae, such as manure, should be disposed of in a manner that will conclusively kill that stage; incineration is preferred.²
 - To avoid these situations, inspections and cleanings of transport vehicles should be conducted in areas with concrete or otherwise hard and sealed floors. Trucks, trailers or other conveyances used to transport infested animals should also be treated with insecticide before further use.²



New World Screwworm larvae



SCAN QR FOR AN APPROVED LIST OF TREATMENTS FOR NWS, REFER TO THE FDA GUIDANCE FOR VETERINARIANS



SCAN QR FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING INSECTICIDE USE FOR NWS

References:

1. <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/nws-pest-card.pdf>
 2. https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/nws_myiasis_disease_strategy.pdf
- Images: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/bro-new-world-screwworm.pdf>

NCBA President's Report

Raising More Than Cattle — Investing in the Next Generation

By GENE COPENHAVER, National Cattlemen's Beef Association



Every generation of cattle producers shares two responsibilities — caring for the land and livestock entrusted to us today and preparing the people who will lead this industry tomorrow. One of the most encouraging signs for the future of cattle production is the growing number of young people stepping into roles as producers, researchers, advocates, and leaders through state association leadership development programs or NCBA's Young Cattlemen's Conference, which has just completed its 43rd year.

Across the country, students and young cattlemen and women are either continuing family operations or entering the industry for the first time, bringing fresh ideas and energy while honoring the values that have sustained cattle production for generations. At NCBA, engaging the next generation is a top priority. As a grassroots organization built by producers willing to step up and lead, NCBA is committed to creating opportunities that help young people build skills, gain experience, and understand their voices matter in shaping the future of our industry.

NCBA has expanded programs designed to provide students and young producers with real world experience, professional development, and industry connections. Through educational sessions, career exploration opportunities, Beef Quality Assurance certification, networking with industry leaders, internships, and scholarships, students gain exposure to careers in production, research, policy, and agribusiness while learning how NCBA serves as the trusted voice of U.S. cattle producers.

NCBA's student engagement efforts reach a wide range of participants, including 4-H and FFA members, undergraduate and graduate students, and those conducting advanced research that will shape the future of cattle production. These programs help young professionals build skills that will serve them — and the industry — for years to come.

Internships remain an important part of preparing the next generation. NCBA internships in Washington, D.C., Colorado, and at major industry events provide students with hands-on experience in government affairs, meetings and events, marketing, educational programming, and association operations. These opportunities give students valuable insight into both the policy and business sides of the cattle industry.

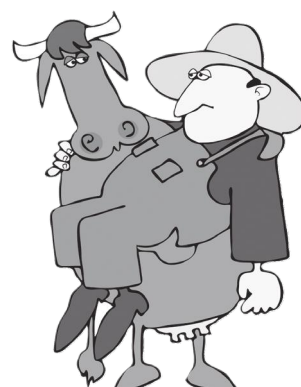
Through the National Cattlemen's Foundation and generous

industry partners, NCBA awards scholarships annually to undergraduate and graduate students pursuing careers in agriculture. These scholarships help support future industry leaders while easing the financial burden of higher education. Producers interested in supporting these efforts can learn more on the National Cattlemen's Foundation website.

NCBA student membership is open to students under the age of 25 and provides access to scholarships, internships, educational resources, webinars, and a nationwide network of producers and industry professionals. Student membership also helps young people strengthen their resumes through involvement with the nation's largest and oldest trade association representing cattle producers.

Over the past year, NCBA has also launched new initiatives to strengthen youth engagement, including the Collegiate Partnership Program, which allows agriculture-based student organizations to partner with NCBA and offer memberships to their students. The effort has already more than doubled student membership involvement. NCBA also created an Industry Internships page on [NCBA.org](https://www.ncba.org) that connects producers and agribusinesses seeking help with students looking for hands-on experience in the cattle industry.

Nearly 95 percent of cattle operations are family owned, making succession and leadership development critical to the future of our industry and our food system. By investing in students and young producers today, we are helping ensure American cattle production remains strong for generations to come. I am proud of the work already underway and confident in what lies ahead for this industry we all care so deeply about.



**Have you forgotten something?
Make sure your cattle loving friends are members of your state and national associations!**

Every producer knows there's strength in numbers.



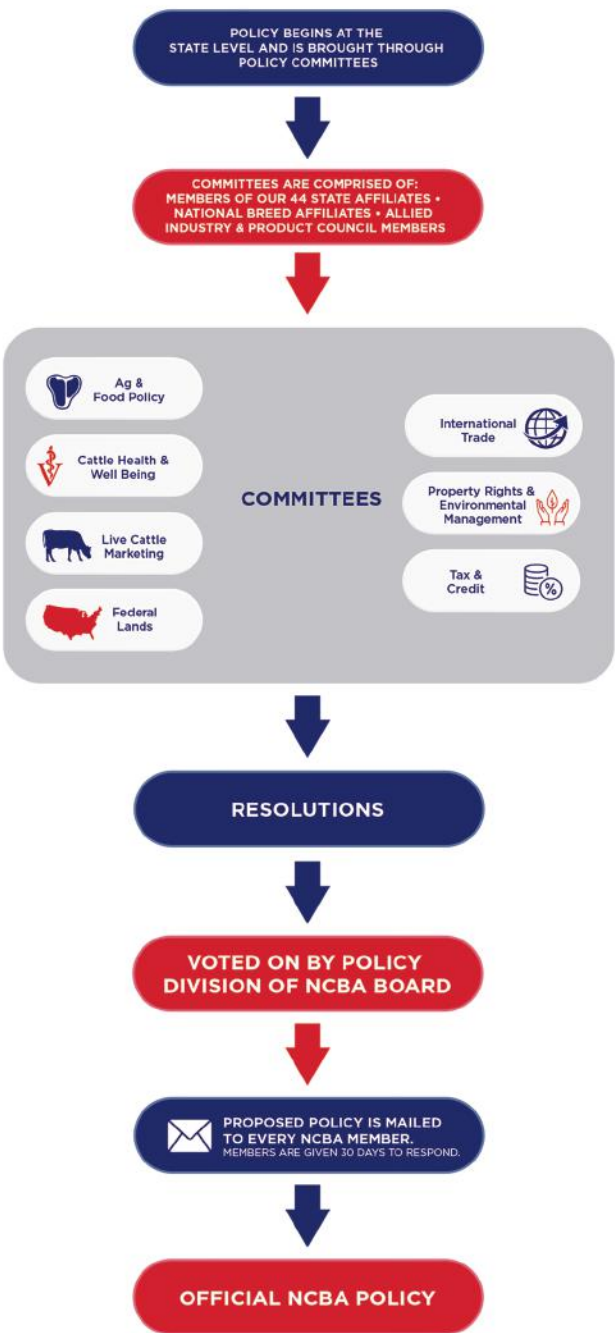
NCBA is in Washington, D.C., every day **defending the cattle and beef industry**. Our strength comes from our members, and **we need your help**. Help secure the future by recruiting your friends, family and neighbors to join our **fight**. Recruit new members and be rewarded for your support with special gifts and prize drawings!



Scan QR code and
join us today!

To learn more, visit [NCBA.org](https://www.ncba.org) or call
us at 866-233-3872

HOW NCBA DRAFTS POLICY



The National Cattlemen's Beef Association serves your interests through defending your operation and property from government overreach, protecting the legacy of your farm/ranch with tax relief, expanding trade opportunities that add value to your cattle, and protecting the beef industry from attacks by animal rights activists.

NCBA's policy process begins and ends with individual members. As a grassroots driven organization, individual producers set the course for NCBA's advocacy work in Washington, D.C. by submitting policy resolutions on the local and state levels. NCBA's state affiliate associations then present their proposed resolutions at our annual national meetings. From there, passed resolutions are collected on a ballot and mailed to every NCBA member where they have the choice to vote for or against all proposed policies. Once approved, passed resolutions then become official NCBA policy.

Our grassroots policy process ensures that cattle producers of all sizes and in every region are well represented in the halls of Congress, the White House, and federal agencies.

AS AN NCBA MEMBER, WE SERVE YOUR INTERESTS BY:

- Promoting the policy of cattlemen in our Nation's Capital.
- Defending your personal liberties and private property rights against government overreach.
- Protecting the legacy of your farm or ranch by advocating for tax relief.
- Adding value to your cattle by expanding trade opportunities.
- Delivering new and innovative education opportunities to help you improve the management of your farm and ranch.
- Protecting the beef community from attacks by animal rights activists.

JOIN TODAY!



NAME

BUSINESS/RANCH NAME

ADDRESS LINE 1

CITY/STATE/ZIP

CELL PHONE

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EMAIL

RECRUITED BY

NCBA PRODUCER

COW-CALF PRODUCER

HERD SIZE

☐ 1-100 \$160

☐ 101-250 \$320

☐ 251-500 \$480

☐ 501-750 \$693

☐ 751-1000 \$960

☐ 1001-1250 \$1,227

☐ 1251-1500 \$1,493

☐ 1501-1750 \$1,760

☐ 1751-2000 \$2,027

☐ 2001+

\$2,027 + \$0.4053/head =

STOCKER/FEEDER

☐ \$160 + \$0.4053/head =

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

NON-CATTLE OWNERS, NON-VOTING

☐ Individual \$160

☐ Business \$213

☐ Student \$53 (24 or younger)

TOTAL AMOUNT PAID

PAYMENT METHOD

☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express

Card #

EXP CVC

Signature



Checks payable to National Cattlemen's Beef Association



HONORING HERITAGE

Protecting What Matters



JOIN TODAY

☎ 866.233.3872

Join NCBA and stand with fellow cattlemen and women, creating a powerful network that advances the interests of the cattle industry. Together, we strengthen our rural communities and our industry, preserving a heritage that is the backbone of America and your family's legacy.



National Cattlemen's
Beef Association



National Cattlemen's
Beef Association

2026 NCBA POLICY PRIORITIES

NCBA's policy focus for 2026 is to defend the free market, promote free trade, and reduce regulatory burdens to preserve opportunities for producer profitability and strong beef demand. There will be an increased focus on elevating and defending the voices of real cattle producers and grassroots membership driven policies.

- Continue to press the administration to roll back harmful regulations to keep working lands working.
- Enhance and strengthen U.S. mitigation measures against the incursion of New World Screwworm.
- Protect the U.S. cattle herd from foreign animal diseases and pests through heightened awareness and preparedness actions.
- Expand market access for U.S. beef exports and hold trade partners accountable to ensure equivalent animal health and food safety standards for imported beef.
- Promote science-based nutrition policies and sound, fact-based information for consumers.
- Push for further hours-of-service flexibility, increased truck weights, and continue delaying ELD requirements for livestock haulers.
- Safeguard the U.S. cattle and beef supply chain by working with the administration to ensure there is a strong workforce to limit processing disruptions for producers.

NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION

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A Message from the CEO

Celebrating Our Semiquincentennial

By COLIN WOODALL, *National Cattlemen's Beef Association*



I am using semiquincentennial as often as I can this year because you only get to celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States of America once. For those of you who are history buffs like me, you know there have been many instances in our nation's history that could have prevented us from ever getting this far. Our country is here thanks to the grit, tenacity, and sheer determination of those who came before us. The U.S. cattle and beef business is deeply woven into the broader story of the United States. We have shaped, and been shaped by, 250 years of exploration, expansion, innovation, and economic change. At every major point in American history, the grit, tenacity, and determination of cattle producers have shown through.

These quintessential American traits are why our cattle and beef industry looks nothing like it did in 1776, and it is a far cry from the first cattle introduced to this country by the Spanish explorers. We are producing the highest quality beef we've ever produced, and our customers are rewarding us with their repeat business. This quality is a result of decades of research and continual improvement.

Much of the success we have seen in beef quality and consumer demand is thanks to work funded by the Beef Checkoff. Just as we have seen throughout American history, the Checkoff was born out of necessity. Our need was to stem the trend of consumers replacing beef with chicken. Knowing we could only count on ourselves to get the job done, the Checkoff was included in the 1985 Farm Bill and has been one of the best self help programs that's ever been created, I think.

Checkoff funded research has been the foundation of our progress. Nutrition research has answered many questions and debunked the myths surrounding beef consumption. This base of knowledge is why the Dietary Guidelines for Americans is now beef friendly. Safety research has led to numerous practices and procedures that make beef safer than it's ever been. Product quality research has found ways to maximize the value of each carcass through muscle profiling and the development of new cuts. Our sustainability research has demonstrated that there is no better steward of the land than cattle producers.

Our work on issues management and public relations has helped the industry navigate many challenging issues like BSE, highly

pathogenic avian influenza, the Hallmark/Westland recalls, and more. We've also evolved with the times and are effectively using social media to get beef in front of the consumer on the platforms they use daily. Beef. It's What's For Dinner. remains one of the most effective advertising campaigns, and this summer it is celebrating another American milestone.

It has been 100 years since the Mother Road, Route 66, began transporting people from Chicago to Los Angeles. Now that summer road trip season is upon us, we are teaming up with our state beef council partners in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California to promote the Route 66 Beef Trail. The Beef Trail is a digital passport travelers can download to point them to the best steakhouses, barbecue joints, and diners along this legendary route. To find out more, go to beefitswhatsfordinner.com and search "Route 66."

As I write this, the Fourth of July is only a few weeks away, and I know the air will permeate with the aroma of beef cooking in backyards. Why would you want to celebrate any other way? Beef is one of the iconic symbols of our great country, and the American cattle producer has long been the embodiment of American independence. For 250 years, the cattle industry has grown alongside our nation while feeding its people, shaping its culture, and driving its economy. So, here's to Independence Day and celebrating all that is great about America with a heaping serving of beef! Happy Semiquincentennial!



Barba New HPI Print and Digital Coordinator. Hereford Publications Inc. (HPI) welcomed Morgan Barba as the print and digital coordinator on May 26. The Henderson, Colo., native graduated from Fort Hays State University, and she will complete her master's degree in agricultural education and communications at Kansas State University (K-State) in August of 2026.

"I'm excited to join the American Hereford Association (AHA) team and contribute to promoting the Hereford breed through both print and digital media," Barba says. "Building strong relationships with breeders and producing high quality content that supports their programs is something I'm passionate about, and I look forward to contributing to the continued growth and momentum of the Hereford breed."

Barba will play a key role in coordinating marketing and publication projects from concept to completion across both print and digital platforms. She will manage HPI's digital presence and serve as the liaison between creative services clients and HPI staff.

"We are excited to welcome Morgan to the HPI team," says Kane Aegerter, AHA director of seedstock marketing. "Her education, talent, and dedication to the Hereford breed will make her a tremendous asset to our organization. We are confident she will bring expertise, exceptional service, and support to our breeders and staff, helping HPI continue to grow and serve our customers at the highest level."

Barba is a well rounded agricultural communications professional, with experience in producer engagement, commodity association communications, and print and digital media production. She's completed internships with the Kansas Soybean Association, Adams County Extension, K-State, Kansas State Fair, and National Laboratory of the Rockies.

Barba can be reached at mbarba@hereford.org.



Rock Solid. "It is often believed today that successful breeders have some mysterious method of which others are ignorant. Instead, the principles of the successful breeder have been exceedingly simple. The difficulty lies not so much in knowing the principles as in applying them," according to Sewell Wright, a livestock geneticist in 1920.

Tom Field, the Paul Engler Chair of Agribusiness Entrepreneurship at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, shared Wright's quote and the context for it during the opening session of the American Hereford Association (AHA) Educational Forum, held in conjunction with the 19th World Hereford Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Field set the stage for sharing current AHA research results, advancements in genetic prediction, and more.

AHA members have always valued objective, collaborative research as essential requirements for breed improvement. Insights shared during the Forum helped participants connect current and previous Hereford research and how each step in the deliberate journey paved the way to current possibilities.

For instance, Mark Enns, the John E. Rouse Chair in animal breeding at Colorado State University (CSU), shared details about the school's collaborative research project with AgNext and the AHA. It's designed to estimate in-breed heritabilities and evaluate genetic and phenotypic correlations among three environmental sustainability traits — dry matter intake, methane emission rate, and blood urea nitrogen — and growth and carcass traits.

Based on results so far, Enns explains, "There are genetic differences within the AHA population for both methane emissions and blood urea nitrogen concentration. If selection pressure is applied, we will see genetic change in those traits."

Shane Bedwell, AHA chief operations officer and director of breed improvement, also shared plans for ongoing research aimed at better understanding bovine congestive heart failure (BCHF) in late day feedlot cattle and how Hereford genetics reduce the risk.

All of this represents the leading edge of exploring necessary new frontiers, but Bedwell reminded the Educational Forum that it is possible because of the thoughtful, deliberate way AHA leadership

has addressed the need for the continuous collection of accurate phenotypic data over time, as well as genotypic data these days.

The AHA was an early adopter of whole herd reporting, for example. It remains one of only two breeds in the U.S. that requires whole herd reporting for data to be included in the breed’s genetic evaluation.

Hereford is the only breed in the U.S. with a genetic proving program — the National Reference Sire Program (NRSP) — designed to compare the genetic merit of young Hereford sires in real world, commercial beef cattle production. The mainstay NRSP test herd at Olsen Ranches in Harrisburg, Neb., is the reason the breed has such an enviable amount of individual animal dry matter feed intake and carcass data to use in its genetic evaluation for the benefit of all users of Hereford genetics. Incidentally, this is how and where data is also collected for methane emissions, nitrogen excretion, and individual animal water intake. The Olsen herd also provides an extraordinary amount of BCHF data.

More than 400 Hereford sires have been tested through the NRSP since its inception in 1999. Those sires influence 7 percent of the more than two million AHA performance pedigrees.

“The National Reference Sire Program is simply unrivaled in the data collected and the resource it provides as a major breed improvement tool,” Bedwell says.

Take More, Make More. Maternal heterosis borne by complementary crossbreeding is tough to beat for leveraging production efficiency and economic potential in commercial cow/calf herds.

Consider a 14 percent advantage in first calf weaning rate at two years of age, as seen in Table 1. That’s the difference between Hereford sired, black baldy females and commercial Angus females in the AHA ongoing cooperative research project with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). It is designed to quantify the differences between breeding either Hereford or Angus bulls to commercial Angus cows over time and retaining replacement heifers.

“In a 100 head cow herd, that’s 14 more calves. If you put a \$2,000 price tag on each weaned calf, that’s \$28,000. That’s \$280 more per cow. That’s a lot of dollars,” says Dan Shike, lead project researcher and interim head of the UIUC Department of Animal sciences.

Plus, 18 percent more of the Hereford sired females bred back on

time for their second calf.

The study began with 600 commercial Angus cows. Half were bred to six different Hereford bulls; the other half to Angus bulls. All bulls used represented the top 15 percent of each breed for its maternal and terminal indexes. This is a fall calving herd. Results so far underscore the significant advantages enabled by Hereford genetics and maternal heterosis.

“I’m not looking for the cow that wins in one year. I’m looking for the cow that wins over her lifetime and stays in the herd, stays in production, because she has some built-in fertility, some resilience, which leads to longevity,” Shike says. “They wean more calves, and more of them breed back. That’s Hereford genetics; that’s maternal heterosis.”

More efficiency and fewer inputs – “The baldy female, in my opinion, is second to none as a replacement female, from the milking ability we get from the Hereford and the carcass merit to sustainability,” says Paul Koffskey of Groendyke Ranch manager in Nash, Oklahoma. “If you’re not using that to your advantage, I think you’re leaving money on the table.”

Koffskey was no stranger to Hereford genetics and heterosis when he came to Groendyke Ranch several years ago. At the time, ranch owner John Groendyke said his goal was increased ranch efficiency. Keep in mind the ranch runs about 2,000 commercial cows across four ranches in three counties. The cows are all Angus — 75 percent black and 25 percent red. These days, Hereford bulls breed about 80 percent of the cows.

“There’s got to be a cow. In my opinion, with the rising input costs, whether it be feed, fertilizer, labor, or whatever, the cow has to be as efficient as she possibly can, whether it be weaning half or more of her body weight, having a calf every year, or breeding back to have a calf at the same time every year and maintaining a body condition score (BCS) of 6 or better with no inputs other than during the wintertime,” Koffskey says. “That’s what you’re after, and I guess you could probably call that intensive management, but it should be with the input costs we have nowadays.

Hereford News continued on the next page

Table 1: 2-year-old Females

	Angus-sired	Hereford-sired
Feb. body weight (lbs.)	1,014	963
Feb. BCS	4.8	4.6
Feb calf body weight (lbs.)	243	252
Milk	8.3	9.7
DMI	31.1	27.8
April calf weaning weight (lbs.)	387	373
First-calf weaning rate	76%	90%
Rebreed (AI)	60%	68%
Rebreed pregnant	75%	93%

Source: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Hereford News *continued from the previous page*

Thinking back to the UIUC study, Shike explains feed efficiency of the Hereford sired baldies so far accounts for a savings of \$90 per head per year in feed costs, compared to their straight black counterparts. That’s with hay priced at \$150 per ton.

All of that helps explain the enviable market for the baldy replacement females Groendyke Ranch is quickly building, at least in general terms. More specifically, the customer base is growing because Koffskey matches bulls to individual cow groups of 50–100 head based on whether they’re building replacements or terminal calves. He is also a stickler for using bulls with complete genetic evaluation data.

“I can prove in black and white what those traits mean to us when I’m putting those bulls with different groups of cows. It’s a hugely successful tool to use,” Koffskey says.

Groendyke Ranch was named the AHA Commercial Producer of the Year in October. The audience saw a video during the award presentation, providing an overview of the ranch and its cattle.

“That group of black baldy heifers you saw just weaned their second calves at 215 days actual age. The steer calves weaned at 665 pounds and the heifer calves at 655 pounds,” Koffskey told the crowd. “The breed back was 97 percent on a 45 day breeding season. How much more efficient do you want to be? It’s all because of the Hereford influence.”

From the first year Groendyke Ranch incorporated Hereford bulls to the third year, Koffskey says weaning weights increased 62 pounds. He explains, “Some people may think that’s not a lot, but on 2,000 calves, you do the math, and it’s all because of the Hereford advantage. There’s no question about that.”

Most producers would rather have more pounds to sell than fewer, of course. But the cost of added pounds is also part of the equation.

Greg Thoma, AgNext director for agricultural modeling and lifecycle assessment at Colorado State University, used data from the UIUC study to conduct a lifecycle assessment for a 1,000 head operation over ten years. The model considered a 1,000 cow commercial Angus herd using Hereford bulls and retaining its own replacement heifers or using Angus bulls and retaining its own replacement heifers.

Although weaning weights were heavier in the Angus sired scenario, increased fertility, breed back, and longevity meant more weaned calves over time in the Hereford sired model, which yielded



45,728 more pounds of steers and open heifers to sell.

For instance, 13 percent more of the Hereford sired females in the UIUC study remained in the herd as four-year-olds, compared to the straight black group, as seen in Table 2.

“I’ve seen the difference in other breeds that we have tried to use, whether it’s a terminal cross or not. And by far, the Hereford breed is, hands down, way above it,” Koffskey says. “Whether you put a Hereford bull on the black cows, red cows, Charolais cows, or whatever, I don’t think you get that sort of hybrid vigor explosion with any other genetic cross.”

Shane Bedwell points out Hereford genetics provide additional heterosis due to the fact they are the least related of the *Bos Taurus* breeds, as documented by MARC.

“Heterosis and hybrid vigor on the black hided cow or the red hided cow, in my opinion, is a genetic explosion, whether it’s a steer or a heifer, whether they’re going to the feedlot or they’re being retained as bred female, as we do,” Koffskey says.

Stamped for more – AHA’s new advertising campaign embodies these realities with a direct, powerful message — Hereford genetics stamp baldies with the indelible white face, which signifies more docility, fertility, longevity, and efficiency.

“This new advertising campaign also serves as a gateway,” says Taylor Belle Matheny, AHA director of communications. “The ad directs producers to a new landing page — [Hereford.org/stamped](https://www.hereford.org/stamped) — where they will find compelling videos, photos, and articles telling the powerful story of maternal heterosis built with Hereford genetics while inviting them to learn more and subscribe to a variety of free information, including the *Baldy Advantage* magazine and the monthly *Bald Faced Bottom Line* e-newsletter.”

Table 2: Implications of Longevity

	Angus-sired (%)	Hereford-sired (%)	% Difference
2-year-olds calved	89	95	6
First-calf weaning rate	76	90	14
Pregnant 2-year-olds	75	93	18
3-year-olds calved	69	83	14
In herd as 4-year-olds	67	80	13

Source: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign



Matheny notes all “Stamped for More” ads, communications, and promotional material are free for AHA members to use and available under the media tab at [Hereford.org](https://www.hereford.org).

“This is more than a new advertising campaign; it represents a cohesive, powerful message that speaks to solutions for commercial cow/calf producers,” Ward says. “I encourage every AHA member to magnify the message by utilizing these materials in their individual marketing efforts.”

About the American Hereford Association. AHA, with headquarters in Kansas City, Mo., is one of the largest U.S. beef breed associations. The not-for-profit organization along with its subsidiaries — Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) LLC, Hereford Publications Inc. (HPI) and American Beef Records Association (ABRA) — provides programs and services for its members and their customers, while promoting the Hereford breed and supporting education, youth, and research.



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Blackstrap Steaks with Caramelized Onions

Total Time — 40 minutes

- 4 beef chuck eye or ranch steaks, cut 3/4 inch thick (*about 6 oz each*)
- 1/4 cup molasses
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- Salt
- Fresh basil sprigs (*optional*)



Caramelized Onion Relish

- 1½ cups chopped sweet onion
- ¾ cup chopped red bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh basil
- 2 tablespoons toasted pine nuts
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

To prepare caramelized onions, spray a medium nonstick skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Heat over medium to medium-high heat until hot. Add onion; cook 5–7 minutes, stirring frequently. If necessary, re-spray the skillet with cooking spray. Add bell pepper;

continue cooking 3–5 minutes or until onions are browned and bell pepper is crisp tender, stirring frequently. Stir in sliced basil, pine nuts, 1 tablespoon vinegar, and black pepper. Season with salt, as desired; keep warm.

Meanwhile, combine molasses, Worcestershire sauce, and 1 tablespoon of vinegar in a small bowl.

Heat a second large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Season steaks with black pepper. Place steak in a pan; cook 9–11 minutes (ranch steaks, 8–11 minutes) for medium rare (145°F) to medium (160°F) doneness, turning occasionally and brushing with a molasses mixture during the last 3–4 minutes of cooking.

Season the steaks with salt, as desired; serve with the caramelized onions. Garnish with basil sprigs, if desired.

Makes 4 servings.

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Williamson and Campbell Join BioZyme Leadership Team.

W Matt Williamson of Saint Joseph, Mo., and T.J. Campbell of Brownsburg, Ind., are the newest hires to the BioZyme Inc. leadership team. Williamson is the vice president of business development. Campbell is the director of sales diversification. In their roles, they will work with the global animal nutrition and fermentation company to help grow sales and develop strategies across the BioZyme family of brands.

“Adding professionals like Matt and T.J. to our team will strengthen our already WOWing workforce. Matt is a strategist who knows how to get teams to work together to drive efforts to the next level,” said Lisa Norton, BioZyme President and CEO. “With T.J.’s experience in equine sales and management, I have high hopes that he can help our diversification efforts in the companion animal brands.”

Meet Matt Williamson – Williamson brings extensive experience in strategic planning, business management, consulting, collegiate level coaching, and sales to his role as Vice President of Business Development. In this role, he is responsible for driving sustainable, profitable revenue growth through sales excellence and market expansion. This role integrates sales leadership with business development to optimize performance, strengthen commercial infrastructure, and unlock current and new revenue streams.

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NEWS

“I’ve been aware of BioZyme and have known Lisa and Bob [Norton] for many years. I’m looking forward to being part of a high quality, morally driven team. BioZyme is like a well oiled machine that is highly thought of in the community, and I’m really excited to think I can be a part of the team building and revenue generating in the future here,” Williamson said.

Williamson earned a bachelor’s degree in exercise science and a teaching certificate in biology from Missouri Western State University, followed by a master’s degree in administration from Northwest Missouri State University. He spent 26 years coaching college football across numerous states before transitioning into sales — a move that



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allowed him more time with his family. He and his wife of 26 years, Andrea, have two sons, Zach and Brock. In his free time, Williamson enjoys spending time with family, golfing, and duck hunting.

Meet T.J. Campbell – As the Director of Sales Diversification, Campbell offers a wealth of sales and business analysis experience to BioZyme. In this newly created position, he will create and implement the strategies and teamwork needed to ensure BioZyme achieves its goal of sales diversification. His past experiences include time with Antares Custom Saddles/Sellerie de France, Devoucoux, and the World Equestrian Center.

“I couldn’t be more excited to pursue my passion for sales and am enthusiastic about using my skills and network to diversify the companion animal brands, including equine, dog, cat, sheep, goat, and poultry. I believe in Amaferm, as we have used the Vitalize products and have seen them work. Furthermore, this is a company where everyone’s opinions are heard. I couldn’t think of a better place to be,” Campbell said.

Campbell is a lifelong equine enthusiast who hails from a multigenerational equestrian family. Spending his formative years in Michigan, training in a high level barn, both his mom and sister are professional horse trainers. Although he shares a passion for riding, his interests always leaned more toward the business of sales, equipment, farm, and event management.

He is married to Taylor — also an avid show jumping equestrian — with two sons, J.T. and Logan. He enjoys supporting their endeavors, which include competitive riding, football, and soccer. They live in the greater Indianapolis area.

How to Care for Show Livestock. *Five Daily Habits That Build Healthy, Ring Ready Champions.* Champions don’t just happen when they walk off the trailer into the show ring at any given fairgrounds. Building champions begins long before that, in the quiet rhythm of daily chores. Banners are built at home, in the show barn, with buckets, feed pans, brushes, and hours of exercise and TLC.

If you are looking for how to care for show livestock, the answer is not complicated. It is consistent. It takes dedication, a routine, and the drive and desire to set goals and work hard enough to reach them.

Healthy, competitive show animals are the result of small habits practiced intentionally. Whether you are working with cattle, sheep, goats, or swine, the fundamentals remain the same. Sound structure, balanced nutrition, proper hydration, healthy skin and hair, and long term joint support create animals that not only look in the show ring but also thrive at home.

We asked the BioZyme experts, makers of Sure Champ, for some advice on how they #Preptowin. Sure Champ is a line of livestock show supplements that proactively work to assist with the challenges created by the show environment. Here are five daily habits that turn good livestock into backdrop ready contenders.

1. Build a Consistent Daily Routine – Before diving into hair products or feed additives, understand this — livestock perform best when their environment is predictable.

Animals thrive on rhythm. Feeding at the same time each day, exercising on schedule, maintaining clean bedding, and minimizing unnecessary stress all support digestive health and immune function. Stress disrupts appetite. Disrupted appetite affects fill,

bloom, and performance.

A strong daily routine should include:

- Morning health check and feeding time
- Clean, fresh water regularly
- Exercise or movement
- Hair/skin, rinsing session
- Evening feeding and observation

When learning how to care for show livestock, start by mastering consistency. A calm, structured program allows the animal’s genetics and nutrition plan to express themselves fully. We recommend feeding animals every 12 hours. If you feed at 6:00 a.m., plan your evening feeding at 6:00 p.m., which gives the livestock ample time to digest, and it should find them hungry again. Animals are very habitual, and they rely on you, so don’t let them down.

2. Prioritize Balanced Nutrition Every Single Day – Feed is not just fuel; a solid nutrition program is the foundation that builds your program.

Show animals are asked to perform at a higher level than commercial livestock. They must maintain muscle shape, adequate condition, hair quality, and bloom while staying structurally sound. That requires intentional ration formulation.

Understand Species Specific Needs – Each species has unique nutritional demands:

- Show cattle require balanced energy for muscle and finish without excess fat.
- Show lambs need controlled growth and muscle expression.
- Show goats demand careful protein management for muscle definition.
- Show pigs require a precise amino acid balance for shape and structure.

Work with a nutritionist or experienced feed representative to develop a livestock feed ration that fits your animal’s stage of growth and target show date.

Monitor Body Condition Closely – Daily observation matters. Evaluate:

- Top line shape
- Rib cover
- Muscle definition
- Fill
- Hair and skin quality

If you are serious about how to care for show livestock, do not wait for weekly weigh-ins to make adjustments. Small, timely feed tweaks are far more effective than dramatic last minute corrections.

Support Digestive Health – A healthy digestive system drives nutrient absorption. Consider incorporating supplements that support gut integrity and microbial balance, like Sure Champ, powered by AO-Biotics Amaferm. Amaferm is a prebiotic research proven to enhance digestibility.

We know that 70 percent of health begins in the digestive system, and when animals stay healthy, they perform. When digestion is efficient, animals maintain bloom and consistency in appearance.

BioZyme News *continued from the previous page*

Sure Champ products contain Amaferm, and when fed daily, help animals maintain appetite and gut health, keeping them performing.

3. Hydration Is Performance Insurance – Water is the most overlooked nutrient in the show barn. Make sure your show livestock have constant access to fresh, clean water. No exceptions.

Hydration impacts:

- Feed intake
- Muscle function
- Temperature regulation
- Skin and hair condition
- Joint lubrication

Even slight dehydration can reduce appetite and dull overall appearance.

Daily Hydration Practices:

- Scrub water buckets daily. Residue reduces intake.
- Monitor consumption trends. Sudden drops signal problems.
- Adjust to weather changes, especially heat and travel.

Show animals often experience stress during hauling and exhibition. Stress can reduce water intake, which in turn reduces feed consumption. Preparing animals to drink from familiar buckets at shows can minimize disruption. For instance, if your show pigs are accustomed to drinking from nipple waterers, be sure to train them to drink from buckets at home before traveling to shows so they don't go off water at the show.

Another way to ensure your animals stay hydrated at shows is to incorporate Sure Champ Liquid Boost into their diets. Liquid Boost is a liquid for all livestock designed to provide immediate support to the animal's digestive and immune system. It contains Amaferm, MOS, which helps normalize gut microflora and support the immune system, and flavoring that helps drive intake of feed or water.

When considering how to care for show livestock, hydration should never be an afterthought.

4. Skin & Hair Health is Vital – Grooming is not cosmetic fluff. It is functional management. Daily skin and hair care stimulates circulation, distributes natural oils, and allows early detection of health concerns. It is also a training opportunity, reinforcing calm behavior and trust between exhibitor and animal.

Daily grooming habits for show cattle:

- Rinse or wash as needed. Rinsing daily helps train the hair. Washing three times a week with a conditioning shampoo helps keep the animal clean and helps build back natural oils.
- Blow dry thoroughly to promote hair growth and work the hair in the direction you want it to lay.

- Brush and train hair daily

Grooming is also inspection time. Check for:

- Swelling in joints
- Hoof condition
- Skin lesions
- Signs of lameness

To understand how to care for show livestock effectively, treat daily hair and skin care as both preparation and prevention.

5. Protect & Support Joint Health Early – Soundness wins banners. Structural issues end careers.

Show animals, particularly those pushed for muscle and growth, will stress joints and connective tissue. Daily exercise programs, firm footing, and proper nutrition all play roles to maintain joint integrity.

Exercise with Intention – Controlled exercise strengthens muscles while supporting joint stability. Avoid abrupt increases in workload. Gradual conditioning builds resilience.

For example:

- Walk livestock consistently on appropriate surfaces.
- Use structured exercise plans for your animals.
- Monitor all show projects closely for stiffness or uneven movement.

Maintain Proper Footing – Bedding should provide cushion without being overly soft. Hard, slick surfaces increase the risk of injury. Clean, dry pens reduce strain and slipping.

Nutritional Joint Support – Trace minerals such as copper, zinc, and manganese contribute to connective tissue development. Balanced nutrition supports skeletal strength and long term soundness. We recommend adding Sure Champ Joint Juice to your daily feeding plan as animals get bigger and add more stress to their joints. Joint Juice is a liquid product for show livestock designed to support joint health utilizing patented technology. Joint Juice contains MHB3, a patented high molecular weight hyaluronic acid, and lubricates joints and supports mobility while also supporting sustainable soundness.

Joint health is not something to address only when a problem appears. It should be built into your daily care plan from the start.

The Power of Observation – Perhaps the most underrated habit in caring for show livestock is simply paying attention.

Successful exhibitors develop a sharp eye. They notice:

- Subtle appetite changes
- Shifts in posture
- Variations in manure consistency
- Changes in behavior

Early intervention prevents small issues from becoming major setbacks. A cough caught early. A slight limp addressed quickly. A minor feed adjustment made before weight drifts too far.

Travel & Show Day Considerations – Daily habits should continue even on the road.

During show season, regardless if you are at home, on the road, or at a show:

- Maintain feeding schedule as closely as possible.
- Offer familiar water sources. Start adding Sure Champ Liquid Boost at least three days before travel until you get home from the show. Some exhibitors feed it year round.
- Continue skin and hair health routines.
- Provide adequate rest between classes.

Travel stress can disrupt digestion and hydration. Planning ahead preserves condition and composure.

Animals that are calm, hydrated, and consistent in their routine show with confidence. Judges notice balance, well trained animals

that enter the ring well presented, but those traits are rooted in care long before show day.

Mental Preparation for Exhibitors – Livestock showing is not only about the animal. It is also about the exhibitor.

Daily responsibility builds discipline, time management, and problem solving skills. Youth exhibitors who master how to care for show livestock learn to:

- Set goals
- Track progress
- Adjust strategies
- Accept feedback

The show ring becomes a classroom. The barn becomes a laboratory for growth.

Final Thoughts on How to Care for Show Livestock – If you are searching for how to care for show livestock, remember this — excellence doesn't happen overnight. It happens over many days and long nights. In the show barn, out in the yard, behind the scenes.

Healthy, show ready livestock are not created through last minute polishing. They are built through:

- Consistent routines
- Balanced, species specific nutrition
- Intentional hydration management
- Purposeful skin and hair health practices
- Proactive joint and structural support

Each bucket scrubbed. Each ration weighed. Each brush stroke applied. Each step walked.

Over time, these actions stack into strength, hair popping confidence.

Show season will always bring nerves and anticipation. But when daily habits are strong, preparation replaces panic. The animal enters the ring not as a gamble but as a reflection of disciplined care.

In the end, learning how to care for show livestock is about stewardship. It is about honoring the responsibility that comes with feeding, training, and presenting an animal at its very best.

About BioZyme Inc. With a continued commitment to excellence, the BioZyme Stockyards location earned the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) and Feedstuffs 2024 Feed Facility of the Year honor. BioZyme Inc., founded in 1951, develops and manufactures natural, proprietary products focused on animal nutrition, health, and microbiology. With a continued commitment to research, BioZyme offers a complete line of feed additives and high density, highly available vitamin, mineral, trace mineral, and protein supplements for a variety of animals, including cattle, pigs, poultry, sheep, goats, horses, and dogs. BioZyme brands include AO-Biotics, VitaFerm, Gain Smart, Sure Champ, Vitalize, DuraFerm, and Backyard Boost. With headquarters in St. Joseph, Mo., the company reaches a global market of customers that stretches into countries across five continents. For more information about BioZyme, visit www.biozymeinc.com.

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zoetis NEWS

Zoetis Shares Resources and Tips for New World Screwworm Response and Management.

When it comes to protecting your animals, planning ahead is critical. With the recent New World screwworm (NWS) incursion in Texas, it's important to be aware of your herd's risk level and be vigilant in checking your livestock for signs of an infestation.

"We understand that livestock producers and animal caretakers are facing a stressful and uncertain time as New World screwworm threatens what they've worked so hard to build. At Zoetis, we stand with you because protecting your animals means protecting your livelihood, your families, and your way of life. Planning ahead is critical, and we're

committed to being a resource and a partner," said Kristin Kasselmann, Senior Vice President, Head of Livestock & Equine, Zoetis.

Producers are encouraged to diligently observe livestock daily, if possible, for signs of NWS infestation. An intense smell of decay is often the first indication, so you will want to investigate to find the source of the odor.

Be prepared to report a New World screwworm infestation to your veterinarian or state veterinary authority as quickly as possible. Now is a good time to review and bookmark the U.S. Department of Agriculture response playbook for quick, practical guidance.

"If you haven't already prepared a plan, we encourage producers to work closely with their veterinarian to put written action plans in place now," said Dr. Mitch Blanding, Director of beef technical services, Zoetis. "It will be critical to quickly report any case of New World screwworm. We want to be able to document and isolate these cases, clean and debride the wounds where possible, remove any larvae that are easily removed, and apply approved topicals to the wound to promote healing."

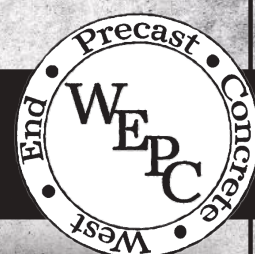
Your herd veterinarian will be the best resource in determining prevention and treatment options.

Zoetis offers Dectomax-CA1 Injectable (*doramectin injection*), the only nonprescription conditionally approved parasite control product labeled for prevention and treatment of infestations caused by NWS larvae in cattle and for prevention of reinfestation for 21 days.

West End Precast

276-228-5024

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J-Bunks - \$275

U-Bunks - \$225

Calf Bunks - \$175

Water Troughs - \$450
Pads - \$300
Tanks

Prices FOB Wytheville, Virginia • Delivery Available

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the emergency use of the approved/conditionally approved products Dectomax/Dectomax-CA1 for the following indications:

- The prevention and treatment of infestations caused by *Cochliomyia hominivorax* larvae (myiasis) in dairy cattle (lactating dairy cows, dry dairy cows, and replacement dairy heifers 20 months of age and older), except for calves to be processed for veal.
- The prevention of infestations caused by *C. hominivorax* larvae (myiasis) in swine, sheep except for lactating sheep, and deer.
- The prevention of infestations caused by *C. hominivorax* larvae (myiasis) in horses one year old and older.

Please refer to the following fact sheets for additional information:

- EUA – Dairy Cattle, Swine, Sheep, and Deer Fact Sheet
- EUA – Horse Fact Sheet

For more information on NWS, the current conditional approval and the EUA for Dectomax/Dectomax-CA1, visit zoetisus.com/NewWorldscrewworm.

Dectomax-CA1 is conditionally approved by FDA pending a full demonstration of effectiveness under NADA 141-616.

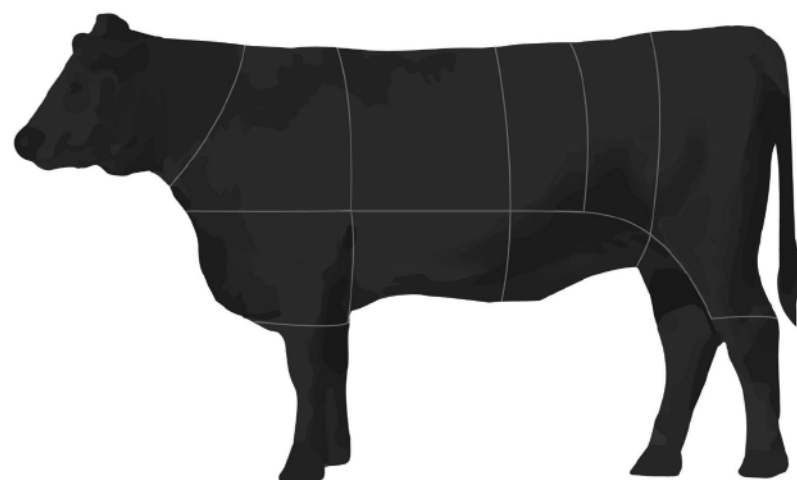
Important Information:

- Consult your veterinarian for assistance in the diagnosis, treatment, and control of parasitism.
- Dectomax-CA1 Injectable (Cattle only), as authorized under the Conditional Approval for use against New World screwworm, has a 35 day pre-slaughter withdrawal period. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal. Do not use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older, except under the conditions of the Emergency Use Authorization. Use in dogs may result in fatalities.
- Dectomax/Dectomax-CA1 Injectable Emergency Use Authorization, authorized for the duration of the emergency declaration, does not provide full or conditional approval, but the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has determined that Dectomax/Dectomax-CA1 may be effective and safe. Dectomax/Dectomax-CA1 Injectable, as authorized under the Emergency Use Authorization for use against New World screwworm, has a 35 day pre-slaughter withdrawal period for lactating dairy cattle, dry dairy cattle, replacement dairy heifers, sheep and deer, and a 24 day pre-slaughter withdrawal period for swine. Treated calves and calves born to treated cows should not be processed for veal. Withhold milk from dairy cattle for 468 hours (19.5 days) after treatment has ended. Not for use in lactating sheep. Not for use in horses less than one year of age.

About Zoetis. As the world's leading animal health company, Zoetis is driven by a singular purpose — to nurture our world and humankind by advancing care for animals. After innovating ways to predict, prevent, detect, and treat animal illness for more than 70 years, Zoetis continues to stand by those raising and caring for animals worldwide — from veterinarians and pet owners to livestock producers. The company's leading portfolio and pipeline of medicines, vaccines, diagnostics, and technologies make a difference in over 100 countries. A Fortune 500 company, Zoetis generated revenue of \$9.3 billion in 2024 with approximately 13,800 employees. For more information, visit www.zoetis.com.

SELL MORE BEEF

**by joining North Carolina's
official marketing program
for agriculture –
Got to Be NC!**



- * List your farm and products in our Find Local directory *
- * Receive marketing assistance *
- * Have opportunities to meet wholesale and retail buyers *



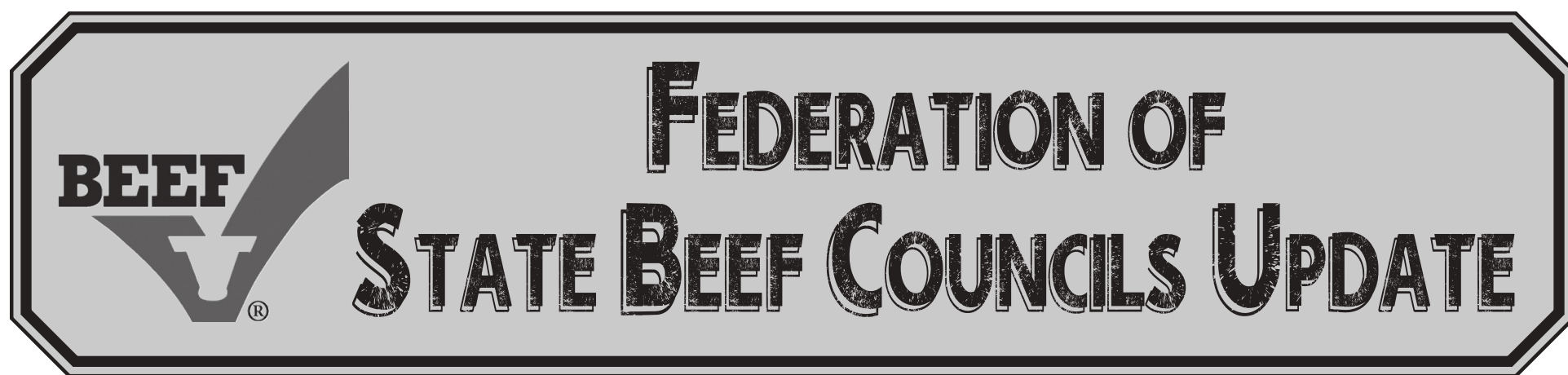
Got to Be NC Find Local is an online directory of farms selling beef from a pound of ground to bulk packages. List your farm and products for free.

The site is promoted across all North Carolina counties and receives thousands of visits each month.

Join today!



For more information about the Got to Be NC program, contact April at April.Keeton@ncagr.gov



United in the Federation. In 1963, when individual state beef councils (SBCs) saw a need to unify and leverage resources, the Federation of State Beef Councils was established. The tradition of collaboration continues today, and for the last 30 years, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) has been home to the Federation of State Beef Councils. As both home to the Federation and a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, NCBA plays a vital role in helping state beef councils access expertise and extend programming to get the most from producers' investment.

Together, the Federation and the Beef Checkoff are driving demand for beef by using grassroots producer input during Checkoff Committee meetings and the Beef Promotion Operating Committee. Here are a few examples of how producers guide this important work and how states benefit from their voluntary investment in the Federation of State Beef Councils.

Health Professional Toolkits – Toolkits, highlighting beef's role in health, are sent directly to doctors' offices to help correct outdated notions/perceptions and empower medical health professionals to confidently recommend beef. Post program evaluations consistently indicate that doctors are more likely to recommend beef after receiving these toolkits. In 2025, 26 states invested more than \$160,000 to supplement national Checkoff dollars. These additional funds lowered the costs per reach and expanded national impact, which enabled the program to reach more than 5,000 health professionals and more than 500,000 consumers.

Nutrition Seminar Program – The program works in collaboration with SBCs to provide influential, credentialed health and nutrition experts to speak on cutting edge issues at State Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics meetings, as well as other statewide meetings and conferences whose audiences include health professionals. A wide range of topics and speakers are available and can be tailored to meet each state's needs. In 2025, 27 states utilized the program.

E-Commerce – To ensure that beef's positive message is reaching existing as well as new online buyers, NCBA and the Beef Checkoff partner with national grocery retailers for e-commerce efforts. Ads inspire consumers to purchase beef throughout the year. Digital ads capture consumers' attention through attractive beef photography showcasing seasonally relevant cuts and messaging along with the Beef. It's What's For Dinner. logo. The ads are placed on the retailer's website and app, as well as on popular lifestyle sites and occasionally on a retailer's social platforms, such as Pinterest.

State beef councils also have the opportunity to partner with

NCBA to increase digital ad placements within their states or in major media markets. More than 20 states have contributed funds to participate in retail e-commerce efforts over the past year. Overall, e-commerce efforts continue to drive beef sales. Partnerships with national supermarket chains and club stores resulted in more than \$50 million in incremental beef sales.

Advertising – NCBA's advertising experts worked with 36 state beef councils in the past year, serving as an in-house advertising agency and helping stretch Checkoff dollars to their maximum potential. The team works with each state to develop goals and objectives, identify potential digital platforms, implement advertising campaigns, and report progress. From digital, audio, and video ads to display ads and even outdoor billboards, more than 114 million beef ad impressions were served on behalf of state beef councils from October 1, 2025, through April 13, 2026. This advertising has resulted in more than 38 million consumer actions and engagements with the Beef. It's What's For Dinner. brand.

Another benefit is the detailed performance analytics available following each campaign. Digital ads are tracked, and states know exactly where and when ads are displayed, who sees them, if they are clicked, and how consumers engage with the information. This is powerful data that SBCs can use to determine effectiveness and plan future campaigns.

Consumer Insights Dashboards – State Consumer Insights Dashboards measure and compare consumer behaviors and preferences related to beef and other proteins in different states to a national benchmark. The data is collected through the Consumer Beef Tracker survey, gathered through a representative survey panel that is in-field 365 days a year. The results provide a directional read with historical trends and can be used as one of many tools to help states plan for their respective fiscal year. The service is offered for free to all states through NCBA's Market Research team.

The Federation at Your Service – In addition to the funds invested, which supplement the integrated state/national plan, state beef council investments also provide services for states and support the governance of the Federation. A variety of services are available at no additional cost to state beef councils, including creative and design services, communications assistance, IT and website support, human resources facilitation, as well as staff and leadership development, training, and education.

To learn more about the Federation of State Beef Councils, visit ncba.org/federation.

Trending in Food & Media

BEEF DEMAND AND PRICES



Cargill reported strong demand for flavor-forward formats that make authentic cooking easier at home. The company pointed to raw marinated beef items like birria-style and guajillo-seasoned beef.²



NBC News discussed how consumer appetites for protein are fueling record meat sales and that beef accounted for 70% of last year's 6.8% jump in U.S. meat sales.³



Media attention remains on beef prices. For the first four weeks of April, there were 68,000 U.S. news articles about beef prices compared to 469,740 about gas prices.¹

NEW WORLD SCREWWORM



News mentions about New World Screwworm increased nearly 25% in April compared to March, while social media mentions more than doubled over that same period.¹



Detections of New World Screwworm closer to the border between Texas and Mexico along with the groundbreaking for a sterile fly facility led to the increase in mentions.¹



Bloomberg and The Wall Street Journal are among the major national news outlets in April that reported on New World Screwworm and potential cattle industry impacts.^{1,4}

BEEF IN THE HEADLINES



Brisket was one of the food items astronauts enjoyed during the Artemis II moon mission in April. The Brisket meal was mentioned more than 3,100 times by U.S. news outlets.^{1,5}



The Washington Post focused on 'boy kibble', simple, high-protein meals with Ground Beef as the main ingredient. More than 250 articles have discussed the trend so far this year.^{1,6}



National media outlets including The New York Times along with Food & Wine continue to feature beef recipes with international flavors.⁷

ARMS #050126-07

1. National Cattlemen's Beef Association. (2025). *Traditional and social media listening dashboards*. Retrieved from Meltwater: www.meltwater.com
2. <https://www.supermarketperimeter.com/articles/13979-cargill-tracks-strong-demand-for-flavor-forward-authentic-easy-cooking>
3. <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/americans-are-eating-meat-industrys-health-claims-rcna267122>
4. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2026-04-24/more-screwworm-cases-in-mexico-threaten-cattle-trade-with-us>
5. <https://nypost.com/2026/03/05/science/mango-salad-beef-brisket-and-5-types-of-hot-sauce-artemis-ii-astronauts-will-chow-down-on-these-189-foods-on-the-moon-mission/>
6. The Washington Post, <https://shorturl.at/TfU3c>
7. <https://www.foodandwine.com/kebab-rolls-11937270>





BEEF CUTS AND RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS

CHUCK		RIB		LOIN		SIRLOIN		ROUND		INGREDIENT CUTS	
Arm Chuck Roast	Cross Rib Chuck Roast	Prime Rib Roast	Porterhouse Steak	Top Sirloin Steak	Top Round*	Kabobs*					
Arm Chuck Steak	Shoulder Roast	Ribeye Steak, Bone-In	T-Bone Steak	Top Sirloin Petite Roast	Top Round Steak*	Stew Meat					
Blade Chuck Roast	Shoulder Steak*	Back Ribs	Strip Steak, Bone-In	Top Sirloin Filet	Bottom Round Roast	Strips					
Blade Chuck Steak*	Ranch Steak	Ribeye Roast, Boneless	Strip Steak, Boneless	Coulotte Roast	Bottom Round Steak*	Cubed Steak					
7-Bone Chuck Roast	Flat Iron Steak	Ribeye Steak, Boneless	Strip Petite Roast	Coulotte Steak	Bottom Round Rump Roast	Ground Beef and Ground Beef Patties					
Chuck Center Roast	Top Blade Steak	Ribeye Cap Steak	Strip Filet	Tri-Tip Roast	Eye of Round Roast	Shank Cross-Cut					
Denver Steak	Shoulder Petite Tender	Ribeye Petite Roast	Tenderloin Roast	Tri-Tip Steak	Eye of Round Steak*	Tenderloin Tips					
Chuck Eye Roast	Shoulder Petite Tender Medallions	Ribeye Filet	Tenderloin Steak (Filet Mignon)	Petite Sirloin Steak	Brisket Flat	Inside Skirt*					
Chuck Eye Steak	Short Ribs, Bone-In	KEY TO RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS Grilling Oven Roasting Stewing Braising Skillet-to-Oven Stir-Fry Broiling Skillet Cooking Pressure Cooking Indirect Grilling Smoking		Sirloin Bavette Steak	Brisket Point	Flank Steak*					
Country-Style Ribs	Funded by Beef Farmers and Ranchers © 2021 Cattlemen's Beef Board and National Cattlemen's Beef Association			LEAN These cuts meet the government guidelines for lean, when it contains less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat and less than 95 mg of cholesterol per 100 grams (3½ oz) and per RACC (Reference Amount Customarily Consumed), which is 85 grams (3 oz).	Short Ribs, Bone-In*						

THE BEEF CHECKOFF

Now Working Twice as Hard for YOU
—Nationally and at Home

Have You Sold Cattle on the Farm?

If so, be sure to send in your checkoff investment.

- It’s the LAW to pay the National \$1.00 Checkoff per head on all cattle sold.
- It’s a wise investment to contribute to the North Carolina Cattle Industry \$1.00 Assessment per head on all cattle sold.

The National (\$1.00) Checkoff and the State (\$1.00) Assessment provides funds needed to help promote beef and the cattle industry.
The Beef Checkoff program is run by producers like you and has played a vital role in increasing the demand for beef.
The North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment will support youth activities, promotion, issues management, research, and education.

National Beef Checkoff/North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment
PRIVATE TREATY SALES CHECKOFF/ASSESSMENT INVESTMENT FORM

Both the seller and the buyer have the responsibility to have the \$1 per head assessment for the National Beef Checkoff and the \$1 per head assessment for the North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment collected and remitted to the N. C. Cattlemen’s Beef Council. This form is designed for the seller to use in private treaty sales of North Carolina cattle.

Date of Sale _____

Seller’s Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Seller’s Signature _____

Buyer’s Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Buyer’s Signature _____

National Beef Checkoff

Total Number of Cattle Sold _____ x \$1.00/head = \$ _____

North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment

Total Number of Cattle Sold _____ x \$1.00/head = \$ _____

Total Amount Remitted \$ _____

Person remitting assessment ☐ Seller ☐ Buyer

Send Form and Remittance to: **N.C. Cattlemen’s Beef Council**
P.O. Box 1207
Cary, NC 27512

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Check No.: _____

Postmark Date: _____



USDA Farm Service Agency UPDATE

Disaster Assistance – Livestock Forage Disaster Program .

The Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses for covered livestock and who are also producers of grazed forage crop acreage of native and improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or acreage planted specifically for grazing. Grazing losses must occur on land physically located in a county experiencing a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county.

LFP also provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who are prohibited by a federal agency from grazing the normal permitted livestock on the managed rangeland due to a qualifying fire.

The qualifying drought and qualifying grazing losses, and/or notification of prohibition to graze Federal land due to fire, must have occurred in the grazing period and crop year. For grazing losses on rangeland managed by a federal agency, an eligible livestock producer may elect to receive assistance for losses due to drought conditions or fire conditions, if applicable, but not both.

LFP is administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Eligible Counties for Drought and Payment Rates – Grazing land or pastureland physically located in a county rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as having a:

- D2 — severe drought — intensity in any area of the county for at least eight consecutive weeks during the normal grazing period is eligible to receive assistance in an amount equal to one monthly payment;
- D3 — extreme drought — intensity in any area of the county at any time during the normal grazing period is eligible to receive assistance in an amount equal to three monthly payments;
- D3 — extreme drought — intensity in any area of the county for at least four weeks during the normal grazing period or rated a D4 (exceptional drought) intensity at any time during the normal grazing period is eligible to receive assistance in an amount equal to four monthly payments; or
- D4 — exceptional drought — in a county for four weeks (not necessarily four consecutive weeks) during the normal grazing period is eligible to receive assistance in an amount equal to five monthly payments.

A map of eligible counties for LFP drought can be found at fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/livestock-forage/index.

Eligible Livestock – Eligible livestock are grazing animals that satisfy the majority of the net energy requirement of nutrition via grazing of forage grasses or legumes and include such species as alpacas, beef cattle, buffalo/bison, beefalo, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, equine, goats, llamas, ostrich, reindeer, or sheep.

Within those species, animals that are eligible include those that are or would have been grazing the eligible grazing land or pastureland:

- During the normal grazing period for the specific type of grazing land or pastureland for the county; or

- When the federal agency prohibited the livestock producer from having livestock graze the normally permitted livestock on the managed rangeland due to fire.

Eligible livestock must:

- Have been owned, leased, purchased, entered into a contract to purchase, or held by a contract grower during the 60 days prior to the beginning date of a qualifying drought or fire condition;

- Have been sold or otherwise disposed of due to a qualifying drought condition during the current production year or up to two production years immediately preceding the current production year if there is a systemic drought condition;

- Have been maintained for commercial use as part of a farming operation on the beginning date of the eligible drought or fire condition;

- Not have been produced and maintained for reasons other than commercial use as part of a farming operation, including, but not limited to, wild free roaming animals or livestock used for hunting, racing or wagering, or consumption by the owner; and

- Not have been livestock that were or would have been in a feedlot on the beginning date of the qualifying drought or fire as part of the normal business operation of the livestock producer grower.

Eligible Producers – To be eligible for LFP, persons or legal entities must be a U.S. citizen, resident alien, partnership of U.S. citizens, a legal entity organized under state law, or an Indian tribe or tribal organization defined in the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act that:

- Own, cash or share lease, or be a contract grower of covered livestock during the 60 calendar days before the beginning date of a qualifying drought or fire;

- Provide pastureland or grazing land for covered livestock, including cash rented pastureland or grazing land as of the date of the qualifying drought or fire that is either:

- Physically located in a county affected by a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county; or

- Rangeland managed by a federal agency for which the otherwise eligible livestock producer is prohibited by the federal agency from grazing the normally permitted livestock because of a qualifying fire.

- Certify that they have suffered a grazing loss because of a qualifying drought or fire; and

- Timely file an acreage report for all grazing land for which a grazing loss is being claimed.

Payments – FSA will calculate LFP payments for an eligible livestock producer for grazing losses because of a qualifying drought equal to payment factors of one, three, four, or five times the LFP monthly payment rate). The LFP monthly payment rate for drought is equal to 60 percent of the lesser of either the monthly feed cost:

- For all covered livestock owned or leased by the eligible livestock producer; or

- Calculated by using the normal carrying capacity of the eligible grazing land of the eligible livestock producer.

Total LFP payments to an eligible livestock producer in a calendar year for grazing losses will not exceed five monthly payments for the same kind, type, and weight range of livestock.

In the case of an eligible livestock producer who sold or otherwise disposed of livestock because of drought conditions in one or both of the two previous production years immediately preceding the current production year, the payment rate will equal 80 percent of the monthly payment rate.

FSA will calculate LFP payments for eligible livestock producers for losses suffered because of a qualifying fire on federally managed rangeland for which the producer is prohibited from grazing the normally permitted livestock. The payment begins on the first day the permitted livestock are prohibited from grazing the eligible rangeland and ending on the earlier of the last day of the federal lease of the eligible livestock producer or the day that would make the period a 180 calendar day period. The payment rate is 50 percent of the monthly feed cost for the number of days the livestock producer is prohibited from having livestock graze the managed rangeland because of a qualifying fire, not to exceed 180 calendar days.

Payment Limitation – The Agriculture Improvement Act (2018 Farm Bill) established a maximum annual per person and legal entity payment limitation for LFP (without regard to any other program) of \$125,000.

Therefore, for 2019 and subsequent program years, no person or legal entity, excluding a joint venture or general partnership, may receive, directly or indirectly, more than \$125,000 total in payments under LFP. The average adjusted gross income (AGI) limitation relating to limits on payments for persons or legal entities, excluding joint ventures and general partnerships, with certain levels of AGI will apply. Specifically, a person or legal entity with an AGI (as defined in 7 CFR Part 1400) that exceeds \$900,000 will not be eligible to receive LFP payments.

Direct attribution provisions apply to LFP. Under direct attribution, any payment to a legal entity will also be considered for payment limitation purposes to be a payment to persons or legal

entities with an interest in the legal entity or in a sub-entity. To learn more, visit the Payment Eligibility and Payment Limitations fact sheet at fsa.usda.gov/payment-limitations.

Enrollment – Eligible livestock producers who are also producers of grazed forage crop acreage must provide a completed application for payment and required supporting documentation to their FSA office by March 1 following the end of the calendar year in which the grazing loss occurred.

Contract growers must include a copy of the grower contract and any other supporting documents required for determining contract grower eligibility.

Supporting documents must show evidence of loss and that grazing land or pastureland is owned or leased. If a loss of grazing was due to a fire that the eligible livestock producer was prohibited by the federal agency from having livestock graze the normal permitted livestock on the managed rangeland due to a fire, supporting documentation received from that federal agency must be provided.

FSA will use data provided by the applicant to determine eligibility for program benefits. Without all required supporting documentation and data, the application will not be able to be approved, and benefits cannot be provided.

To find more information about FSA disaster assistance programs, visit farmers.gov or contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.



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Beef Promotion and Research Program
PRIVATE TREATY SALES CHECKOFF INVESTMENT FORM

Information is required by (7 CFR 1260.201). Failure to report can result in a fine.
Information is held confidential (7 CFR 1260.203).

Today's Date: _____

Seller's Name: _____ Buyer's Name: _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Seller's Signature: _____ Buyer's Signature: _____

Both the seller & the buyer are responsible for making sure that the \$1.50 per head assessment is collected and remitted to the Beef Promotion & Research Board.

Total Number of Cattle Sold: _____ x \$1.50 Per Head = \$ _____

Date of Sale: _____ Person remitting assessment form: Seller ☐ Buyer ☐

* State of Origin of Cattle: _____

* If cattle purchased came from another state within the last 30 days, indicate from which state the cattle were purchased.

Send Report and Remittance to:
SOUTH CAROLINA BEEF COUNCIL
P.O. Box 11280
Columbia, SC 29211

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0093. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1.8 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Help Cattle Bounce Back Faster After Stress. Stress and disease can suppress feed intake, making proactive immune support more important. From weaning and transportation to commingling and even changes in weather, cattle move through a series of stressful events that can challenge their immune functions. These events may be routine on paper, but inside the animals, the biological responses can be significant.

“Stress triggers a hormone called cortisol,” said Chris Reinhardt, Ph.D., technical services nutritionist, Zinpro. “The job of cortisol is to ensure cattle survive the stress event, and survival is often juxtaposed against the animal’s ability to thrive.”

That distinction matters. During acute stress, cattle often reduce feed intake or stop eating altogether. Research has shown that only 65 percent of healthy calves and 50 percent of sick calves consumed feed within 48 hours of arrival at the feedyard.¹

In these situations, nutrients that would normally support growth and immune function are redirected toward short term survival. As Reinhardt put it, “If an animal’s not eating, they’re not thriving.”

So, what should producers do? A good starting point is recognizing that immune support is not separate from overall management. It’s built through timely observation, sound trace mineral nutrition and fast action when cattle begin to show signs of challenge.

“Nutrients such as zinc, copper, and manganese are critical to normal immune cell function and the ability of cattle to respond to health challenges,” said Dr. Reinhardt. “But one of the biggest practical hurdles is that sick or highly stressed cattle are usually the least likely to consume enough feed to meet those needs.”

That is why the highest risk moments often require the most attention. Weaning, transportation, and commingling can all suppress feed intake and immune function, leaving cattle more vulnerable to health challenges such as bovine respiratory disease (BRD).

Trace minerals play a key role in immune response – Practically speaking, producers can think about immune support in two key situations. One is during major stress periods, especially for high risk calves, and the other is during the early treatment window when cattle are pulled for respiratory disease.

“When a calf is pulled for a respiratory challenge, producers should not only think about targeting the disease itself but also about providing the immune system what it needs to help the animal mount its own response,” said Dr. Reinhardt.

In those moments, trace mineral support in a drench or paste can be given to cattle alongside antimicrobial therapy to help deliver the key nutrients they need.

“Ensure the trace mineral source is able to reach the critical tissues and cells within the immune system effectively — at a greater rate and a greater amount — to provide cattle with the tools they need to defend themselves against both virus and bacterial invasions,” notes Dr. Reinhardt.

Spotting sick cattle sooner makes a difference – Early identification of health challenges is one of the most practical management tools available to producers for keeping cattle on track.

“We’ve learned over decades now, the earlier an animal gets treated for respiratory disease, the better the case outcome,” Dr. Reinhardt said. “If we’re late getting that animal pulled and treated,

the case outcome is almost always less certain.”

Training pen riders to spot changes in behavior, attitude, and appetite can help operations respond sooner, though Dr. Reinhardt acknowledged that labor constraints can make consistent daily observation difficult.

Stress and disease cannot be eliminated entirely from cattle production, but they can be managed more effectively. Proactively supporting the immune system can be the difference between cattle simply surviving challenges and continuing to thrive in spite of them.

Animal health and performance technologies such as Zinpro ProFusion are designed to help support the immune system during high risk moments. For more insights, visit zinpro.com/beef.

References

¹Hutcheson, D., Cole, A. *Management of Transit Stress Syndrome in Cattle: Nutritional and Environmental Effects*, *Journal of Animal Science*, Volume 62, Issue 2, February 1986, Pages 555–560, doi.org/10.2527/jas1986.622555x.

About ZinPro. For more than 54 years, Zinpro has improved the health and well being of both animals and people as a pioneer in the research and development of performance trace minerals and innovative nutritional solutions. As a family owned, privately held company, our steady growth can be attributed to employing a world class team of experts, manufacturing quality products, and our steadfast commitment to helping our customers advance the health and performance of their animals. With products marketed in more than 70 countries worldwide, Zinpro is the global leader in advancing animal performance through greater nutrition and is dedicated to creating smarter practices for a better, more sustainable world. To learn more, visit zinpro.com.



ZINPRO®

NEWS

The CEO's Corner



AI Conversation Critical for Dairy's Future

By GREGG DOUD, National Milk Producers Federation

I was first introduced to the possibilities of computer generated data during high school in the 1980s. I later thought it was cutting edge to turn in my grad school homework on a 3½ inch, 1.44 mb disc in the early 1990s. That felt like dizzying technological progress then. That's nothing compared to now.

From easy-to-fake videos to massive energy sucking data centers

on rural land, AI is changing everything from web searches to queries of massive databases to predicting your next purchase. AI technology has quickly permeated all aspects of our lives and is now learning more quickly than we know how to adapt.

Dairy farmers, cooperatives, and the broader industry can't afford to sit on the sidelines. AI's economic effects are simply too great, and its consequences too profound. Dairy economics are unforgiving, consumer expectations are accelerating, and labor — well, every producer knows that story. If we want a resilient, profitable dairy sector for the next generation, mastery and incorporation of AI isn't optional. It's essential.

Let's start with the most basic reality: Margins in dairy remain tight, and volatility isn't going anywhere. Feed costs spike, milk prices swing, and global markets move on a tweet or a weather event. Dairy farmers have always been among the most data savvy business owners in agriculture, but the sheer volume of information available today — from ration formulation and heat stress to milk yields and cattle health — has far outpaced what a human can digest alone.

That's where AI earns its keep. We're talking about tools that don't just record data but interpret it, learn from it, and predict outcomes before a problem shows up in the bulk tank. It isn't about replacing the producer's judgment; it's about equipping the farmer with massive amounts of data that can be used to calibrate a level of precision that can predict and allow you to correct a problem before it occurs.

Cow level precision aided by AI may be the biggest potential productivity leap dairy has seen since the rotary parlor. Cows respond to predictable routines, clean stalls, and precisely formulated rations. Modern sensors can track rumination, movement, temperature, and feed intake, building a behavioral fingerprint for every cow. AI systems can pick up early signs of ketosis, mastitis, lameness, or feed disruption days sooner than traditional observation. Now imagine using AI to integrate the weather forecast with a feed ration, optimizing nutrition before the sun comes up. (Actually, we're already doing this.) That means healthier cows, lower feed costs and vet bills, and higher milk production. In a business where each additional pound of milk matters, such innovations aren't a luxury — they're a lifeline and a competitive advantage for farmers who use AI effectively.

But perhaps the biggest long term value of AI in dairy isn't inside the barn. Without question, the efficiencies AI creates in the dairy supply chain and logistics will be revolutionary and will certainly bring changes. But imagine a world that's able to seamlessly connect producers to consumers in the marketplace, domestically and overseas. For instance, consumers, major dairy buyers, and foreign trading partners increasingly want transparency: how the cow was treated, what it was fed, how the milk was produced, what a dairy's environmental footprint looks like, etc.

This is the sort of information that seals deals, both with foreign buyers in an export market and with parents shopping at a grocery store. Dairy farmers with AI driven monitoring and recordkeeping can document sustainability and animal care metrics with a level of detail that wasn't possible before — a potential advantage when selling to transparency minded customers.

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intensity, water use, and soil health are competitive advantages. We'll also soon be able to use AI to predict which investments will garner the best farm level returns if we have the right data sets.

None of this means AI is a silver bullet. Major questions and concerns remain on how this technology can be harnessed for the broadest benefit, where the energy to power it will come from, how thriving farms and AI data centers can best coexist, and what safeguards on data privacy and security are needed, with this last point being a serious and complex problem that requires viable, legally enforceable solutions. It's also important to remember that, like everything else, AI isn't always right — without human guidance, significant errors can occur, and in the end, the dairy farmer needs to stay in the driver's seat.

But for dairy, the potential benefits are too great to shy away from the challenges, and we need the industry's best minds focused on solutions, to get a sense of where AI is going and how dairy can benefit from that path.

That's why next week, at NMPF's Board of Directors meeting in Arlington, Va., we're adding an AI workshop and presentations to our agenda. As the leading U.S. dairy farmer organization, we want to use our power to convene the industry on a precompetitive basis to wrestle with the questions and challenges we all have in common, to seek common solutions that help all of us thrive, and work through the challenges widespread AI adoption is rapidly placing before us. We're excited to see what our members come up with, and we're looking forward to being a repository of knowledge of this critical, fast changing topic.

The dairies that thrive in the next decade will be the ones that blend human intuition with the predictive power of AI. We can treat AI as an outsider's gadget, or as a threat with risks that don't justify the rewards, or we can embrace it as the next evolution of the same ingenuity that has always defined American agriculture. At NMPF, we are firmly in the camp of AI embrace, knowing that there will be bumps on the road, kinks to work out, and challenging questions to answer along the way, because along with policy leadership, we also help our members seek innovative solutions that benefit the entire industry. Dairy has never been afraid of hard work or new tools. AI is simply the next one we will use to succeed.

S.C. Cattle Receipts, Trends, and Prices
for the Month of MAY 2026

Cattle Receipts: 5,937 • Previous Month: 8,910
Feeder supply - 24% steers • 40% heifers • 36% bulls

SLAUGHTER CLASSES

	Avg. Wt.	Price
Cows - % Lean		
Breaker	1,388	\$176.40
Boner	1,165	\$173.70
Lean	1,030	\$155.69
Bulls - Yield Grade 1-2	1,549	\$203.69

FEEDER CLASSES

FEEDER STEERS (Medium and Large 1-2)

Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	425	493.88	\$2,177.07
450-500	470	475.30	\$2,304.04
500-550	525	448.84	\$2,351.92
550-600	563	440.75	\$2,520.11
600-650	616	403.83	\$2,498.81
650-700	661	370.04	\$2,544.70

FEEDER BULLS (Medium and Large 1-2)

Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	419	488.71	\$2,047.69
450-500	468	475.46	\$2,225.15
500-550	521	439.37	\$2,289.12
550-600	573	423.97	\$2,429.35
600-650	613	409.52	\$2,510.36
650-700	661	379.39	\$2,507.77

FEEDER HEIFERS (Medium and Large 1-2)

Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	424	449.55	\$1,906.09
450-500	469	438.58	\$2,056.94
500-550	513	404.19	\$2,073.49
550-600	566	388.41	\$2,198.40
600-650	610	357.27	\$2,179.35
650-700	675	346.27	\$2,337.32

Source: S.C. Department of Agriculture - USDA Market News Service
Columbia, S.C. - 803-737-4491





NMPF
NATIONAL MILK
PRODUCERS FEDERATION

NEWS

U.S. Dairy Cites New USITC Report in Call for Action on Canadian Dairy Trade Practices. The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) recently reiterated their call for the U.S. Trade Representative to use the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) joint review process to address Canada's distortionary nonfat milk solids export practices. Their statement follows yesterday's release of the U.S. International Trade Commission's (USITC) Section 332 report, *Non-fat Milk Solids: Competitive Conditions for the United States and Major Foreign Suppliers*.

The report confirms what NMPF and USDEC have long documented — that Canadian milk production quotas that “aim to match domestic supply and demand for butterfat lead to a level of raw milk production that results in a domestic structural surplus of [nonfat milk solids] components.” The report goes on to note that the Canadian government-administered milk pricing system “unlinks its relatively high farmgate price of milk from the price that [nonfat milk solids] processors pay for milk components in Canada using regulated ‘price discrimination.’”

The Canadian structural surplus and pricing system outlined in the report served as a basis for NMPF and USDEC to work with the first Trump administration to secure commitments during the USMCA negotiations for Canada to limit its artificially low priced skim milk powder and milk protein concentrate exports. The deal established an annual threshold over which these nonfat milk solids exports are subject to a surcharge to ensure U.S. producers are not being undercut in the U.S. or international markets.

While the report acknowledges that Canada has to date limited its exports of products formally classified as nonfat milk solids, it also cites a marked increase in Canadian exports of products categorized under tariff codes for “blended dairy products” and “protein isolates” that fall outside of the USMCA disciplined tariff categorization. The report estimates that from 2013 to 2015, exports under the “protein isolate” tariff code were just 76 metric tons. Post USMCA implementation, the volume of protein isolates has grown dramatically to over 32,000 metric tons from 2022 to 2024. While the tariff code is not exclusive to dairy proteins, USITC estimates that most of the exports were dairy based.

USITC notes that the dairy products are entering the U.S. from new and expanded processing plants in British Columbia and Manitoba. The report cites that “[i]n addition to access to cost competitive sources of [non-fat milk solids] components, these facilities received grants and loans from national and provincial

governments.”

In testimony before the USITC as part of the investigation in July 2025, NMPF and USDEC's Jaime Castaneda and William Loux called out the detrimental effects of Canada's cumulative pricing and trade practices on U.S. dairy farmers and processors. Castaneda said, “It is absurd that Canadian dairy producers receive one of the highest farmgate milk prices in the world by a wide margin, yet their nonfat milk solids end up on the global market at prices below our cost of production.” Loux added, “Canada's actions distort markets and undermine fair competition...This information is critical to bring substantive results for U.S. dairy producers and processors, including during the upcoming USMCA review process.”

The testimony complemented comprehensive comments submitted by NMPF and USDEC as part of the investigation and coordination among members to demonstrate the breadth of the issue. The organizations will continue to work with USTR to leverage the report and ensure Canadian attempts to circumvent their dairy protein export commitments are comprehensively addressed in the ongoing USMCA joint review process.

NMPF Advances Dairy in Final Nutrition Rules. USDA recently announced two final rules for nutrition policy — “Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs” and “Updated Staple Food Stocking Standards for Retailers in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.” Both contain advances for dairy farmers and their cooperatives in line with NMPF efforts.

NMPF applauded USDA's final rule that clarifies Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act implementation. The rule, which took effect on June 8, allows schools to offer whole and 2% milk in all federally funded meal programs for the first time since 2012.

As USDA developed the rule, NMPF advocated for schools to be able to offer whole and 2% milk not just at lunch, but also at breakfast and through other programs, including the Special Milk Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The updated rule makes it clear that schools can now offer whole, 2%, 1%, or skim unflavored and flavored milk options in all meal programs.

USDA the same day released updated staple food stocking standards for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) retailers.

The updated SNAP restocking rule continues to recognize dairy as a staple food category and now also counts flavored milk, sour cream, and shredded cheese as separate food varieties. The rule also limits plant based alternatives, allowing only three to count toward the dairy stocking requirement. These updates reflect

many recommendations NMPF made in comments submitted in November.

USDA removed butter from the staple foods list and reclassified it as an accessory food to be consistent with how other cooking fats are classified. Consumers can still use SNAP benefits to purchase butter at the store, but retailers will no longer be required to stock butter to qualify as a SNAP retailer. Retailers still must carry seven food varieties from the dairy category to meet SNAP standards.

FARM ES Integrates RuFaS Model Updates. The National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) Environmental Stewardship Program recently released revisions to its Version 3 evaluation tool, integrating the latest scientific updates from the Ruminant Farm Systems (RuFaS) model that powers FARM ES Version 3.

Key reasons for this update:

- Cropping practices — If a farm enters optional details about their cropping, those practices will now be reflected in the total footprint. Feed production emissions will be broken down into purchased and homegrown production emissions for those farms that choose to enter cropping info.

- RuFaS made important improvements in the manure methodology. For example, better responsiveness to temperature, better manure methane modeling for youngstock, ability to specify solids management after solid liquid separation, etc.

- The RuFaS team can better support FARM ES when questions or issues arise because FARM ES will be using the most up-to-date model version.

- The RuFaS scientific documentation will reflect the model version that FARM ES uses, simplifying the efforts by cooperatives, processors, customers, and consultants to understand how FARM ES quantifies emissions.

- Adjustments to the FARM ES report now will better enable GHG Protocol LSRS aligned reporting.

- Updating the platform upholds FARM Environmental Stewardship's commitment to offer the best available scientific methods that work for farms of all sizes, geographies, and production styles.

FARM Environmental Stewardship provides a platform built by and for the U.S. dairy community, powered by peer reviewed, credible science. U.S. dairy farmers actively shape the program, unifying industry response to supply chain interests and helping to streamline sustainability measurement into one program.

FARM ES showcases the great conservation work dairy farmers have done for generations and increasingly serves as a gateway for farmers to access supply chain incentive projects and other mechanisms that directly support their stewardship efforts.

NMPF Endorsed Supply Chain Security Bill Passes House. Following significant support and engagement by NMPF and USDEC, the House of Representatives recently approved the bipartisan Combatting Organized Retail Crime Act (CORCA).

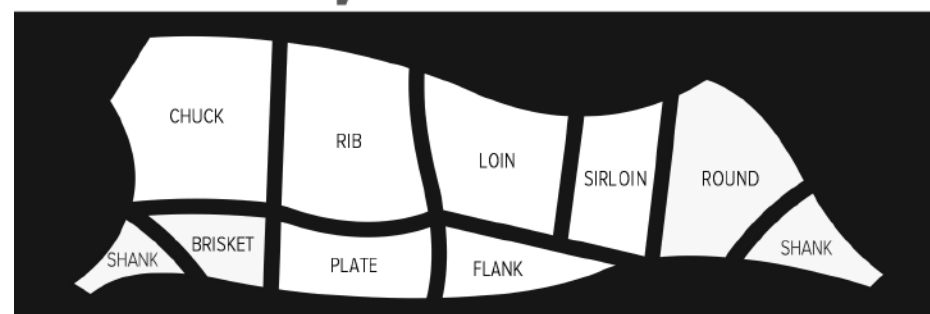
NMPF has been at the forefront of this effort, including staff meetings with members of Congress and the White House National Economic Council to underscore the considerable damage that organized cargo theft poses to dairy shippers. NMPF President &

CEO Gregg Doud met with Senator Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, the lead sponsor of the bill, to highlight dairy's exposure to container break-ins and thank him for his leadership on this issue.

Dairy products are rarely the target of organized criminal activity but increasingly have become collateral damage, which leads to costly shipment returns, limited insurance recourse, and real risks to food safety and U.S. dairy's reputation as a dependable global supplier.

NMPF News continued on the next page

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United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

NMPF News *continued from the previous page*

CORCA would establish a coordination center within the Department of Homeland Security to centralize investigation and prosecution efforts. NMPF worked directly to ensure food and agriculture remained included in the final legislation, which now advances to the Senate.

NMPF Urges USTR to Protect Common Names in AGOA Modernization. NMPF, USDEC, and the Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN) submitted formal comments to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) recently, making the case that reauthorization of the African Growth and Opportunities

Act (AGOA) should include explicit protections for common food names as an eligibility condition.

AGOA is a U.S. trade law that provides sub-Saharan African countries with duty free access to the U.S. market when they meet certain economic and human rights conditions.

The comments commended the Trump administration for prioritizing and including common name provisions in nine reciprocal trade agreements to date, which ensure U.S. dairy exporters can market products under globally recognized generic terms like “parmesan” and “feta.” The three organizations urged USTR to extend that momentum to AGOA by making common name protections an explicit eligibility condition for beneficiary countries.

The stakes are significant as the European Union has aggressively used geographical indication provisions in trade agreements to lock out U.S. competitors by monopolizing generic cheese terms. AGOA modernization offers a powerful lever to reverse that trend, and NMPF is collaborating with allies in Congress and the administration to secure a level playing field for U.S. dairy across Africa.

Dairy Industry Leader Testifies before Congress on USMCA Dairy Priorities.

Michael Lichte, Chief Insights and Optimization Officer for Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), testified recently before the House Committee on Agriculture on the importance of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) to U.S. dairy and the need for strengthening dairy implementation and enforcement during the agreement’s forthcoming joint review. Lichte served as a witness representing NMPF as a board member and the USDEC as a director.

“Export demand now accounts for 17 percent of total

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U.S. milk production and has become one of the primary drivers of incremental growth across the dairy sector,” Lichte said. “For DFA and the U.S. dairy industry broadly, USMCA remains one of the most consequential trade agreements affecting long term competitiveness, manufacturing investment, and farm level economic stability. That’s why it’s essential that we strengthen and renew it.”

Mexico and Canada together account for more than 40 percent of all U.S. dairy exports by value. Lichte’s testimony focused on Canada’s administration of its dairy tariff rate quotas in a manner that limits trade and its circumvention of USMCA export disciplines for dairy proteins, while also highlighting the importance of preserving U.S. exporters’ ability to use common cheese names like “feta” in Mexico.

On Canada, Lichte documented chronic underfill of negotiated dairy tariff rate quotas, with cumulative fill rates reaching only 64 percent for industrial use cheese, 34 percent for fluid milk, and just 7 percent for skim milk powder through 2025. He also detailed Canada’s growing use of alternative tariff classifications to move surplus dairy proteins into U.S. and global markets in ways that evade USMCA’s dairy protein export caps, a practice confirmed by a May 2026 U.S. International Trade Commission report.

“The underlying market distortions USMCA sought to discipline continue to affect U.S. manufacturers and global dairy protein markets,” Lichte added. “With appropriate enforcement and

modernization, USMCA can continue supporting investment, export growth, and economic opportunity for the United States’ dairy farmers and processors for generations to come.”

About the National Milk Producer’s Federation. *NMPF was organized in 1916 to provide a forum for dairy producers and the cooperatives they own to participate in public policy discussions. NMPF advocates policies to Congress, U.S. and foreign government agencies, industry organizations, the news media, and the public.*

We use our unique resources to harness the ever changing climate in the politics and marketing of milk and dairy products from farm to table to promote the economic well being of dairy producers and their cooperatives through coordinated industry efforts.

NMPF addresses policies concerning milk pricing, domestic and international market development, agriculture credit and taxation, environmental issues, food safety and health, animal welfare, product standards and labeling, and research and biotechnology.

Our mission is to foster an economic and political climate in which dairy producers and the cooperatives they own can thrive and prosper. Achieving such success assures consumers of adequate supplies of wholesome and nutritious dairy products at affordable prices.

This helps improve the bottom line of the associate members who provide services to dairy producers and cooperatives that they represent. For more information, visit www.nmpf.org.



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If you need help working your cattle, contact Marcus Harward at 704-322-0840 or Chuck Doolittle at 704-221-1447 for more information.

John Deere MY27 6R Tractor Delivers Enhanced Comfort and Increased Efficiency for Farmers and Ranchers. *New 6R options provide versatile midsize tractor solutions for any farm.* John Deere recently announced the launch of the latest generation of its 6R Series tractors, designed to help farmers and ranchers get more done with greater comfort, command, and performance. The MY27 6R tractor can be the perfect fit for the needs of any farm, dairy, or ranch, delivering the strength of a larger tractor with the agility and efficiency farmers need every day.

“The comfort, versatility, and efficiency make the new 6R tractor the go-to choice for many farms and ranches,” said Anne Anderson, marketing manager for the John Deere 6 Series tractor line.

Upgrades Catered to Farmers’ Everyday Needs – Built for the demands of everyday farm and ranch work, the MY27 6R combines the durability, reliability, and versatility producers count on across a wide range of applications.

The new John Deere 6R brings together power, comfort, and control with features designed to help operators take on demanding work with greater confidence. A new e19™ powershift transmission delivers seamless shifting and strong performance in tough applications, while an updated cab and CommandArm with CommandX controls create a more spacious, intuitive operator experience with improved visibility to help reduce fatigue during long days. Suspension and steering improvements further enhance ride quality and handling, giving operators a smoother, more confident feel both in the field and on the road.

The high capacity, closed center hydraulic system supports powerful loaders and provides consistent performance for implements in row crop applications. Additionally, the MY27 6R introduces a new loader designed to deliver more versatility and smarter operation, pairing increased life capacity with advanced technology like integrated weight sensing, position awareness, and optional camera views. These enhancements help operators move more material with fewer trips while reducing waste. A built-in controller also makes it easier to add options in the future, like loader suspension, lighting, hydraulic implement unlatch, and expanded tech packages as work and needs evolve.

A selection of transmissions allows operators to match the tractor to their preferred driving style and workload. Inside the cab of the MY27 6R, farmers can benefit from a variety of comfort features quiet operation, excellent visibility, and intuitive controls designed for long days in challenging conditions.

“The MY27 6R tractor is built to handle the wide range of jobs farmers and ranchers face every day, from tilling, planting, and baling to hauling and loader work,” Anderson said. “It gives operators the performance and reliability they need to stay productive across a variety of tasks and conditions.”

Options to Match Your Operation – The MY27 6R tractor gives farmers and ranchers premium features in a power dense tractor built for a wide range of jobs. With four frame sizes and 15 models, the 6R lineup offers the flexibility to match the tractor to the operation and its needs. Working with their John Deere dealer, customers can build the right combination of power, comfort, hydraulics, and technology for their needs.



JOHN DEERE

NEWS

The MY27 6R Series lineup is designed to help operators get more everyday tasks done with greater confidence, efficiency, and performance, including:

- Full frame construction provides exceptional stability and reliability, especially under heavy field loads and frequent loader work.
- Intelligent Power Management automatically delivers extra horsepower when load or PTO demands increase, unlocking up to 40 additional horsepower for a maximum 305 hp on the MY27 6R 260.
- Powertrain enhancements help the MY27 6R deliver smoother power, quicker operation, and improved fuel efficiency across demanding field and transport applications.
- Built-in connectivity and precision technology to help streamline tasks and support more informed decisions throughout the day
- Over-the-air software updates and automation features that help reduce manual input and keep the tractor current as operational needs evolve

“The 6R updates give you the flexibility and strength to handle demanding jobs without jumping to a larger tractor,” Anderson said. “It is built to give you the right power with better efficiency, more ease of use, and consistent performance in the right size when you need it.”

MY27 6M Provides Additional Flexibility to Farmers – As part of its expanded tractor lineup, John Deere is also introducing updates to the 6M Series, providing customers with a versatile midspec solution that complements the premium 6R tractors. Designed to handle a wide range of applications, the 6M delivers the dependable performance operators expect, with the flexibility to configure the machine to fit their specific needs.

“By updating the 6M Series tractor lineup, we are ensuring we

meet the needs of a diverse group of operations,” Anderson said. “With the MY27 updates, we continue to deliver power and versatility in a dependable daily tractor that can handle the jobs you give it.”

The updated 6M lineup brings scalable technology, including integrated connectivity and precision ag capabilities, and simple, yet efficient, power with the new e19 powershift transmission. Options that are consistent in larger tractor lineups, such as G5 CommandCenter display options and the CommandX drive lever, are available in the 6M lineup but can be customized based on customers’ preferences.

With the ability to choose the right level of features and technology, customers can match the tractor to their operation. These updates make the 6M tractor lineup a strong addition alongside the 6R for farms and ranches seeking premium performance and everyday versatility.

Supported by John Deere’s extensive dealer network, the 6 Series tractor lineup is backed by expert technicians, genuine parts, and advanced diagnostic tools designed to keep machines running when it matters most. With local dealer support and proactive service solutions, farmers can count on the 6R and 6M Series to deliver reliable performance throughout the life of the machine.

To learn more about the John Deere MY27 6 Series tractor lineup, visit JohnDeere.com.

John Deere Introduces New 5E 3-Cylinder Utility Tractor With eHydro Transmission, Prioritizing Operator Simplicity and Versatility. *Tractor upgrades give customers easy control and improved efficiency on any operation.* John Deere recently announced the newest 5E 3-Cylinder tractor, featuring their first electronically controlled eHydro transmission in a utility tractor. Built with ease of use, versatility, and performance in mind, the 5E 3-Cylinder tractor can help operators of all experience levels tackle a wide range of tasks.

“The new 5E 3-Cylinder tractor was designed to make any job intuitive, whether you’re a seasoned operator or just stepping into the driver’s seat for the first time,” says Mark Davey, go-to-market manager for the 5 Series tractor lineup at John Deere. “By reducing the learning curve, our customers are able to get to work faster and operate with greater confidence and efficiency.”

Breakthrough eHydro Transmission – With the power of the first John Deere electronically controlled hydrostatic drive in this tractor class, the eHydro transmission contains many features designed to simplify operation and improve efficiency, including:

- TwinTouch pedals for simplified and more comfortable forward and reverse control.
- Automotive cruise control set up similar to a car for consistent speed regardless of terrain.
- SpeedMatch to maintain a desired maximum travel speed.
- LoadMatch to allow the engine and transmission to communicate with each other to prevent the tractor from stalling during heavy load applications.
- MotionMatch to adjust acceleration and deceleration response.
- Speed governance to ensure controlled operation and safety across operators.

“The eHydro transmission brings together a suite of smart features, making the tractor more intuitive and efficient, allowing for increased productivity and reduced operator fatigue,” Davey says.

Tailored for Rural Lifestyle and Specialty Applications – The new 5E 3-Cylinder tractor is built for a wide range of customers, from rural lifestyle property owners and part time producers to nurseries and specialty crop operations. These operators need machinery that can handle a variety of tasks without adding additional complexity.

With a focus on dependability, the 5E 3-Cylinder tractor helps operators get more done in less time, ensuring consistent performance day after day, no matter the task.

“The 5E 3 was designed with a deep understanding of how our customers actually use their tractors every day,” Davey says. “Whether it’s a rural property, nursery, or specialty crop operation, customers need equipment that is dependable and versatile to handle a variety of tasks.”

Additional updates include:

- Go-home lighting allows for extended external lighting to get you where you need to go in low light conditions, safely.
- Updated, smaller steering wheel for improved comfort.
- Improved electrical connections reduce contamination in wiring connections and harnesses.
- Swivel seat (available in select cab models) allows for better visibility and comfort during loader or rear implement work.

“Our customers spend long hours operating their equipment, so including features that improve comfort and performance is essential,” Davey says. “Features like go-home lighting, a smaller steering wheel, and updates to the swivel seat help operators stay both aware and comfortable throughout the day.”

John Deere remains committed to helping farmers increase productivity while reducing costs. The new 5E 3-Cylinder tractor with eHydro transmission delivers easy-to-use, smarter, and more reliable machinery to all customers, no matter the type of operation.

To learn more about the capabilities of the new 5E 3-Cylinder tractor featuring the eHydro transmission, or to place an order, visit JohnDeere.com.

About John Deere. *It doesn’t matter if you’ve never driven a tractor, mowed a lawn, or operated a dozer. With John Deere’s role in helping produce food, fiber, fuel, and infrastructure, we work for every single person on the planet. It all started nearly 200 years ago with a steel plow. Today, John Deere drives innovation in agriculture, construction, forestry, turf, power systems, and more. For more information on Deere & Company, visit us at www.deere.com.*



USDA Opens State-of-the-Art Livestock Insects Research Laboratory to Combat Livestock Pests.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) recently opened the Knipling-Bushland U.S. Livestock Insects Research Laboratory, a state-of-the-art laboratory facility that will provide the U.S. cattle industry with innovative tools and advanced technologies to manage and eliminate the invasive fly and tick pests that threaten the U.S. cattle industry.

"The Trump Administration has been committed to eradicating pests that could harm our American livestock since the President has been sworn in. The brand new Knipling-Bushland U.S. Livestock Insects Research Laboratory will allow us to research and find new active measures to keep current and future threats away from our borders," said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins. "We have taken extraordinary actions to keep New World Screwworm out of the United States and this lab will help us accelerate our offensive efforts to drive this pest further away from our borders."

"For the last 250 years, our nation has relied on research leading to science based innovation as a means to overcome some of America's greatest agricultural challenges, including the exclusion of New World Screwworm from the United States with novel Sterile Insect Techniques," said USDA Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics Dr. Scott Hutchins. "The Knipling-Bushland U.S. Livestock Insects Research Laboratory — named after ARS pioneers that every entomologist and entomology student knows of through their breakthrough work — will build on their legacy by protecting livestock health, ensuring that America's ranches remain productive, safe, and profitable for generations to come."

The new 52,000 square foot laboratory features cutting edge laboratory spaces, advanced cattle facilities, and a state-of-the-art genomics core to drive research that delivers innovative control technologies for the U.S. livestock industry. Other on-site research opportunities will involve improved surveillance and trapping tools, novel insecticides and acaricides, enhanced pesticide delivery techniques for cattle and wildlife, sustainable treatments to prevent and mitigate outbreaks of invasive/quarantine arthropod species, improved approaches to combat pesticide resistance, and insect genomics to identify pest vulnerabilities.

The facility also houses two ARS research units — the Livestock Arthropod Pest Research Unit and the Veterinary Pest Genetics Research Unit. Collectively, these units improve the health, sustainability, and profitability of U.S. livestock production and protect the U.S. food supply from devastating arthropod pests, including biting flies, ticks, and the New World Screwworm. On-site research also plays a role in critical research to eradicate other ticks and blood feeding flies that can harm, infect, and kill cattle.

"This new laboratory will equip our researchers with advanced tools to combat the most destructive invasive insects already impacting the U.S., as well as those posing future threats at our borders," said ARS Administrator Joon Park. "The important ARS research conducted here in Kerrville will continue to play a vital role in protecting and strengthening the future of the U.S. cattle industry."

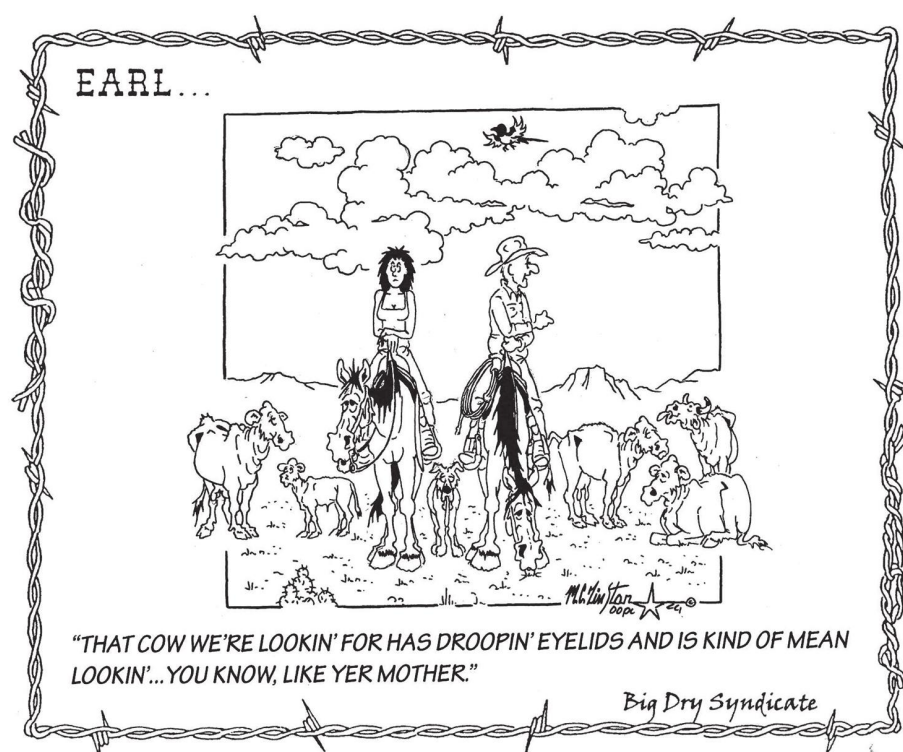
This is a full circle moment due to the 80 years of historic research done at previous ARS laboratory facilities in the Kerrville

USDA NEWS

area. This includes:

- Research on the biology of control of New World Screwworm that led to its eradication from the United States in the 1970s.
- Development and evaluation of novel pesticides like macrocyclic lactones for controlling biting flies and ticks on cattle and wildlife.
- Sequencing the genome of over 25 important livestock arthropod pest species.

The laboratory is named after two influential and pioneering USDA researchers — Drs. Edward F. Knipling and Raymond C. Bushland. In 1937, Knipling first developed the theory that screwworms could be controlled using the sterile male technique. In the early 1950s, Bushland successfully demonstrated that the theory worked, that viable sterile male screwworms could be produced and used to control screwworm populations. This biocontrol technique, known as Sterile Insect Technique (SIT), became the keystone component of the strategy that eventually led to the eradication of the screwworm from





the United States, Mexico, and Central America. Nearly 80 years later, SIT is still being employed to fight New World Screwworm in Mexico and Central America, in an effort to keep the devastating insect from reestablishing itself once again in the United States.

The Agricultural Research Service is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency. Daily, ARS focuses on solutions to agricultural problems affecting America.

USDA Announces Improved Support, Reduced Burdens, and \$60 million in Investments to Support Small Meat and Poultry Plants.

The Small Processors Action Plan will strengthen a strong, safe, and local American food supply. Secretary Rollins recently launched the Small Processors Action Plan, a new set of actions to better support small and very small meat and poultry processing plants, improve customer service, and reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens while maintaining strong food safety protections for consumers. Additionally, Secretary Rollins announced that USDA is accepting applications for the fourth round of the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program to expand American meat and poultry processing.

"This announcement marks another step toward rebuilding our domestic beef industry. The actions contained in the new Small Processors Action Plan modernize USDA's approach to the people and small businesses who process American locally grown beef and protein. We are removing overly burdensome red tape, improving service, and giving small plants the clarity and support these businesses need to operate safely, grow, and compete," said Secretary Rollins. "By expanding local processing capabilities, we're continuing to bolster our domestic producers, which are central to the President's Make America Healthy Again agenda."

"President Trump ended the war on protein. Real American beef is back on the menu," said U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. "USDA's Small Processors Action Plan will strengthen our food supply, expand access to high quality protein, and support American farmers and ranchers. That's how we Make America Healthy Again."

Both the Small Processors Action Plan and the additional \$60

million in funding for the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program build on USDA's Plan to Fortify the American Beef Industry.

Small Processors Action Plan – Small and very small plants make up the majority of Federally inspected establishments and play a critical role in local economies, rural communities, and the resilience of the nation's food supply. These actions being announced by USDA are designed to make it easier for these businesses to interact with the agency, get timely answers, and resolve issues, without weakening inspection or food safety standards.

Improving customer service and responsiveness

- Creating clearer, easier ways for small plants to submit and track appeals and requests
- Establishing dedicated support to help small businesses navigate processes and get timely responses
- Expanding access to assistance for plants with limited technology or connectivity
- Making requirements clearer and easier to navigate
- Updating and expanding plain language guidance by FSIS, tailored to small and very small plants
- Improving visibility of available support, escalation paths, and points of contact
- Launching simpler tools to help plants engage with USDA systems
- Reducing unnecessary burden while maintaining food safety
- Streamlining processes related to FSIS inspection staffing concerns and appeals
- Improving consistency and clarity across the field through targeted training and guidance
- Strengthening coordination with the Small Business Administration to ensure small plants are aware of available resources

USDA will begin rolling out these improvements immediately and will continue engaging with small and very small plants to ensure the changes are effective and responsive to real world needs.

USDA News continued on the next page

USDA News *continued from the previous page*

Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program – The USDA Rural Business and Cooperative Service published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for \$60 million to fund a fourth phase of the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP) to help eligible meat and poultry processors expand their capacity, encourage competition and sustainable growth in the U.S. meat processing sector, and to help improve supply chain resiliency. Available funding will be divided equally into two separate competitions — one for Small and Very Small Processors and one for Intermediate Processors.

Eligible applications include for-profit organizations, nonprofit organizations, producer owned cooperatives, tribes, and tribal entities. Privately owned entities must be independently owned and operated, and all entities must be domestically owned. Additionally, the applicant's processing facility must be physically located and operating in the United States or its territories. The applicant's facility must primarily process cattle in order for the project to be eligible for the program; however, funds or equipment may be used for processing meat and poultry at the facility.

Additional information is available at <https://tinyurl.com/ProcessingProgram> and electronic applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by August 7.

USDA's Remote Beef Grading Program Launches App – Offers Marketing Benefits to Processors and Cattle Producers. USDA-AMS launched a new mobile app to make access to the Remote Grading Program for Beef (RGP) even easier.

"While more than 90 percent of fed beef is officially graded by USDA — predominantly at larger plants — the Remote Grading Program for Beef (RGP) extends those market benefits, especially to small processors, by providing low cost grading services that afford them access to new markets using USDA grades like Prime, Choice, and Select," said Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Dudley Hoskins. "This new app is another enhancement supporting producers and processors participating in the program with improved responsiveness, streamlined workflows, and assurance that grading services remain accurate and reliable. Programs like RGP and its continued improvements reflect USDA's commitment to expand opportunities for producers to market their high quality American beef."

The RGP provides processors with access to USDA beef grades — Prime, Choice, and Select — at a lower cost than traditional onsite graders. The RGP utilizes mobile app imaging, supported by robust data management and oversight, to assess carcass characteristics remotely and assign official grades that buyers and consumers rely on to signal quality. With the new app, customers will experience more secure image submissions, fewer upload mistakes, clearer status visibility, and reliable tracking of assigned carcass grades.

Since its launch, the RGP has registered 88 facilities — many are considered small or very small — in 32 states. Most plants received grades within 24 hours of submission. Farmers and ranchers also benefit from having official USDA quality grades, which allow them to use this information in direct-to-consumer markets, or simply to use carcass data to continue improving genetics, growth, and quality.

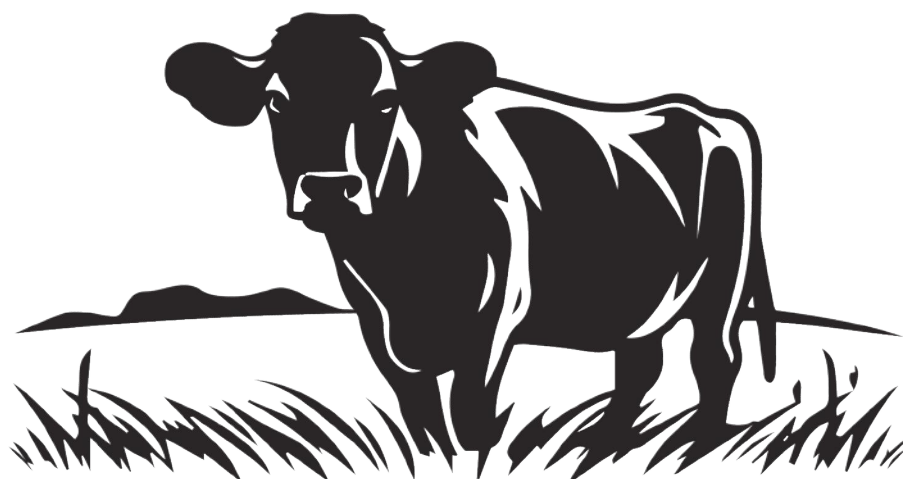
RGP supports Secretary Rollins's Plan to Fortify the American Beef Industry and allows industry to leverage access to USDA quality grades to expand market opportunities. For more information about the RGP for beef, visit www.ams.usda.gov/services/remote-beef-grading or contact Jodie Pitcock at Jodie.Pitcock@usda.gov or 816-351-5152.

Trump Administration Announces Texas Cattleman and Food Safety Entrepreneur, John Bellinger, as Senior Advisor New World Screwworm Preparedness. Secretary Rollins recently announced President Donald J. Trump has appointed John Bellinger as the new Senior Advisor for New World Screwworm Preparedness. In this role, Bellinger will integrate into USDA's team to help further drive its robust effort to explore all available technologies to combat the New World Screwworm.

"I want to thank John for joining our team as USDA transitions to the next phase of fighting and eradicating this pest from our borders, as we did nearly 60 years ago, yet it came back due to Biden's failed open border policies," said Secretary Rollins. "John's roots in Texas where New World screwworm is at ground zero, and his private sector experience in the related food safety and cattle industries, will help the administration advance our response and protect U.S. livestock."

"New World Screwworm presents unique challenges to America's ranchers, and Secretary Rollins has taken dramatic steps to work on building up our domestic response to this pest. USDA is responding in real time and building up long term capabilities to push back New World Screwworm beyond our borders and past the Darien Gap," said Senior Advisor Bellinger. "I look forward to working with USDA and our state partners as continuing ramping up testing, detection, and release of our tools to reduce these flies' populations."

John Bellinger currently serves on the Texas A&M Board of Regents after being appointed by Governor Greg Abbott in 2023, where he serves as Chair of the Committee on Research. He resides in San Antonio and is the co-founder, with his wife Gina, and the former CEO of Food Safety Net Services (FSNS). He is currently a board member of the recently merged company between FSNS and the Certified Group. He is the CEO of Agri-West International food exporter, as well as Bellinger Development. He is the former chairman of the U.S. Meat Export Federation and the Southwest



Meat Association. Additionally, he is a longtime member and season ticket holder of the 12th Man Foundation. He is also a member of the Texas A&M University College of Agriculture Development Council, as well as an adviser to the Animal Science Department. He remains a partner and board member of Nolan Ryan Beef, BK Beef, BC Stables, AW Japan, Just Pots, and Livek. He is the recipient of the 2007 Outstanding Alumnus award for the Texas A&M University College of Agriculture and the Outstanding Alumnus award of the Texas A&M University Animal Science Department in 2014. He has also been inducted into the U.S. Meat Industry Hall of Fame in 2022. Bellinger received a bachelor of science in agricultural education and a master of science in animal science from Texas A&M University.

Secretary Rollins Welcomes President Trump's Appointment of John Rich as Special Envoy for American Landowners. Secretary Rollins recently welcomed President Donald J. Trump's appointment of John Rich as Special Envoy for American Landowners.

As Special Envoy, Rich will serve as a leading advocate for America's farmers, ranchers, and private landowners, helping ensure their concerns are heard and their rights are protected. He will engage directly with landowners across the country and work to address challenges posed by government overreach, activist pressure campaigns, and outside interests that threaten private property rights and the long term viability of rural communities.

A key focus of Rich's work will be advocating for landowners facing pressure related to large scale solar and wind development that may impact productive farmland, ranchland, and rural livelihoods. He will work closely with USDA leadership and stakeholders to ensure landowners have a strong voice in decisions affecting their property and communities.

"America's farmers, ranchers, and landowners are among the greatest stewards of our nation's resources and the backbone of our rural communities," said Secretary Rollins. "President Trump understands that private property rights are fundamental to the American way of life. John Rich has long been a champion for rural America, and I look forward to working alongside him as we continue fighting for the people who feed, fuel, and clothe our nation."

"President Trump has afforded me the great honor of serving as Special Envoy for American Landowners," said Special Envoy Rich. "I look forward to representing and advocating for landowners' rights and standing up for the farmers, ranchers, and rural families who work every day to provide for our country. Protecting private property rights and ensuring that landowners are not harassed, intimidated, or pressured by outside interests will be at the heart of this mission."

The appointment reflects President Trump's ongoing commitment to ensuring that America's farmers, ranchers, foresters, and landowners have a strong voice in Washington and a federal government that supports, rather than hinders, their success.

USDA Issues Directive to Restore Grazing on National Forest Lands and Strengthen Support for America's Ranchers. Secretary Rollins recently announced the distribution of a comprehensive directive to all U.S. Forest Service employees from the Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment (NRE). These actions advance implementation of the Advancing Grazing on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Lands

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the USDA Department of the Interior Grazing Action Plan, delivering on the Trump Administration's commitment to strengthen American ranching, restore multiple use management on federal lands, and combat regulatory lawfare against producers.

"America's ranchers are an integral component of our rural economies, our food security, and our national strength," said Secretary Rollins. "For too long, bureaucratic overreach and activist driven lawfare have undermined the multiple use mandate of our National Forests and Grasslands. Today, we are empowering line officers with clear direction and reaffirming grazing as an essential tool for healthy landscapes and vibrant rural communities."

The letter to Forest Service employees, addressed from Secretary Rollins and referencing the detailed implementation directives from Under Secretary Michael Boren, emphasizes the historic role of grazing on National Forest System lands. These actions build directly on the October 2025 USDA Plan to Fortify the American Beef Industry and the March 31 MOU signed with Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum.

Key Elements of the Directives:

- Expanding access to prioritize permitting vacant and closed allotments
- Maximizing grazing flexibilities to keep working lands working
- Eliminating delays by streamlining permitting and allotment authorizations
- Elevating rural Americans by giving ranchers a better voice
- Improving service by setting expectations for positive engagement with ranchers.

USDA News continued on the next page

West End Precast

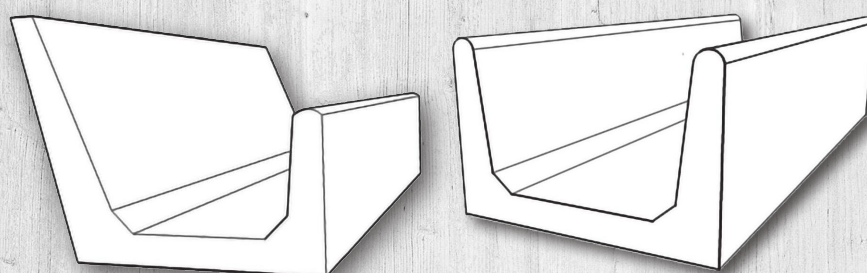
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USDA News *continued from the previous page*

By elevating grazing as an Administration priority, USDA is protecting the roughly 23,000 permittees and lessees who rely on public rangelands while delivering more affordable, American raised protein to consumers.

Secretary Rollins Announces Historic \$125 Million Annual Investment in Agricultural Research Infrastructure Across America. Secretary Rollins and U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon recently hosted several land-grant university leaders at USDA for a roundtable discussion and announced the opening of the FY2026 funding opportunity for the Research Facilities Act program. President Trump's Working Families Tax Cuts provided \$125 million annually for the Research Facilities Act program and this historic investment will help address decades of deferred maintenance and accelerate modernization of agricultural research facilities across the country.

"A nation that cannot feed itself is not secure, and for too long, many of our land-grant universities have faced aging facilities and mounting deferred maintenance costs that threaten their ability to conduct world class agricultural research," said Secretary Rollins. "Today we are announcing a \$125 million investment to ensure America's farmers and ranchers continue to benefit from the innovation that secures our vital U.S. agriculture industry and allows us to feed, clothe, and fuel not only our nation but the world."

"Agricultural advancement is not an accident of history; it is the product of generations of Americans' hard work and ingenuity," said Secretary McMahon. "Our land-grant universities have driven agricultural development for more than a century —

advancing critical scientific breakthroughs, pioneering cutting edge technologies, and cultivating dedicated Americans who have strengthened America's food and farming systems. Thanks to President Trump, today's investment ensures these institutions continue to anchor American strength at home while leading the world in competitiveness."

"Agricultural innovation has enabled our nation to feed millions, eradicate emerging threats, and maintain one of the safest food supplies in the world," said Under Secretary Hutchins. "The Research Facilities Act program will ensure that future food and agricultural research is conducted in state-of-the-art facilities equipped with cutting edge tools. This program is a win for American agriculture and for the next generation of scientists and producers."

The USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) will administer this competitive funding opportunity, and the funding will support renovation, expansion, and construction projects that strengthen research capacity and ensure America's agricultural research enterprise remains equipped to meet the challenges facing America's farmers, ranchers, and producers. Applicants must provide a dollar-for-dollar non-federal cash match to ensure strong local investment and stewardship of taxpayer resources and eligible entities may receive funds for only one project at a time. Projects will be funded at four levels:

- Level I — Planning Grants — \$100,000 to \$200,000 for activities like needs assessments, site surveys, preliminary designs, and cost estimates
- Level II — Small Facility Upgrades — \$250,000 to \$2 million for activities like renovations and lab modernization
- Level III — Mid-Scale Construction/Expansion — \$2 million to \$10 million for expansions, specialized research wings, and major retrofits
- Level IV — Large Scale Research Complex — \$10 million to \$30 million for entire new buildings, specialized labs, and controlled environment research facilities

"For 164 years, USDA has partnered with America's great land-grant and agricultural universities to produce the discoveries, service, and education needed to keep the nation fed and to fuel U.S. agricultural progress around the world," said NIFA Director Dr. Jaye L. Hamby. "This investment reaffirms our commitment to that valued partnership and to the next generation of agriculturists. We are excited to see the tremendous impact this program will have to improve profitability for our farmers, ranchers, and producers and secure our nation's food supply."

The deadline for applications is July 17. For more information, visit nifa.usda.gov or email RFAP@usda.gov.

USDA Marketing and Regulatory Programs Announces Targeted Organizational Improvements and Leadership Changes to Strengthen Service Delivery. USDA Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP) mission area recently announced strategic, targeted organizational improvements within the Agricultural Marketing

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Service. The Mission Area is also pleased to announce career Senior Executive Service member Kelly Moore, who has been Acting Administrator, has been appointed as the permanent Administrator for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

Agricultural Marketing Service Reorganization – AMS administers programs that create and expand marketing opportunities for U.S. agricultural producers. More than 90 percent of its workforce is based in field positions across the country.

To enhance efficiency and better align with USDA priorities, AMS will reduce siloing in its Fair Trade Practices Program by moving commodity specific functions to the appropriate AMS commodity or service programs. For example, oversight of the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act will shift to the Specialty Crops Program, and the Packers and Stockyards Division will move to the Livestock and Poultry Program.

This realignment will deepen collaboration, streamline communication, and provide industry stakeholders with a single, clear point of contact for AMS related issues.

AMS mission areas will continue uninterrupted, with no reduction in force. The agency will gradually reduce its National Capital Region footprint, with most future hiring occurring in USDA Hubs or field offices

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – In addition to the MRP changes, USDA is announcing the appointment of Kelly Moore as APHIS Administrator. This appointment provides consistent, stable leadership as targeted improvements move forward.

“Administrator Moore’s appointment provides APHIS with strong and steady leadership,” said Under Secretary Hoskins. “Her commitment to service, accountability, and partnership will help ensure APHIS continues delivering exceptional support to U.S. agriculture.”

Simultaneously, APHIS is implementing targeted changes to

its Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) program to strengthen national plant health leadership and unify policy and operational functions, enabling faster, more consistent responses to plant health issues and emerging threats. All PPQ programs will continue without interruption and with no reduction in force nor movement of staff.

No animal or plant health programs, including personnel, are impacted by these additional announcements.

Commitment to Transparency and Stakeholder Engagement – Both AMS and APHIS remain committed to transparent communication and will continue engaging employees, partners, and stakeholders to support a smooth transition that strengthens MRP’s long term capacity to serve U.S. agriculture and protect the Nation’s food and fiber systems.

About the U.S. Department of Agriculture. *USDA is made up of 29 agencies and offices with nearly 100,000 employees who serve the American people at more than 4,500 locations across the country and abroad. We provide leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on public policy, the best available science, and effective management.*

We have a vision to provide economic opportunity through innovation, helping rural America to thrive; to promote agriculture production that better nourishes Americans while also helping feed others throughout the world; and to preserve our Nation’s natural resources through conservation, restored forests, improved watersheds, and healthy private working lands.

Our strategic goals serve as a roadmap for the Department to help ensure we achieve our mission and implement our vision.

When President Lincoln established the U.S. Department of Agriculture, he called it the “People’s Department.” At USDA we are working tirelessly to be a model department that serves all people of our great Nation. For more information, visit www.usda.gov.



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For Your Advertising Needs, Contact:

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Upcoming Events

ANGUS

- Aug 1 — Edisto Pines 11th Annual Female Production Sale, Leesville, S.C.
- Aug. 29 — N.C. Angus Association Field Day, Raleigh, N.C.
- Sep. 26 — Biltmore Fall Production Sale, Asheville, N.C.
- Oct. 17 — Fred Smith Company Ranch Extra Effort Sale, Clayton, N.C.
- Oct. 30 — Hokie Harvest Sale, Blacksburg, Va.
- Oct. 30 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Female Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
- Oct. 31 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Bull Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
- Dec. 4 — Knoll Crest Farm Total Performance Bull Sale, Red House, Va.
- Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.

BRANGUS

- Oct. 30 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Female Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
- Oct. 31 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Bull Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.

CHAROLAIS

- Oct. 30 — Hokie Harvest Sale, Blacksburg, Va.

GELBVIEH

- Dec. 4 — Knoll Crest Farm Total Performance Bull Sale, Red House, Va.
- Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.

HEREFORD

- Nov. 28 — Southern Partners in Performance Sale, Union Grove, N.C.
- Dec. 4 — Knoll Crest Farm Total Performance Bull Sale, Red House, Va.

SIMMENTAL

- Oct. 17 — Fred Smith Company Ranch Extra Effort Sale, Clayton, N.C.
- Oct. 30 — Hokie Harvest Sale, Blacksburg, Va.
- Oct. 30 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Female Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
- Oct. 31 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Bull Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
- Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.

WAGYU

- Nov. 7 — Wilders Wagyu StayWILD ‘26 Production Sale, Turkey, N.C.

OTHER EVENTS

- Jul. 7 — Forage & Livestock Annual Webinar Series - Session 1
- Jul. 8-10 — Virginia Beef Cattle University, Blacksburg, Va.
- Jul. 14 — Northeast Cattle Reproduction School, Louisburg, N.C.
- Jul. 15-16 — 2026 Tri-State Ag Expo, Clemson, S.C.
- Jul. 31-Aug. 2 — 2026 S.C. Junior Beef Round-Up, Clemson, S.C.
- Aug. 7-9 — 2026 N.C. Junior Beef Round-Up, Fletcher, N.C.
- Aug. 13 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Aug. 19 — Forage & Livestock Annual Webinar Series - Session 2
- Aug. 20 — Cattle Reproductive Management & Tools, Pittsboro, N.C.
- Sep. 17 — Forage & Livestock Annual Webinar Series - Session 3
- Sep. 24 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Oct. 1 — Forage & Livestock Annual Webinar Series - Session 4
- Nov. 12 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.

LIVESTOCK MARKET SALES

- Jul. 1 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Jul. 1 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Jul. 6 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
- Jul. 6 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
- Jul. 7 — Mid-Atlantic Cattle Sales Video Auction, via macsvideo.com
- Jul. 8 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Jul. 8 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Jul. 13 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
- Jul. 13 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
- Jul. 15 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Jul. 15 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Jul. 20 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
- Jul. 20 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
- Jul. 21 — Mid-Atlantic Cattle Sales Video Auction, via macsvideo.com
- Jul. 22 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Jul. 22 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
- Jul. 27 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
- Jul. 27 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
- Jul. 29 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/ Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
- Jul. 29 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.



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