

Western Livestock Journal®

"The Industry's Largest Weekly Circulation"

The National Livestock Weekly

February 12, 2024 • Vol. 102, No. 11

website: www.wlj.net • email: editorial@wlj.net • advertising@wlj.net • circulation@wlj.net

INSIDE WLJ

RED BLUFF RECAP – With tradition like no other, the 83rd Red Bluff Bull, Gelding and Stock Dog Sale brought in huge crowds again this year, connecting old and new friends throughout the industry. Find sale results, champions and many exciting details inside. **Page 21**

RED ANGUS FEATURE – This annual focus on Red Angus shares special breed advice for improving your operation like dealing with cold stress, herd reporting and stayability. **Page 33**

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"California producers are gathering their troops and aligning their defenses in the war against bovine tuberculosis. This comes, in part, as a response to USDA officially identifying a third infected dairy herd in the state in the last nine months. Keeping the producer in mind, the defense action they plan to employ is flexible, yet uses strategies suitable for the entire nation. With the detection of another infected herd in California, USDA's regulatory process has automatically downgraded the state status from 'Accredited Free' to 'Modified Accredited Advanced,' the second of five USDA status levels," read the Feb. 17, 2003, WLJ article.

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USFWS: Gray wolf in West does not warrant listing

— Recovery plan to be developed

Following calls by environmental groups to list gray wolves in the West under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has determined listing is not warranted.

On Feb. 2, the USFWS announced after a peer-reviewed assessment, gray wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains and western U.S. do not warrant listing under the ESA. An analysis indicated that wolves are not at risk of extinction in the West now or in the foreseeable future.

"We find that the gray wolf in the Western United States is a valid listable entity; however, the gray wolf in the Western United States does not meet the definition of an endangered species or a threatened species," the agency said. "Thus, we find that listing the gray wolf in the Western United States is not warranted at this time."

The finding is not action-forcing, and the legal status of gray wolves does not change.

However, the agency will be developing a National Recovery Plan under the ESA for gray wolves in the lower 48 states. The agency plans to have the first-ever nationwide recovery plan developed by the end of 2025.

"Recovery plans provide a vision for species recovery that is connected to site-specific actions for reducing threats and conserving listed species and their ecosystems," the agency said.

Lawsuit brewing

Following their petition denial, the Center for Biological Diversity and other environmental groups plan to take legal action against the agency's decision.

See **WOLVES** on page 12



Yellowstone National Park

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined it is unwarranted to list gray wolves under the ESA in the Northern Rocky Mountains and the western U.S. Pictured here, a single female wolf in Yellowstone National Park.

Rabobank: Rebuilding a resilient US cattle herd is a necessity

— Adapt to uncertainty

A recent report by Rabobank shows U.S. cattle producers and beef processors face mounting challenges in managing production and price risks. As the industry grapples with these difficulties, there is a growing call to bolster resilience across the supply chain, mirroring the dedication previously shown in boosting demand over the past three decades.

Lance Zimmerman, senior animal protein analyst at Rabobank, stated high consumer demand and low supplies have created higher market prices, exposing the market to greater financial risk. Zimmerman continued that the high cost of inputs and cattle prices have muffled signals that lead to herd rebuilding.

The recent downturn in cattle futures prices on the Chicago Mer-

cantile Exchange highlights the industry's volatility. Despite a significant rally from pandemic lows in 2020 to highs in 2023, with live cattle futures climbing 120%, challenges persist for cattle producers and beef processors, the report said.

Factors such as ongoing cow liquidation, elusive heifer retention, production risks exacerbated by drought and escalating input costs—including a 70% rise in corn prices, a 48% increase in alfalfa prices and a 65% surge in retail diesel prices from 2020 to 2023—underscore the need for resilience in the face of mounting pressures, the report continued.

Rabobank forecasts continued growth in consumer beef prices and cattle markets through 2026. Still, sustained periods of steady or decreasing costs are necessary to incentivize producers to begin a multiyear herd rebuild. However, the

report pointed out that cattle producers' confidence is being shaken by tightening consumer budgets, rising recession risks and fluctuating margins, all of which require consistent profitability for the next herd rebuild to materialize.

The report continued it expects consumers to pay more for beef, which should bolster growth in the cattle market. However, cow-calf operations require more than just elevated prices and immediate profitability to initiate herd rebuilding. Ensuring consistent cash flow and reliable returns for cattle producers must become a primary industry objective to incentivize and retain new operators throughout successive cattle cycles.

Drought stalls efforts

Zimmerman wrote that drought

See **RABO** on page 20

Group urges Biden to designate more monuments

— Cites economic contribution

A Western group of local elected officials is urging President Joe Biden to designate six new national monuments and expand existing ones across the West.

The Mountain Pact—a group comprising local officials from 100 Western communities—released a report emphasizing the conservation and economic advantages of national monuments with testimonials underscoring their significance in their localities.

"National monuments are important to western communities. Protecting public lands has always been a bipartisan effort and one that all Americans can celebrate," said Anna Peterson, executive director of The Mountain Pact. "We continue to urge President Biden to use his authority under the Antiquities Act to protect more places with cultural and scientific significance as national monuments."

Biden designated the fifth national monument in August 2023 with the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni—Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument, protecting nearly 1 million acres surrounding the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

Biden has also restored Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante boundaries in Utah, and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine

See **MONUMENTS** on page 26

Cash trade inactive; packers holding out

Cash trade for the week was off to a slow start, with few bids picked up. Trade was expected to be delayed until later on Friday. The board managed to climb a few dollars higher in the cattle complex.

Live cattle futures were several dollars higher over the week. The February contract gained about \$4 to close at \$183.77, and the April contract gained \$3.40 to close at \$186.57.

"Today, futures are retracing some of yesterday's rally as traders scramble to get a grip on quantifying the implications of a USDA Cattle on Feed report that won't be released until two weeks from Friday," Cassie Fish, market analyst, wrote Thursday in The Beef. "And despite all the bullishness, live cattle futures still have not taken out their November high."

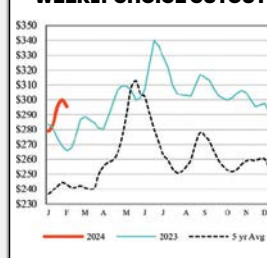
Cash trade was inactive through Thursday afternoon, with less than 2,500 head sold. Live steers sold from \$176-179, and dressed steers did not show a market trend.

Cash trade through the week ending Feb. 4 totaled 69,008 head. Live steers averaged \$177.81, and dressed steers averaged \$279.78.

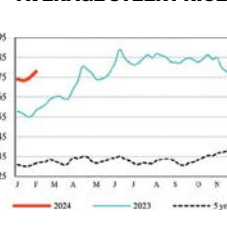
The national weekly direct beef type price distribution for the week of Jan. 29-Feb. 5 was the following on a live basis:

- Negotiated purchases: \$177.76.
 - Formula net purchases: \$177.60.
 - Forward contract net purchases: \$188.01.
 - Negotiated grid net purchases: \$176.49.
- On a dressed basis:
- Negotiated purchases: \$280.01.
 - Formula net purchases: \$279.85.
 - Forward contract net purchases: \$292.43.
 - Negotiated grid net purchases: \$279.64.

WEEKLY CHOICE CUTOUT



5 AREA WEEKLY WTD AVERAGE STEER PRICE



Slaughter through Thursday totaled about 501,000 head, compared to 505,000

See **MARKETS** on page 53

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------|
| LIVE STEERS | DRESSED STEERS | CME FEEDER |
| \$176.00 | N/A | \$242.11 |
| WEEK ENDING: 02-08-24 | | |

PERIODICAL: Time Sensitive Priority Handling

COMMENTS

Optimistic outlook

All signs point to higher highs, according to CattleFax's report given during the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's (NCBA) Cattle Industry Convention in Orlando, FL.



IPSEN

It's been since 1951 that the all cattle and calves inventory was this low. That's 73 years! Amid a strong market in 2023, herd liquidation has continued, and signs point that a continuation of this trend is still happening. All eyes were on cow slaughter throughout the last quarter of 2023, and numbers did everything they were expected to—they continued. 2024 started the calendar year down nearly 2% from 2023's number of beef cows, which was the lowest in 50 years at that point. On top of this, the latest inventory report showed heifers held for replacements were down 1.4% over last year as well.

It's an easy assessment to make that we simply don't have the cow herd to slow a strong market rally anytime soon. Factors weighing on the minds of all cattlemen and women—high interest rates, drought conditions, labor shortages, high inputs, etc.—are all playing a key role and pushing cattle to town. Raising beef cattle still hasn't been an easy thing to do even though the market was in good shape this past summer. More relief is needed for many to pull out of their financial and atmospheric pressures. Albeit in the far West, hay prices were more favorable, which helped many producers.

The market correction that happened in the last 90 days of 2023 can be blamed for many reasons, but what is evident is that it is behind us, and this market is on the move again. Most sale barns across the country are seeing a lot of the losses nearly erased and continue to hit new highs in nearly every weight class. A couple of highlights from recent sales across the country will show that things are on the move. In Riverton, WY, 159 steers weighing 629 pounds sold for \$3.04/cwt. In South Dakota, a semi load of steers weighing 705 lbs. brought \$2.83/cwt. The market has seen a sharp run over the last few weeks and this trend doesn't look to slow down in the near future. The question will be at what point does it slow down and plateau?

Mike Murphy, CattleFax chief operating officer, forecast the 2024 average fed steer price to be up \$9/cwt over 2023. This is a significant increase and could mean huge dividends for *WLJ*'s readership this year. In his comments, he claimed the average 550-lb. steer calf will average \$2.90/cwt. This is a measurable gain for cow-calf producers and is in line with what producers can budget to make ends meet, especially if an interest rate, or multiple interest rates, are against the cattle at some point, which is most producers in business today.

Randy Blach, CEO of CattleFax, commented with one of the most important details in my opinion. He spoke briefly on excess packing capacity chasing fewer numbers of cattle. As many new facilities were brought into production over the last 18 months, the added competition was bound to play a role. Even though many of these facilities play in smaller markets, with several of these facilities now in play, they are helping move the needle in the favor of the guy raising calves right now. Their impact might be small in their area, but it's added more pressure.

What many have seen is that these facilities are going after program cattle for a specific target. Value-added programs are the most important they've ever been. These cattle need to have a story behind them as they enter the next phase. Feeder and stocker buyers are needing the information for risk protection and marketing. It has changed the way we look at reaching our consumer. They've asked for the story behind the product, and these labels help us deliver that. It's the best our industry has right now, and producers are being paid for the story.

The outlook for 2024 is all positive for the rancher right now. I could talk more about inputs and interest rates, but we all know what they are. After the Fed's last meeting when Chairman Jerome Powell maintained rates and looks to maintain rates for the next couple of meetings, we surely have a more optimistic outlook.

During the NCBA's CattleCon, *WLJ* had a booth for the first time in recent history. In that space, we welcomed hundreds of readers from across the nation and we'd like to welcome new subscribers to the *WLJ* family. We are anxious for the future here and are working on several behind-the-scenes projects to build a better platform to relay the best information possible to our loyal readership. Welcome! — **LOGAN IPSEN**

GUEST OPINION

Farming is a beautiful way of life for many families ... it's also a business. An often-quoted phrase is an important one in agriculture: the business of business is relationships. It's the theme of a growing conversation between farmers and those downstream in the supply chain. And that's something to celebrate. Why? Because it can make the difference between untenable mandates and collaborative progress.

As an example, we hosted a conversation at our convention at the end of January with Hans Specht, manager of global agriculture for Kraft Heinz, and Mallory Flanders, regional sustainability specialist for Cargill. It started by acknowledging that communication up and down the food supply chain hasn't always been great, and there is shared responsibility for that. On the bright side, we heard how attitudes are evolving and relationships are strengthening within the food supply chain.

Hans talked about his department at Kraft Heinz—the ag office—being a clearinghouse for other departments. Whether it's a sourcing claim or emissions commitment, his job is to ensure it's realistic for their farmer suppliers. He admits that's not always easy. It required a mindset shift, he explained, realizing the only way to achieve their sustainability goals is through partnerships on the farm—not one-size-fits-all programs.

He says the company increasingly understands the need for adaptability. This reality inspired them to employ a team of agronomists to dispatch across the country and globe to support their farmer suppliers in achieving tailored, obtainable goals.

Mallory stressed that every farm and every field is unique, saying her job is to help Cargill become more nimble in its ability to accommodate the diverse needs of farmers. Full stop. Raise your hand if you heard similar sentiments from companies downstream in the supply chain a decade ago. I didn't think so. It's important to acknowledge and applaud the progress made toward increased understanding and fundamental respect for farmers and the challenges they face ... even if we still have a long way to go.

No one thinks we've achieved supply chain utopia. Both Hans and Mallory are quick to say they don't have all the answers, and both hope to further increase understanding of what farmers need within their companies. Frankly, plenty of companies within the food supply chain have yet to recognize the value of treating farmers as partners and the uniqueness of every farm. So, what can farmers do about it?

THE BUSINESS OF RELATIONSHIPS

Tara Vander Dussen, a fifth-generation dairy farmer from New Mexico and co-host of the Discover Ag podcast, joined the conversation with Hans and Mallory to present a farmer's perspective. She encouraged fellow farmers to view this moment as an opportunity. The tightening connections within the supply chain, increased consumer interest in how food is grown, and intense spotlight on climate-smart farming come together to represent unprecedented possibilities, she says, along with plenty of reasons for farmers to be cautious.

She stressed the importance of three things: leveraging, learning and collecting data. She hopes farmers will be proactive in leveraging the increased interest in collaboration by engaging those downstream in the supply chain. Obviously, that's easier for some types of crops and contracts than others, but she pointed out that farmers can help to advance supply chain understanding even if not directly with the companies buying, processing and marketing their crops and herds. Building relationships will benefit all of agriculture.

Learning has always been second nature to farmers, but Tara pointed out that the pace of technological advances and developing farm income opportunities is stunning. It can also be overwhelming. She suggests taking five minutes out of each day for learning. Whether that's to read about new research into feed additives, check out carbon markets or to explore any one of a thousand other emerging topics in agriculture. She says it's not about becoming an expert in five minutes, but rather about discovering what new options and advancements might be worth exploring further.

Finally, she urges fellow farmers to start collecting on-farm data if they aren't already doing so. Regardless of whether a farmer has any intention of sharing their data—ever—she says the only way to have a choice is by having the data. She was quick to point out an array of concerns about data privacy and the Wild West nature of current ecosystem markets, but equally quick to encourage farmers to position themselves in the driver's seat. Collect it and hold it close, she says. Data has value and should be shared only with trusted partners.

Trust can't be mandated or purchased. Trust is built when genuine respect is shown for farmers and the complexities of farming. It's built when food companies hire agronomists instead of auditors. It's built when relationships are built. After all, the business of business is relationships. — **Terri Moore, American Farm Bureau Federation vice president of communications**

GUEST OPINION

STATE TAX CREDIT, INCENTIVE PROGRAMS BOOST AG INDUSTRY

A few months ago, I was chatting with my colleague Patrick Hanlon about federal programs aimed at agriculture. For a little background, his area of expertise is in business incentive credits offered by states to encourage economic development. After talking about the Inflation Reduction Act, Patrick brought up a good point: Most of the time, we focus on federal programs and forget that most states offer incentives to businesses such as agriculture. I asked him to coauthor this article to outline the basics of state programs.

Qualifying activities for state economic development incentives are when companies hire new employees; make capital investments in real estate, machinery and equipment; and train new or current employees. There are more than 350 state tax credit and incentive programs targeting agriculture industry companies. These programs are designed to help businesses invest in their operations and improve their productivity, which ultimately benefits the local economy.

These state programs vary widely in terms of their eligibility requirements, the amount of tax credit or incentive offered, and the types of activities that are eligible for the credit or incentive. Some states offer tax credits for the purchase of new equipment or for the installation of energy-efficient systems. Other states offer incentives for the creation of new jobs or for the training of employees. Many states offer a combination of these.

In Illinois, the Agriculture Equipment Sales Tax Exemption Program provides a sales tax exemption for farm equipment. This program is available to farmers who meet certain eligibility requirements, including the requirement that they own or lease at least 40 acres of land. It helps to reduce the cost of equipment for farmers in Illinois, which can help to

stimulate investment in the agriculture industry.

In Ohio, the Ag-LINK program offsets the impact of up-front costs in the agricultural industry by providing an interest rate reduction on agriculture business operation loans at eligible banks and farm credit lenders.

In South Carolina, the Rural Infrastructure Authority grant program provides grants to businesses that invest in rural areas in the state. The program is available to all businesses that meet certain eligibility requirements, including the requirement that they create new jobs in rural areas. It helps to encourage businesses to invest in rural areas in South Carolina, which can help stimulate economic growth in these areas.

In addition to the tax credit and incentive programs specifically targeted at agriculture industry companies, most of the economic development tax credits and incentive programs not targeted at agriculture companies specifically will usually apply to them when they undertake qualifying activities.

For example, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation provides a wide range of tax credits and incentives to businesses that create jobs or make capital investments in Indiana. These programs are available to all businesses that meet the eligibility criteria, including agriculture industry companies.

Overall, state tax credit and incentive programs are powerful tools for supporting the growth and development of the agriculture industry. Businesses that are interested in taking advantage of these programs should consult with their state economic development agency to learn more about the specific incentives that are available in their state. — **Rod Matuszycki, DTN tax columnist**

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| <p>WESTERN LIVESTOCK JOURNAL (ISSN 0094-6710, USPS 678660) is published weekly (52 issues annually, plus special features) by Western Livestock Journal LLC, 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111. Website: www.wlj.net. Email: advertising@wlj.net or editorial@wlj.net. U.S. subscription rates: 1 year - \$55, 2 years - \$85, 3 years - \$110. Single-copy price: \$1.50. Periodicals postage paid at Denver, CO, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Western Livestock Journal, P.O. Box 370930, Denver, CO 80237-0930.</p> | | | |

OBITUARIES



Robert 'Bob' Henry Neumeyer; 1930-2024

Bob Neumeyer, 93, passed away on Jan. 19, in Eagle, ID. Bob was born on March 27, 1930, in Denison, IA, to Viola and Rudy Neumeyer. The oldest of five boys, they all helped with the farm and were active in 4-H and FFA.

After high school, Bob continued to work on his dad's farm until the Korean War when he and five high school classmates enlisted in the United States Air Force. He was stationed at Kessler Field in Biloxi, MS, and then Elmendorf Field in Anchorage, AL, and worked as a welder in the machine shops. He was honorably discharged from the service after two years and returned to Denison to help his dad with the farm. His time in the Air Force and interest in flying led him to obtain his private pilot license 10 years later.

In 1954, Bob met Hollyce Anderson at a dance in Denison, where she was an elementary school teacher. She was the love of his life and they were married on June 24, 1955, had four children and made their home in Tipton, IA. Bob worked for Foxbilt Feeds and Triple F Feeds as a sales manager during this time.

From an early age, Bob dreamed of moving out West to the mountains and raising cattle. In 1963, Bob accepted a job with the *Western Livestock Journal* and moved his young family to Yakima, WA. After two years he accepted a position as secretary manager for the Western States Angus Association and moved his family to Citrus Heights, CA.

Bob loved Angus cattle and worked toward the day he could go back to ranching life. In 1968, that dream became a reality, and he became a partner in the Jaynbee Angus Ranch and moved his family one last time north of Bonners Ferry, ID.

Bob and Hollyce were long time members of Trinity Lutheran Church and Bob was an active member of the Church Board. When arriving in Idaho, he started the Kooteneers 4-H Club and was an active 4-H leader for many years, was active in the Cattleman's Association, the Selkirk Saddle Club, and was a Boundary County commissioner.

Bob was involved in the Angus business for over 65 years. While still in Iowa, he was the first secretary and sales manager of the Denison Angus Association.

While serving two terms on the board of directors of the American Angus Association, Bob was instrumental in maintaining the Certified Angus Beef (CAB) program in the early 1980s when it was in its infancy losing money and some board members thinking it should be abolished. As Marketing Committee Chairman, Bob was the deciding vote to maintain the CAB program which ultimately became a remarkable success story and the reason Angus beef is promoted and served by restaurants around the world, from the finest steak establishments to the most popular fast-food chains.

Bob helped many other Angus breeders get their start in the business and was an adviser and mentor to many. In 1999, Bob was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation and honored for making major contributions in the advancement of the Angus breed. Bob served as president of the Western States Angus Association and Inland Empire Angus Association. He and Hollyce were honored at the Western Na-

tional Angus Futurity in 2004.

He is survived and will be missed by Hollyce, his wife of 68 years; two brothers, Dean Neumeyer of Fountain Hills, AZ, and Butch Neumeyer of Walker, IA; three children, Nancy (George) Langfield of Moscow, ID, Gary (Barbara) Neumeyer of Puerto Armuelles, Panama, and Jeff (Mary) Neumeyer of Eagle, ID; and his grandchildren, Maximilian (Rebekah) Langfield, Nampa, ID; Ethan Langfield, Boise, ID; Kyle Neumeyer, Anchorage, AL; Casey Neumeyer, Greybull, WY; Ayla Neumeyer, Washington, D.C.; Robert Bojorquez, Seattle, WA; Daniel (Lea) Neumeyer, Portland, OR; David (Madison) Neumeyer, Boise, ID; Joseph (Olivia) Neumeyer, Boise, ID; Alyssa Neumeyer, Eagle, ID; Meilanna Neumeyer, Eagle, ID; Kensington (Jon) Hill, Moscow, ID; Colleen (Brice) Baines, Coeur d'Alene, ID; Weston Baines, Alexandria, VA; and Sonja (Alex) Shinavier, Bonners Ferry, ID.

Bob is preceded in death by his parents, brothers Neil and Don, and his beloved daughter, Jean Neumeyer Bojorquez.



Gene Simeon 'Primo' Walker, Jr.; 1957-2024

Gene Simeon "Primo" Walker, Jr., 66, joined our Lord in His heavenly kingdom on Jan. 29. Gene was a proud graduate of Texas Christian University Ranch Management program, where he honed his passion for the cattle industry. Gene's life revolved around his love for cattle trading. Known throughout the industry for his integrity and commitment, he served as a director of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, where he dedicated his time and expertise to the betterment of ranching and cattle trading practices. Gene's word was his bond, earning him the respect and trust of his colleagues and friends.

Beyond his professional achievements, Gene was a devout follower of Jesus Christ, finding solace and strength in his faith. He cherished the teachings of the Bible, and John 14:6 held particular significance in his life.

However, Gene's greatest joy came from his family. His wife, Jean Carlyn Walker, was his partner in life, providing love and support throughout their journey together. Gene found immense happiness in the presence of his children and grandchildren, who were the light of his life. The time spent with his family brought him great delight, providing a sense of warmth and love that Gene cherished deeply.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Gene Simeon and Mary Katherine Walker; his mother-in-law, Jean Murray De St Germain; and his brother, James Patrick "Rick" Walker, Sr.

Left to cherish his memory is his beloved wife Carlyn Walker; his children, Jeffery Carl Walker, Cathy Elizabeth (Kevin) Walker Reed, Kandy Elaine Walker, and Marygene Walker; his grandchildren, William, Rheya, Michael, Memphis, Wyatt, Rayce, Virgil, Gemie and Gene, III; his siblings, Elizabeth Walker and Kathleen "Kandy" Walker; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, extended relatives and friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that you consider making a donation to Moriel Ministries, P.O. Box 823, Dover, TN 37058.



Terry Ray Fankhauser; 1970-2024

On Jan. 29, we bid farewell to Terry Fankhauser, a beloved figure born in Eureka, KS, on Oct. 16, 1970, to Larry and Mary Clark Fankhauser. Terry's journey began at Madison High School, where he graduated with the Class of 1989, later pursuing football at Ft. Scott Community College, and earning his undergraduate and master's degrees in ruminant nutrition at Kansas State (K-State) University.

On Sept. 13, 1997, Terry married the love of his life, Hidi Hodges in Lebo, KS. Their journey commenced in Overland Park and unfolded in Colorado, where Terry devoted 22 years of service as the executive vice president to the Colorado Cattleman's Association (CCA). In the summer of 2022, Terry, alongside Hidi and their children, Emma, Tess and Grant, returned to the family ranch in Madison, KS, established in 1906 by

Terry's great-grandparents. Despite the change in scenery, Terry's unwavering commitment to the industry endured, and he continued to serve as a consultant for CCA.

His passion for the industry was reflected in his active participation in key programs and committees, including the Colorado Ag Council, National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Strategic Planning, American Heritage Alliance, Partners for Western Conservation, Colorado Range Management Initiative, emeritus director of Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, Colorado State University (CSU) Quality Assurance Initiative, and the Advisory Committee to the CSU president.

Terry was also a member of the NCBA, an Honorary Lifetime Member of CCA, and a member of the K-State University Alumni Association. He contributed to the Ft. Lupton First United Methodist Church, where he served on the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee during his time in Colorado.

Terry is survived by his loving wife, Hidi, and their children, Emma, Tess and Grant, along with his parents, Larry and Mary Fankhauser, and his sister, Shari Kurtz, and her husband, Robert, of Eureka, KS, as well as nieces and nephews whom he held dear. His memory will be cherished by numerous extended family members and countless friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions to Madison High School Music and FFA

departments, the Greenwood County 4-H Foundation Beef Project, or the CCA Building Fund and sent in care of the VanArsdale Funeral Home, P.O. Box #488, Madison, Kansas 66860.

May Terry Fankhauser rest in peace, his legacy enduring through the lives he touched, and the unforgettable mark he left on the cattle industry and beyond.

Richard C. 'Dick' Law; 1931-2024

Richard C. (Dick) Law, a cherished member of his community, passed away on Feb. 2 at the age of 93, in Roseville, CA. He was born in Elmhurst, IL, on Jan. 7, 1931, to David H. Law III and Janice May.

Dick attended El Segundo High School graduating with the class of 1941. After high school, Dick attended Pierce Junior College where he began his career in the livestock industry. Dick joined the Air Force in 1950 where he served his country for three years. After his discharge from the Air Force, Dick continued his education at Fresno State University, earning his bachelor's degree in animal science.

While at Fresno, Dick met the love of his life, Norma (Bam) Giffin, and on Sept. 1, 1956, they were married. Dick and Bam made their home in Orange County, CA, and it was there, in 1963, that Dick embarked on a career with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). He served as a state brand inspector for the Orange County area until he relocated

to Roseville in 1968. Dick was a dedicated brand inspector and served the Placer/Nevada Region until his retirement from the state in 1992, completing 31 years of service with the CDFA. Dick also served as an officer with the Placer County Sheriffs Reserves.

Throughout his life, Dick made service to his community a priority. He was a 4-H parent and was actively involved as project leader and fair volunteer. He was an active member of Sons in Retirement (SIRS Branch 98), he was a Mason, and an active member of Roseville Elks Lodge 2248 where he held the honor of being an exalted ruler among other officer positions. He was an active member of his church, sang in the choir and volunteered for any functions the church may have needed him for.

Dick was an avid golfer, he enjoyed showing cattle with his daughters, singing and RV traveling. Upon retirement, he and Bam traveled the world to see places on their bucket list.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 66 years, Norma (Bam) Law; his mother, Janice; and brothers, Robert Kay and Dr. David Hillis Law IV. Dick is survived by his daughters, Gale Rickert (Ross J.B.) Summerville, SC; and Cynthia Pettitt (Bob) Sloughhouse, CA.

Dick will leave behind a legacy of service, dedication to God, his community and his family. His passion for life will be remembered fondly by all who knew him.

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PG&E proposal a concern for local CA farms

Farmers and vintners in northern San Joaquin County, CA, are expressing concern about an electrical transmission project they say would bisect farm properties, restrict the ability to change crops and negatively affect property values in one of the state's top wine regions.

Growers with farms in the path of the transmission system proposed by investor-owned Pacific Gas & Electric Co. (PG&E) and the local municipal power provider, Lodi Electric Utility, raised concerns during a recent virtual meeting of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

In interviews and testimony to the CPUC, some farmers said they understand the transmission line is needed but suggested the project be modified or that power lines be placed underground to reduce the acres of farmland that could be taken out of production.

San Joaquin County farmer Joe Cataldo, who grows 73 acres of winegrapes and cherries in Lodi, CA, said he believes the transmission line will reduce the value of his property.

"I'll have about 6 to 7 acres worth of ground that will have to be taken by PG&E for the five or six steel poles and access roads that are proposed on my property," Cataldo said. "To have steel poles right in the middle of our cherries

and access roads everywhere ... is going to create a huge hardship. We're already struggling as farmers as it is."

Lodi farmer Dwight Busalacchi, who grows 20 acres of rare grape clones for specialty wineries, said his property is affected by a steel tower and a portion of the transmission line, which is near a 426-foot-deep well.

"It would cost about \$160,000 to relocate the well and probably another \$50,000 to abandon it," Busalacchi said, adding he estimates it would cost half a million dollars to prepare his property for the line. "We'll lose about \$6,000 of yearly income from the grapes that have to be removed."

Karen Norene Mills, California Farm Bureau director of Legal Services, said proponents of proposed transmission lines are frustrated about how long it takes for projects to be approved. She said this can lead to shortcuts in the outreach process by utilities that can undermine the community's ability to provide input.

"There is tremendous pressure at the state and national levels to build out transmission lines, so it takes extensive pressure to overcome the preference to simply rubber stamp the application of the utility, in this case, PG&E," said Mills, who has been engaged on the issue on behalf of farmers since the project

was first proposed in 2015.

"The first opportunity to convey concerns about the project" is through the California Environmental Quality Act process overseen by the CPUC, Mills said. "If the process is fairly conducted, community concerns can be addressed, yet still allow the project to move forward."

The Northern San Joaquin Transmission Project, formerly known as Northern San Joaquin Power Connect, would include almost 11 miles of new transmission lines, access roads, new and modified substations and other upgrades.

The purpose of the new 230-kilovolt transmission system is to address the San Joaquin County region's reliability and capacity issues identified by the California Independent System Operator.

The CPUC is due to conduct an environmental review before deciding on the project.

Addressing utilities commission representatives, farmers talked about impacts to their operations during the project construction, which is expected to take several years.

Dave Simpson said PG&E plans to use a portion of his property as a staging area as it builds what he described as "a major construction project."

"We have 28 acres of winegrapes that are going to be impacted by the construction

of this project," he said. "They want to use a 20-foot dirt road between two vineyards, which is enough to turn a grape harvester, and they want to use that for I don't know how long."

Simpson also argued that transmission lines should be put underground or that existing transmission corridors be improved instead. "There needs to be a better way," he said.

His wife, Sandy Simpson, said the project will decrease property values and negatively impact "the ambiance of the Lodi wine country that the city of Lodi and farmers have been trying to capitalize on to make this a viable destination, which it is becoming more and more."

With about 40% of the state's premium grapes grown in Lodi, the viticultural area is touted as the "wine-grape capital of the world." Lodi growers produce more than \$450 million in winegrapes annually, said Amy Blagg, executive director of the Lodi District Grape Growers Association.

"A lot of families have been grape growers for generations and have opened small wineries, so the aesthetics of having a transmission line through the property doesn't really lend to that as well, so there's a lot of concerns and questions about alternatives," Blagg said.

The project is happening at

a time when farmers are having to make hard decisions about their futures, Blagg said.

"We have a lot of growers right now, just as markets change, looking at pulling out a vineyard and determining what alternative crops they could grow," she said. "The overhead lines limit their ability to plant alternative crops such as trees."

Jim Grady, who farms almost 50 acres of winegrapes in Lodi, said the transmission line bisecting his vineyard "will make aerial application of sulfur impossible." After late-spring rains, Grady explained, farmers must aerially apply sulfur to mitigate mildew and mold.

Katie Koeplin of Lodi said the project would affect two of her properties and cause her to lose a portion of a cherry orchard. She and others who addressed the CPUC expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of outreach to the community during the process.

"We were not informed of any of this happening until about three years ago, so we missed many of the beginning meetings, and we were not able to have any input because we were not aware of them," Koeplin said.

PG&E provided outreach to the community at a workshop in 2019, but then "everything went quiet," Blagg said.

Last September, when ma-

ny farmers were harvesting winegrapes, Blagg said, PG&E submitted its preferred route to the CPUC. Locals said they learned the project was revived after noticing a letter stapled to a telephone pole. Weeks after making phone calls, farmers received letters informing them of the proposed project.

"There's just so much wrong with the way this was handled," Cataldo said. "I have a lot of questions that I need answers to."

Many shared concerns about the project's impact on aesthetics and Lodi's viticultural area, which attracts a few million visitors annually.

Cataldo said he wonders whether he'll be able to achieve his goal of adding a tasting room on his property in the coming years.

"If you've got this beautiful vineyard and skyline, and then all of a sudden there's huge, industrial metal and concrete towers buzzing over our property," he said, "that's going to be a game changer."

The Public Utilities Commission may approve the project as proposed or make changes. The agency is expected to make a final decision in 2025. The project is planned to be operational by 2029. Public comments were due Feb. 9. — **Christine Souza, Ag Alert assistant editor, California Farm Bureau Federation**

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Ag chair: Farm bill needs to be jumpstarted

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow began Feb. 5 with the intent to jumpstart the debate on a new farm bill with a plan that would give farmers a choice between a higher premium subsidy for crop insurance or signing up for the traditional commodity programs.

"This is one of several ideas that I will be putting out to really jumpstart negotiations, because we're not where I think we ought to be here in terms of negotiating the bill," Stabenow (D-MI) told DTN in an interview.

The senator pointed to commodity groups and a repeated theme at hearings from farm groups that protecting and expanding crop insurance is considered a top priority.

"Far and away, people want us to make sure that we're protecting crop insurance and we're moving forward on new options and make it more affordable," Stabenow said.

Farm groups and Republicans in Congress want to see higher reference prices under the Agricultural Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage (ARC and PLC) programs. Plans to raise reference prices 10% or more are projected to cost at least \$20 billion over 10 years.

Stabenow is proposing to give farmers the option of enrolling in ARC and PLC or in a countywide insurance plan that would

include a higher premium subsidy.

"There's no reason why we can't offer farmers more choice," she said.

Stabenow pointed to the program for cotton producers, who can enroll in ARC or PLC, or choose to buy the Stacked Income Protection Plan, or STAX, which is sold to cotton producers with an 80% premium subsidy. If cotton farmers sign up for ARC or PLC, they cannot buy STAX.

The senator said her proposal would support a broader range of farmers than boosting reference prices because specialty crop farmers don't participate in ARC and PLC. She pointed to her home state of Michigan which has a high percentage of specialty crops. Other farmers don't have base acres on their commodities as well, so they are prevented from enrolling those acres in the ARC-PLC programs.

"This would give more of a choice and help those who don't have base acres, and beginning farmers, and specialty crops who would be better off with more crop insurance as their risk management tool," Stabenow said. "And we can do it for a reasonable amount of money. And so, it's something that I think is very doable and that is one of the reasons I put it forward."

Talk to insurers

Stabenow made similar

comments in an online speech to the National Crop Insurance Industry Convention in Scottsdale, AZ, that she delivered from the Detroit airport.

The senator told crop insurers that Republicans are pitching boosts in reference prices while at the same time proposing cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the conservation money in the Inflation Reduction Act. Those proposals are opposed by Democrats in both chambers of Congress.

"Folks don't want to even start unless I pick something that will lose every Democratic vote," Stabenow said.

Republicans have proposed putting restrictions on the Agriculture Department's ability to rewrite the Thrifty Food Plan that determines benefit levels for SNAP, which used to be known as food stamps. Republicans have noted that previous updates of the Thrifty Food Plan had been budget-neutral, but the Biden administration rewrote increased benefit levels.

Republicans have also proposed taking some of the almost \$20 billion in budget authority for climate-related conservation programs to use for other purposes, particularly raising the reference prices that trigger farm subsidies under Title I of the farm bill.

"I have thrown that out as a choice to get things going," Stabenow told crop insurance leaders. "We are not seeing the active negotiation we have seen in the past."

STAX data

It's too soon to determine if STAX pays out for 2023, but USDA Risk Management has summary reports for 2022. There were 24,973 STAX policies sold in 2022 on 6.8 million acres. Those policies had a total premium of \$467.74 million, but \$375.1 million—80%—was subsidized by the federal government. STAX had an indemnity payout of \$762.5 million in 2022.

To put the STAX payout into context, the entire ARC-County payout for the

2022 crop year involving 22 crops was \$267 million. PLC did not trigger a payout for 2022.

Farmers planted 12.5 million acres of cotton in 2022, so STAX basically covered half the crop.

In her speech to crop insurers, Stabenow emphasized the importance of crop insurance as the No. 1 risk management tool for agriculture and noted that farmers who testified before Congress repeatedly said it was the most important program.

She noted that crop insurance covers most of the planted acreage in the country, covering 136 crops while the traditional commodity programs, ARC and PLC, only cover 22 crops.

In a letter to colleagues last month, Stabenow said she is also open to an update of the reference prices, but she also noted that the budget is limited.

Stabenow said she has some key principles for the next farm bill, which include targeting benefits to active farmers, providing choice and flexibility and assistance as soon as possible,

reaching more farmers and addressing emerging risks.

Concerns over time

Stabenow told DTN her proposal reflects that it is time to get serious about negotiations. A farm bill also needs to be bipartisan, "which means there are certain red lines on both sides," Stabenow said.

"This is the art of the possible," Stabenow said to insurers, adding there has to be bipartisan support.

The bill needs to "respect" points at which Republican and Democratic votes would be lost. Negotiators need to "find a spot in the middle," she said, adding that the committee has not traditionally taken money from one title to fund another. She said she is opposed to both cuts to the nutrition title and cuts to crop insurance.

"The only way we get a farm bill is to get a strong bipartisan bill in the Senate first," Stabenow concluded. — **Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor, and Jerry Hagstrom, DTN political correspondent**

How to use night feeding to increase daytime calving

A simple management strategy—feeding cows at dusk—could increase the number of calves born during the day. It's easier to watch cattle and see if intervention is necessary while it's light out. Producers can also keep an eye on calves and make sure they're getting a healthy start during the day when it's warmer and easier to manage both cows and calves.

To program beef females so the majority calve during the day, begin feeding at dusk two to three weeks before the start of the calving season.

We aren't sure exactly what triggers a cow to calve, but it likely has a hormonal connection. Studies have shown that rumen contractions increase in frequency just after feeding but slow down a few hours before a cow starts to calve. Pressure in the rumen drops during the last two weeks of gestation and declines faster during calving, indicating calving is triggered when rumen pressure is lower.

Feeding at night may cause this pressure to rise at night and decline in the daytime, which has been suggested to be part of the reason night-feeding increases instances of day-calving.

Several data sets support that feeding pregnant cows at dusk will increase the number of cows calving during the daytime. In Canadian and British studies, feeding later in the day resulted in 79% of the cows calving during the daytime.

In field trials by cattlemen when cows and heifers were fed once daily between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m., 74.5% of the calves were born between 5 a.m. and 5 p.m. In the most convincing study, 1,331 cows on 15 farms in Iowa, cows were fed once daily at dusk and 85% of the calves were born between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.


Calving time is a labor-intensive and stressful time for producers, so having more cows calve during the daylight hours can reduce the stress on the calving crew. — **Nebraska Extension**



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Identifying the right bull for your operation

This week addresses some questions received in response to recent Cow-Calf Newsletter articles. "What's a good bull worth in 2024?" outlined the following criteria to meet "good bull" status:

- A bull that sells with a registration paper which includes pedigree information and a complete set of genetic values (including EPDs and bio-economic indices) to be considered in the selection process.

- A bull that has passed a breeding soundness exam and selling with a breeding sound-

ness warranty (terms will vary).

In addition, it is important to identify the right bull for your operation. Bull selection is not a "one size fits all" proposition. Whether you are buying out of a live auction or private treaty, it is critical to assess your own unique operation in order to determine the attributes your next bull needs to add value to the calf crop he will sire. This needs to be done before you go bull shopping.

There are approximately two dozen genetic values in most beef breeds available to con-

sider, in reality, only a few can be prioritized when identifying your next herd sire.

Selection pressure and your bull buying budget are both precious commodities, don't squander either on traits that are not economic priorities in your operation.

Do you intend to keep daughters to develop as herd replacements?

At this point in the cattle cycle, many producers will be retaining heifers to grow their cow herd. If this pertains to you, the maternal EPDs of your next herd sire will

have a long-term economic impact in your operation. The Heifer Pregnancy (HP) EPD is a selection tool to improve fertility in your cow herd. Higher values indicate higher pregnancy rates in replacement heifers during their first breeding season. The Calving Ease Maternal (CEM) EPD is a selection tool to increase the likelihood of unassisted births of the replacement heifers your next herd bull will sire.

Milk EPDs indicate the milk level in the form of pounds of calf cows will wean based on the nutrition provided. Higher Milk

EPDs not only result in daughters weaning heavier calves but also in higher nutritional requirements in the cow herd so there is an optimum value depending on your production environment.

Mature Weight (MW) EPDs indicate the mature size of a bull's daughters. Optimums in mature cow weight also depend on your production environment.

The Sire Search feature at angus.org indicates considerable variation in MW EPDs among sires combining better than average genetic values for Calving Ease Direct, Weaning Weight, Yearling Weight, HP, CEM, Milk and Marbling.

Will you be using your next bull on cows or virgin heifers?

No one wants to pull calves. That being said, there is an extremely low incidence of dystocia in mature cows. Selection for calving ease bulls in the form of higher Calving Ease Direct (CED) and low Birth Weight

(BW) EPDs is a priority when bulls will be used on heifers.

What else should be considered?

- Marketing endpoint of your calf crop should influence selection priorities when bulls are used as terminal sires.

- Your existing cow herd. Breed composition, disposition and body type, mature size, percent calf crop weaned and percent of mature weight weaned all should impact what you prioritize in bull selection.

Every operation should establish a budget for herd sire purchases. The return on this genetic investment is based on identifying the right bull (or bulls) that offer the best fit for your operation.

Over time, 80-90% of genetic improvement is the result of sire selection. Herd bulls will either increase or restrict the profit potential of your operation. — **Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**

WY cattleman becomes new NCBA president

Mark Eisele, a Wyoming rancher, ascended to the role of National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) president during the 2024 Cattle Industry Convention, held in Orlando, FL. Eisele, along with his wife, Trudy, and their children, operate the historic King Ranch near Cheyenne, WY, grazing both public and private lands.

The 2024 NCBA officer team, approved by the NCBA Board of Directors, took office at the end of this year's convention. Buck Wehrbein of Nebraska was named president-elect and Gene Copenhaver of Virginia was elected vice president. Kim Brackett of Idaho was elected chair of the NCBA Policy Division and Skye Krebs of Oregon was elected policy vice chair. Dan Gattis of Texas and Nancy Jackson of Mississippi were elected as chair and vice chair, respectively, of the NCBA Federation division. Brad Hastings of Texas will continue to serve as NCBA treasurer.

Eisele's focus during his time as president is to advocate for opportunities to strengthen the industry for future generations and for producers' freedom to operate. Protecting property rights and reinforcing the cattle industry's position as an ally in preserving open spaces and wildlife habitat through managed grazing practices will be a top priority.

"I manage both public and private lands and am often asked why protecting public land ranching is important. Aside from it being a part of how we raise cattle in the West, it's also an important place to draw a line in the sand," he said.

"If public lands are closed to cattle, or we're regulated to the point that we can't run cattle on public lands, it will only be a matter of time before activists end up on the doorstep of every farmer and rancher in the country, looking to restrict private property and water rights. I want NCBA to make sure that can't happen," he said.

"Grazing is good and beef is a valuable protein," he continued.

"We need flexibility in the way we produce it. Those are the simple messages I want to get across to decision makers."

During the year ahead, Eisele also expects to tackle ongoing farm bill negotiations as NCBA works to secure reauthorization of animal health provisions, expanding the accessibility and funding of risk management and disaster relief programs, and protect voluntary conservation programs. The significant challenge posed by federal government tax policies, particularly the "Death Tax," will also be top of mind.

He expressed his commitment to advocating for producers in all segments of the industry. Eisele sees the year ahead as an opportunity to pay back the efforts of those who came before him. Acknowledging the influence of past leaders, Eisele explained that it's critical for cattle and beef industry leaders to step up and lead while taking on the challenges of the future.

"I believe in this industry. I believe in its people. I want to meet as many members as I can and hear stories about good things that have happened," he said. "I also want to hear stories about bad things that are occurring so we can find ways that NCBA can support our members and help solve the problems they face. In the year ahead, I plan to focus on these priorities while also opening opportunities for young leaders."

He continued, "For me, one of the most meaningful things in my whole world is to have my family, my kids, my grandkids on the ranch with me. One of the reasons I want to serve, and do what I'm doing, is for my family. I also want to repay the mentors who gave me a leg up in the industry. And I'd like to do something significant with my time here on the planet. The agricultural landscape is evolving, and I am confident that with the same spirit that has carried our association through the last 125 years, we will continue to thrive, innovate and lead," Eisele said. — **NCBA**

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Researchers studying abnormalities that cause sterility in horses

Researchers at the Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (VMBS) have received a \$640,000 grant from the USDA to study abnormalities in sex development that affect the reproductive capabilities of some horses.

The new project will examine a diverse group of about 100 sterile horses, including those whose chromosomes don't match their sex based on the presence of their reproductive organs.

Studying these unexplained abnormalities will give equine scientists and veterinarians vital information for giving care and treatment advice to horse owners.

"This project will allow us to properly diagnose these abnormalities in the future," said Dr. Terje Raudsepp, a professor in the VMBS' Department of Veterinary Integrative Biosciences and director of the Molecular Cytogenetics Lab.

"We'll be able to give owners a definitive answer regarding whether a certain horse is capable of reproduction so they don't spend valuable time and resources on reproductive therapies. It will also improve the animal's quality of care," she said.

A threefold question

The horses in the study can be separated into three distinct groups, each with a different reproductive abnormality that renders them sterile.

The first group are mares with underdeveloped reproductive organs, which is often a sign of X monosomy,

a condition in which a female animal is born with only one X chromosome instead of two.

"It's the most common sex chromosome abnormality in horses and one of the main causes of mare sterility," Raudsepp said. "If we know that an animal has X monosomy, we can tell the owners so that they don't continue to look for a fertility treatment. That mare may be a good companion, or a good riding horse, but she won't ever reproduce."

But previous chromosomal analysis has revealed that the mares did not have X monosomy—they had a normal karyotype (the number and appearance of an organism's chromosomes) of XX. Raudsepp and her team hope to discover why these mares have underdeveloped reproductive tracts despite having normal-looking chromosomes.

The second group of horses in the study have a normal male karyotype—with an X and Y chromosome—as well as the sex determination region (SRY) or "maleness" gene, but their organs did not develop as expected.

"If their sex chromosomes are XY and they have the SRY gene, then they should be male," Raudsepp said. "But these horses have underdeveloped ovaries instead of male sex organs. They appear to be female."

A third group of horses in the study are intersex—they are not easily identifiable as either male or female by their physical features and reproductive organs.

"However, when we look at all their chromosomes together, we see normal female XX karyotype. So this

third group should be female, but they're not," Raudsepp said.

Identifying abnormalities

Raudsepp and her colleagues collected the genetic samples for this project over the course of more than 20 years in the Texas A&M Molecular Cytogenetics Lab, which provides testing to inform owners of chromosomal abnormalities in their animals.

The tests are especially useful when an animal has

a health condition like sterility and the underlying cause is unknown.

Over the years, the samples collected from mares with different disorders of sex development and reproduction showed that some mares had sex chromosome abnormalities, while others did not; the researchers realized there was no clear scientific explanation.

"We also work with many other kinds of animals; the comparisons with other species helped us notice the patterns in horses that led

to this project," she said.

To understand what mutations are causing these abnormalities, Raudsepp and her colleagues will use genome sequencing to see the genomic features of each gene in an organism's DNA.

"Twenty years ago, the technology was too expensive to do at this scale. But we also didn't have enough samples yet. Now we have better technology, more animal health data to compare with our findings, and more collaborators to work with," Raudsepp said.

In addition to the members of the Molecular Cytogenetics Lab, Raudsepp is working with VMBS faculty members Dr. Brian Davis, an associate professor in the Departments of Veterinary Pathobiology and Small Animal Clinical Sciences, and Dr. Rytis Juras, director of Animal Genetics Laboratory. The team will also collaborate with Dr. Alan Conley, at the University of California, Davis, who is conducting hormonal profiling of the horses. — **Courtney Price, Texas A&M University VMBS**

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Webinar series on selling at farmers markets

Producers selling local foods at farmers markets can learn more about marketing strategies, state regulations, value-added products, business planning and boosting sales through fruit and vegetable incentive programs in a five-part online series presented Feb. 12-16 by University of Missouri (MU) Extension.

Participants will hear from farmers, extension faculty, representatives of the Missouri Department of Agriculture and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, as well as representatives for MarketLink and the Mid-America Regional Council. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and exchange ideas.

"This series will help farmers and other food producers gain knowledge to help them sell their food products at farmers markets," said Londa Nwadike, member of the MU Extension Food Systems Network.

The five sessions, held via Zoom, are 12-1 p.m., starting Monday, Feb. 12:

- Feb. 12: Marketing for the farmers market, hear from regional growers.

- Feb. 13: Learn how to accept the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and participate in Double-Up Food Bucks.

- Feb. 14: Learn the state regulations you need to know to sell meat and eggs at farmers markets.

- Feb. 15: Understand the changes to Missouri's cottage food regulations and learn the regulations you need to follow to sell your cottage foods.

- Feb. 16: Grants/business planning/additional resources.

The cost is \$10 for all the sessions, which will be recorded and available after the event to registered participants.

Register at tinyurl.com/4aj6vc2w.

The Selling at the Farmers Market Series is presented by the MU Extension Food Systems Network and sponsored in part by the Missouri Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program. — **MU Extension**

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Financial implications of debt-financed heifer purchases

December and January precipitation greatly improved soil conditions across much of the southern Plains, including Oklahoma. The U.S. Drought Monitor showed over 67% of Oklahoma is drought free as of Jan. 25. Encouragingly, none of the state is in extreme or exceptional drought. In comparison, just over 2% of the state was drought free in January 2023 with almost 58% of the state in extreme or exceptional drought.

With improved soil moisture and ponds refilled,

Oklahoma cow-calf producers are looking to restock drought-diminished herds. However, there are reasons for caution before jumping into the heifer replacement market. Heifer prices are high—very high.

In Oklahoma City, OK, on Jan. 30, 625-pound heifers sold for nearly \$238/cwt, or nearly \$1,500 per head. There are reports of production sales with bred heifers going for over \$2,500 per head. These prices make financing of replacements risky for many producers.

First, let's consider financial position as measured by current ratio, debt-to-equity (D/E), and debt-to-assets (D/A). These measures help measure a farm's ability to withstand financial shocks.

Current ratio is the ratio of current assets to current liabilities. When buying replacement heifers, the producer increases longer-term assets (more breeding stock) while decreasing current assets (cash) and increasing current and longer-term debt. This means the current ratio

drops.

The producer is less able to generate cash in a timely manner. So, unanticipated expenses (e.g., equipment breakdowns or higher feed bills) or decreased revenues (e.g., disease outbreaks or breeding failure) can put the business in increased financial risk.

The D/E ratio is relative proportion of debt financing to owner financing. The D/A ratio is the percent of the farm's assets "owned" by creditors. Both are important measures of credit

reserve. Healthy D/E and D/A ratios (lower values are better) indicate the business can replace longer-term assets (equipment, building, breeding stock) as needed. And healthy ratios indicate the business has a buffer to withstand lower revenue and higher expenses as the firm can borrow against their asset base if necessary.

What this means for cow-calf producers is that borrowing to buy replacement heifers increases D/E and D/A, reducing the firm's credit reserve. This reduces the firm's ability to replace other longer-term assets as needed and the firm's ability to withstand shocks.

Second, let's consider cash flow demands. Debt financing increases cash outflows for debt service. Current replacement heifer notes will not self-liquidate unless a large downpayment is applied, maybe as high as 75% down depending on loan terms. So, most

producers will need other sources of unencumbered cash inflows to make principal and interest payments. Before committing to buy high-priced replacements, those sources need to be identified.

What the current conditions mean for financially struggling producers is that waiting to rebuild herds may be the best financial option. If excess forage is available by delaying replacement purchases, the producer has options.

Calves can be weaned onto grass to add pounds and revenue. Forage can be stockpiled to reduce feeding hay to cows in the fall and winter. Pastures can be leased to neighbors until needed. Hay can be baled and sold. Each of these options may result in healthier (i.e., less risky) financial positions and better cash flow balances. — **Eric A. DeVuyst, Rainbolt Chair of Agricultural Economics, Oklahoma State University**



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Snow, mud creating challenges for producers

Cold January temperatures followed by muddy conditions from melting snow has created special challenges for beef cattle producers, said Kansas State (K-State) University beef extension specialist Justin Waggoner.

"We're getting muddy, but at the same time we've got these cold temperatures, so it really starts to add up, if you will, in terms of the impact it can have on cattle," he said.

Waggoner said monitoring the body condition of gestating cows during times of cold stress becomes critical for calving and rebreeding.

"I would encourage cow-calf producers to pay close attention to body condition score on cows, especially as we begin to get closer to calving," he said. "The other side of that is we need to prepare ourselves that if we're seeing some thin cows at calving, then we need to consider what that looks like in terms of the upcoming breeding season. Likely, it's going to take longer for those cows to cycle back."

Observing the weights of replacement heifers experiencing cold stress relative to target weights at breeding should also be monitored, according to Waggoner.

"We get this implication of cold stress and these heifers aren't able to gain as much," he said. "Take the opportunity to do a weight check on those heifers 45 to 60 days before the expected breeding season."

Bulls require management during harsh winter weather as well, Waggoner said.

"We talk about the importance of bull management oftentimes in providing bedding for those bulls, but the

other piece of that is we certainly want to encourage producers to do a semen test prior to turnout," he said. "We're more focused on the calves and the upcoming calving season, so it's just really easy to overlook those bulls."

Management of feeding sites is also important.

"We need to consider moving the location where we're feeding those livestock. If we're still feeding cows out on pasture, rolling hay, then we need to make sure that we're minimizing the damage to a particular location, or we may need to do some clean-up of those long-term feeding sites once conditions improve," he said.

Concerning the growing and finishing sectors of the industry, poor pen maintenance and muddy conditions take a toll on the gain of fed cattle, Waggoner said.

"Hoof deep mud can start to impact cattle performance and reduce it by as much as 15%," he said.

Additionally, backgrounding and growing operations may need to account for reduced animal performance in their marketing plans, Waggoner said.

"If we're in a system where we'd like to market eight-weight (800-pound) calves in March, and if we're colder and wet, there's some likelihood that those calves are going to be lighter," he said. "So reevaluating the performance of those calves relative to their optimum marketing date certainly will be beneficial to producers."

More information on cattle production is available at local Extension offices in Kansas. — **K-State Research and Extension**

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CattleFax forecasts continued producer profitability

The popular CattleFax Outlook Seminar, held as part of the 2024 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show in Orlando, FL, shared expert market and weather analysis.

The smallest beef cow inventory in the last 50 years, coupled with historically strong demand, led to the highest average fed cattle and calf prices in 2023. As reduced cattle numbers and beef production continue over the next three years, leverage and profitability will continue to favor cattle producers.

Despite record prices, expansion will likely be delayed once again. Lingering drought, high input costs, limited labor availability, high interest rates, and market uncertainty all serve as headwinds against growing the cow herd. The current cattle cycle anticipates slower and more prolonged expansion, with heifer retention causing a supply decline with expected lows in fed slaughter by 2026.

Higher cattle prices and reduced feeding costs will continue to improve margins for cow-calf producers for the next several years, a much-needed improvement to drive expansion as weather patterns allow, according to CattleFax.

After several months watching El Niño's influence on the global weather pattern, Meteorologist

Matt Makens said the El Niño event that placed moisture on the South and Southeast is fading away and La Niña is showing signs of making a rapid return.

"During the next several weeks, we will continue to see strong and wet storm systems move across the central and southern states. Increased odds for snow and cold as far south as Texas will mean possible impacts on calving and wheat," he said. "Take this moisture now and make the most of it; look for a good start to this grazing season overall but be mindful that drought conditions will increase for the southern Plains during summer and fall as we see our pattern change quickly."

As La Niña's influence grows, increased heat and drought-related issues are expected for the central and southern Plains. The moisture pattern will favor the northern tier of states and the Ohio to Tennessee valleys.

Kevin Good, vice president of market analysis at CattleFax, reported that U.S. beef cow herd declined 2% with inventories at 28.2 million head at the beginning of this year.

"Though drought conditions did improve in many regions, over a third of the cow herd was affected by drought in 2023, causing limited heifer retention and more liquidation in

some regions. This will limit growth to the cow herd near-term," Good said.

Cow and bull slaughter is forecast to be 6.5 million head in 2024, down around 800,000 head from 2023. CattleFax predicted feeder cattle and calf supplies outside of feedyards will be 1 million head smaller than 2023 at 24.1 million head.

Commercial fed slaughter in 2024 is forecast to decline by 750,000 to 24.8 million head. Cattle on feed inventories began 2024 up about 2% at 11.9 million head. Good noted, "Though inventories may remain somewhat elevated for a few months, they are expected to decline significantly through the second half of the year."

After about a 1.3-billion-pound decline in 2023, beef production is expected to be down another billion pounds in 2024 to total about 25.9 billion lbs. The decline in production in 2024 will lead to a 1.7-lb. decline in net beef supply to 56 lbs. per person.

Mike Murphy, CattleFax CEO, forecast the average 2024 fed steer price at \$184/cwt, up \$9/cwt from 2023. All cattle classes are expected to trade higher, and prices are expected to continue to trend upward. The 800-lb. steer price is expected to average \$240/cwt, and the 550-lb. steer price is expected to average \$290/cwt. Utility cows are

expected to average \$115/cwt, with bred cows at an average of \$2,600.

"When thinking about what demand looks like, we need to think about what our consumer looks like with the U.S. economy being the driving factor going into 2024," Good said. "Though inflation has moderated, consumer debt and interest rates, cheaper alternative proteins, and economic uncertainty may limit spending and impact purchasing decisions."

2024 USDA All-Fresh Retail Beef prices are expected to average \$7.90/lb. and, while higher beef prices may soften consumer purchasing habits, Good predicted the consumer preference for the quality, consistency and safety of U.S. beef will continue to support relatively strong demand. "Premiums for higher quality beef should remain as consumers have shown a willingness to pay for Choice grade or better beef."

Global protein demand has continued to rise around the world and tighter global protein supplies should broadly support prices in 2024. U.S. beef exports saw large declines in 2023, down about 13%, and another 5% decline is expected in 2024, driven by smaller U.S. production and higher prices. Japan and South Korea remain the top U.S. beef export destinations.



Nick Hunt of CattleFax.

NCBA

Troy Bockelmann, CattleFax director of protein and grain analysis, said national Dec. 1 on-farm hay stocks were up 6.9% from a year ago at 76.7 million tons with hay prices averaging \$220/ton in 2023. "Another good hay crop needs to be seen in 2024, to help rebuild stocks from the lows in 2022 and return prices to a more historically normal range. The first half of 2024 will likely see prices supported at more elevated levels before dropping by roughly \$30/ton following harvest."

He noted that corn stocks-to-use are at just under 15% and should keep the market below \$5.50/bushel with a yearly average price of \$5/bushel expected. "Overall, when thinking about watch items for 2024, look at March perspectives planting report, soybean exports, and the

total principal crop acres." On the energy front, Bockelmann said that, for 2024, not much will change. He said crude oil is expected to average around \$80/barrel and noted that the geopolitical environment will be the driver of price relative to oil markets.

Randy Blach, CattleFax CEO, concluded the session with an overall positive outlook, and noted that the current cattle cycle will be much slower and prolonged compared to the last as heifer retention has not yet started on a nationwide basis. He expects the peak in cattle prices is likely to occur in 2025-26 and, in the meantime, industry profitability will continue to swing in favor of the cow-calf producer as excess feeding and packing capacity chases a declining supply of feeder cattle and calves. — NCBA

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LEGAL LEDGER

Public lands grazing fee remains steady

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) have announced the federal grazing fee remains \$1.35 per animal unit month (AUM) on federal lands. An AUM is calculated as the use of public lands by one cow-calf pair, one horse, five sheep or five goats for one month. The fee will apply to nearly 18,000 BLM grazing permits and leases, and nearly 6,250 USFS permits. The annually determined fee is established using a 1966 base value of \$1.23 per AUM. Under a 1986 presidential order, the grazing fee cannot fall below \$1.35 per AUM, and any increase or decrease cannot exceed 25% percent of the previous year's level. The figure is calculated according to current private grazing land lease rates, beef cattle prices and the cost of livestock production.

NCBA supports FAIR Labels Act

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) supports a bill to stop deceptive labeling practices on alternative meat products. The Fair and Accurate Ingredient Representation on Labels Act of 2024 (FAIR Labels Act) was introduced by Sen. Roger Marshall (R-KS), Reps. Mark Alford (R-MO-04), Roger Williams (R-TX-25), Don Davis (D-NC-01) and Jonathan Jackson (D-IL-01). The legislation would require alternative meat products to be labeled as "imitation" and provide clarity on lab-grown products. Lab-cultivated meat would need to be clearly labeled as "lab-grown" and include a statement that the product was not produced by traditional farming and ranching. "We're not afraid of a little competition, but it is unfair for lab grown or plant-based fake meat products to trade on beef's good name," said former NCBA President Todd Wilkinson.

MSGS releases producer profitability brief

The Montana Stockgrowers Association's (MSGA) Producer Profitability Task Force has released a Producer Profitability Initiative brief. The initiative is a grassroots movement intended to unite ranching stakeholders and ensure the sustainability of the livestock industry. "In December, MSGA's membership passed member-led policy supporting organizational work on producer profitability," said Lesley Robinson, MSGA first vice president and Producer Profitability Task Force chair. "Since then, the task force has worked to build a framework for this initiative." The brief highlights five focus areas: creating a favorable tax climate, improving government programs, minimizing barriers to entry for young or beginning livestock producers, finding solutions for labor challenges, and developing industry mentorship opportunities. The next phase of the initiative will be producer profitability listening sessions around the state. For more information, visit www.mtbeef.org/profitability.

NRCS CA opens agreement proposals

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in California is seeking cooperative agreement proposals through April 3. Priority will be given to projects that provide direct technical assistance to NRCS staff in the implementation of farm bill conservation programs. Each agreement opportunity will make up to \$1 million available. Cooperative agreements will require no funding match and have a floor of \$25,000 and a ceiling of \$75,000. Contribution agreements will require a 1:1 funding match, with a floor of \$25,000 and a ceiling of \$150,000. For more information, visit grants.gov.

San Diego lands permanently conserved

About 1,300 acres of wildlands that serve as habitat for endangered and threatened wildlife in San Diego County, CA, are now permanently protected. The area near Chula Vista, CA, was proposed for home development but will be preserved following state acquisition of the land. Conservation of the land follows after legal challenges from environmental groups. "In an acquisition and closing facilitated by the Nature Conservancy for \$60 million, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife will now own and manage the property as an expansion of the Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve," the Center for Biological Diversity announced. The property is joined with the nearby San Diego National Wildlife Refuge. The land is habitat to the endangered Quino checkerspot butterfly, San Diego fairy shrimp, California gnatcatcher and golden eagles.

JBS settles worker wage case

JBS and a group of meat plant workers have settled claims of price-fixing in a lawsuit originally filed against nearly a dozen meat producers. A joint notice filed on Feb. 5 did not include settlement terms, according to proposed class representative Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll PLLC. The workers sued a group of meat processors in November 2022, arguing the processors shared compensation data and worked to fix uniform pay policies in violation of federal antitrust laws. Perdue settled with the workers in December 2022 and Seaboard Foods settled for \$10 million last August.

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US cattle inventory reaches 73-year low

Table 1. Top 10 beef cow states, 2024 inventory, change from 2023 and 2019.

| Top 10 States | Rank | Beef Cows, 2024 | 2023-2024 | 2019-2024 |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | | 1,000 Head | Change | Change |
| Texas | 1 | 4,115 | -185 | -540 |
| Oklahoma | 2 | 1,922 | -69 | -228 |
| Missouri | 3 | 1,840 | -116 | -219 |
| Nebraska | 4 | 1,637 | -67 | -304 |
| South Dakota | 5 | 1,502 | -31 | -316 |
| Kansas | 6 | 1,264 | -51 | -265 |
| Montana | 7 | 1,251 | -20 | -197 |
| Kentucky | 8 | 907 | +12 | -110 |
| Florida | 9 | 862 | -26 | -52 |
| North Dakota | 10 | 860 | -16 | -115 |
| Top 10 | Subtotal | 16,160 | -569 | -2,346 |
| U.S. | Total | 28,223 | -716.3 | -3,467.7 |

Not many ranchers active today will remember the last time the U.S. cattle industry was this small. On Jan. 1 the all cattle and calves inventory was 87.15 million head, the smallest total inventory since 1951.

The all cattle and calves inventory is 1.9% smaller year over year and is the fifth consecutive year of declining cattle inventories, a total decrease of 7.65 million head or 8.1% since the most recent peak in 2019. The 2023 calf crop was 33.6 million head, down 2.5% year over year and the smallest calf crop since 2014.

The Jan. 1 beef cow

herd inventory was 28.22 million head, down 2.5% year over year and a decrease of 3.47 million head or 10.9% lower, from the cyclical peak in 2019 (Table 1). The current beef cow inventory is the smallest beef cow herd since 1961. Table 1 shows that the top 10 beef cow states, which currently represent 57.3% of total beef cows, accounted for 79.4% of the year-over-year decrease in total beef cow numbers and 67.7% of the decrease from 2019 to 2024.

The inventory of beef replacement heifers on Jan. 1 was 4.86 million head, down 1.4% year over year. However, the 2023 beef replacement heifer inventory was revised down by 4.5% from the initial value reported one year ago. Thus, the 2024 inventory of beef replacement heifers is down 11.4% from the 2022 inventory and is the smallest beef replacement heifer total since 1950. Since 2001, USDA has provided the portion of beef replacement heifers that are expected to calve in the coming year. The current inventory of these bred beef heifers is 3.05 million head, the smallest in the data back to 2001.

The estimated supply of feeder cattle outside feedlots is calculated by sum-

ming the inventories of other heifers, steers greater than 500 pounds and calves greater than 500 lbs. and subtracting the inventory of animals already in feedlots. On Jan. 1, inventories of other heifers, steers and calves under 500 lbs. were all down year over year and feedlot inventories were up 1.6% leading to an estimated supply of feeder cattle outside feedlots of 24.2 million head, down 4.2% from one year ago. The estimated feeder supply can be consistently calculated back to 1972 and the 2024 value is the smallest in that 53-year period.

The smaller cattle inventory is projected to result in a decrease of about 5% in total beef production to roughly 25.5 billion lbs. in 2024. That's three times as much beef as was produced in 1951, the last time the total cattle inventory was this small; impressive growth in productivity in the beef cattle industry. Nevertheless, the current ability to produce beef is smaller than market potential today and the industry will look to rebuild numbers and increase beef production when conditions allow.

— **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**



Two-Steppin' Across Texas

May 19-25, 2024

The 2024 Livestock Tour, presented by *Western Livestock Journal*, will be two-steppin' across Texas in May! Starting and ending in San Antonio, this tour will showcase a diverse selection of livestock operations from the Hill Country to the Brazos Valley. The 2024 tour will include a variety of livestock breeds, management techniques and business approaches with a culture that is only found in the big state of Texas.

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*I understand the price is \$1,985 PER PERSON and is based on double occupancy. The price includes seven nights' accommodations, all transportation, six breakfasts, six lunches, one cocktail party and two dinners, all fees, admissions, taxes and tips. The single rate supplement is \$625. The tour will begin Sunday, May 19th, 2024, in San Antonio, TX at the Estancia Del Norte, and ends back in San Antonio, TX, Saturday, May 25th, 2024. A deposit of \$500 PER PERSON is due with a signed application to hold your reservation. Final payment is due April 15. Make your check payable to Livestock Tours, LLC and mail to: Livestock Tours, PO Box 50381, Billings, MT 59105. If you would like to pay by credit card, please call Livestock Tours at 970-318-6551. Cancellations after April 15 will be subject to a \$500 per-person cancellation fee. Cancellations after May 1st will be subject to any and all funds not recovered from our vendors, as well as the \$500 per-person cancellation penalty. Refunds cannot be made if a member leaves the tour before its completion. After registration form and deposit have been received by Livestock Tours, LLC, a confirmation will be emailed or sent by mail if no email address is provided.

SIGNATURE PARTICIPANT 1

SIGNATURE PARTICIPANT 2

Greens plan to sue if protections not given

WOLVES (from page 1)

"Unlike the Service, we won't stand idly by and watch as northern Rockies wolves are slaughtered year after year," said Kristine Akland of the Center for Biological Diversity "Wolves are an invaluable part of their ecosystems and deserve strong federal protections."

The Center for Biological Diversity, Humane Society of the United States, Humane Society Legislative Fund, and Northern Rockies Wildlands and Wildlife notified the USFWS on Feb. 7 that they intend to sue the agency for denying their May 2021 petition.

The groups claim USFWS violated Section 4 of the ESA by failing to recognize the risk to wolves in significant portions of the wolf's range. They also contend the agency "ignored the best available science" and that it cannot rely on states' "overestimates" of the northern Rockies wolf populations.

The agency has 60 days to "remedy its legal viola-

tions" before the groups will file a lawsuit in federal district court, they said.

Background

Gray wolves are listed under the ESA as endangered in 44 states, threatened in Minnesota, and under state management in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and portions of eastern Oregon and Washington.

At the end of 2022, there were about 2,800 wolves distributed across at least 286 packs in seven states in the western U.S., USFWS said.

"This population size and widespread distribution contribute to the resiliency and redundancy of wolves in this region," the agency said. "The population maintains high genetic diversity and connectivity, further supporting their ability to adapt to future changes."

To read the decision in its entirety, visit regulations.gov and search for Docket ID FWS-HQ-ES-2021-0106.

— **Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor**

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Lot 3 - TFS TRIPLE CROWN 2382K



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Lot 34 - TFS STELLAR 2124K



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Caring for dehydrated calves with scours

Anyone who has experienced a gastrointestinal virus knows the key to getting back to good health is to keep drinking fluids. That is true for beef cattle as well, say the experts at the Kansas State (K-State) University Beef Cattle Institute.

In some cases, young calves who become severely dehydrated from scours may not survive without an intervention, said the K-State veterinarians, who addressed this topic on a recent "Cattle Chat" podcast.

"Scours most commonly affects calves in the first 3-4 weeks of life," said veterinarian Brad White.

With this disease, calves experience severe diarrhea and quickly become dehydrated.

"Calves with moderate diarrhea are losing a lot of fluid and they don't feel well so they often aren't nursing, which compounds the problem," said Brian Lubbers, K-State veterinarian. "An 80- to 100-pound calf that has

scours can lose 5-10% of their body weight quickly, so it is important to intervene quickly."

Lubbers said along with diarrhea and a lack of vigor, calves experiencing dehydration will also show in their eyes.

"With dehydrated calves, their eyeballs will skin and there is a gap in the eyeball and the eyelid," Lubbers said.

Because this is a common disease, it is important for cattle producers to maintain bags of commercial electrolyte replacement on hand, said K-State veterinarian Bob Larson.

"If you can get the calf to drink from a bottle then you can give them oral electrolytes," Larson said. "Another option is to deliver that through an esophageal feeder."

However, if they are really sick, not able to get up and laying on their side, Larson said producers need to have their veterinarian adminis-

ter IV fluids to the calf. Lubbers added that subcutaneous fluids or intra-abdominal fluids are another step that might be an option if they are unable to drink but not to the point where they need IV fluids.

Both Larson and Lubbers agree that it is important to consult with the local veterinarian about the best mode of treatment to aid the sick calf.

Lubbers said that the electrolytes can be administered in conjunction with allowing calves the chance to nurse or receive milk replacer but that the timing is a factor.

"I recommend spacing out the electrolytes and milk feeding by a couple of hours to keep from the milk curdling from an interaction from a bicarbonate in the electrolyte," Lubbers said. "The milk will provide the sick calf energy that is important to their recovery."

From a management standpoint, White said it is important to isolate the calf



*K-State Research and Extension
Calves are most susceptible to scours in the first 3-4 weeks of life.*

to offer treatment and lessen the risk that the disease will spread to other calves in the herd.

"This sickness has a fecal-oral transmission, so it is important those calves are

in a clean environment and the people that work with them need to follow good sanitation practices," White said.

These include wearing gloves when handling the

animals, and washing boots and any equipment that is used with the calves as well as making sure people wash their hands thoroughly, Lubbers said. — **K-State Research and Extension**

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Lot 45 - PCC Kingdom 5128L



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Lot 49 - PCC Buckman 5111L



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CED +9
 BW +1.1
 WW +75
 YW +139
 Milk +29
 PAP +1.13
 CW +68
 MB +.94
 RE +1.01
 Fat +.013
 \$AxH +186
 \$AxJ +181
 \$M +84
 \$W +74
 \$F +114
 \$G +73
 \$B +186
 \$C +325

RIVERBEND SURPASS K1755 9/12/2022
 Sire: BJ Surpass • Dam: Chair Rock Sure Fire 6095
 MGS: GAR Sure Fire
 Brother to Home Town, Tomahawk, Fireproof and GridMaker.



LOT 17

CED +8
 BW -.4
 WW +60
 YW +106
 Milk +32
 PAP -2.20
 CW +41
 MB +1.28
 RE +.68
 Fat +.058
 \$AxH +152
 \$AxJ +119
 \$M +101
 \$W +73
 \$F +74
 \$G +82
 \$B +156
 \$C +303

RIVERBEND INCENTIVE K1705 7/6/2022
 Sire: SITZ Incentive 704H • Dam: Chair Rock Sure Fire 6095
 MGS: GAR Sure Fire
 Brother to Home Town, Tomahawk, Fireproof and GridMaker.



LOT 28

CED +0
 BW +4.2
 WW +79
 YW +142
 Milk +15
 PAP +1.69
 CW +58
 MB +1.59
 RE +1.02
 Fat +.036
 \$AxH +221
 \$AxJ +200
 \$M +44
 \$W +55
 \$F +100
 \$G +104
 \$B +204
 \$C +309

RIVERBEND CACHE K1108 6/13/2022
 Sire: Gardens Cache • Dam: Chair Rock Sure Fire 7003
 MGS: GAR Sure Fire



LOT 45

CED +2
 BW +2.9
 WW +80
 YW +152
 Milk +18
 PAP -.38
 CW +78
 MB +1.05
 RE +.59
 Fat -.004
 \$AxH +131
 \$AxJ +105
 \$M +60
 \$W +56
 \$F +131
 \$G +74
 \$B +205
 \$C +326

RIVERBEND PACIFIC K1334 7/30/2022
 Sire: Sterling Pacific 904 • Dam: K BAR Acclaim 8108
 MGS: Jindra Acclaim



LOT 53

CED +4
 BW +3.8
 WW +80
 YW +137
 Milk +17
 PAP -.42
 CW +63
 MB +.98
 RE +.90
 Fat +.034
 \$AxH +172
 \$AxJ +170
 \$M +56
 \$W +59
 \$F +101
 \$G +71
 \$B +173
 \$C +280

RIVERBEND MAN IN BLACK K1721 7/29/2022
 Sire: LAR Man In Black • Dam: Baldrige Blackbird A030
 MGS: Hoover Dam
 Brother to Alternative.



LOT 61

CED +3
 BW +.7
 WW +76
 YW +136
 Milk +26
 PAP +.65
 CW +55
 MB +.75
 RE +.74
 Fat +.025
 \$AxH +149
 \$AxJ +131
 \$M +69
 \$W +74
 \$F +95
 \$G +58
 \$B +154
 \$C +269

RIVERBEND ENFORCER K1610 8/25/2022
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 MGS: Basin Payweight 1682



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2023 ESAP regional winners recognized

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) recognized six of the nation's top cattle operations as Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP) regional winners for their environmental conservation efforts during CattleCon24 in Orlando, FL.

The regional winners will compete for the national award, which will be presented during NCBA's Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., April 17-19, 2024.

"Cattle producers from coast to coast are committed to preserving natural resources for future generations," said NCBA President Todd Wilkin. "It is an honor to recognize these regional winners who utilize innovative practices and epitomize environmental stewardship."

Regional ESAP winners undertake stewardship efforts unique to their environment, landscape and resources. The selection committee determined winners based on eligible applications received from six of the seven regions. The 2023 regional winners are:

Region I: Tuck Farms

Located 25 miles southeast of Roanoke, VA, Keith Tuck is dedicated to sustainable and environmentally conscious management on his cattle operation. Tuck Farms is adjacent to Smith Mountain Lake, which provides potable water for local communities and is

a tourist destination for water recreation.

Tuck's managed grazing efforts have improved animal condition, soil health and wildlife habitat. Fencing cattle out of ponds and streams has prevented erosion and repaired banks with vegetative cover, resulting in clear water. The farm plays a positive role in the community as residential development consumes surrounding areas and serves as a picturesque setting for passing tourists.

Region II: JB Ranch

JB Ranch is a third-generation cow-calf operation in Immokalee, FL, managed by Liesa and Russell Priddy. The ranch provides important habitat for more than 20 protected animal species including panthers, the Florida state animal.

Resource management goals are intertwined and inseparable, and the removal of invasive species as well as ensuring water integrity are priorities. The Priddys have reduced invasive plant species by 90% utilizing various methods, including mechanical removal, prescribed burning and rotational grazing.

Water quality has improved with the use of control structures and solar wells. As development encroaches, JB Ranch remains an oasis, and the Priddys have diversified their operation by harvesting cabbage palms and sod for land-

scaping as well as offering guided hunts.

Region IV: G Bar C Ranch

G Bar C Ranch, located north of Dallas, TX, is committed to continually improving ranching practices in ways that nurture the environment. The Ellis family sees themselves as caretakers of the land, maintaining biodiversity, natural habitat and clean waterways. The ranch implements an adaptive multi-paddock strategy that rotates cattle through 58 permanently fenced pastures.

The family also strives to keep carbon stored in the soil by minimizing disturbance. The Ellis family grazes in a manner that keeps the vegetative filters and sponges working effectively and prevents erosion, keeping water clear and pure.

Region V: Tower Rock Ranch

Since 1883, Tower Rock Ranch has been an active cattle operation in Mansfield, WA. Environmental sustainability is a daily goal and cattle management practices keep water, natural habitat and wildlife top of mind.

Wildfire has changed the function and appearance of the ranch many times over the years with brush and small trees consumed, leaving pastures with no shade, fence replacement a financial burden and fewer calves to market. Despite setbacks from fires, the Miller, Matsumura

and Vargas families forge ahead with a commitment to protecting the environment.

Tower Rock Ranch preserves habitat for sage grouse, releases beneficial insects to control Dalmatian Toadflax, and effectively manages rangeland through rotational grazing. The ranch also regularly hosts tours, training sessions and studies for agency employees, organizations, schools and fellow cattle producers.

Region VI: Hart Ranch

Hart Ranch, a cow-calf operation in Montague, CA, is dedicated to landscape and watershed rejuvenation, demonstrating the tremendous positive impacts a well-managed cow herd and grazing program has on the environment.

Through strategic partnerships with various organizations and state and federal agencies, the Hart family has improved on-farm water efficiency and soil health while simultaneously bettering anadromous fish species habitat through the voluntary dedication of senior, cold-spring water rights to critical streams. And they have integrated sustainable timber management with regenerative grazing practices to maximize carbon sequestration in Klamath River watershed headwater regions.

These actions have benefited not only the endangered



Kevin Ochsner, host of NCBA's Cattleman to Cattleman.

NCBA

and non-threatened species that call the Hart Ranch home, but also the Hart Ranch cowherd with increased carcass quality and yield grades in the final product.

Region VII: Bartholomay Kattle Kompany

Bartholomay Kattle Kompany lies on the Sheyenne Delta on the edge of the Red River Valley in Sheldon, ND. The cow-calf operation encompasses just over 4,000 acres, which includes areas of cropland, hayland, native range and pasture.

The Bartholomay family constructed a hoop barn to keep rainwater and runoff away from the feedlot and manure, and they use manure to fertilize crops and improve soil health. Understanding the importance of soil conservation, the family

implemented no-till farming practices to grow corn, soybeans, wheat, oats and sunflowers in their crop rotation system. In addition, the Bartholomays' willingness to allow research projects on their land is a testament to their dedication to progressive, environmentally friendly farming and ranching management practices.

Established in 1991 by NCBA to recognize outstanding land stewards in the cattle industry, ESAP is generously sponsored by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Corteva Agriscience, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Cattlemen's Foundation.

For more information, visit www.environmentalstewardship.org. — NCBA



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BW +1.1 WW +65 YW +117 SC +63 MILK +11
MARB +.92 RE +.78 \$W +47 \$F +124 \$G +69
\$B +194



Byergo Colonel G14 19434474

BW -.2 WW +59 YW +116 SC +.07 MILK +30
MARB +.64 RE +.61 \$W +55 \$F +100 \$G +55
\$B +155



CAR Bismark 8190 19330111

BW -.4 WW +55 YW +92 SC +2.20 MILK +26
MARB +.29 RE +.42 \$W +60 \$F +60 \$G +28
\$B +88



Sitz Accomplishment 720F 19078208

BW +.9 WW +75 YW +136 SC +1.10 MILK +20
MARB +.60 RE +.59 \$W +62 \$F +91 \$G +45
\$B +136



Sterling Pacific 904 19444025

BW +2.1 WW +75 YW +138 SC +1.27 MILK +11
MARB +1.33 RE +.59 \$W +49 \$F +112 \$G +84
\$B +197

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Tips for dealing with wet, muddy winter conditions in pens

In unexpected warm, wet winter conditions, cattle face challenges accessing feed, water or a place to lie down. Muddy conditions affect requirements for maintenance, according to a University of Nebraska-Lincoln study.

Even if feed intake is not affected by muddy conditions (cattle can reach the bunk and water trough and consume a full ration daily), mud depths of less than 9 inches increase maintenance requirements up to 80%.

This means that cattle consuming a finishing diet containing 1 Mcal NEm/lb. will require nearly double the amount of feed to meet their maintenance requirements or 19 lbs. for a 1,400-pound steer. In many cases, intake is affected by muddy conditions and 19 lbs. may not be achievable, leading cattle to lose weight.

That's why it's important to reduce the effects of mud and standing water in pens as soon as possible. Inherently, pen conditions are dictated by siting, orientation, fence type, and percentage of solid surfacing around bunks, water tanks, access points and loafing areas. Therefore, strategies to reduce the effect of mud and standing water on cattle performance are listed below for worst to best pen conditions:

Suggestions for worst pen sites

(Flat, heavily stocked or with standing water and/or with less than one-third of the pen are as solid surfacing.)

- Remove lightweight cattle to pastures or corn stalk fields stocking at a rate of 1 acre per head on hilly ground or 2 or more acres per head on flat ground.

- On pens made available by this strategy, scrape solid surfacing to the bare material (concrete or bituminous) and bed heavily before permitting

access to heavier or newly received cattle housed yet in adjacent pens (continue to feed only the home pen).

- If this is not possible, simply lay whole round bales of bedding or even hay on areas with less mud. Cattle will work the material off, using it for bedding and feed. Continue this strategy until weather conditions improve.

Suggestions for average pen sites

(With some slopes for loafing areas, stocked lighter and/or more than one-third of the pen are as solid surfacing.)

- All aprons and surfaced areas, scrape down to the surface. This is a minimum to let cattle find a spot to lie down.

- Aprons need to be scraped two to four times weekly. On wide aprons (over 20 feet), lay bedding down heavily after scraping in areas beyond the first 20 feet behind the bunk.

- If forming a bed pack, only bed when pack begins to seep. Dry or sticky packs are still functional as bedding.

- Scrape any scattered (not heavily wet) bedding onto bed pile. Bed on top of it.

To make additional "emergency" hard surfaces (applicable to both pen conditions described above):

- Potential areas to enhance surfacing: behind bunk or water tank aprons or on top of mounds if accessible (don't attempt to build a hard surface on hillsides unless machinery can safely drive over it).

- Alternatively, consider ground-cover mats like this or this used to move heavy construction equipment over a ground surface. Make sure this "path" is in place before attempting to improve a site within the pen.

- Scrape down below surface line about 1 foot, attempting to remove excess accumulated manure and mud.

- Lay down recycled concrete to the depth of 6 inches. Bed heavily on top of this. A 25-by-25-foot area filled to a 6-inch depth will need 16 tons of recycled concrete (one short truck load; about \$500 for concrete).

- Alternatively, one might consider using railroad ties to create the base. About \$30 each at retail price.

- Dimensions are 8 feet x 7 inches x 9 inches, so a 48-foot x 3-foot surface made from ties would require 24 ties or \$720.

- A square design is recommended for recycled concrete

(to prevent excess scattering), while a long rectangle shape is recommended when forming a base with ties to keep them tucked together in a narrow path.

- Bed any emergency surfaced areas generously. The prorated rate of bedding to achieve a working bed pack is 4 lbs. per head daily or more. Any bedded areas must be rebedded regularly, particularly on areas with no surfacing. Lapses in bedding will create worse conditions even on surfaced areas.

- Areas where recycled concrete is laid should be man-

aged separately when cleaning manure from pens. They can be left installed permanently and managed as an extension of the apron (recycled concrete tends to "set" together with traffic and moisture) or power washed and surfaced with concrete when weather improves.

- Ties can be lifted when weather improves (and before extending the area using concrete) and be used for other purposes.

Note: These are emergency recommendations to improve pen conditions rapidly and are not tested by scientific

procedures. In the example dimensions provided above, and assuming 24 ft squared are needed to fit one animal, no more than 25 head will be able to access this area at one time at a cost of between \$500-1,000.

Yet, considering the value gain resulting from fed cattle prices increase since the beginning of the year results in a \$75 increase in value per head. Investments at or below this level to preserve the performance and life of a \$2,700 animal are well advised. — **Alfredo DiCostanzo, Nebraska Extension educator**

NDSU presents horse webinar series

Horse owners and stable managers will have the opportunity to learn management strategies and ask questions during a webinar series that North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension is hosting at 12 p.m. CDT on Wednesdays in March.

Topics will include an overview of genetic diseases in the Quarter Horse breed, weed and manure management in pastures, prevention and detection of communicable equine diseases, and emergency first aid until the veterinarian arrives.

"The goal of these webinars is to empower our equine owners in North Dakota to confidently apply what we share to their animal care routines or land and resources management," said Mary Keena, Extension livestock environmental management specialist at NDSU's Carrington Research Extension Center.


"Understanding genetic

diseases, knowing how to prevent a communicable disease and effectively applying first aid to your animal while waiting for a veterinarian in an emergency situation may not only save the animal's life but is also part of animal husbandry and ownership," said Rachel Wald, NDSU Extension's agriculture and natural resources agent in McHenry County.

"Management of your grazing resources by way of weed and manure management can help you increase the usable parts of your pastures, ensuring longevity of the grazing season," said Paige Brumund, NDSU Extension's agriculture and natural resources agent in Ward County.


The webinar presenters are NDSU Extension specialists and agents, NDSU professors and the NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

Visit ndsu.ag/horsewebinar to register for the webinars. — **NDSU Extension**



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SALE REPORTS

APEX CATTLE SALE
Jan. 29, Dannebrog, NE
Auctioneers: Joe Goggins & Jered Shipman

TOPS: Apex Approval DG155K, 3/3/22 by Leachman Approval K140F; \$30,000. Apex Approval ZF928K, 4/7/22 by Leachman Approval K140F; \$20,000. Apex Architect DJ927L, 2/12/23 by TSN Architect J618; \$17,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

BEAR MOUNTAIN ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 1, Palisade, NE
119 Bulls \$5,960
Auctioneer: Greg Goggins

TOPS: Bear Mtn Prolific 3686, 2/17/23 by Ellingson Prolific; to Keyes Angus, Brewster, NE, \$21,000. Bear Mtn Highlander 2808, 8/28/22 by Baldrige Highlander; to Kessler Angus, Milton-Freewater, OR, \$14,500. Bear Mtn Stealth 3524, 1/9/23 by Bear Mtn Stealth 1510; to Crown Farms, MO, \$12,250. Bear Mtn Man in Black 305, 12/30/22 by LAR Man In Black; to Lance & Lisa Shifflett, NE, \$12,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

RIDDER HEREFORD RANCH BULL & FEMALE SALE

Feb. 1, Callaway, NE
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812-Year-old bulls 6,071
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55 Yearling heifers 1,996
Auctioneer: Joel Birdwell
TOPS—Bulls: R 0141H North Star 65L, 3/21/23 by CL 1 Domino 0140H; to Knippling, SD, \$28,000. R 23H North Star 102K, 4/6/22 by R 240 North Star 23H; to McTygue, NE, \$14,500. R 1117J North Star 62L, 3/18/23 by CL 1 Domino 1117J; to Stuempler, NE, \$14,000. R 0140H North Star 77L, 3/24/23 by CL 1

Domino 0140H; to Johnson, NE, \$13,500. **Heifers:** R Starlette 301, 2/20/23 by CL 1 Domino 0186H; to Bragg of TX, \$4,500. R Starlette T 327, 3/20/23 by FE 27C Red Diamond Lad 620H; to Pollard of NE, \$3,100. R Starlette 309, 3/2/23 by CL 1 Domino 0186H; to B Bar Herefords, TX, \$3,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

POSS ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 2, Scotia, NE
59 Older bulls \$9,529
164 Yearling bulls 8,852
223 Total bulls 9,031
Auctioneers: Greg

Goggins & Wes Tiemann
TOPS: Poss Thedford 3512, 1/23/23 by Hoffman Thedford; to Kamphaus Angus, O'Neill, NE, Bartels Angus, Riverton, NE, GMC Genetics, Fraziers Bottom, WV, \$150,000. Poss Deep River 3070, 2/3/23 by Ellingson Deep River; to Alta Genetics, Baraboo, WI, \$30,000. Poss Barricade 3660, 1/23/23 by Sitz Barricade 632F; to Grimmus Cattle Co., Hanford, CA, \$30,000. Poss Deep River 2719, 8/4/22 by Ellingson Deep River; to Raven Cattle Co., Ainsworth, NE, \$27,500. Poss Clarity 3613, 1/8/23 by Connealy Clarity; to Chris Tomjack, Ewing, NE, \$23,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

UPSTREAM RANCH PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 3, Taylor, NE
320 Hereford bulls \$6,188
3 Angus bulls 6,750
8 Red Angus bulls 6,281
42 Hereford bred heifers 6,667
2 Red Angus bred heifers 3,750
Auctioneers: Lynn Weishaar and Seth Weishaar

TOPS—Bulls: UPS Entice 2137 ET, 5/6/22 by UPS Entice 9365 ET; to Andrew Orsak, Wallis, TX, \$52,000. UPS Houston 20060 ET, 10/20/22 by SHF Houston D287 H086; to Rausch Herefords, Hoven, SD, \$25,000. UPS Expedition 2506, 8/19/22 by SR Expedition 619G ET; to Landgren Ranch, Bartlett, NE, \$20,000. **Bred heifers:** UPS Miss Endure 2272 ET, 5/15/22 by NJW 79W Z311 Endure 173DET, bred to /S Long Haul 11443 carrying a bull calf; to Pete Loehr, Peoria, IL, \$20,000. UPS Miss Perfecto 2043, 4/23/22 by H Perfecto 9020, bred to /S Long Haul 11443 carrying a bull calf; to MCM Polled Herefords, Ayr, NE, \$17,000. UPS Miss Entice 2210 ET, 5/11/22 by UPS Entice 9365 ET, bred to SHF Insight F158 J34 ET; to Woolfolk Farms, Chapman Land & Cattle and Jason Day, Jackson, TN, \$15,500. — **TY GROSHANS**

TJS RED ANGUS 'RED TRUCK' SALE
Feb. 2, Buffalo, WY
127 Bulls \$6,902
Auctioneer: Ty Thompson
Sale Manager: Legacy Genetics
TOPS: TJS Guidance K019, 4/28/22 by EGL Guidance 9117; to Dwyer Red Angus, Sidney, MT, \$23,000. TJS Guidance K206, 5/13/22 by EGL Guidance 9117; to Meyer Company Ranch, Helmsville, MT, \$15,500. CJS Take Charge K003, 4/25/22 by EGL Guidance K059; to Sutherlin Farms, Stevensville, MT, \$15,000. TJS Guidance K059, 5/1/22 by EGL Guidance 9117; to Meyer Company Ranch, Helmsville, MT, \$12,000. TJS Warden K030, 4/29/22 by PIE Captain 057; to Romans Ranches, Harper, OR, \$11,500. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

BEARTOOTH ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 3, Billings, MT
30 Older bulls \$6,158
38 Yearling bulls ... 5,032
9 Bred heifers 4,661
34 Open heifers 4,441
41 Bred cows 2,932
60 Commercial bred cows

2,408
Auctioneer: Ty Thompson
Sale Manager: Genetic Pathways
TOPS—BULLS: Beartooth Atlantis L08, 1/6/23 by Square B Atlantis 8060; to Crow Valley Livestock, Carpenter, WY, \$16,000. Beartooth Confidence Plus L01, 1/2/23 by Connealy Confidence Plus; to Maxwell Ranch, Lewistown, MT, \$15,500. Beartooth Trail Boss K05, 7/2/22 by Brumfield Trail Boss 057; to Maxwell Ranch, Lewistown, MT, \$15,000. Beartooth Confidence Plus L02, 1/3/22 by Connealy Confidence Plus; to Jeff Burger, Williston, ND, \$9,000. **Females:** Beartooth Lady 307, 1/3/23 by Sitz Barricade 632F; to Jocko Valley Cattle, Arlee, MT, \$20,000. Beartooth Lady 306, 1/3/23 by Square B Atlantis 8060; to Ingram Angus LLC, Pulaski, TN, \$11,000. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

ELLINGSON ANGUS SALE
Feb. 3, St. Anthony, ND
357 Angus bulls \$12,094
600 Commercial Angus open heifers 1,965
185 Commercial Angus bred heifers 3,216
Auctioneers: Joe Goggins and Greg Goggins

TOPS: Ellingson Prolific 3050, 2/14/23 by Ellingson Prolific; to Jocko Valley Cattle, MT, \$295,000. Ellingson Thedford 3048, 2/14/23 by Alta Genetics, AB, CN, \$150,000. Ellingson Rangeland 3311, 3/5/23 by Ellingson Rangeland; to Simenson Land and Cattle, ND, \$45,000. Ellingson Prolific 3027, 2/13/23 by Ellingson Prolific; to Katus X7 Ranch, SD, \$37,000. Ellingson Badlands 3148, 2/19/23 by Ellingson Badlands 0285; to Harwood Ranch, MT, \$35,000. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

FREY ANGUS RANCH PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 4, Granville, ND
114 Yearling bulls \$6,813
33 Bred heifers 3,901
26 Commercial bred heifers 2,800
Auctioneers: Joe Goggins and Greg Goggins
Sale Manager: Frey Livestock Sales and Services

TOPS—Bulls: FAR Resilient 3002, 1/13/23 by Sitz Resilient 10208; to Z-Farms, Fullerton, ND, \$20,000. FAR Resilient 3005, 1/16/23 by Sitz Resilient 10208; to Ethan Steffan, Killdeer, ND, \$14,000. FAR Resilient 3001, 1/11/23 by Sitz Resilient 3001; to Tam Griepentrog, Hankinson, ND, and Tyler Medenwald, Peever, ND, \$14,000. FAR Resilient 3012, 1/25/23 by Sitz Resilient 10208; to Jamyson Fischer, Tappen, ND, \$14,000. FAR Annuity 3117, 2/13/23 by CAR Don Annuity 114; to Kid Handem, Tappen, SD, \$13,500. **Bred Heifer:** FAR Miss Blackbird 2030, 1/30/22 by CAR Don Annuity 114, bred to QLC Mr Ed; to Gaven Johnson, Vela, ND, \$6,500. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

GATEWAY SIMMENTAL BULL SALE
Feb. 5, Lewistown, MT
210 Yearling bulls \$6,934
Auctioneer: Ty Thompson
Sale Manager: Allied Genetic Resources
TOPS: Lot 1-552L, 2/22/23 by GW High Ball 102H; to Kenner Simmental, Lead, ND,

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\$24,000. Lot 3-047L, 3/15/23 by GW High Ball 102H; to Lyman Livestock, Spanish Fork, UT, \$24,000. Lot 2-45L, 2/18/23 by GW High Ball 102H; to Klein Ranch, Atwood, KS, \$23,000. Lot 13-432L, 2/17/23 by GW Triple Crown 018C; to Bar K Cattle Co., Tonasket, WA, \$16,000. Lot 8-407L, 2/16/23 by GW High Ball 102H; to Walkin' 5

Ranch, Broadview, MT, \$12,500. Lot 22-642L, 2/25/23 by CCR Waco 4142G; to 3M Farms, Heck, SD, \$12,500. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

**ELKINGTON POLLED
HEREFORDS & SOUTH
DEVON PRODUCTION
SALE**

**Feb. 2, Idaho Falls, ID
69 Hereford**

bulls \$4,077
**20 South Devon
bulls 3,948**
**11 Hereford
heifers 2,309**
**5 South Devon
heifers 2,250**

**Auctioneer: Butch
Booker**

TOPS—Herefords: EPHR ELKER BROKER 252K, by EPHRELKERBROKER444Z 005C; to Frenches Doubletree Herefords, Salmon, ID, \$6,250. KEPHR ELKER BROKER 274K, 3/4/22 by EPHR ELKER BROKER 444Z 005C; to Bill Stoval, Juliet, MT, \$6,250.

EPHRELKERBADASS291K, 3/8/22 by LE ELKER Broker 317K; to Six Mile Ranch, UT, \$6,000. KEPHR ELKER BROKER 317K, 3/11/22 by EPHRELKERBROKER444Z 005C; to Fayette Ranch, WY, \$5,500. **South Devons:** EBS ELKER SLEAP ON 305K, 3/12/22 by EBS ELKER 1121 642A; to Owen Ranch, MT, \$7,000. EBS ELKER PERFORMER 311K, 3/12/22 by EBS ELKER MACHINE 419E; Bob Slagowski, WY, \$5,400. — **JARED PATTERSON**

KLAMATH FALLS BULL

**SALE
Feb. 2, Klamath Falls, OR
3 Lim-Flex bulls .. \$5,416
9 SimAngus**

bulls 5,194
5 Charolais bulls .. 5,150
64 Angus bulls 4,855
1 Simmental bull... 4,750
**9 Red Angus
bulls 4,472**
7 Hereford bulls ... 4,464

Auctioneer: Eric Duarte

TOPS: CIC Kobalt, 2/23/22 LimFlex by AHCC Dakota Thunder 215G, consigned by Country Inn Cattle; \$7,500. Berrys Knight, 1/30/22 Angus by E&B Plus One, consigned by

Berry Cattle, WA; to DeBaca Land & Livestock, Prineville, OR, \$7,500. 7N E641 Capitalist 2223, 9/30/22 Angus by LC Capitalist 316, consigned by Nannini Hay & Livestock, OR; to Flynn Cattle, OR, \$7,000. CIC Exclusive 211K, 2/11/22 Angus by Musgrave 316 Exclusive, consigned by Country Inn Cattle, OR; to Cameron King, OR, \$6,500. Roadrunner Bomber 4659, 3/10/22 Angus by Casino Bomber S39, consigned by Cardey Ranches, CA; to Ed Moore, OR, \$6,500. — **JARED PATTERSON**

Should I still be grazing stockpiled forage?

Cold weather can have some advantages, especially after some of the rains we received lately. If you are having to concentrate livestock or are wanting to graze wet or saturated ground, frozen ground or free concrete has some advantages.

If you are still grazing stockpiled forage, frozen ground helps to protect the soil surface and reduce compaction from hooves. In reality, if you have a good stand of stockpile, it has to get almost bitter cold to freeze that ground. The blanket of forage serves as pretty good insulation.

On the contrary, ground that has little cover left will freeze quicker and deeper. It will also be more susceptible to pugging and compaction when grazed or walked on when thawed out and wet.

People have been asking if they should go ahead and graze some stockpile that they were not able to graze earlier. This evokes the questions, "How much forage is there and how will it be managed?" If the soil is saturated with water and you don't have an enormous amount of grazable vegetation present, you will probably do more harm than good.

If the soil is frozen, then perhaps even a meager amount of 3,000 pounds of forage per acre might be worth pursuing, but it would also make a great field to possibly graze early in the rotation in the spring because it will certainly rebound quickly and have ample amounts of soil protection and dry matter after the initial green-up. You won't get that from fields that were grazed tighter—they will be slower to rebound.

Fields with quite a bit more than 3,000 lbs. of stockpile per acre are pretty rare this time around. But, if you did have some, the more vegetative cover that you have, the more resilient the field will be. Heavy stockpile will have more and deeper root systems, helping to create more resilient structure and more soil surface protection unless under very saturated conditions.

You might ask how to estimate available forage. If you took a grazing stick or yardstick and measured the forage height in the potential field and measured it from the ground to a compressed height and multiplied that by 250 for normal dense stand, you would get a quick estimate of the total pounds of dry matter present.

It's best to use a "compressed" height to be more accurate. You can take a light clipboard and lay it on top of the forage and measure below that. You will quickly note that it takes quite a bit of standing forage to be even 3,000 lbs. Not all of that will be desirable or grazable, nor should it be.

If you want a more accurate estimate of the vegetation present, you can make yourself a clipping frame that is approximately 12 inches by 23 inches or 1.92 square feet. Lay that frame on the ground and clip the forage that is within the frame and place it in a pre-weighed paper bag. If time allows, set the bag of forage in a warm dry spot until the forage is air dry—this normally takes several days depending on conditions.

You can also carefully dry the forage in a microwave, but this too is time consuming, a bit precarious, and also usually can annoy your wife if done in the kitchen.

Once the forage is dry, weigh the sample in grams. If you don't have a gram scale, weigh it in ounces and multiply it by 28.35 to get grams. Multiply the grams of dry weight by 50 and you have an estimate of total pounds per acre of dry matter.

Pastures that are grazed or treaded on by livestock during the winter, especially when the ground is not frozen and saturated, will usually have quite a bit of sod disturbance that will not only increase compaction, reduce desirable plant density, and increase opportunities for annual weeds, but also increase the likelihood of erosion. Be careful grazing this winter, especially after such a dry, lower production fall.

We should still have some good opportunities to get a little fresh snow which is ideal to frost-seed legumes into. With most fields having slightly less forage than usual left behind, frost seeding some clover into these fields and getting a good stand should be pretty easily done.

Slightly higher seeding rates are best for frost seeding than for conventional seeding. White clovers can be seeded at 1-1.5 lb. per acre. Remember it is a very small seed than red clover—you can get it on too thick if not careful.

Mixing it with another seed as a carrier is good. Red clover should be seeded at 6-8 lbs. per acre; birdsfoot trefoil at 5 lbs. per acre and common lespedeza with hulled seed at 10 lbs. per acre. Those are single species rates, if mixing, then each would be reduced.

All legumes should be inoculated with the appropriate inoculants (rhizobia) for that species to insure proper bacteria, good germination and growth. Coated seed, when available, can solve lots of problems including seed size, the inoculants and it can even help the pH for the seedling.

Remember, it's not about maximizing a grazing event, but maximizing a grazing season! Keep on grazing! — **Victor Shelton, retired NRCS agronomist/grazing specialist**



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LFP payments concentrated in the western, central US

Drought imposes significant costs on the U.S. agricultural sector, particularly for livestock producers who rely on precipitation to grow forage.

USDA's Farm Service Agency's (FSA) provides payments to livestock producers whose pastures and rangeland are impacted by drought through the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP).

The LFP was established by the 2008 Farm Bill and uses eligibility criteria based on county-level drought conditions reported by the U.S. Drought Monitor. FSA annually sets species-specific per head LFP payment rates designed to cover about 60% of monthly feed/forage costs for livestock.

Livestock species eligible for LFP payments include traditional livestock, such as beef and dairy cattle, as well as more exotic varieties, such as reindeer and ostriches. Between 2008 and 2022, the program disbursed more than \$12 billion (in 2022

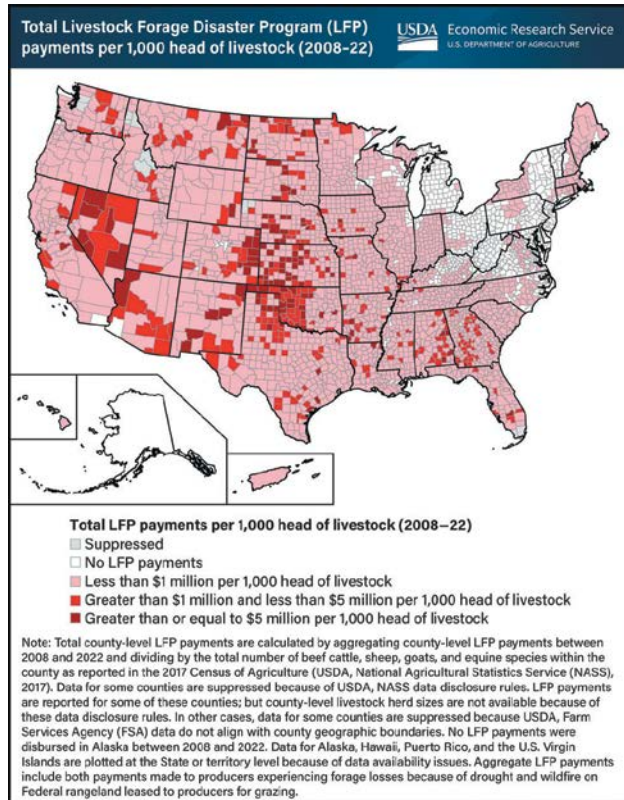
dollars) of payments to livestock producers.

Counties with the largest aggregate LFP payments per 1,000 head of livestock are concentrated primarily in the western,

southern and central U.S., where drought conditions are generally more severe and common.

About 20% of counties in the continental U.S. received no LFP payments

between 2008 and 2022. These counties are primarily located in urban regions and the relatively more humid Eastern U.S. — **USDA Economic Research Service**



Industry trying to balance numbers, packing capacity

RABO
(from page 1)

has posed a significant challenge for U.S. cattle producers in recent decades and will continue to be a significant concern for the industry in the coming years, leading to a slower and weaker cow herd rebuild in the next cattle cycle.

Despite efforts to creatively source feedstuffs

and manage pasture resources amidst widespread drought, continued ingenuity will be crucial for rebuilding the U.S. beef cow herd and seizing opportunities in the cattle market. However, uncertainties surrounding precipitation levels, particularly with the transition to La Niña, cast doubts on the potential for sustained pasture refreshment, further complicating herd rebuilding efforts. With moderate to severe drought still affecting a significant portion of the U.S. beef cow herd and hay stocks at historically low levels, many cow-calf operations are compelled to sell rather than rebuild herds.

Despite upward price trends, lingering forage and margin uncertainties impede aggressive herd growth, necessitating a slower recovery of U.S. beef cow inventories. The best-case scenario is herd stabilization in 2024 and subsequent rebuilding by 2025. As climate patterns continue to pose challenges, cattle producers will focus on building a more efficient and drought-resilient cow herd over the next decade, emphasizing factors such as cow size, stocking rates and rotational grazing programs to enhance pasture and forage utilization and promote herd resilience.

Capacity balance elusive

Zimmerman said the industry is grappling with a delicate balance between cow numbers and packing capacity, which presents a significant challenge for market participants.

While cattle numbers have dwindled to levels not seen since 1952, the processing segment is expanding its weekday packing capacity by an estimated 12,000 head, anticipating a herd rebuild that has yet to materialize.

"That involves transitioning from a commodity mindset to a collaborative approach where production risk, value creation and market positioning are shared functions among all participants," Zimmerman said. "With this approach, the industry can encourage industry investment by distancing itself from the violent and unpredictable margin swings that come with the traditional cattle cycle."

Zimmerman continued achieving a more stable

infrastructure necessitates aligning available supplies with capacity constraints, shifting from a commodity mindset to a collaborative approach where production risk, value creation, and market positioning are shared responsibilities among all stakeholders.

As cattle producers faced challenges, packing margins thrived, prompting increased calls for expanded capacity within the industry. Rabobank said over the next three years, packing plants are expected to face tighter margins, presenting additional challenges for new entrants.

"Recent government intervention—and the political pressure to avoid food supply chain failures—may create a market disruption that allows beef processors to endure fundamental supply challenges for longer than previously possible," Zimmerman said.


Pursuing resiliency

The report stated the U.S. beef industry is contending with a progressively intricate and demanding business landscape marked by unpredictable climate patterns, supply fluctuations and shifting margins, which amplify production and price risks across all sectors.

However, Zimmerman noted there is an opportunity to mitigate these risks by enhancing vertical coordination, embracing technology, engaging in public policy advocacy and exploring other strategic avenues.

"The U.S. beef industry prides itself on a foundation that starts with independent cattle producers and continues with distinct segmentation from grower to finisher to processor," Zimmerman said. "Each segment independently focuses on production efficiency and marketing to ensure economic viability."

"That independence is a central part of what keeps many ranchers viable," Zimmerman continued. "Yet, the business environment is becoming increasingly complex and challenging. In Rabobank's view, a more vertically coordinated supply chain will be an important approach in managing this complexity." — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**



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RED BLUFF

WRAP-UP

Highlight reels from the annual Red Bluff events

Highlight reels! That seems to be the takeaway from the 2024 Red Bluff Bull, Gelding, and Stock Dog Sale. In every species, there were highlights that rose to the top of the competition in every way and when they hit the sale ring, there were people willing to pay their value and set new records!

2023 was a year that offered a continuation of strong markets in all three species sold at Red Bluff. Stock dogs continue to bring more and more attention to finished dogs as labor shortages are seen across many of the Western ranches.

Red Bluff has several major auctions that happen, and the week starts with a video sale hosted by Western Video Market. At first, this sale was just for replacement cattle, but has transformed into a feeder cattle sale with a female sale at the end. Having both products brings in more buyers but offers sellers another opportunity to market cattle during a different time of year. It's been a formula that has worked well for everyone.

After a year of cattle market rallies, the feeder cattle sold extremely well under Col. Max Olvera. On the replacement female market, Col. Rick Machado conducted a very successful sale and saw bred heifers range from \$2,500-3,250/head throughout the offering. A few pairs and older cows were offered as well.

Dogs have proven to be valuable assets to any operation on multiple levels. The breeding value these dogs have also followed suit and have become good investments for breeders wanting to build programs around stock dog trials and competitions. This year was an exciting year as Red Bluff set a new record for the high-selling dog at \$50,000! Consignor Henry VanOrnum consigned RC5 Luee, the reserve champion dog after the three-trial series. This dog's skill was impeccable and was a highlight for many to see. When he entered the sale ring, it was off to the races as in-state buyer Elwood Ranches won the final bid in a highly contested race. It was a highlight reel for all involved.

The horse market has not

seen any sign of expansion, and horses with youth, capability, mind and pedigree are still hard to find. Red Bluff was slightly down in consignment numbers and opened entries up to mares and cold bloods this year. Adding mares to the sale was a big boost and everyone looks for this area to grow in coming years. In fact, the high-selling mare was the third overall high-selling horse in the sale.

Cowboys across the West are riding more and more mares and seeing Red Bluff allow them into the sale for the first time is a big step in the right direction. The crowd at the Red Bluff Horse Sale always reaches about 4,000 in attendance. It's one of the highlights for WLJ to be a part of. People from across the West travel to this sale, as well as hundreds of people watch the live stream online.

A new record was set in the horse sale. Vynstage, a 2018 bay gelding by Doc's Hickory, consigned by Walt and Mary Vermedahl, Flagstaff, AZ, sold to Legacy Pro Rodeo, Corvallis, OR, for \$72,000. This gelding was set apart in so many ways

and held several honors during the sale. A deserving finale for a gelding that represents everything Red Bluff is trying to accomplish.

As the horse market continues to climb, the next few years could be interesting to see how long this record holds. Each time a record is set it seems all the competition rises, and looking forward to the future is a lot of fun for this sale.

The cattle market saw a good year in 2023 and there's a lot of optimism going into the new year. 2023 saw the lowest cow herd on inventory in over fifty years so tight supplies have seen a rally in the marketplace. 2024 has an optimistic outlook and the bull sale at Red Bluff sees this trend show up in the sale average. Consignments were down overall, but the quality remained at an excellent level.

With over 250 bulls in a consignment sale, there will be variation in quality, but Red Bluff has been able to maintain strict measures on their quality control with the help of a sifting committee before the grading committee evaluates each bull.

Commercial cattlemen can truly put together a bull battery of half-brothers or similarly bred bulls to take home to their commercial cows. The bull sale was excellent throughout the entire day as prices stayed strong across the board. The final average was \$6,147 on 259 total bulls.

For anyone who hasn't been to the Red Bluff Bull, Gelding, and Stock Dog Sale, it's a must-see event. There aren't words or social media posts that can describe what happens in one week. The schedule is filled with everything imaginable in a western event. Range and halter bull shows, dog trials, equine competitions, socials, a trade show, guest speakers, an art gallery, bull riding and so on. There's something for everyone. It's an event the entire family can come to and enjoy something unique about it.

The traditions that are carried on throughout the week ring true to a blending of past, present and openness to the future. As someone walks through the main street of the fairgrounds with cattle pens on one side and tradeshow vendors on

the other, it's easy to see how things have progressed in agriculture. From genetics in the cattle and their appearance, to management and irrigation vendors all sharing ideas on how to move forward in the best of their abilities. It's an information sharing week with livestock transactions going on the entire time.

We encourage everyone to visit RedBluffBullSale.com if they want to learn more about the week's events. Live feeds of each show and trial are available for viewing and navigation to where animals can be bid on during the live auctions is easy to find. You can also find information on their social media platforms, namely Facebook for the latest information. There you'll find coverage and pictures by the incredibly talented Crystal Amen of Crystal Amen Photography. Her photos are used in this issue and WLJ is grateful for her sharing her work with us. Next year's events will take place Jan. 23-27, 2025, and we encourage everyone that can attend to do so. — **Logan Ipsen, WLJ president**



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RED BLUFF BULL & GELDING SALE



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The 2024 Red Bluff Bull, Gelding and Stock Dog Sale champions



Courtesy photo

The 2024 Supreme Champion and Champion Haltered Hereford Bull, consigned by Kudlac Herefords of Grants Pass, OR.



Courtesy photo

The 2024 Reserve Supreme Champion and Champion Haltered Angus Bull, consigned by The England Ranch of Powell Butte, OR.

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It takes more than a week of competition to become a champion at Red Bluff. Months of preparation, training, feeding and care go into each and every consignment. Whether it's a bull, a dog or a horse, every consignment must have planning and daily work put in to reach the top. It's an honor to consign a champion and it's a huge reward when they're sold.

Red Bluff has taken on its own identity. It's a community, a go-to event. It's become more than a show and sale, it's become a remarkable marketing platform to connect livestock buyers and sellers together, build on industry networking and kindle friendships that last a lifetime.

When a person takes a step back and looks at the history this event has, it's hard not to appreciate all the champions that have come through the rings. It's often said that this year's sale is what will determine next year's sale. Unhappy customers and consignors don't equal successive quality sales.

Year after year, by holding the standards so high, the Red Bluff committees are setting in place a standard that ensures buyers of these animals receive the quality they are expecting to buy.

This mindset has created an atmosphere which keeps competition at an extremely high level.

This culture of competition is instilled in these consignors. Many of these consignors have been bringing animals to Red Bluff for years—some as many as 50 years! They understand what it takes to bring quality year in and year out. New consignors are pushed to bring their best and the bar of competition continues to rise. It is exciting, yet humbling, to think about what the future holds for these events.

Below is a list of the champions that were selected at this year's event. All those who consigned, not just these champions, deserve huge congratulations because every animal contributes to the overall success.

If you'd like to learn more about Red Bluff, visit www.RedBluffBullSale.com.

Champion Halter Bulls

Supreme Champion and Champion Hereford — Kudlac Herefords, Grants Pass, OR.

Reserve Supreme Champion and Champion Angus — The England



Courtesy photo

The 2024 Champion Calving Ease Bull, consigned by Shandar Angus Ranch, Payson, UT.

RED BLUFF 2024 CHAMPIONS



The 2024 Jack Owens Ideal Bull, consigned by Broken Box Ranch of Williams, CA.

Courtesy photo



The 2024 Consignor of the Year, Shandar Angus Ranch of Payton, UT.

Crystal Amen Photography

Ranch, Powell Butte, OR.
Champion Charolais — Reis Livestock, Gridley, CA.
Champion AOB and SimAngus — Check X Livestock, Powell Butte, OR.
Champion Balancer — Cardy Ranches, Turlock, CA.
Champion Polled Hereford — Chico State University, Chico, CA.
Champion Maine Anjou — Brocco Show Cattle, Petaluma, CA.
Champion Red Angus — K Bar Ranches, Central Point, OR.
Champion Simmental — Cole Cattle Co, Hamlin, TX.
Reserve Champion Calving Ease — K Bar D Ranch, Redmond, OR.

Champion Range Bulls

Overall Range Ready and Champion Angus — Peerless Ranches, Prineville, OR.
Champion Calving Ease — Shandar Angus Ranch, Payson, UT.
Champion Balancer — Cardy Ranches, Turlock, CA.
Champion Charolais — Cardy Ranches, Turlock, CA.
Champion Hereford — Kudlac Herefords, Grants Pass, OR.
Champion SimAngus — T

& S Livestock, Gerber, CA.
Champion Simmental — EV Show Cattle, Wilton, CA.
Ideal Jack Owens Bull — Broken Box Ranch, Williams, CA.
Overall Consignment of the Year — Shandar Angus Ranch, Payson, UT.

Champion Geldings

Champion Cow Horse — Walt & Mary Vermedahl, Flagstaff, AZ.
Champion Cutting Horse — Reagan Glenn, Paso Robles, CA, and Harry De Haan, Filer, ID.
Champion Snaffle Bit — Tucker & Tina Robinson, Shandon, CA.
Champion Conformation — William Pennebaker, Wilton, CA.
Champion Head Horse — Walt & Mary Vermedahl, Flagstaff, AZ.
Champion Heel Horse — Gary Scheer, Santa Ynez, CA.
Champion Stock Horse — Walt & Mary Vermedahl, Flagstaff, CA.
Craig Owens Ideal Ranch Horse — Andrea Feeney, Willows, CA.

Champion Stock Dog

Champion Stock Dog — Tom Richards, Melba, ID.



The 2024 Overall Range Ready and Champion Angus Bull, consigned by Peerless Ranches, Prineville, OR.

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SALE REPORTS

46TH ANNUAL RED BLUFF STOCK DOG SALE

Jan. 26, Red Bluff, CA
13 Dogs \$12,288

Auctioneer: Trent Stewart
Pedigrees: Matt Macfarlane

To attend the Red Bluff

Dog Sale is an experience. It is one of the most prestigious dog sales across the country and the few entries that are accepted are elite athletes. Each year, the bar of competition is set higher and higher while dogs are entered from around the country to compete for top honors. As

the competition has increased, so too has the reputation which has driven the sale's demand each year. This sale continues to build momentum, which is a large reason why the Don Smith Pavilion set another record for attendance with standing room only!

Dogs are entered into a three-trial competition where qualified judges score each dog's every move. They are graded on how they obey the handler's commands, control the cattle, how they apply and release pressure on the cattle, and

how they maneuver the course, plus various things the judges are looking for. Many times, a single point is the difference between one placing and the next.

The trials are always action-packed. A full audience of hundreds of people attend each trial waiting to see which dog will surface to the top. The first and last trials are held in an outdoor venue which consists of a four-acre paneled-off area next to the fairgrounds. A group of five yearling cattle are let loose and pushed to the far end of the pasture. The dog is then sent by the handler to fetch the cattle and bring them back with the intention of driving them through an open set of panels that resemble a fence line gate.

From there, the cattle need to be controlled and driven again before ending up at an open stock trailer where the dog pushes the cattle on board. The handler is only able to shadow the cattle and is discounted for assisting the dog. Many times, the full course isn't completed, but shows how the dogs handle, obey, work and control.

The second trial is set indoors inside an arena on the fairgrounds. This trial is much like the outdoor trial except the cattle need to end up in a pen rather than a trailer. The cattle don't have as far to get away from the dogs, and dogs are able to show their intricate techniques and handling.

This year saw a very strong group of dogs, but there were three particular standouts that fought sift competition to the last run outdoors in severely wet and muddy conditions. Tom Richards, Melba, ID, consigned the Champion Dog named Bobbie Jean, a 2021 tri-colored female. Her scores were in the lead right out of the gate, with the high scores in the first and second rounds. Yet with the two other standout dogs fighting neck and neck in the third run, Bobbie Jean stayed consistent and was crowned champion by 9 points.

After that, in a tight race, Reserve Champion went to RC5 Luee from Henry VanOrnum, Cave Junction, OR, arguably the most sought-after dog as the final round concluded with the best high-scoring round seen by attendees all week, a remarkable score of 87. This last showing before the sale started set the stage for buyers as Luee brought paramount excitement to the sale arena. This Reserve Champion male set the Red Bluff Dog Sale record, commanding \$50,000 as the gavel fell. It was one for the ages.

Congrats to all the consignors and committee members that work tirelessly to keep this sale at the top of its industry. Without the commitment of the committee, the consignors and the buyers that support

this sale, we wouldn't have much to enjoy. Visit www.redbluffbullsale.com to learn more, watch videos and view results of the dog sale!

TOPS: RC5 Luee, 2022 tri-colored male by T.H. Rue; from Henry VanOrnum, Cave Junction, OR, to Elwood Ranches, Montague, CA, \$50,000. Bobbie Jean (aka Waffles), 2022 tri-colored female by Billy Bones; from Tom Richards, Melba, ID to Legacy Pro Rodeo, Corvallis, OR, \$21,000. DSW Rowdy, 2020 black/white male; from Dustin Wood, Templeton, CA, to 5 Star Charolais, Riley, OR, \$16,000. SJP Red, 2021 red/white male; from Larry Monger, Sisters, OR, to Elwood Ranches, Montague, CA, \$9,000. — **JARED PATTERSON**

62ND ANNUAL RED BLUFF GELDING SALE
Jan. 26, Red Bluff, CA
46 Geldings . . . \$24,554
4 Cold Bloods . . 16,125
5 Mares 25,400
10 2 Year olds 10,750
Auctioneers: Rick Machado & Trent Stewart

Pedigrees: Eric Duarte
The Red Bluff Gelding Sale had a lot of changes in 2024, but the same excitement, anticipation and success all remained the same going into the 62nd anniversary sale. Friday night in Red Bluff, CA, hosts an enormous crowd and has become one of the fixtures the community gets to see throughout the year.

This year was a special sale because entries were opened to more than geldings for the first time in the sale's history. This year featured the first "cold bloods" that included the \$23,000 Gypsy Vanner from Craig and Ashley Wright to lead off this year's sale. Four head of these horses averaged \$16,125. Additionally, this year featured a group of mares. Five mares averaged \$25,400 with a high of \$49,000. The mares were excellent quality mares that competed right along with the geldings and were showcased remarkably. The sale committee looks for this area of the sale to grow over the next few years.

The horse market has been very competitive over the last several years. Increased sales prices across the nation with fewer and fewer horses available to the public is driving things forward. As Red Bluff consignments rolled in ahead of the deadline, this situation is becoming more and more apparent. It's simply harder to find the right horse of the right age to fit everyone's needs. Red Bluff recognized this and is committed to moving forward and adapting to the changing market. What is exciting is that each year, it seems the high-selling record is broken. We don't see this trend changing



Crystal Amen Photography
DSW Rowdy, a 2020 black/white male consigned by Dustin Wood, Templeton, CA.



Crystal Amen Photography
Bullfighter Dave Murdoch keeps a rider safe during the Red Bluff Bucking Battle.



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SALE REPORTS

anytime soon. We see the high-selling horses continuing to get higher, but it will take the right horses to accomplish this.

Red Bluff's criteria for the horse sale haven't wavered in this high market. Each horse is thoroughly evaluated by several vets, committee members and stockmen. If a horse doesn't appear to be sound, quality and represented accurately, it is sifted on the spot. This stringent process has given Red Bluff its reputation for generations.

Each horse can compete for champion honors in several categories including stock horse, heading, heeling, breakaway, cutting and snaffle bit. Horses are given opportunities to shine in each area, so prospective buyers know exactly what they are bidding on. This multi-day preview style allows for people to truly see what these horses are capable of. It's really a one-of-a-kind sale.

A thank you to the sifting and selection committee members is due for upholding the standards of the Red Bluff Gelding Sale: Bob deBraga; Dusty deBraga; Matt Owens; Mac McGiffin; Art Sutfin, DVM; O.W. Hootin, DVM; Wayne Merhoff, DVM; Jon Sutfin, DVM; Maurice O'Keefe; Kenneth Owens; Nathan Owens; Bryan Owens; Martin Murphy; Kathy Ferguson; Justin Daugherty; Robert Staley; Roy Owens; and Kevin Terra, DVM.

TOPS—Geldings: Vyntage, 2018 bay gelding by Doc's Hickory; from Walt and Mary Vermedahl, Flagstaff, AZ, to Legacy Pro Rodeo, Corvallis, OR, \$72,000. Once a Roan Rey, 2018 red roan gelding by Once In A Blu Boon; from Olivia Bennett, Hickman, CA, to SOS Ranch, Lakeview, OR, \$50,000. I Got The Blues, 2017 sorrel gelding by Cat Man Blue from Gary Scheer, Santa Ynez, CA, to Legacy Pro Rodeo, Corvallis, OR, \$41,000. AF River Starlight, 2015 bay gelding by Starlighting; from Andrea Feeney, Willows, CA, to Kade and Danielle Savler, Tuscarora, NV, \$40,000. Rayzin Pepto Time, 2019 sorrel gelding by Reyzin The Cash; from Tucker and Tina Robinson, Shandon, CA, to Chris Raimondi, Santa Barbara, CA, \$35,000. Hash Money, 2019 red roan gelding by Hashtags from Tom and Carmen Buckingham, Bruneau, ID, to Crystal Burrill, Red Bluff, CA, \$33,000. **Mare:** Real Smooth Liz, 2015 bay mare by Real Smooth Cat; from Angela Begley/Brian Sloan, Tracy, CA to Geren Moon, Hines, OR, \$49,000.

83RD ANNUAL RED BLUFF BULL SALE
Jan. 27, Red Bluff, CA
259 Total bulls . \$6,147
9 Balancer 6,778
18 Hereford 6,722
158 Angus 6,620
20 Sim-Angus . . . 6,325

2 Maine-Anjou . . 6,125
1 Gelbvieh 5,000
9 Red Angus 4,722
5 Simmental 4,700
6 Polled Hereford 4,500
31 Charolais 4,108
Auctioneers: Rick Machado, Trent Stewart, Max Olvera and Eric Duarte

A sale entrenched with history, the Red Bluff Bull Sale continues to defy the odds with one of their most successful events ever. We saw record highs and extreme demand for this year's consignment of bulls.

Overall, this sale increased the average by nearly \$1,100 per bull over last year. To see this average remain at its level is an enormous success. The quality of front-end bulls was as good as I've seen for years attending the event. Hats off to all the consignors and breeders for building and bringing such a versatile seedstock product to the record-setting week.

The consignors of the Red Bluff Bull Sale have remained consistent for many years. A core group of cattlemen and cattlemen bring bulls each year that buyers have come to know and expect their superb quality. Commercial ranchers around California, Oregon, Idaho, Arizona and Nevada gather for the sale and many cattlemen purchase their year's bull battery at this sale.

In an age where consignment sales are known to struggle, this sale continues to bring uniform quality, pedigrees and consistency so these ranchers can assemble a group of bulls that add value to their calf crops. These bulls truly do come with a committee of ranchers' approval commonly known as "The Red Bluff Standard."

The bulls are sifted and graded stringently throughout the week. There is a sifting committee studying soundness, structure and overall quality. If the bull doesn't meet their expectations, the bull is immediately sifted before it ever has the chance to reach the grading committee. Once the bull passes the sifting process, it continues to the show ring where it is judged in classes with its contemporaries and the classes are given a number grade. This number is then used in the selling order. Keeping the quality at a high level has helped build the reputation a Red Bluff bull carries and has driven the success of this sale.

Congratulations to all the consignors, especially longtime Red Bluff consignor Kudlac Herefords for consigning, yet again, the Supreme Champion Bull, who was an outstanding Hereford herd bull, and The England Ranch for consigning the Reserve Supreme Champion bull, who was a high-performing, balanced data fall yearling Angus bull with standout phenotype. Bull Sifting Committee:

Mac McGiffin, Red Bluff, CA; Matt Owens, Red Bluff, CA; and Bryan Owens, Red Bluff, CA.

Bull Grading Committee: Mark Bidwell, Hat Creek, CA; Lane Russ, Ferndale, CA; and Sam Shaw, Caldwell, ID.

TOPS: PK Cascade

22K20, 3/15/22 Hereford; from Kudlac Herefords, OR, to Whitney McCord, Junction City, OR, \$16,500.

JMA Heritage 3174-1995, 9/8/22 Angus; from Jackson Mountain Angus, NV, to Shufelberger Ranches, Redding, CA, \$14,000. OAK RIDGE

Instrumental, 10/1/22 Angus from Oak Ridge Angus, CA, to W Dart Ranch, Cottonwood, AZ, \$13,000. ER LM

Monumental 286, 9/2/22 Angus from The England Ranch, OR, to Dayton Stafford, Prineville, OR, \$11,000. CHEX Gunslinger

205, 1/26/22 SimAngus; from Check X Ranch, OR, to Richard Micke, Terra Bella, CA, \$10,500. PK

Cascade 22K06, 2/3/22 Hereford from Kudlac Herefords, OR, to Hays Ranch, Red Bluff, CA, \$9,750. — **JARED PATTERSON**



Courtesy photo
 Bobbie Jean, the 2024 Champion Stock Dog, consigned by Tom Richards, Melba, ID.



Crystal Amen Photography
 A young rider holds on during the Red Bluff Wild Pony Race.



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Circle L Fireball K701

PAP: 36
 Reg: *20537669

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Circle L Essential K775

PAP: 35
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Circle L Broadview 214L

PAP: 35
 Reg: *20650677

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Circle L Gus 200L

PAP: 35
 Reg: *20649863

| CED | BW | WW | YW | MK | MB | RE | \$M | \$B | \$C |
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Trying to stem a rural veterinary crisis

Just down the street from each other, groups representing the nation's veterinarians and state agricultural directors are both raising concerns about the growing shortage of rural veterinarians who treat food animals.

"That is absolutely a challenge and we know that we're seeing fewer and fewer veterinarians in rural areas," said Rena Carlson, an Idaho veterinarian and president of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

The AVMA was in Washington, D.C., to lobby for its priorities, which include legislation to boost the number of rural veterinarians.

The shortage of rural veterinarians also was a major point of discussion at the National Association of State Directors of Agriculture (NASDA), which was also holding its winter policy meeting just a block away from the AVMA gathering.

Michael Strain, the Louisiana commissioner of agriculture and a licensed veterinarian, added the problem is exacerbated as the older generation of veterinarians who could afford to maintain a rural practice are now retiring.

"When you look at this

from food security and national security, this is an imperative. There are solutions but none of them are immediate," he said.

Loan repayment programs

USDA operates the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, which repays up to \$25,000 a year in student loan debt for three years—\$75,000 total—for veterinarians to choose to practice in areas USDA designates as having a shortage of large-animal veterinarians. Right now, data shows there are 240 areas around the country in 47 states that qualify—the highest since USDA started keeping track of that data.

"And if you look at the last five years, we've seen a 20% increase in the number of shortage areas," Carlson said.

The Rural Veterinary Workforce Act would provide an exemption from the federal income withholding tax for rural veterinary loan repayments and similar state programs, helping allow more veterinarians to practice in rural communities where their services are needed most. Further, the bill would expand the ability to fund more loan repay-

ment awards by rolling tax money back into the program.

"For every three veterinarians that we're able to give that loan repayment program to, we could add one more through this act," Carlson said. "This will go a long way to improve the ability to sustain a practice in rural America."

The legislation has been introduced multiple times and has dozens of co-sponsors in both the Senate and House. Because the bill is essentially tax legislation, it would have to come through the House Ways & Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee.

There are roughly 80 veterinarians every year who are approved for the loan repayment program. With the tax change, Carlson said it could bump up to potentially 115 loan repayment awards annually. There are typically more than twice as many people who apply for the loan repayment program than are approved.

"We know there are more people who apply than are funded through the program," she said.

Cost of education

Generally, the average cost of a year in veterinary school is around \$50,000 a

year, typically meaning graduates are leaving school averaging roughly \$180,000 in loan debt. That loan debt makes it hard to pencil out a living for young rural veterinarians, Strain said.

"It's hard to find a food-animal practice that justifies paying for a mortgage, your family and paying that debt," Strain said.

Agricultural commissioners suggested the \$75,000 in loan repayment also needs to be extended.

Strain said the struggles of the rural veterinary workforce go back more than a dozen years and are now reaching a crisis point

for livestock producers. In situations where livestock needs certain vaccinations that require a licensed veterinarian, Strain said there are a lot of areas where those animals simply aren't treated.

Further, most veterinarians from urban areas don't have an interest in moving to a rural area to start their practice. Strain said there need to be changes in the way veterinarian schools recruit and accept prospective students. A rural student who grew up on a farm is more likely to consider practicing in rural areas.

"We have to recruit peo-

ple who will be inclined to go back home and practice food-animal medicine," Strain said.

Jeff Witte, New Mexico's director of agriculture, said another problem is that veterinary practices are becoming similar to medical practices with consolidation as veterinarians share expensive diagnostic equipment, which again forces more veterinarians to practice in urban areas.

"I think the voluntary loan repayment program is a good tool, but it's not enough," Witte said. — **Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor**

Report claims support of presidential designations

MONUMENTS

(from page 1)

National Monument in the Atlantic Ocean. The Camp Hale-Continental Divide in Colorado, Avi Kwa Ame in Nevada, Castner Range in Texas, and Emmett and Mamie Till-Mobley sites in Illinois and Mississippi

were established under the Biden administration.

The report claims more national monuments are crucial for addressing the climate and biodiversity crisis. In addition, it cites a 2023 Conservation in the West Poll from Colorado College's State of the Rockies program, which reported that 84% of people in the West strongly support presidents continuing to use their authority to designate public lands for protection.

It also cites a 2023 Outdoor Industry Association Outdoor Participation Trends Report showing a continual growth in outdoor activity participation, with a 2.3% increase in 2022, reaching 168.1 million people.

According to the report, the National Park System and numerous national monuments had over 312 million visitors in 2022, contributing significantly to local economies with 378,400 jobs and \$50.3 billion in economic output. Additionally, Bureau of Land Management lands welcomed over 80 million visits in 2022.

Proposed designations

Among the potential national monument designations is the Great Bend of the Gila in Arizona.

The group Respect Great Bend of the Gila states a national monument designation would ensure the protection of cultural, historical and ecological resources used by Tribes between Phoenix and Yuma in Arizona. They assert preserving the Great Bend of the Gila is crucial for maintaining the region's wildlife habitats and ensuring the survival of desert species like bighorn sheep, Sonoran Desert tortoise, mule deer and javelina.

The Mountain Pact report urges Biden to create the Chuckwalla National

Monument and the Sattitla-Medicine Lake Highlands National Monument in California to preserve culturally significant lands for Native American communities.

The Chuckwalla designation would preserve approximately 660,000 acres of federal land in the Coachella Valley region in the west to the Colorado River in the east. The proposal for the Sattitla-Medicine Lake Highlands involves about 200,000 acres of public land managed by the U.S. Forest Service in Northern California. The Pit River Nation and other Tribes are urging the federal designation to safeguard their ancestral lands from ongoing risks posed by geothermal energy development.

The Mountain Pact also calls for Biden to expand the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument in Southern California and Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument in Northern California.

The report also advocates for establishing the Delores Canyon National Monument in Colorado. The group Protect the Delores calls the region of 500,000 acres below McPhee Dam to the Utah state line in western Colorado the state's most diverse unprotected ecosystems.

In New Mexico, the Mountain Pact proposes designating Mimbres Peak National Monument, part of the Chihuahuan Desert.

It also proposes Owyhee Canyonlands in southeast Oregon. A coalition of environmental groups has formed Protect the Owyhee Canyonlands to assist in the passage of Senate Bill 1890 introduced by Sens. Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Jeff Merkley (D-OR). The bill would establish a grazing management program for Malheur County and designate close to 1.1 million acres as wilderness areas. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

Cattleman's Choice

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WEDNESDAY,

MARCH 13, 2024

LUNCH AT 12 NOON SALE AT 1:00 PM

143 BULLS | 47 YEARLING HEIFERS



LOT 1 – UCC ENDURE 240

| | |
|----|-----|
| BW | 2.7 |
| WW | 66 |
| YW | 112 |
| MM | 31 |



LOT 92 – UCC TAHOE 315

| | |
|----|------|
| BW | -0.2 |
| WW | 75 |
| YW | 129 |
| MM | 29 |

HEREFORD SIRE:
BOYD 317 BLUEPRINT 6153
BEHM 100W CUDA 504C

RED ANGUS SIRE:
WFL MERLIN 018A
5L WRANGLER 1974-166E

BLACK ANGUS SIRES:
TEHAMA TAHOE B767
BALDRIDGE MOVIN ON G780



LOT 42 – UCC ENERGIZE 309U

| | |
|----|------|
| BW | -3.7 |
| WW | 79 |
| YW | 128 |
| MM | 34 |

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Hereford.org February 2024 | BALDYADVANTAGE 1

Farm sector profits forecast to fall in 2024

USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) forecasts that U.S. net cash farm income (NCFI), defined as gross cash income minus cash expenses, will decrease by \$42.2 billion (25.8%) to \$121.7 billion in 2024 in inflation-adjusted dollars.

This is after NCFI decreased in 2023 by a forecast \$50.2 billion to \$163.9 billion. Net farm income (NFI) is forecast to decrease by \$43.1

billion (27.1%) to \$116.1 billion from 2023 to 2024. NFI is a broader measure of farm sector profitability that incorporates noncash items, including changes in inventories, economic depreciation and gross imputed rental income.

The forecasted 2024 NFI decrease follows a decrease of \$37.2 billion from 2022 to \$159.2 billion in 2023. These decreases are from record

levels in 2022, and if forecasts are realized, NCFI and NFI would fall below their respective 2003-22 averages in 2024.

Underlying these forecasts, cash receipts for farm commodities are projected to fall by \$32.2 billion (6.2%) to \$485.5 billion in 2024. During the same period, production expenses are expected to increase by \$7.2 billion (1.6%) to \$455.1 billion in 2024.

Also, total commodity

insurance indemnity payments are forecast to fall by \$1.5 billion (6.6%) in 2024,

and direct government payments to farmers are projected to fall by \$2.2

billion (17.7%) from 2023 levels to \$10.2 billion in 2024. — USDA ERS

Developing crops that produce low-carbon fuels and feed

Cargill has awarded \$2.5 million to the Forever Green Initiative at the University of Minnesota to support research into two novel oilseed crops—winter camelina and domesticated winter pennycress—that can produce seed-based oil for low-carbon transportation fuels while also protecting soil, improving water quality, and providing new revenue streams for farmers.

"Winter camelina and pennycress could be truly transformative for farmers, the environment, rural communities, and the economy of Minnesota and the Upper Midwest," said Mitch Hunter, associate director of the Forever Green Initiative, a research platform in the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences. "We are extremely excited to have this support from Cargill, which will greatly advance our research and help make these crops a reality for farmers."

Winter camelina and pennycress could be a major climate solution for hard-to-electrify parts of the transportation sector because their seed oil can be refined into drop-in replacements for jet fuel and diesel. Grown in the off-season and with few inputs, the crops produce seed-based oil with a small greenhouse gas footprint.

Fuel made from these crops could reduce emissions by more than 60% compared to petroleum jet fuel or diesel. Demand for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) is increasing rapidly—spurred by state and federal tax credits and the newly launched Minnesota SAF Hub—and the shipping industry is looking for low-carbon replacements for conventional diesel fuel. The oil can also be used for food, biopolymers, and other industrial applications, and the high-protein meal can be used for

animal feed.

Forever Green is an international leader in the development of winter camelina and pennycress. The Initiative is advancing a portfolio of over 15 new perennial and winter-annual crops. By integrating these novel crops with common Midwest crops like corn, soybean, and wheat, farmers can keep their soil covered with living crop plants year-round—a strategy known as "continuous living cover" agriculture.

A recent report called Putting Down Roots projects that, with widespread adoption in Minnesota, continuous living cover agriculture could reduce nitrogen loss from farmland by 23% and soil erosion by 35% by 2050. Nitrate is a major contaminant of ground and surface water. The report, released by Forever Green and its partners Friends of the Mississippi River and EcoTone Analytics, also finds that on-farm profit could increase 20% with a shift to continuous living cover. Winter camelina and pennycress were leading crops in this report, projected to be planted on over 5 million acres by 2050.

"Cargill is committed to building a more sustainable food and agriculture system, and part of our approach is helping make regenerative agriculture practices commonplace," said Lyle DePauw, crop innovation director for Cargill. "Winter camelina and domesticated pennycress have the potential to address key sustainability challenges in agricultural supply chains, including water quality concerns and demand for low-carbon fuel feedstocks. Cargill is committed to creating opportunities for farmers to be profitable and sustainable."

Both the University of Minnesota and Cargill are members of the MBOLD coalition, which works to accelerate so-

lutions to climate and sustainability challenges in food and agriculture. An MBOLD-funded pilot project helped demonstrate that winter camelina is a scalable sustainability solution and ongoing collaboration with Forever Green will illuminate key economic, environmental, and agronomic factors for taking camelina production to scale.

The five-year grant will accelerate research into crop biology and management. All research results will be shared publicly. — Cargill



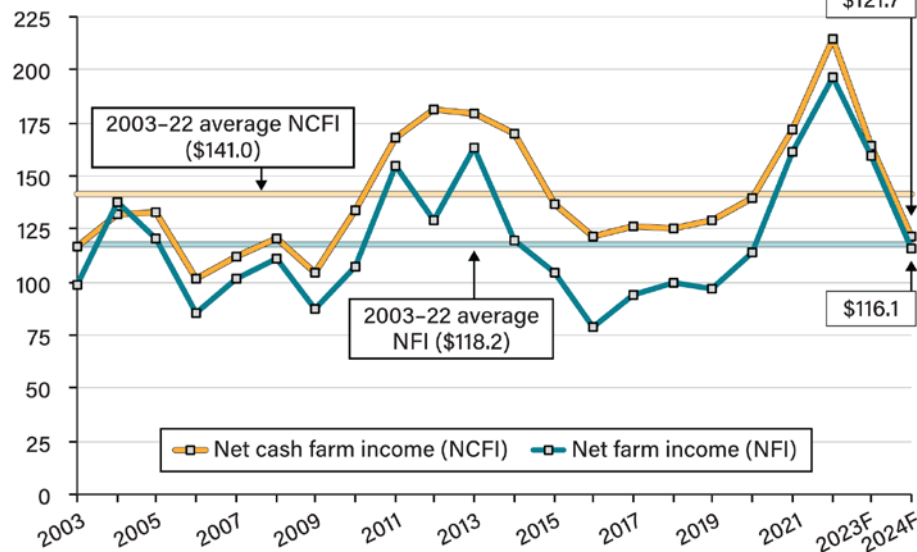
Cargill

A plant breeder assesses a plant of pennycress, a novel winter oilseed cover crop.

U.S. net farm income and net cash farm income, inflation-adjusted, 2003-24F

USDA Economic Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

2024 dollars, billions



Note: F = forecast. Values are adjusted for inflation using the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Gross Domestic Product Price Index rebased to 2024 by USDA, Economic Research Service. Net cash farm income (NCFI) is equal to gross cash income minus cash expenses. Net farm income (NFI) is a broader measure of farm sector profitability that incorporates noncash items, including changes in inventories, economic depreciation, and gross imputed rental income.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service, Farm Income and Wealth Statistics. Data as of February 7, 2024.

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NV offers farm-to-fork certification program

University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Extension's Herds &

Harvest Program is providing a certification program Feb.

21-April 27 geared toward new or up-and-coming ranchers

and farmers that will allow them to obtain a Nevada Beginning Farmer & Rancher Level 1 Small Acreage and Farm to Fork Certification.

The classes will take place 6-8 p.m., Wednesdays, Feb. 21-April 24, with additional field trips touring small-acreage farms and ranches in Washoe and Douglas counties being offered April 26-27.

The program's courses will be conducted via Zoom and will draw upon the knowledge and experience of established Nevada agriculture producers and university experts. Participants who complete the course, attend a tour or one of the spring Nevada agriculture conferences, and complete a business plan review will receive their Level 1 Certification.

Course topics include:

- Feb. 21: An overview of small-acreage and farm-to-fork production, including identifying resources, understanding jurisdictions, developing a business plan and setting goals.

- Feb. 28: Crops and soil, focusing on plant needs and how to determine the best plants for a given land space. This will include an overview of how plants grow, nutrients and day length requirements, and soil basics.

- March 6 and 13: Courses will be paused for the Nevada Urban Agriculture Conference, March 6-8 in Las Vegas; and the Nevada Small Agriculture Conference, March 13-15 in Fallon. Participants may choose to attend one of these conferences or one of the tours offered April 26-27 as part of the certification requirements.

- March 20: Value-added programs in Nevada and where and how to market products, including farm stands, direct market sales, sale yards, using Nevada Grown and social media. Participants will also learn how to develop a marketing plan.

- March 27: Livestock production, focusing on needs and requirements, basics of livestock and poultry nutrition, feed management, reproduction and the Quality Assurance Program.

- April 3: Meat quality, processing and training, including the characteristics of meat based on nutritional management and an overview of meat regulations in Nevada and the statewide meat program.

- April 10: Understanding Nevada water, focusing on the basics of water rights and water law in Nevada.

- April 17: Farm financial management in the 21st century, focusing on financially building a farm, building busi-

ness skills and assets, estate planning, and balance and cash flow basics.

- April 24: Partners and funding, including an overview of opportunities and resources available to Nevada producers.

- April 26-27: Field trips touring local farms and ranches in Washoe and Douglas counties will be available to participants, who can choose to attend either a tour or one of the aforementioned conferences as part of the certification requirements.

The cost for the program is \$60 per person, and registration can be completed online at NevadaBFR_Level1.eventbrite.com. For more information, contact Staci Emm, Extension educator for Mineral County, at emms@unr.edu or 775-475-4227; or Kaley Chapin, outreach specialist, at kaleys@unr.edu or 702-467-2668.

Persons in need of special accommodations or assistance should contact Paul Lessick, civil rights and compliance coordinator, at plessick@unr.edu or 702-257-5577 at least five days prior to the scheduled event with their needs or for more information.

The Extension Herds & Harvest Program combines a series of workshops on different topics and provides educational business management and mentoring skill building to support Nevada agricultural producers. This project was supported by the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program of the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. — UNR Extension



Kaley Chapin

Last year's certification programs conducted by Extension for farmers and ranchers included a tour of the Wild Harmony Ranch in Gardnerville, NV.

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| | | |
| 1/4 SM 3/4 AN Allen American L28 S A V Patriot 0942 x Allen G138 | 1/4 SM 3/4 AN Allen Pride L14 S A V Patriot 0942 x Allen H1023 | 1/4 SM 3/4 AN Allen Vault L469 Brooking Bond 1245 x Allen J629 |

SDSU hosting women in ag conference

South Dakota State University (SDSU) Extension will host a conference this spring to help women in agriculture develop their ability to advocate for themselves and the industry.

The Power of Women as AgVocates Conference is March 1-2 at the Casey Tibbs Rodeo Center Museum in Fort Pierre, SD. Registration is \$75.

An "agvocate" is someone who advocates for agriculture. With a mix of keynote speakers and SDSU Extension presentations, the conference will provide women in agriculture with opportunities to network, learn and grow in a fun and relaxing environment.

"This conference is designed for women to learn about the power of advocating for you, your family, business and industry," said Robin Salverson, SDSU Extension cow/calf field specialist.

Kelsey Geraets, an agricultural advocate and feedlot manager for her family's 2,500-head cattle operation near Colton, SD, will kick off the conference at 7 p.m. CST on March 1. On March 2, there will be a mix of networking, presentations and speakers from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

First-generation Nebraska cattle producer Anna Kobza will provide the first keynote speech on March 2, "The Power We Possess." Pursuing a doc-

torate in feedlot nutrition, Kobza uses social media to educate her nearly 95,000 followers on Instagram (@annamkobza) about animal production and Nebraska ranch life.

Laila Down, the Iowa-based founder and CEO of talent development consulting firm Point One Development, will provide the other keynote address. A professional speaker with a background in agricultural sales and advertising and education, Down will speak about "The Power of Motivating Women."

From SDSU Extension, Nutrition Field Specialist Claudia Botzet will present about healthful meal and snack preparation, SDSU Extension Community Vitality Field Specialist Peggy Schlechter will talk about agritourism and legislative issues that will affect South Dakota agriculture, and SDSU Extension Family Resource Management Field Specialist Lorna Saboe-Wounded Head will demonstrate stress management and mindfulness activities to promote mental health.

Registration is required by Feb. 23. For hotel information and to register, visit the SDSU Extension Events page and search "power of women."

For more information, contact Salverson at 605-374-4177. — SDSU Extension

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KS water specialists using data to spur aquifer recovery

Throughout Kansas and the Midwest, you don't have to look far to find folks who believe the future of the High Plains Aquifer—also known as the Ogallala Aquifer—is important to the region. Water is a popular topic of conversation among rural and urban residents.

Susan Metzger, director of the Kansas Center for Agricultural Resources and the Environment and the Kansas Water Institute, notes the Ogallala Aquifer is the largest freshwater aquifer in the world.

"It underlies eight states, including much of Kansas, so most of the water supply for western Kansas relies on the Ogallala High Plains Aquifer," Metzger said. "It is a finite resource, receiving some recharge on an annual basis, but we use the water faster than it can be recharged."

Metzger said conversations about the future of the aquifer often focus on changing individual actions because, as soon as 40 years from now, the aquifer could be 70% depleted. She adds that 40% of Kansas farm acres that depend on irrigation may no longer have sufficient supplies to sustain current pumping rate.

Brownie Wilson, the water data manager for the Kansas Geological Survey, says his

organization measures about 1400 wells in the aquifer each January to understand where the baseline is.

"2022 was one of the driest years we had on record in Kansas," Wilson said. "So what happens is that dry conditions lead to a longer pumping season in our state, and so the water levels didn't have a chance to recover in 2022."

Wilson added that water recharge levels this year in northwest Kansas and west central Kansas have been close to zero, while southwest Kansas has averaged out and been higher than last year.

Earl Lewis, the chief engineer in the water resources division for the Kansas Department of Agriculture, calls Kansas "data rich" compared to neighboring states due to the state's annual well measurements and continued research focused on the aquifer.

He said the aquifer's water levels have stayed fairly consistent since the mid 1990s.

"Back in the mid 1980s, the state of Kansas required that every single (non-domestic) water rights holder submit an annual report to the Kansas Division of Water Resources," Lewis said. "We got to the point of actually installing totalizing flow meters on almost every water

right or every well across the state, and that's really rare."

Measuring water use is critical to understanding the aquifer, what is causing the issue and how to remedy challenges, Lewis added. He reminds those with water rights to check their meter reading before the next snow and fill out the state's required report by March 1.

While the water issue in Kansas is large, Lewis said the basics of the issue are simple.

"We're taking out more water than what Mother Nature puts back," he said. "So, your only options are finding a new way to bring more water into the system, or reduce the use of that water."

Lewis said bringing more water to the system would

be very difficult to do, so the focus is on reducing overall water use.

Water conservation areas, local enhanced management areas and research have helped farmers reduce overall water use while still being successful in their business.

"Research institutions are helping us to identify those problems and find solutions that have helped these farmers stay productive while using less water," Lewis said.

Metzger said the key to helping farmers remain successful includes a transition in technology. From flood irrigation to center pivot irrigation, and now even more efficient drop nozzles, technology has helped reduce water use.

"It really is putting all those parts and pieces of the puzzle together to find a solution," Metzger said. "This involves using less water as well as figuring out the ways that a producer can do that successfully for their bottom line while still maintaining great food production."

Metzger said researchers can identify the relationships between water usage and aquifer levels. She said all of that information helps officials determine a budget for localized areas.

"With the data set that we've been talking about, we've noticed that the aquifer is remarkably consistent in the way it recovers at the end of the pumping season," Wilson added.

Wilson said the goal is to

maintain farmers' ability to feed the world and make a living at the same time.

"It's not an easy task, but it's something that is doable, and we're seeing that on the ground in certain places," Wilson said.

Metzger added the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Water Resources and the Kansas Water Institute have additional resources to learn more.

"This is an opportunity to own your future," Metzger said, referring to farmers and Kansas residents. "What you do for the Kansas economy and for the world is so keenly important, and we're here to help you make those changes." — **Kansas State University Research and Extension**

FWSSR sales crush 2023 results by nearly \$2M

The Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo (FWSSR) saw yet another record-breaking year in horse and cattle sales, signaling a potentially robust economy in the livestock sector.

Thirteen Stock Show auction sales generated more than \$12.6 million with a record-breaking \$8.2 million in the Junior Sale of Champions.

Headlined by a bid of \$340,000 from Higginbotham Insurance and Financial Services for Grand Champion Steer Leadfoot, a European cross shown by Elli Benzer of Dallam County 4-H, the junior sale saw the Grand Champion Barrow sell for \$35,000, the Grand Champion Lamb for \$100,000 and the Grand Champion Wether Goat for \$35,000.

Totals for other sales are as follows:

- The Premier Texas Longhorn Sale, 70 lots, gross: \$115,700.

- American Quarter Horse Association Best of The Remuda Sale, 37 lots, gross: \$357,000.

- Select Breeders Quarter Horse Sale, 12 lots, gross: \$251,500—an increase of more than \$100,000.

- Invitational Ranch Horse Sale, 7 lots, gross: \$200,000.

- National Braunvieh Sale, 50 lots, gross: \$165,900.

- Best of the West Angus Bull Sale, 84 lots, gross:

\$353,136.

- Stars of Texas Angus Female Sale, 59 lots, gross: \$415,301—an increase of nearly \$2,000 per head.

- Mustang Adoption/Auction, gross: \$75,600.

- Cowtown Cattle Drive Charolais Sale, gross: \$131,125—an increase of nearly \$15,000.

- Rabbit Auction, gross: \$2,585.

- 54th Annual Powerhouse Hereford Sale, gross: \$295,500—an increase of more than \$78,000.

- Southwestern Exposition Invitational Commercial Heifer Sale, 429 lots, gross: \$2,092,600—an increase of nearly \$3,000 per head.

"The Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo has established itself as a robust marketplace for livestock and horses," said FWSSR Senior Executive Vice President and General Manager Matt Carter. "We're looking toward 2025 with a great deal of optimism as we begin the \$40 million renovation of the sheep, swine and poultry, pigeon and rabbit barns."

The 2025 FWSSR will take place Jan. 17-Feb. 8, 2025. Tickets for the event, and entries for both the livestock and horse show, will begin in September. Guests interested in premium seating can contact premiumseating@dickiesarena.com. — **FWSSR**

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| CED | BW | WW | YW | MILK | RE | MARB |
| 9 | 3.1 | 75 | 124 | 23 | 0.92 | 0.39 |


SONS SELL



AAA 19904224
CASINO CONSTABLE

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|----|-----|------|------|------|
| CED | BW | WW | YW | MILK | RE | MARB |
| 4 | 2.2 | 79 | 133 | 22 | 0.86 | 1.06 |


SONS SELL



AMGV 1497206
CAPITAL ASSET

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|----|-----|------|------|------|
| CED | BW | WW | YW | MILK | RE | MARB |
| 10 | 1.9 | 96 | 146 | 27 | 0.73 | 0.46 |

SONS SELL



AMGV 1581672
BGR PATENT

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|----|-----|------|------|------|
| CED | BW | WW | YW | MILK | RE | MARB |
| 9 | 1.9 | 81 | 135 | 14 | 0.75 | 0.41 |

SELLS LOT 2



RAAA 3751659
STOCK MARKET

| | | | | | | |
|-----|------|----|-----|------|------|------|
| CED | BW | WW | YW | MILK | RE | MARB |
| 16 | -4.9 | 79 | 133 | 24 | 0.29 | 1.19 |

SONS SELL



AMGV 1581603
BGR REVENUE

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|----|-----|------|------|------|
| CED | BW | WW | YW | MILK | RE | MARB |
| 11 | 1.5 | 88 | 138 | 22 | 0.74 | 0.25 |

SELLS LOT 1

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Enhancing student learning with virtual reality

In a peach processing facility, the air might be filled with the sweet aroma of ripe peaches and the sound of equipment humming as it carries out the canning process. At the California Processing Tomato Industry Pilot Plant on the University of California (UC), Davis campus, students within the Department of Food Science and Technology (FST) get to see that action firsthand. They can also now experience it—virtually.

FST Chair and Professor Christopher Simmons developed several virtual reality (VR) modules to help teach students about the intricacies of food processing. Simmons, who earned bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in engineering, created virtual environments featuring various pieces of real-life equipment that the food industry uses to wash, sanitize, heat and perform other operations to produce food products.

"We use it to bring more interactive and immersive

learning opportunities into the lesson plan, beyond what you can get with images, videos or written descriptions, and to better communicate the spatial reasoning behind the design of the equipment and facilities," Simmons said.

Pandemic sparks innovation

Simmons first introduced the technology during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when instruction was fully remote.

"We were using it as an emergency alternative to our traditional lab activities during the pandemic because we had no ability to engage with the real equipment or facilities we typically rely on," Simmons explained. When in-person learning resumed, Simmons kept the VR component alive, and it complements his in-person training.

There's no app, it's just streaming VR, accessed via

websites using a device of choice, such as a computer, tablet or cell phone. Students can also visit the virtual settings using a VR headset for a full 3-dimensional, immersive experience.

Simmons said he's incorporated the VR models into his undergraduate courses, FST 110—physical principles in food processing and FST 110L—food processing lab, and graduate course, FST 228—food systems and sustainability. In these courses, students use the virtual environments in class and at home on their computers for homework assignments and to reinforce concepts covered in lectures.

"When I ask students if they've used it, they're always excited to use this new technology," said Shayne Morrissey, Ph.D. student and teaching assistant with the Department of Food Science and Technology.

Navigating digital replicas

Currently, there are several virtual environments being used by students. Simmons created a virtual replica of the campus' anaerobic digester, a milk processing facility, a steam-jacketed kettle, a centrifugal pump and a flume washer.

There's also a virtual peach processing facility, which is the largest VR model and a complete replica of the peach line found in the Pilot Plant on campus. There, students can experience the whole process from start to finish. The virtual model describes the flow of the fruit material and what happens at each step.

Students learning how to use a steam-jacketed kettle, which is a common piece of equipment for heating things up, get to operate the valves and read the gauges virtually before seeing it in person.

"This is the most interactive virtual environment we have

because you can adjust all the valves and get readings off the gauges, just as you would in real life," Simmons explained.

During a demonstration, Morrissey wore a VR headset to show what it was like to experience the kettle room. At one point, Simmons instructed him to walk forward and turn open a valve on a pipe coming from the ceiling to allow water to flow into the tank. "That's so cool," Morrissey expressed. He could also see a thermometer that showed the needle going up as the water inside the kettle was "warming" up.

"This is an exact facsimile of how you would operate this kettle that we have in the Pilot Plant, displaying data that we would obtain from the genuine piece of equipment, so this is our most advanced virtual module where you are really interacting in a way that's entirely representative of the actual equipment," Simmons said.

Morrissey also showed off the virtual room with a flume washer, which is often used to wash produce. Simmons suggested he "dip" his hand in the water in the sink.

"A lot of students have fun with that, I tell them to be careful not to fall over," Morrissey quipped.

Less noise, better safety

There are some benefits to using the VR modules before exposing students to the real deal. For instance, the real peach canning facility can be very loud when the equipment is running, which limits the amount of conversation

that can be had.

"It's tremendously loud, so it's hard to instruct in the moment and students can't readily converse within their groups. And you've got to be careful because there are moving parts in the peach pitter and caustic solution being used to peel the peaches. So, there are some safety concerns that we have to always be mindful of," Simmons said. "None of that exists in the virtual space."

Future purposes

In addition to using it as a teaching tool, Simmons and Morrissey are working with FST Professors Nitin Nitin and Bwalya Lungu, along with collaborators at the University of Maryland, to study the effectiveness of VR learning. There's one research project underway to determine if using these VR modules within food processing coursework broadly improves motivation to learn. Another study in the works is analyzing if communication of 3-dimensional concentration data in produce washing for sanitizer can be better conveyed in virtual environments compared with the traditional color-map/concentration map typically depicted in 2-dimensions.

Simmons said there's no limitation to what can be created in the virtual world. He has some ideas for possible future models, including a virtual exploration of chemical and microbial aspects in soil.

"This is still very new technology, especially in food science," Simmons said. "The opportunities are boundless." — UC Davis

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Sire: H5 215Z Domino 011
CED 3.5 BW 3.7 WW 66 YW 109 M 36
M&G 69 REA .76 MARB .38 CHB 168



3122
Sire: H5 5019 Advance 9241
CED 4.2 BW 1.4 WW 69 YW 97 M 40
M&G 75 REA .41 MARB .60 CHB 156



18L
Sire: SITZ Virtue 11710
BW 1.9 WW 73 YW 156 Milk 38 HP 17.0
MARB .56 REA .69 \$M 60 \$C 268



3323
Sire: H5 5019 Advance 9241
CED -3.8 BW 5.8 WW 80 YW 135 M 39
M&G 79 REA .55 MARB .45 CHB 173



15L
Sire: Sitz Dignity 599J
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MARB .69 REA .81 \$M 93 \$C 277

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UDAF to issue \$3M in food systems grants

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) has been awarded \$3,040,043.28 through the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service Agri Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure program, which aims to build resilience in the middle of the food supply chain, provide more and better markets to small farms and food businesses, and support the development of value-added products for consumers.

"The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food is excited for the opportunities for our producers that the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure grant funding will bring," said UDAF Commissioner Craig Buttars. "Programs like this make a tremendous difference in our state's ability to support the economic viability of farms and food businesses and keep legacy farms in operation. Increasing in-state processing as well as distribution and storage capacity are among our state's greatest needs. We look forward to seeing the improvements this funding will make." UDAF will be issuing \$2,310,934.44 in two rounds of competitive subaward grants to support the development of middle-of-the-supply-chain activities

for Utah-based food and farm activities. The first round of applications will go until the end of March, and any remaining funds will be issued in a second round in spring of 2025.

UDAF will also be hiring a full-time supply chain coordinator to address critical gaps in the state. Middle-of-the-supply chain includes activities that happen after production, but before they reach the market or end-consumer and may include the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storage, transportation, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced food products.

Eligible food products include fruits and vegetables, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products (excluding meat and poultry products and animal feed products). Applicants may either apply for the equipment-only simplified project track or the infrastructure project track.

The grant application window for the first round of funding is open Feb. 7 through March 31. To apply, visit ag.utah.gov/rfsi. For more information, contact Allison Ross at aross@utah.gov. — UDAF

STORY SHORTS

Listeria outbreak in US linked to cheese

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Food and Drug Administration and local health authorities are investigating a multi-year outbreak of listeria monocytogenes infections linked to queso fresco and cotija cheeses made by Rizo Lopez Foods Inc., of Modesto, CA. The outbreak persisted as early as 2014, with new cases reported as recently as December 2023. The investigation, prompted by positive listeria findings in Rizo Bros Aged Cotija cheese, resulted in a voluntary recall in January 2024. Despite previous inconclusive evidence, whole genome sequencing now confirms the link between the recalled Cotija cheese and illnesses in this ongoing outbreak, urging heightened vigilance among consumers. As a result of the ongoing investigation, Rizo Lopez Foods Inc. has initiated a voluntary recall of all sell-by dates for its dairy products. These include cheese, yogurt and sour cream sold under brands such as Tio Francisco, Don Francisco, Rizo Bros and others. The company has halted production and distribution of these items temporarily while investigations continue.

Tyson Foods reports Q1 results

Tyson Foods reported its first quarter earnings ending Dec. 31, reporting a net income of \$107 million, significantly lower than the \$320 million from the same period a year earlier. Despite this, first quarter revenue reached \$13.319 billion, marking a 0.4% increase, driven by sales volumes in pork and prepared foods and higher beef prices compared to the previous year. Operating income for the quarter totaled \$231 million, down from \$467 million a year earlier, with a \$205 million loss in beef, reflecting a 4.1% decline in total beef sales. Despite tight live cattle supplies, Tyson anticipates a 2% decrease in industry production this year, forecasting an operating loss for the year with a slight possibility of breaking even.

EU raises concerns about lab meat

A delegation from Austria, France and Italy, along with nine other European Union (EU) nations, sent a letter expressing concerns that lab-grown meat "does not constitute a sustainable alternative to primary farm-based production" and raises ethical, economic, social and public health questions. In the letter to the Council of Ministers, the countries raised issues such as the carbon footprint of lab-grown methods and whether the EU should embrace the method when it bans hormone-treated meat and food derived from cloned animals. The letter states before making any market authorization decisions, the delegation advocates for a comprehensive approach to cell-based meat production, considering outcomes from discussions with member states and European civil society. The EU hasn't authorized any animal products based on cell cultivation techniques.

Reward offered on burro killings

The Bureau of Land Management is offering a \$10,000 reward for information regarding the shooting and killing of 19 wild burros found between Baker, CA, and Primm, NV, on Aug. 13, 2019. BLM law enforcement seeks information on two vehicles: a gray or silver 2008 Toyota extended cab pickup with flared fenders and a brush guard, and a white 2008 Toyota extended cab pickup with a white camper shell, white rims, sunroof and brush guard. Surveillance footage captured both vehicles traveling together and was last seen in Primm, NV, in the parking lot of Whiskey Pete's Hotel and Casino. Anyone with any knowledge of this crime is encouraged to contact the 24-hour WeTip crime reporting system at 909-987-5005.

Wagyu on the menu at KS high school

Students at Washburn Rural High School in Topeka, KS, will soon have Wagyu beef for school lunches from a local meat company offering a discount to provide students with a nutritious meal. "The owner of the company values doing business with schools, and he wants to give back to the community, and we're getting such a good price," Food Service Supervisor Stan Vallis told local news outlet KSNT. "It's extremely affordable and it's a high-quality product." The school district is working with Booth Creek Wagyu in Manhattan, KS, and said in late January the meat should be available soon for students.

John Deere partners with SpaceX

Deere & Company has partnered with SpaceX to offer satellite communications (SATCOM) service to farmers using the Starlink network. The collaboration will allow farmers grappling with rural connectivity issues to fully utilize precision agriculture technologies. Leveraging SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet constellation, the SATCOM solution facilitates autonomy, real-time data sharing, remote diagnostics and machine-to-machine communication. John Deere dealers will install ruggedized Starlink terminals and 4G LTE JDLINK modems on compatible machines to activate it. The Starlink technology will be available in limited release in the U.S. and Brazil in late 2024.



YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

(In an effort to serve the next generation of livestock producers, WLJ's Youth Opportunities calendar lists internship and scholarship information for agricultural- and livestock-focused students, listed by application deadline. If you have an internship or scholarship to announce, please email it to editorial@wlj.net.)

Feb. 15 - The Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association has two paid internships available for students in the summer of 2024. The Fort Worth internship is a full-time internship located at the headquarters office in Fort Worth, TX, and the government relations internship is a full-time internship that requires relocation to Austin, TX. Details: tinyurl.com/37jpa4v.

Feb. 23 - The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is providing multiple internship opportunities in NCBA's offices in Denver, CO, and Washington, D.C. Details: jobs.keldair.com/ncba.

Feb. 29 - The Raymond Ansoategui Family, in partnership with the Montana Stockgrowers Foundation, is accepting applications for the 2024 Dr. Raymond Ansoategui Overeducated Cowboy Scholarships. Details: www.mtbeefoundation.org.

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CED BW WW YW MILK YG MARB RE HB GM
6 2.0 102 152 34 -.16 .21 .72 58 -



LOT 33 - HEBER

AAA 20769262 - PAP 33
SG Salvation x V A R Discovery
CED BW WW YW MILK CW MARB RE \$B \$C
+9 +.9 +84 +146 +21 +76 +1.42 +.83 +220 +334



LOT 2 - HEBER

RAAA 4828002
SAS Copperhead G354 x BUF CRK The Right Kind U199
CED BW WW YW MILK YG MARB RE HB GM
6 1.6 90 131 24 -.20 .33 .53 59 43



LOT 44 - HEBER

AAA 20768339 - PAP 35
S A V Renovation 6822 x LD Capitalist 316
CED BW WW YW MILK CW MARB RE \$B \$C
+6 +2.2 +84 +143 +20 +62 +.48 +.61 +142 +228



LOT 9 - HEBER

RAAA 4828122
Bieber CL Stockman E119 x 3SSC Domain A163
CED BW WW YW MILK YG MARB RE HB GM
14 -3.0 84 136 30 .12 .86 .37 65 65



LOT 43 - HEBER

AAA 20768334 - PAP 31
Deer Valley Growth Fund x Rito 707 of Ideal 3407 7075
CED BW WW YW MILK CW MARB RE \$B \$C
+9 +1.0 +81 +144 +31 +70 +.25 +1.07 +147 +264



LOT 26 - HEBER

ASA 4231007 - PAP 35
TJ Chief 460G x EXAR Upshot 0562B
CE BW WW YW MILK YG MARB RE API TI
14 -1.6 69 110 33 .05 .44 .34 137 79



LOT 28 - HEBER

AAA 20747293 - PAP 37
Connealy Craftsman x Connealy Confidence Plus
CED BW WW YW MILK CW MARB RE \$B \$C
+10 +1.0 +74 +123 +34 +59 +1.15 +1.25 +189 +338



LOT 40 - BORDER

AAA 20699728
T/D Doc Ryan 049 x S S Enforcer E812
CED BW WW YW MILK CW MARB RE \$B \$C
+2 +2.1 +83 +142 25 +60 +1.21 +.85 +186 +307



LOT 41 - BORDER

AAA 20704224
BJ Surpass x WR Journey-1X74
CED BW WW YW MILK CW MARB RE \$B \$C
+12 -.4 +82 +141 +33 +59 +.98 +.72 +171 +296

US beef cattle herd smallest since 1951

David Anderson, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension economist in the Department of Agricultural Economics, and Jason Cleere, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension statewide beef cattle specialist in the Department of Animal Science, said Mother Nature will determine whether Texas' beef cattle herd continues to shrink or rebounds. They agreed that rebuilding herd numbers will rely heavily on rain and soil moisture supporting forage production for grazing through 2024 and winter feeding into spring 2025.

According to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) cattle inventory report released Jan. 31, the nation's beef cow herd fell 2% since last year to 28.2 million head. Anderson said the report estimate is the lowest number of U.S. beef cows since 1951.

The beef cattle herd in Texas is the smallest—4.1 million head—since 2014. The Texas herd started to recover from the 2011-12 drought after that low point.

From 2010-14, the Texas

herd shrunk from 5.14 million to 3.9 million, a 24% decline, Anderson said. There were 4.65 million beef cows in 2019, but those numbers have fallen 12% since due to the drought's impact on forage production in back-to-back years.

Declining beef cattle numbers across the state ripple into national markets because Texas carries 14.6% of the U.S. herd.

Like a big ship reversing course, Anderson said rebuilding cattle herds takes time.

"Higher sale prices are an incentive for producers to expand the herd, but a lot of producers have been feeding hay since mid-July, and that has led to deeper culling of herds," Anderson said. "The stage is set to expand, but the key is rainfall and conditions allowing producers to hold back replacement heifers that are the future of our herds."

Calf prices riding optimism

Cleere said recent rainfall

has greatly improved soil moisture indexes and stock tank water levels around the state.

That soil moisture has fueled optimism among producers, and he suspects it has impacted recent spikes in calf prices at local cattle markets.

"I think producers are eager to keep replacement heifers, but they've also been struggling to hold on to cows," Cleere said. "The rainfall has provided more optimism. Calf prices have been crazy good the last couple of weeks."

For example, Anderson said the combined calf price data from Texas auctions showed prices for 500-600-pound calves increased from \$273/cwt to \$299/cwt in the last two weeks.

Cleere said the price jump in calf prices could be related to producers buying calves because they have good available grazing on cool-season forages like wheat and ryegrass. Recent rains should significantly improve spring

forage production in cool-season forage pastures.

Good spring grazing conditions should help producers as calving begins, Cleere said.

The USDA-NASS report estimated the U.S. calf crop at 33.6 million head, down 2% from 2022. Cleere said Texas producers could see a lighter spring calving season due to factors like heat-related stress during the summer based on several palpation reports around the state.

Cleere also shared concerns about seeing below-average body condition scores in bred cows. Low body condition scores could impact this calf crop but also could impact recovery times for breeding and cows' ability to carry a calf to term.

While optimism is high among cattle producers now, Cleere said last year was an example of how quickly conditions can turn. There was optimism that the 2022 drought was breaking in parts of the state following winter and spring rain, but by May,

the dry, hot conditions set in and did not let up.

He encouraged producers to find ways to optimize good conditions now but to stick to plans that protect their operation's long-term ability to hold cattle. Both Cleere and Anderson agree that all market indicators point to even higher calf prices as the state and national herds rebuild.

"The big thing is, as we start spring calving, we need to make sure those cattle remain in good body condition so they can be bred," he said. "I've seen quite a few thin cows out there, and I know producers are stretching hay supplies, but we need to be thinking about the next calf crop right now." — **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**

Roughage use in finishing cattle diets

Roughage serves as a functional ingredient in finishing cattle diets, with key roles in supporting rumen health. Conventional wisdom assumes that roughage inclusions should be no greater than necessary for rumen health (less than 10% of diet dry matter) to maximize feed efficiency. Greater inclusions of roughage may reduce risk of digestive upset and simplify management with minimal efficiency losses.

Role in feedlot diets

Roughage plays a critical role in digestion and metabolism of dietary nutrients. One key function is the promotion of rumination and regurgitation, which results in greater saliva production and increased ability to buffer acid in the rumen. In addition, longer particles of roughage serve to support rumen wall health and to regulate feed intake.

For these reasons, a minimum amount of roughage is considered critically important in high-starch finishing cattle diets to reduce risk of digestive upsets and optimize net energy intake by cattle. According to the most-recent survey data, the most common roughage inclusion in North America for finishing cattle diets is between 8-10% of diet dry matter.

Nutritionists typically limit roughage inclusion in finishing diets because those ingredients are less digestible (and thus lower in energy) compared to grain and biofuels co-products. Increasing the amount of roughage reduces net energy concentration of the diet, and consequently reduces predicted daily gain. Roughage also costs more per unit of energy compared to concentrates in most cases, so it is no surprise that roughage inclusion is limited to the minimum necessary for rumen health.

Greater roughage inclusion

A one-size-fits-all recommendation often misses opportunities to improve results. Feeding a slightly reduced energy density diet by including more roughage may not be as detrimental to cattle performance as often believed. In some instances, increasing the amount of roughage inclusion increases net profit.

Reduced risk of digestive upset and improved gut health are the likely drivers behind these responses. Low-

er roughage diets should improve gains and feed efficiency, at least in theory. However, to capture that potential performance, every aspect of feeding management must be nearly ideal. Any deviations in mixing procedures, amount of feed offered, or timing of feed delivery or intake increases the likelihood of off-feed events.

Unfortunately, circumstances are rarely perfect in production systems. Equipment failure and workload conflicts may interfere with management plans. Weather events, such as blizzard or heat waves in the summer, disrupt feeding behavior and increase the odds of erratic feed intake.

In those circumstances, feeding a few extra percentage points of roughage may reduce risk. In South Dakota State University (SDSU) research trials evaluating silage inclusion in finishing cattle diets, doubling the amount of corn silage fed was less detrimental to output than expected. We think that one reason for that response is maintaining consistency in feed intake, especially as cattle near the end of the feeding period.

Increased roughage reduces risk caused by feed intake disturbances, whether caused by weather or delivery disruptions. For instance, winter snowstorms often cause delays in getting cattle fed. In addition, cattle alter feeding patterns during weather events, such as blizzards or heat waves. If cattle must wait for feed, a typical response would be for them to consume their diet aggressively, opening the door for digestive upsets. Feeding less starch (by increasing fiber from roughage) reduces that risk.

Cattle feeders who raise their own feed are in a great position to use roughage sources produced on-farm to their advantage. Marketing feeds, such as silage or crop residue, through cattle can increase net farm income. Increasing silage inclusion in SDSU studies resulted in greater beef production per acre of cropland compared to lower roughage diets.

Choosing a production plan that does not target maximum performance may seem contradictory to commonly accepted practice. However, building in a safety measure in the form of added roughage might improve efficiency when measured across an entire system. — **Warren Rusche, SDSU Extension feedlot management specialist**

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RED ANGUS

FEATURED SECTION

Murdock's Musings: Ranching in one's twilight years

When I stepped down as an Umatilla County commissioner on Jan. 3, 2023, the constant question was, "What are you going to do now?" as if 60 years of active employment wasn't enough to simply respond with "nothing."

To be honest, "nothing" wasn't even on the radar. We all have favorite sayings. One of mine comes from Jack London who said "I would rather be ashes than dust. I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry rot."

"I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The proper function of man is to live, not to exist. I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them."

At the moment, I'm still involved as president of the community action agency covering seven counties, a trustee of our church, a member of the Rotary Club, a member of the board of the Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) and an active participant in several political campaigns.

In terms of recreation, I play nine holes of golf a week in good weather from

the yellow tees.

That being said, I'm much more comfortable saying I'm involved with ranching than telling the world I am retired. My son and grandsons might sniff at the term "involved" but another body never hurts, and I do all of the paperwork for the purebred cattle operation and make important financial contributions, as well as all the footnotes and copy for our annual bull sale catalog. In addition, since everyone else is busy during the day, I also deliver the bulls after the sale and help check cattle in the mountains during the summer.

My most regular involvement is during calving season since the residents all leave before daylight and return after dark. I go out during the day in my side-by-side and tour the pastures in search of new calves, mothers who might be on the verge or may be having trouble. I write down the summary of my daily observations which I leave for my son who goes out after dark knowing what to look for.

This is followed by similar tours during breeding season to spot females who are in heat. Combined, we are looking at roughly Jan-

uary through April.

For some reason, there are two jobs I am often chosen for—keeping records as the cattle move through the chute or stepping in behind them to keep them moving toward the direction of those who are performing more sophisticated tasks. It's important to remember cows only kick backward.

One time as we were working cattle through the maze of alleyways, my son noticed I was not visible. He called to my grandson asking, "Where is your grandfather?" In response, Mack told him, "He's right here on the ground. The cow he was intimidating didn't want to be intimidated and she hit him head-on. I think he's all right though,"

as I struggled to my feet.

From May through November our cattle range in pastures many miles from town and many miles from cell service. For my most recent birthday, my wife created a three-compartment first aid kit for my pickup which was pressed into action for the first time at my grandson's 1-A high school

football game. Most ranchers would understand the supplies also include paper towels, water and toilet paper.

In the last three weeks I have attended three celebrations of life. We need to live every day as if it would be our last—someday we will be right. — **George Murdock, RAAA Board of Directors member**

RAAA's Stayability EPD: Key points to consider

Stayability predicts differences in the ability of an animal's retained daughters to remain productive in the herd, calving every year, through six years of age. Units are in percentage terms; higher is better.

STAY is an International Genetic Solutions-calculated EPD, with millions of cow records behind it. The Red Angus Association of America's (RAAA) total herd reporting policy, which has been in place for more than 25 years, also adds considerable data quality and quantity to the estimation of our STAY EPD.

The main difficulty with STAY is that it is a lowly-heritable trait (10-15% genetically influenced). Thus, 85-90% of observed outcomes in the pasture are the result of environmental influences, not genetics. This situation makes STAY a difficult trait to see in an individual herd. Most of what producers notice in terms of cows staying in, or falling out of over time, is caused by non-genetic/environmental factors.

RAAA has done two detailed validation analyses using Red Angus phenotypic data to test the efficacy of its STAY EPD. Both showed a favorable result and indicated that the Red Angus STAY EPD is working and does have predictive power, albeit within the broader context of a trait that has large environmental influences, as discussed above.

Validation #1: Red Angus

sires were split into quartiles using their STAY EPD ranking from high to low. Daughter parity data was analyzed and compiled across the sire quartiles. Daughters of sires in the top quartile for STAY EPD, on average, produced 1.4 more calves per lifetime compared to daughters of sires in the bottom quartile for STAY EPD.

Validation #2: Red Angus females that produced seven or more successive calves in their lifetimes were analyzed as a group. The objective was to determine whether our STAY EPD analysis was finding these females from within the greater Red Angus cow population and rewarding them with higher-than-average STAY EPDs. The analysis revealed that these long-lasting females did, on average, have higher STAY EPDs compared to breed average.

Final thought: The primary challenge we face with STAY is that it is a lowly-heritable trait. The correlation between a given animal's STAY EPD and good or bad outcomes in the pasture is, therefore, low. However, when we study the bigger picture across the entire Red Angus database, we find that our STAY EPD is effectively doing its job to identify genetic differences in female longevity.

Questions on this topic that concern specific animals should be directed to Lindsay Upperman, Ph.D., at the RAAA office. — **Tom Brink, RAAA CEO**



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RED ANGUS

FEATURED SECTION

What does the future hold for the cattle market?

With record-high prices this past fall, many producers are wondering how long this strong market will last and what the forecast might be into 2024. Derrell Peel, Extension livestock marketing specialist at Oklahoma State University, says there was a significant increase in cattle prices in 2023, which actually started in 2022.

"We could see what was coming, as cattle numbers dropped, and supplies have gotten tighter. The midyear 2023 cattle inventory report confirmed that the national cow herd is still getting smaller. Nearly all inventory categories were down on a year-over-year basis," he said.

"Calf prices, at least right now in Oklahoma, are not quite up to record levels, but are very close to it, and are going to go past it, if not in the fourth quar-

ter (at the time of this writing), certainly sometime in the next 15 or 18 months. They will definitely go to new record levels," he explained.

With these high prices, some people will continue to sell cows and heifers, especially in drought areas where hay supplies are nonexistent or very expensive. It makes sense to sell a few more cows or heifers rather than try to find and purchase high-priced hay for winter feed.

"We are on the front end of a lot of strength in cattle markets. Even though cow numbers have gotten tighter, we don't have any indications that cow herds are starting to rebuild yet," Peel said.

"In the short run, people seem to be selling, and I can certainly understand that, since we've been through a lot

of stress and a lot of drought in some regions, and folks need a chance to heal up financially. They are taking advantage of the cattle prices we have today, to sell. At some point in time, however, some people will begin to retain heifers to try to rebuild their herds," he said.

Cow inventory is at strikingly low levels across the nation, as drought has taken its toll.

"July (2023) numbers were the lowest in the history of that report, which goes back to the early 1970s. Right now, we have the smallest beef cow herd in the U.S. since the early '60s so there will be a need to rebuild. This comes about by producers retaining heifers and reducing cow slaughter (culling fewer cows), and it looks like this is beginning to happen, in the last part of 2023."

Peel explained that herd rebuilding won't start in earnest until 2024.

"That's when we'll really squeeze cattle supplies because we're holding onto more heifers for breeding purposes. Beef production, even though it's still falling (down 4.5-5% lower on an annual basis), will be down even more. It will probably drop 6-8% in 2024 because we are pulling more animals out to save for breeding. Up to this point, we've maintained a lot of heifers in feedlots; heifer slaughter has remained high, but will come down as we start to retain heifers," he said.

It always boils down to a matter of supply and demand—a simple lesson with big implications.

"Obviously, if there isn't much demand, we won't

maintain high prices. Beef demand has been resilient and very strong, however, up to this point. Retail prices are still moving higher and box beef prices at the wholesale level are substantially above where they were this time last year. As supplies of beef tighten even more, those prices will continue to push higher."

This will impact consumers in the form of higher prices at the grocery store. There will also be less beef, so there will be some reduction in beef consumption over the next few years. "There just won't be as much available, and at higher prices, some consumers will make some changes. They can get all they want at those higher prices, but they won't want as much at those prices," he said.

"Demand is key. We keep watching it, but the demand is still very strong. Even though there won't be as much beef, this doesn't mean demand is weaker. There is a lot of availability of other proteins; pork and poultry are now quite cheap, relative to beef, but people are not turning to those. To a great extent, they still want beef, so this is a positive sign regarding demand," Peel further explained.

"This is the general outlook. Even though we have high prices already, there will be more to come. We're just getting started on what will be happening over the next 15 to 24 months, and maybe even longer. We'll just have to wait and see how things develop in the next few months. This may tell us how long these high prices

are going to last," he added.

"We still have drought in a number of regions, and hay is scarce or expensive. Hay production is up somewhat overall, but in many cases, in areas that are still in drought, hay supplies are tight. Pastures need time to recover. Even if people are seeing some rain in these areas now, it takes a while for the resources to heal and hay supplies to replenish," stated Peel.

"Hay production is up in most of the beef cattle states, but that's just the beginning of this healing process. I don't think we've seen enough recovery yet to make dramatic change in herd rebuilding in 2023. I think it will be next year before it really starts in earnest," he said.

There are many factors that play a role in rebuilding the nation's cow herd, none of which are insignificant or easily predictable.

"I recently wrote a newsletter article that listed a number of reasons why we're slow in starting to rebuild herds. These factors include continuing drought, areas recovering from drought, financial recovery, high input costs (inflation) and high interest rates. These things offset some of the increase in cattle prices; the margins haven't improved as much as cattle prices have improved. It will take some time, and because of this, many factors will continue to support cattle prices—and probably extend the amount of time that we stay at relatively strong cattle prices." — **Heather Smith Thomas for the Red Angus Magazine**

Big results on a small group of Red Angus steers

A long-time Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) member recently shared the carcass data below on 30 head of his high-percentage Red Angus steers. The steers are approximately 85% Red Angus, with the other 15% being Continental-breed influence. The harvest date was Dec. 22, 2023.

To say these are favorable results would be an understatement. The steers produced an exceptional combination of quality grade and red meat yield. They tallied 4 times the national average for Prime quality grades, and less than half the typical number of

Yield Grade 4s. In other words, they marbled very well without putting on excessive back fat.

Their average carcass weight is also right where cattle feeders and packers would like to have it. Additionally, note the impressive dressing percent at 65.6%.

How much genetic selection is behind this great group of steers?

"Quite a lot of genetic selection," according to their owner. He also shared the carcass data on 20 head of heifers from the same calf crop. That group graded 33% Prime and had an average carcass weight of 917 pounds. — **RAAA**

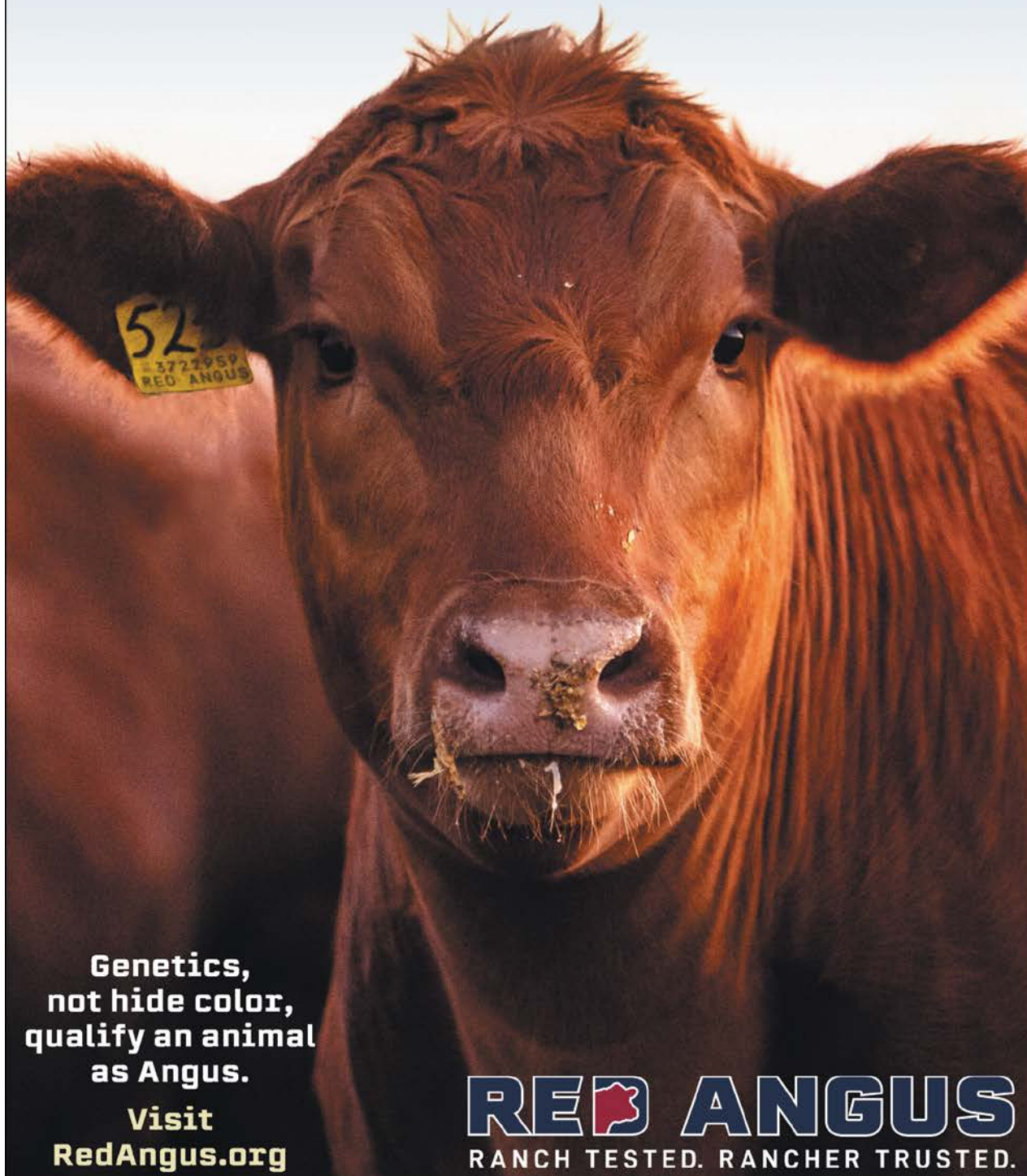
| Carcass Results on High-Percentage Red Angus Steers | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| Quality Grade | Head | Percentage |
| Prime | 12 | 40.0% |
| Choice | 17 | 56.7% |
| Select | 1 | 3.3% |
| Yield Grade | Head | Percentage |
| 1 | 3 | 10.0% |
| 2 | 11 | 36.7% |
| 3 | 14 | 46.7% |
| 4 | 2 | 6.7% |
| Average Live Weight | 1,501 lbs. | |
| Average Carcass Weight | 985 lbs. | |
| Average Dressing Percentage | 65.5% | |

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RED ANGUS

FEATURED SECTION

Reflections on 2023 spring sale data

2023 was a year full of surprises, resembling a roller coaster ride at times with its ups and downs. The calf prices and unknowns from drought started 2023 on a low note. However, optimism began to emerge as spring started and summer brought high points in the market. This trend was reflected in the spring 2023 bull sale season.

During spring, we found a significant increase in the number of high-selling bulls. When I first saw this, I had to do a double take to make sure I was seeing correctly. Considering the crippling inflation that has affected me and my family, I was surprised to see the increase.

After some digging and reflection on the spring sale season, it became clear that a new trend had start-

ed. Producers buying just any bull in the sale offering seems to be fading away. Cattle producers are now selecting balanced trait bulls that check all the boxes for improving their herds in terms of maternal and growth traits. Producers are becoming more selective and favoring the one bull that fits their needs.

Instead of buying two cheaper bulls that may collectively fit their criteria, producers are spending more on one bull that combines their goals and will improve their herds. In 2023, we observed 120 bulls sell for more than \$15,000, compared to 91 in 2022. Additionally, the number of spring bull sales averaging more than \$5,000 increased from 37 to 47 compared to the previous year.

While these numbers

may not seem jaw-dropping to those who consistently sell bulls for higher prices or always average above \$5,000, it's important to note that these sales occurred across the country, including both established and new breeders. This trend highlights the value that customers place

on stand-out bulls.

Even with crippling input costs, producers know that selecting well-balanced bulls will likely result in higher market premiums for their calf crops. This switch in buying tendencies puts pressure on seedstock breeders to continuously improve their genet-

ics and provide top-quality bulls to their customers.

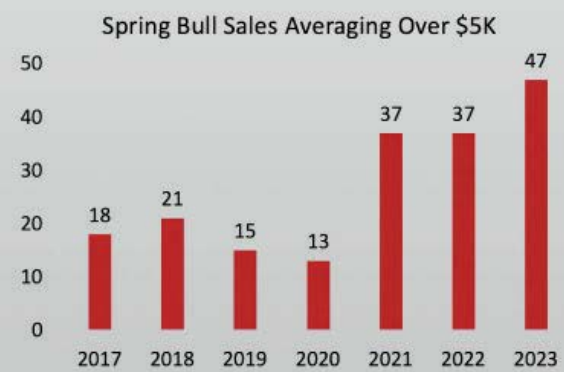
Red Angus breeders have diligently worked on improving their genetics, and this data should excite them that their hard work is paying off. However, it's crucial for breeders to continue to meet the needs of their customers.

By working with Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) staff, seedstock breeders can contribute to the success of commercial cattlemen and women, thereby fostering the growth of the Red Angus breed. — **Rachael Oliver, RAAA commercial marketing specialist**



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Billings, MT
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Jason Beck: 208.790.0646

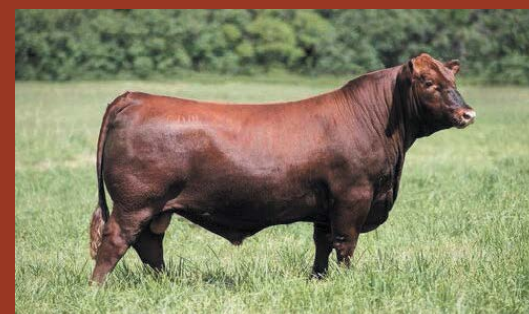
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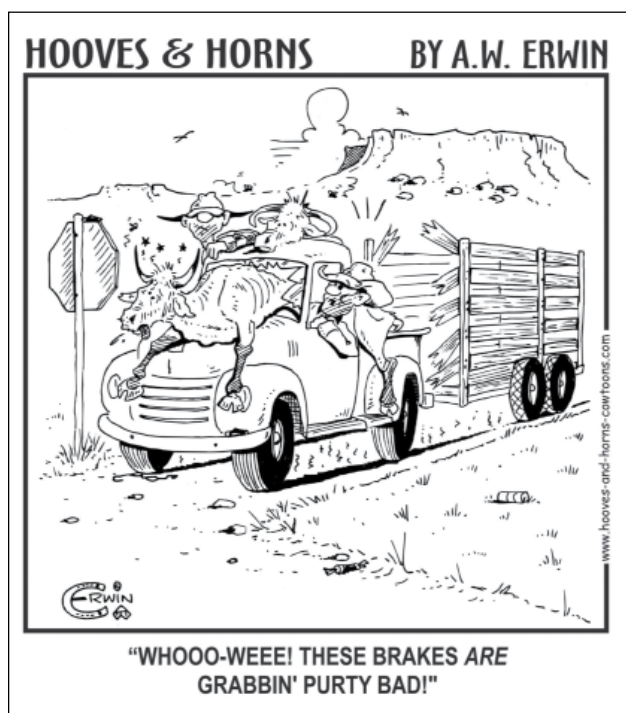


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RED ANGUS

FEATURED SECTION

Building demand for value-added Red Angus cattle

When it's time to sell your Red Angus calves, you want to get the most for your investment. Participating in a value-added program may seem like a

lot of extra work, but the additional dollars received for cattle enrolled in those programs makes it worth the minimal investment of time and documentation.

Adding value

The Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) created the Feeder Calf Certification Program (FCCP), commonly known as the "yellow tag program" in 1995. The program consists of three components: genetic, age and source verification. Cattle should be traceable to at least 50% Red Angus bloodlines, according to Chessie Mitchell, assistant director of value-added programs.

The Allied Access program, a sister program to the FCCP, launched in 2012 to promote crossbreeding using Red Angus females and bulls of other breeds. In this program, cattle are only age and source verified. The Allied Access pro-

gram is also a USDA process-verified program.

The Premium Red Baldy program is a partnership between Red Angus and Hereford. The program is for commercial beef producers who want to take advantage of hybrid vigor. Similarly, RAAA also offers the American Red value-added program for crossbred Red Angus and Santa Gertrudis cattle with a heat-tolerant red hide.

The value these programs bring to cattle producers is instrumental, Mitchell said. Traceability on age, source and breed verification are critical for attaining valuable premiums. Having cattle enrolled in third-party programs allows for producers to advertise a more consistent group of cattle that verifies many of the key

components that buyers are looking for in the marketplace, which translates to premiums for producers.

One call does it all

IMI Global, a division of Where Food Comes From, Inc., saw a need in the beef industry 25 years ago to add value while ensuring traceability was at the forefront of it all, and they have continuously worked to fulfill that need. Most recently, the organization worked with the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef to develop a framework for a sustainability platform, CARE Certified, which is centered around three pillars: animal care, environmental stewardship, and people and community. Since launching in 2020, CARE Certified has enrolled more than 800 ranchers and backgrounders, representing 30 different states and 850,000 head of cattle, according to Doug Stanton, vice-president of sales & business development for IMI Global.

CARE Certified promotes practices that RAAA stands behind, such as proper animal care and handling practices and promoting beef within the community. Most importantly, CARE Certified is rancher friendly, attested Mitchell.

The animal care pillar encompasses much of the tenets from Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) training. Producers must have a current BQA certification, and their efforts around herd health, antibiotic stewardship and cattle transportation are assessed. BQA certification is easy and free to obtain online and is valid for three years.

"Animals should be treated as needed if they get sick," Stanton said. "One thing that's unique about the CARE Certified program is that beef producers are allowed to utilize technologies, such as implants and ionophores."

The environmental stewardship pillar of the program focuses on having a grazing management plan and seeking ways to reduce waste and improve efficiency. The people and community pillar emphasizes beef

producer stories, showcases their philanthropic efforts and highlights how they positively engage with the community.

"If customers are already doing a lot of those things, then they won't have to change their processes to fit the CARE Certified program," Mitchell explained. "Many producers are already keeping herd health plans, abiding by proper antibiotic stewardship, utilizing a grazing management plan, implementing worker safety practices and have an emergency preparedness and succession plan in place."

As most beef producers know, consumers are demanding more of their protein, such as knowing where it was sourced and that it was raised sustainably and used good animal husbandry practices.

"Third-party programs like CARE Certified create transparency from the pasture to the plate and allow millennial consumers to feel like they have a vested interest in the protein on their plate," Mitchell explained.

To begin enrollment in CARE Certified, simply call RAAA to get started. After the initial phone call with RAAA, you'll be assigned an IMI Global account manager. They will contact you to conduct a phone interview and then an independent contract auditor will come out to your ranch to validate the information discussed by phone and observe the cattle, facilities, feed ingredients, etc. As for costs, Stanton noted that FCCP enrolled cattle only pay \$1 per head enrollment fee along with the CARE audit fee plus travel expenses.

"Cattle must be tagged with an EID," Stanton said, "but they don't have to be castrated or weaned by a certain age. The program looks at what they're doing in their environment and if it makes sense."

"A lot of the time, instead of requiring a new way to do something, we're simply asking beef producers to document the processes and procedures they have in place, while formally planning



RAAA Value-added programs such as the FCCP and CARE Certified provide retailers and consumers information about genetics, age and how cattle were raised.

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RAAA FCCP, commonly known as the "yellow tag program," consists of three components: genetic, age and source verification.



RED ANGUS

FEATURED SECTION

for the future." Stanton added. "It's all about continuous improvement."

CARE Certified is reviewed annually by a beef expert committee that makes science-based recommendations grounded in beef industry trends. Those recommendations are taken to a Producer Advisory Committee for review before any official changes are made to the standard.

Other options for adding value

If beef producers want to take the additional step of raising cattle that are non-hormone treated, Stanton said those cattle can be enrolled in the non-hormone treated (NHTC) or Verified Natural Beef programs. NHTC allows cattle to be eligible for export to the European Union. "When beef producers

bundle several claims, when they go to the marketplace, they can market those cattle to different buyers that are looking for those verification claims based on the contracts they have with different packing plants," Stanton said.

More packing plants, food brands and retailers are looking to build sustainability-based claim supply chains for beef products.

Heinen's, an upscale,

family-owned grocery chain with 23 stores primarily based in Ohio, is already utilizing CARE Certified for both its pork and beef brands. The chain also procures poultry products from a long-time customer who is also CARE Certified, according to Stanton.

"A simple Google search will show you how in demand climate-smart and sustainable branded beef is becoming. Since launching CARE

Certified in 2020, several large retailers and brands have announced their internal sustainability goals. CARE Certified is a way they can meet that demand in a verifiable and traceable way," Stanton said. "Because of this, there's definitely a demand for CARE Certified cattle and it's just getting started."

Some program participants support FFA, donate food or

a half a beef, Stanton says. "Beef operations should also be thinking about succession planning. A lot of times, we find that Dad has something planned, but he hasn't shared that with his kids yet. You need to have those conversations and get something in writing. Part of sustainability is the cattle operation carrying on from one generation to the next." — Sarah Hill for the Red Angus Magazine

RAFI unveils new board and ongoing initiatives

The Red Angus Foundation, Inc. (RAFI) recently held its annual meeting and has several ongoing and planned programs. First incorporated in 1995 primarily as a means to support the junior members, the mission was expanded in 2010 to include research and education.

At the annual meeting, Kay Klompien was reappointed to another term representing the Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) Board of Directors, and Daniel Mushrush was elected as a new board member replacing long serving board member Kelli Brown. The RAFI Board extends their thanks for Kelli's dedicated service.

Cam Forbes of Beckton Red Angus—the founding herd of the breed—was elected president, along with Blake Angel as vice president, Frank Wedel as treasurer and Kay Klompien as secretary.

Filling out the board are Daniel Mushrush, Scott Ford and Bob Hough. RAFI's current assets are \$1.9 million split into three funds: general fund, junior fund and Sal Forbes Research Fund. RAFI's financial position was greatly enhanced over two years ago when a commercial customer of Beckton Stock Farm, Charley Jackson of Vermont, bequeathed over \$1 million to the Sal Forbes Research Fund.

As president, Cam Forbes is looking forward to expanding communication with all users of Red Angus genetics, whether they be seedstock producers or those using Red Angus in a crossbreeding system. He wants to look for new ways to serve the Red Angus community and learn more about producers' top priorities to enhance the profitability of people using Red Angus genetics.

From the beginning, Red Angus was a breed based on performance, science and being an early adopter of technology, and he looks forward to RAFI being a constructive part of continuing this tradition. Forbes also looks forward to working with RAAA as closely as possible but emphasized that the two corporations are separate legal entities, which is necessary for RAFI to maintain its 501c3 non-profit status that allows people to deduct their donations to the foundation from their taxes.

RAFI continues to help fund the Junior Red Angus Association and a number of scholarships. Last August, RAFI funded the RAAA for

the second year to collect foot scores, and RAFI looks forward to RAAA getting the program off the ground shortly to start collecting this needed data. Also, last August, RAFI funded RAAA to subsidize genomic testing on cattle that producers submit individual dry matter intake data on, and likewise looks forward to RAAA getting this program off the ground.

After studying the strategic plan, RAFI put out a call for research proposals last year based on identified RAAA priorities and has currently funded two Ph.D. students to work on projects that will result in a male fertility EPD, and the use of pooled DNA to increase the accuracy of dry matter intake on pen fed cattle.

Another call for grants will be going out shortly calling for proposals to collect cattle health data using temperature tags that trip when an animal reaches a temperature of 103.5 F. This has been demonstrated to be successful when calculating a bovine respiratory disease EPD using a threshold model. Standardized phenotypic data is also desired to look for correlated traits. Other proposals will be sought to reevaluate the current Stayability model and research methodologies to improve it, as well as study genetic causes of early embryonic death loss.

Last year, RAFI also instituted a strenuous methodology for evaluating grant proposals. This includes having a clear hypothesis, experimental design, adequate resources and experience; a well-thought-out and defensible budget; and realistic timeline and potential outcome. These are both reviewed by the board, but also peer reviewed by fellow scientists with expertise in the subject area. This greatly enhances that donations are being spent wisely when it comes to research.

RAFI is staffed by all volunteers to maintain minimum overhead and make maximum use of donations for the benefit of the breed. For more information or donate funds, contact Cam Forbes at becktonwyo@gmail.com. Qualified researchers and institutions interested in applying for a grant for one of RAFI's preidentified priorities should contact Dr. Bob Hough at bobhough1@aol.com. — Dr. Bob Hough, WLJ correspondent



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FEATURED SECTION

Taking a systems-based approach to management decisions

For decades, March was calving season at the Wilson Flying Diamond Ranch, located on the western edge of the Nebraska Sandhills. Like many of her neighbors, fifth-generation rancher Jaclyn Wilson was spending some long days supplementing cows and keeping calves alive in the oftentimes harsh Nebraska late winter.

Looking to reduce calf loss and to raise cattle that better fit their environment, Wilson and her dad, Blaine, made the decision to instead start calving May 1 for 45 days.

"We want our cows to work for us; we don't want to work for our cows," Wilson said. "Calving a bit later allows us to pasture

everything and cuts back on the manpower and supplementation expense required during winter calving, and keeping our calving window tight helps with uniformity and marketing opportunities later down the road."

Making a management decision like adjusting calving dates can sound innocent enough—just turn the bulls out a month or two later—but what about the implications on other points in the production cycle?

"We run a long yearling program, so we're not as concerned about weaning weights in the fall, and here in the Sandhills, we don't deal with mud like a lot of operations, so we can get by with pushing

calving season more in tune with what Mother Nature originally intended for animals to do," Wilson said.

The important considerations the Wilsons made in their decision to calve later are part of a "systems-based ranching" approach, which Karla Wilke, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension livestock management specialist, said is the process of looking at the whole picture—and the bottom line—when making a decision about one time point in the production cycle.

"It's all about avoiding tunnel vision and really thinking through the implications of a change at point A on point B and

point C," she explained. "For example, if you're moving your calving dates to avoid frigid temperatures or better line up forage resources with peak lactation, how will it affect cows breeding on a declining plane of nutrition instead of an increasing plane of nutrition?"

"Maybe you're going to save some hay on the front end because your cows aren't calving in March and they have a lower requirement, but you may need to spend a little bit of that on a supplement."

While lighter weaning weights don't necessarily affect the Wilson Flying Diamond Ranch's business model, Wilke said other producers may need to use the systems-based

approach to decide if they are comfortable selling their calves at the same time they have in the past or if it makes sense to hold them over for a few months to add pounds.

"If you're selling your calves at the same point in time but they're two months younger, that lighter calf may bring a little less. However, you had less death loss than you did in the early spring and a little less feed resources in your cows, so after you figure your breakeven, it may still make that change a positive one," she said. "On the other hand, you may need to hit a different market because you've changed your product, so you decide to incur the cost of feeding those calves until January.

"And of course, you'll want to make sure your banker is going to be ok if you have an operating note payment in December."

To best navigate the decision-making process, Wilke suggests making a calendar of the major points in a cow's production cycle—calving, peak lactation, breeding, preconditioning, weaning and selling the calf—and the nutritional and labor needs that go with each of them.

"Line those up with the months they would fall if a change was made and then look at what else is going on in the operation and the industry," she said. "If it's an integrated operation, what farming activities are going on? Do any of the laborers have off-farm jobs that are especially busy at certain points? What are some seasonal marketing trends?"

"If I want to move X then where do Y and Z fall?"

Wilke acknowledges that pulling the trigger on a major management decision can be daunting, as a ranching enterprise can be a big ship to turn. She encourages producers to be dynamic and willing to make adjustments while also taking the time to think through the total impact the decision will have.

"I want producers to feel empowered with their decision and fully understand how it's going to affect their production cycle," she said. "I don't want them to feel paralyzed with fear of making a decision and stepping out there because sometimes you just got to make a move."

Wilson Flying Diamond Ranch was recently feeling the need to make one of those moves after realizing how inefficient their fall-calving herd had become. It was once used in Wilson's embryo recip

program, which has since been phased out of the operation, so the decision was made to end fall calving after this year.

"Our fall calves just really don't fit the environment very well," she said. "Because it cost a lot more to run a pair than it does to run cows and calves separately in the Sandhills, we were early weaning the fall calves at about 90 days and bringing them into our feed lot until about March, which meant more feed and more manpower.

"It can be hard to make a shift that big, but I go back to the old rancher saying that 'one of the worst things you can say in agriculture is this is the way that we've always done it.' It's always worth looking at the alternatives and being willing to change to better fit how the operation needs to function and how the cattle need to function."

Sometimes taking those calculated leaps of faith can pay off in unexpected ways, as it did when the Wilsons decided to add a direct-to-consumer beef business—Flying Diamond Beef—to their operation in 2019.

Wilson had been toying with the idea for several years beforehand, but as the lack of understanding between producers and consumers grew wider, she knew she wanted to be part of the conversation.

"From a production and management standpoint, the beef business made sense for our operation," she said. "Maybe more importantly, it has helped bridge that gap and helped people better understand where their food comes from, how it's grown and why we do what we do."

As a cow-calf producer, Wilson had always been good at analyzing records and performance data, but she said selling her product directly to consumers has helped her become "a better producer."

"We've always had a good concept of what we were doing from the hide in, but it was a lot different when you started looking at product out," she said. "For instance, we could blow everything out of the water from a quality perspective, but yield grade is something we've struggled with. Having this new perspective as a consumer-facing business has changed how we're feeding and finishing animals.

"From a financial position, the business breaks even, but the lessons we've learned and the consumer interactions we've had make it worthwhile when we're looking at the big picture." —**MacEly Mueller for the Red Angus Magazine**

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ProS 120, HB 68, GM 52, CED 16, BW -3.3, WW 84, YW 138, ADG 0.34, DMI 2.04, MILK 30, ME 10, HPG 16, CEM 8, STAY 16, MARB 0.55, YG 0.13, CW 36, REA 0.22, FAT 0.03



LOOSLI PERSEVERANCE 389 • #4838586

ProS NA, HB NA, GM 50, CED 14, BW -1.9, WW 72, YW 117, ADG 0.28, DMI 1.90, MILK 34, ME 7, HPG NA, CEM 9, STAY 16, MARB 0.64, YG 0.11, CW 27, REA 0.19, FAT 0.04

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FEATURED SECTION

Caring for cattle during cold stress

With an average of 41 inches of snow each year, winter weather conditions can be “pretty nasty” for McVilley, ND, rancher Amy Smith.

“It can get 40 below, and we couldn’t go a week where it doesn’t break zero,” she said. “I still lay in bed on some of those worst nights and wonder how everything is going to survive.”

The fourth-generation rancher, who operates Rorvig Ranch Co. with her dad Dan Rorvig and her husband Taryl Smith, said that while they rarely lose an animal due to the frigid temperatures, they do know cold stress can negatively impact their herd if not properly addressed.

Fortunately, cattle are naturally adaptive to cold weather. As the temperature drops, their hair coat thickens, acting as layer of insulation. Their rumen also becomes a built-in heater as it digests nutrients throughout the day.

However, cold stress sets in when cattle are subjected to an environmental temperature below their lower critical temperature, which is the threshold at which they must burn energy to maintain body heat. Many factors can affect an animal’s lower critical temperature (LCT), including the thickness of hide and haircoat, whether they are wet or dry, their body condition and their stage of production.

Zac Carlson, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension beef cattle specialist, said as a general rule of thumb, an LCT of 18 F is typically used for cattle with dry, heavy coats and a body condition score of 5 or 6, while -6 F and calm conditions have been used for well-acclimated animals. Wind chill is also a factor, so if the ambient temperature is 18 F, but the wind is blowing 15 mph, the effective temperature cattle feel is actually closer to 4 F, according to the wind chill index.

“As the temperature declines past that LCT, cattle energy requirements begin to rise,” he said. “For every degree below an 18 degree effective air temperature, energy needs—measured in total digestible nutrients (TDN)—increase by about 1%.”

According to an NDSU Extension article, a 1,400-pound cow in her eighth month of gestation would require 15.5 lbs. TDN at 30 F, 16.25 lbs. TDN at 15 F, 17 lbs. TDN at 0 F, and 17.75 lbs. TDN at -15 F with a light 15 mph wind (windchill of roughly -50 F). With a forage containing 56% TDN, that cow would require an additional 4 lbs. (17.75-15.5 lbs. = 2.25 lbs. TDN ÷ 0.56) on a dry matter basis.

The increased energy demand is in addition to the nutrient requirements a cow needs depending on her physiological stage. For example, when a cow moves from mid-gestation to late-gestation, her energy demand increases 15% to 20%. Furthermore, once she calves and begins lactating, that energy demand jumps to a 30% to 40% increase, relative to mid-gestation.

Carlson said it’s never ideal or advisable to change a ration on a daily basis, but instead recommends increasing the same ration when extended cold periods are forecasted. However, there may be a point where increasing the amount of feed a cow requires will be limited by gut fill. In that case, he suggests feeding a higher quality hay or introducing a supplemental grain or by-product.

“Understanding your forage energy values can be especially helpful not only as you move through winter battling the cold, but also as that pregnant cow moves from mid-gestation into late-gestation,” he said. “As her energy demands increase, you can feed that higher quality hay.”

“I always promote getting hay and feeds tested. Especially with forages, quality is greatly impacted by climate and environment during the growing season, so the hay you fed last year may not have the same nutritional value as the hay you have available this year.”

Carlson said it’s important to get an energy value, not a relative feed value, to identify the forage quality. The greater the value, the more energy-dense the forage is considered. Low-quality hay is generally 45% to 52% TDN, mid-quality hay is generally 52% to 58% TDN and high-quality hay is 58% TDN or greater.

A supplemental energy source may also be necessary, especially for cows grazing cornstalks or dormant range. However, Carlson warns against adding too much corn in a primarily forage-based diet, as more than about 3 lbs. of supplemental corn will start to impact the fiber digestion of that forage.

“While you think you’re adding supplemental energy from corn, you actually end up reducing the amount of energy you’re getting from your forages,” he said. “Other by-products like soy hulls, distillers grains or wet corn gluten feed, which tend to be more favorable, especially during longer bouts of cold stress, offer more energy without a negative effect on fiber digestion.”

Although increasing TDN during a cold snap is critical, Carlson also encourages taking advantage of the weather forecast to start increasing energy content a few days before conditions deteriorate and afterwards, allowing cows time to build back some of the body condition they may have lost.

“A body condition score is roughly 75 to 80 lbs. of body weight, so cows are not going to rapidly lose condition in just a few days of harsh weather,” he said. “But allowing those animals a few extra days on increased energy can help mitigate a slow degradation of a herd’s body condition over an entire winter period.”

If cows continue to lose body condition as they move through pregnancy, they may be weak going into calving, which Carlson said can result in a reduction in colostrum and milk production and potentially a retained placenta, which can affect her ability to breed back.

Veterinarian case studies have also demonstrated a 5-8-pound increase in calf birth weight during colder winters. This phenomenon is often attributed to a cow’s ability to shunt blood from her extremities and channel it to her core when she’s cold, resulting in increased blood flow—and nutrients—to the fetus.

“If we get into a situation with a weak cow and a larger than usual calf, we could very likely experience issues

with dystocia,” Carlson said.

Due to the extended extreme cold in northeastern North Dakota, Smith and her family make a concentrated effort to maintain condition through the fall and early winter using grazing corn—a variety used for stockpiled forage rather than harvest—before cows are eventually moved to cornstalks or dormant pastures and fed hay.

“We feel like if we can fill that cow up early, it’s easier to maintain her,” she said. “When we turn them into the grazing corn, we also put some hay out there just to make sure they stay full, and it helps lengthen the corn out if they have an alternative out there too.”

“In a good year, we’ll get into late-December or January before we have to start feeding hay on a regular basis—grazing corn saves us roughly 50 bales a day. There are a lot of cover crops people can graze in the fall, but

we like our grazing corn because it stands taller than snow.”

In addition to increasing TDN to compensate for energy loss, Carlson said providing shelter or a windbreak can make a significant difference in an animal’s ability to reserve body heat.

“When cattle can seek shelter from the howling winds, you can actually use the ambient temperature—without the wind chill—to determine their increased energy demand,” he said. “If they’re protected effectively, those cows might not need additional energy if the ambient temperature is above that lower critical temperature.”

Fortunately, Rorvig Cattle Co. is located in the bottom of a river valley, and Smith said they use that to their advantage as harsh weather rolls in.

“If the wind’s going to come out of the north, we’ll try to feed them on the back

side of the hill,” she said. “We take the time to think about where we want to feed and how we can tuck the cows in somewhere out of the wind.”

While North Dakota tends to stay frozen most of the winter, Carlson acknowledges that many producers will experience cold rain and a freeze-thaw cycle throughout much of winter, making mud a major concern.

In fact, if a cow in good body condition of 5 or 6 gets a muddy or wet hair coat, Carlson said her LCT can go from 18 F up to 53 F.

He added that research demonstrates muddy conditions can increase the energy demands of a mid- to late-pregnancy cow by 1 to 1.5 lbs. of TDN in order to compensate for her body reserve losses.

“Muddy conditions only multiply the impacts of cold stress; when we get an ani-

mal’s hair wet or muddy, we lose that insulation value,” he said. “Most producers know that cold rain is probably the worst thing you can get. We’d rather take a dry snow in much colder temperatures than get those animals wet.”


Providing adequate dry bedding can make a significant difference in cattle’s ability to withstand cold stress.







“Bedding cattle down during wet and muddy conditions and providing a windbreak during high winds are common practices a lot of producers inherently do,” Carlson said. “We don’t always think through the physical demand we’re preventing or how those actions are actually helping our cattle, but they all add up to help protect the overall health and condition of those animals through the cold months.” — **Macey Mueller for the Red Angus Magazine**

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FEATURED SECTION

Considerations for raising versus



The ongoing drought widely affecting the U.S. Plains and western half of the country has drastically limited feed and forage supplies, subsequently increasing input costs and forcing many producers to liquidate some, or all of their cattle.

According to a report by Lance Zimmerman, Rabo AgriFinance senior beef analyst, "meaningful progress in rebuilding the nation's cow herd will not come until 2025 at the earliest," meaning many of the initially needed replacement heifers are hitting the ground this spring.

Zimmerman's report goes on to say "cow-calf producers will be tasked with building a more economically viable herd as outside demands on production agriculture intensify," which should have some

producers questioning their decision to raise or purchase the replacements necessary in the rebuilding process.

There are advantages to both buying and developing replacement heifers. Purchasing outside females allows a producer to continue adding maternal characteristics while using high-quality terminal sires in their herd. On the other hand, developing replacement heifers gives a producer more control over the genetics in the herd and allows them to retain females that best fit their environment.

The decision whether or not to raise replacements comes down to available management resources to properly select, wean, develop and calve replacement heifers and, of course, the

economics—winter feed costs, opportunity cost of the heifer and breeding costs. Raising replacement heifers is widely acknowledged as one of the costliest activities, yet one of the most important investment activities for a cow-calf producer.

A good decision-making starting point is herd size. According to research from Jim McGrann, professor emeritus in the department of agricultural economics at Texas A&M University (TAMU), if a producer owns fewer than 200 cows, purchasing bred heifers is usually a better economic alternative. To help producers understand the risks and opportunities associated with developing heifers in their own operations, TAMU has developed a replacement heifer budget that calculates total production costs and return on investment to evaluate production, breeding systems and pricing and marketing alternatives.

In his role as an Extension beef reproduction specialist with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), Rick Funston, Ph.D., has extensively researched strategies to cost effectively develop replacement heifers. He said producers interested in raising their own replacements should consider employing a systems approach that utilizes feed resources heifers will be expected to consume as mature cows. He added that increased feed costs have negatively impacted heifer development protocols that rely heavily on harvested feeds.

A 2018 multi-university study "Profitability of Developing Beef Heifers on Stockpiled Winter Forages" compared developing heifers on a low-input, forage-based system to a high-input, drylot system and the impact on profitability of the system over an 11-year lifespan.

When heifer replacement rate and cow costs were held constant across the heifer development systems and the breakeven period to pay off heifer development costs was estimated in years of age, heifers developed on a low-input, forage-based system became profitable at 3 to 4 years of age, whereas heifers developed in a drylot were 9

to 10 years of age before their investment cost was covered.

"Lower-input systems allow producers to develop replacement heifers at lower cost without sacrificing reproductive performance," Funston said.

Furthermore, while traditional recommendations suggest heifers should be managed to reach 65% of their mature body weight at breeding to maximize pregnancy rate, Funston's research and studies from other universities have shown that heifers can be developed to just 50-57% of their mature weight at breeding without impairing reproductive performance.

"Developing replacement heifers to lower target weights—but still on a positive plane of nutrition prior to the breeding season and through calving—can still yield acceptable pregnancy rates and longevity," he explained.

Once the decision to raise replacement heifers has been made, Funston said record-keeping becomes critical to proper selection. For example, research indicates heifers born in the first 21 days of the calving season have a higher pregnancy rate, breed back earlier and wean a heavier calf, yet they are often culled because they tend to be larger than some of their contemporaries.

"I think we should be cautious in culling larger heifers that are born early and out of a moderate cow," he said. "Many producers will say they cull the big end and the lighter end and keep those that fall in the middle, but if those heifers are bigger just because they're older, I think that's a mistake."

Additional research shows that if a heifer initially conceives in her first cycle, she has greater longevity in the herd, and by the time she weans her sixth calf, she will have weaned the equivalent of another calf because of age effect on weaning weight. Funston also said that contrary to common industry practice, there's not adequate data indicating culling heifers out of older cows is necessary. "Longevity is a hard thing to measure, but those older cows have shown you that they can exist in your environment," he said. "We call reproduction lowly heritable

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RED ANGUS

FEATURED SECTION

purchasing replacement heifers

because we're measuring one event one time of year, but if we put it all together with the number of calves a cow has and when she's calved each year, we probably directly select better for longevity."

Funston pointed to research by Jim Gosey, Ph.D., beef specialist and professor emeritus at UNL, which suggests the following criteria for removing heifers from the replacement pool:

- born late in the calving season (after the first 45 days).
- from cows that needed assistance at calving.
- born to dams that have big teats or need help getting their calves to nurse.
- exceptionally small at weaning.
- nervous or have an attitude problem.

Stocker Ranch

On the Stocker Ranch near Dillon, MT, manager Larry Hochhalter has increased the operation's herd size from 110 to 220 commercial Red Angus cows over the past five years using a combination of retained replacements and purchased cows. He selects his 25-40 replacements based on phenotype and approximate calving date, and he leaves the heifers on the cows as long as possible before weaning. Replacements are fed through the winter and then artificially inseminated in late May to calve at the end of March.

As a mid-size ranch operator, Hochhalter has questioned the time, labor and expense of raising replacement heifers but said the decision to do so has ultimately come down to the quality of the females he's been able to add back to the herd each year.

"We like our cows and we've paid special attention to the bulls we've purchased the past few years, so we like the genetics we're getting," he said. "We realize there are a lot of nice females for sale every year—and we're not afraid to purchase outside cows in times of expansion—but our own heifers are often much more suited to this environment, and we can be selective in deciding which ones we retain."

Maddux Cattle Co.

At Maddux Cattle Co., headquartered in southwest Nebraska near Imperial, fourth-generation rancher John Maddux and his family run a large cow-calf and yearling operation featuring a unique five-breed composite cowherd—three-eighths Red Angus, one-quarter Tarentaise, one-eighth Red Poll, one-eighth South Devon and one-eighth Devon—to maximize hybrid vigor and maternal traits. They have used this "Maternalizer" composite to build a reputable business model marketing their smaller framed, easy-fleshing females to producers from Montana to Texas.

"When you have a maternal composite, the attractive product you have to sell is the females," Maddux said. "We try to sell every cow before she's 6 years old to minimize depreciation expense, so we have a very high replacement rate and end up breeding almost every heifer, whether to keep or to sell."

The operation is located on a combination of sandhills and irrigated farm ground, which gives them a "competitive advantage" as their

nearly 2,300 cows graze native range in the summer, corn stalks in the winter and receive very little supplementation throughout the year. Heifer calves stay at their mother's side through the winter, are weaned at 11 months and then developed on a fairly low-input, low-cost system, receiving only about 30 to 40 days of feed before going back to grass for the breeding season.

"I think it's easy to put too many groceries into replacements. We have a very high conception rate in our heifers that are about 55% of mature weight when we breed them," he said. "If you can run those heifers like you would a yearling, you don't really have much more cost in your opens than you do over your bred."

Maddux said in addition to

low inputs, another key to profitability in the cattle business is high fertility, and he is a big believer in only keeping those heifers and cows that conceive early in the breeding season. He uses ultrasound to identify and retain the heifers that conceived in the first cycle, while heifers conceiving in the second cycle are sold.

"This allows us to improve fertility—not genetically, but statistically—because we don't have those late-calving heifers and cows that don't return to heat and don't get bred the following year.

"Reproduction efficiency is extremely important to our bottom line, so it's important for us to keep our own heifers so we have the luxury of being able to only save those that conceive early in the breeding season." — **Macey Mueller for the Red Angus Magazine**



RAAA
The Stocker Ranch near Dillon, MT, has used a combination of retained replacement heifers and purchased cows to expand their operation in the past five years.



RAAA
Maddux Cattle Co. near Imperial, NE, has developed a composite "Maternalizer" population selected for convenience and fitness traits over maximum production.



RAAA
Reproduction efficiency is critical at Maddux Cattle Co., where heifers conceiving in the first cycle are retained and heifers conceiving in the second cycle are sold.

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RED ANGUS FEATURED SECTION

Setting new bulls up for success on the ranch



Randie Culbertson



RAAA

David Fleming
Knowing the breeder buying a bull from is the best way to ensure a new bull is healthy and gets off to a good start.



David Fleming

Use good biosecurity practices when integrating a new bull into the herd, such as quarantine and giving vaccinations.

The day has arrived—that new bull you purchased is being delivered and everyone is excited. Is your operation ready to set that bull up for success

within your herd? The best thing a cattle breeder can do when purchasing a new bull is to vet who you're buying that bull from, according to Randie

Culbertson, Ph.D., assistant professor of animal science at Iowa State University. "Most people selling bulls will guarantee them, but if something happens—that

bull doesn't pass a bull soundness exam, or gets struck by lightning, etc.—having a good relationship with the buyer can provide a bit of security if that bull

isn't fertile for some reason." Red Angus producer David Fleming of Warwick, ND, agreed. If he doesn't know the breeder well, Fleming will talk to former buyers at the bull sale to better understand the buyer's reputation.

"We also keep a few extra bulls around, just in case one doesn't test out or there's a problem with one," he said. Another option is to buy bull insurance, especially if the bull is rather expensive. Each producer must assess their level of risk and consider whether or not insurance is a good option.

millet and hay. "They do pretty well on that ration," said Fleming. "We've also gone back to feeding beet pulp, because they do well on it, too."

It's also helpful to communicate with the operation you purchased the new bull from to find out what vaccines the bull has received. Additionally, talk with your veterinarian about herd health procedures and a vaccination protocol for new bulls, or even new females being added to the herd.

"Have a good working relationship with your veterinarian before that bull arrives, so they can give you good recommendations about worming and other parasite issues, too," Culbertson reiterated.

Ensure bull health

"Make sure you know that bull is healthy and has been tested for any diseases like trichomoniasis," said Culbertson. "You don't want a new bull bringing a disease into the herd."

A good biosecurity practice is to segregate a new bull for a few days upon arrival, just to give him time to acclimate and for you to determine if he is indeed healthy. If a bull has been shipped to your operation, he might get sick from traveling and you want to watch for that possibility. Fleming said this can be challenging in his operation, due to pen availability, but he tries to separate new bulls as much as he can.

Additionally, the bull should be provided with high-quality hay and mineral, and have access to a good water source, according to Culbertson.

"Water is just as important as high-quality feed," she explained. "Also, work with your nutritionist to make sure the ration isn't too hot."

Most bulls are developed before bull sales, but they might lose a little condition during shipping. Bulls should be in excellent condition before going out into breeding pastures because they're likely to drop an entire body condition level—if they're doing their job correctly.

Fleming feeds his bulls a total mixed ration including corn silage, a complete mineral from Purina with Rumensin, and a mixture of ground up alfalfa, oats,

Introducing the new bull

Fleming always pours his bulls for flies, gives them a pinkeye shot and fly tags before turnout. He says he prefers to spread out bulls so younger bulls are placed in a pasture with a more mature bull, therefore the younger bull doesn't have to cover quite as many females.

When the new bull is introduced to the bull battery, there is going to be some rearrangement of the social hierarchy, Culbertson said, so it's a good idea to separate bulls by age to prevent fighting.

"Make sure there's room for the bulls to move around, and there aren't any cows in a pen next to them to instigate fence walking or anything like that," she says.

Bull soundness exams are another critical part of ensuring a successful breeding season, but Culbertson says that it's just a snapshot of that bull's fertility on that day—things can and do happen that you just can't anticipate.

"You can go into breeding season knowing you did everything possible to make sure that bull is fertile," she explained. "Even if they've been semen tested before purchase, test them again."

The adage, "Better to be safe than sorry," certainly holds true. — Sarah Hill for the Red Angus Magazine

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|------|----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|------|----|-----|-----|----|------|------|----|------|
| ProS | HB | GM | CED | BW | WW | YW | ADG | M | HPG | CEM | ST | MARB | YG | CW | REA |
| 140 | 83 | 57 | 9 | 1.5 | 86 | 135 | 0.30 | 33 | 10 | 5 | 22 | 0.67 | 0.00 | 33 | 0.51 |

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|----|-----|------|----|-----|------|----|-----|-----|----|------|------|----|------|
| ProS | HB | GM | CED | BW | WW | YW | ADG | M | HPG | CEM | ST | MARB | YG | CW | REA |
| 122 | 59 | 63 | 18 | -5.7 | 74 | 132 | 0.36 | 28 | 11 | 10 | 16 | 0.59 | 0.07 | 39 | 0.53 |

**Highlighted numbers indicate top 25% breed rank*

| | ProS | HB | GM | CED | BW | WW | YW | ADG | M | HPG | CEM | ST | MA | YG | CW | REA | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|----|---|------------------------|-----|-----|----|-----|------|-----|-----|------|----|----|----|-----|------|-------|----|------|
| GMRA PATRIOT 3203L | #4790856 | • | BROWN PRA PATRIOT G6291 x BIEBER FAF ROLLIN DEEP B627 | BW: 88 WR: 108 YR: 108 | 135 | 86 | 49 | 11 | -1.9 | 76 | 125 | 0.30 | 31 | 9 | 7 | 21 | 0.54 | 0.01 | 25 | 0.42 |
| GMRA STOCKMARKET 3205L | #4790860 | • | BIEBER CL STOCKMARKET E119 x FEDDES BRUNSWICK D202 | BW: 78 WR: 112 YR: 112 | 159 | 83 | 76 | 13 | -1.5 | 86 | 142 | 0.35 | 26 | 13 | 10 | 18 | 0.92 | 0.10 | 43 | 0.43 |
| GMRA STOCKMARKET 3208L | #4790866 | • | BIEBER CL STOCKMARKET E119 x GMRA GAME CHANGER 8270F | BW: 70 WR: 113 YR: 109 | 75 | 22 | 54 | 7 | -1.3 | 91 | 145 | 0.34 | 30 | 14 | 2 | 12 | 0.78 | 0.22 | 40 | 0.24 |
| GMRA PATRIOT 3212L | #4790874 | • | BROWN PRA PATRIOT G6291 x FEDDES BRUNSWICK D202 | BW: 72 WR: 100 YR: 104 | 151 | 102 | 48 | 12 | -1.8 | 77 | 129 | 0.32 | 31 | 9 | 7 | 23 | 0.61 | 0.00 | 21 | 0.25 |
| GMRA KING JAMES 3225L | #4790900 | • | GMRA KING JAMES 0272H x GMRA TESLA 6214 | BW: 77 WR: 105 YR: 106 | 153 | 90 | 63 | 15 | -2.8 | 77 | 126 | 0.31 | 30 | 12 | 10 | 21 | 0.64 | 0.09 | 46 | 0.35 |
| GMRA INVESTMENT 3229L | #4790908 | • | GMRA INVESTMENT 1217J x FEDDES BRUNSWICK D202 | BW: 72 WR: 105 YR: 112 | 145 | 83 | 62 | 14 | -3.3 | 82 | 141 | 0.37 | 28 | 12 | 9 | 19 | 0.58 | -0.02 | 39 | 0.72 |
| GMRA STOCKMARKET 3260L | #4790968 | • | BIEBER CL STOCKMARKET E119 x GMRA TRILOGY 0226 | BW: 76 WR: 102 YR: 104 | 139 | 77 | 62 | 15 | -3.6 | 74 | 124 | 0.31 | 24 | 15 | 11 | 17 | 0.85 | 0.14 | 26 | 0.27 |
| GMRA ENERGIZE 3275L | #4790998 | • | BIEBER CL ENERGIZE F121 x 3SCC DOMAIN A163 | BW: 82 WR: 113 YR: 109 | 134 | 61 | 73 | 13 | -1.7 | 72 | 117 | 0.29 | 30 | 14 | 5 | 17 | 0.67 | 0.08 | 42 | 0.43 |
| GMRA KING JAMES 3283L | #4791014 | • | GMRA KING JAMES 0272H x GMRA TESLA 6214 | BW: 86 WR: 107 YR: 106 | 129 | 62 | 67 | 12 | -0.6 | 79 | 135 | 0.35 | 33 | 11 | 9 | 18 | 0.58 | -0.03 | 42 | 0.58 |
| DDRA NO LIMITS 304 | #4796130 | • | DDRA NO LIMITS 016 x 3C CHEROKEE SQUALL 04W | BW: 88 WR: 112 YR: 110 | 131 | 86 | 45 | 11 | -1.1 | 77 | 128 | 0.32 | 31 | 12 | 8 | 20 | 0.54 | 0.02 | 23 | 0.29 |

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What's (Ag)Next for beef industry sustainability?

Over the past several decades, some of the most meaningful changes in the beef industry have been products of research and innovation. EPDs, which were first published for cattle in the early 1980s, were borne out of the necessity for faster genetic advancement and more informed breeding management decisions. While initially there were skeptics, most producers today would admit their adoption has had an overall positive impact on the beef industry.

Similarly, embryo transfer significantly elevated the potential for herd improvement through increased access to superior genetics for cattle producers of all herd sizes. These two developments in genetic improvement would not have happened without sound research and innovative thinkers to utilize data in an applied way to the cattle industry.

By the same token, Colorado State University (CSU) has a rich history in animal science, rooted in research and innovation, which has provided the perfect setting for AgNext, a modern hub for sustainability solutions for animal agriculture.

Founded in 2020 as the Sustainable Livestock Systems Collaborative (SLSC), CSU brought Kim Stackhouse-Lawson, Ph.D., on board to lead the research body in late 2021. One of her first actions was to change the name from the CSU-SLSC to AgNext, followed by the creation of the Industry Innovation Group, which created the mission, vision and focus areas for the organization and plays an active role in guiding the organization through challenges, research ideas and stakeholder discussions.

Steve Wooten, owner of Be-

atty Canyon Ranch, past recipient of the Environmental Stewardship Award and commercial Red Angus producer, sits on the Industry Innovation Group and said he has fully supported the idea since its inception.

"AgNext is impactful because of the people, the breadth and scope of the trials and the reputation of Colorado State University," he said. "As a producer, I need quality information about what management I can influence so our operation is more environmentally positive, our cattle are more efficient and we stand a chance of being profitable."

AgNext serves as the crossroads for producers, industry partners and researchers to come together to identify real-time solutions for sustainability in animal agriculture and was borne out of the need to solve "wicked problems."

Stackhouse-Lawson defined a "wicked problem" as one that doesn't have the right answer, due to tradeoffs in management systems.

"It's very unlikely that we see improvements in every aspect when we are working on solutions. We hope to see improvements in some areas while other are maintained or have a lessened impact," explained Stackhouse-Lawson. "It's important to remember that sustainability solutions are not just scientific, they also have an emotional element—and should also include social, animal well-being, consumer, environmental and marketing solutions because sustainability is not black and white," she added.

To solve such problems, AgNext brings together a talented and robust team of feedlot and dairy specialists, econo-

mists, nutritionists, veterinarians, communicators, undergraduate and graduate students. A team of this kind is uncommon in an academic setting and Stackhouse-Lawson attested that the diversity of the group plays a large part in its success in finding sustainable solutions in animal agriculture.

"Each member of our team has a 50% engagement component to their appointment, which is different than outreach or education," said Stackhouse-Lawson. "At AgNext, we want to develop a culture where we ideate, innovate and learn together via two-way learning. Those faculty members with a large engagement component build in time to go to operations and understand the challenges that producers face. This connects the supply chain to all aspects of the university."

Stakeholders have challenged AgNext and its members to focus on problems five to 10 years down the road, even though, historically, sustainability has looked backwards. For example, instead of evaluating how outcomes have shifted due to changes in strategies in areas such as reproduction, researchers at AgNext look towards future pain points in the supply chain and are willing to transparently seek solutions to those issues. According to Stackhouse-Lawson, researchers and stakeholders must be willing to fail fast and fail transparently to achieve such goals.

"We have to develop a culture where technical people are comfortable failing, which is historically uncomfortable. However, we also must develop trust in the industry which is why we need to fail fast 98%

of the time, so we can get to the solution, the 2%, quickly," said Stackhouse-Lawson.

"Additionally, we need to fail transparently because that's how engagement works. The public and our trusted partners need to see the 'work, fail and succeed' process on display. That is what our stakeholders told us they wanted."

Seeking answers to complex problems in the beef supply chain is well underway at AgNext. Previously conducted research by USDA's Agricultural Research Service uncovered performance differences between genetically similar groups of cattle that were grazed in the same pastures but were sourced from different origins.

AgNext is partnering on research in Nunn, CO, to also assess methane production to investigate origin-based differences and relationships to performance between three groups of steers: a locally sourced group, a group from the Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, NE, and a third group from the CSU Rouse Ranch in Wyoming.

According to Stackhouse-Lawson, one possible outcome from this research may be that sourcing local feeder cattle locally may be an actual climate smart practice, which would most certainly have striking implications for the feeding sector of the beef industry.

Once a solution is identified, it's a matter of scaling the innova-

tion to promote profitable industries that support vibrant human and animal communities.

"The key for us is finding the balance between what stakeholders are asking for and finding both financial and research partners to execute problem solving," offered Stackhouse-Lawson. "Many of the grants available for research work don't align with the challenges that producers are facing, so that's a hill we have to climb."

Success, as with sustainability, is not black and white but Stackhouse-Lawson attested that the strong relationships that AgNext has with producers, retailers and industry stakeholders, and the support the organization receives, ultimately contribute to successful discoveries and solutions for challenges presented to supply chain sustainability.

One such successful discovery is the development and publication of the 2023 beef lifecycle assessment (LCA), completed by a team of researchers including AgNext faculty member Greg Thoma, Ph.D. The lifecycle assessment comprises all facets of the beef supply chain, from "cradle to grave," and provides a baseline for evaluating mitigation strategies and measuring future improvements in sustainability for the U.S. beef industry.

A previously developed lifecycle, published by the Beef Checkoff in 2016 and based on data from 2011-15, had been used by stakeholders, industry associations, non-governmental

organizations, producers and advocates to promote the positive attributes of beef production and the associated improvements in environmental, social and economic sustainability during that time period. This newly released 2023 LCA provides data and insight to allow the continued advocacy for beef industry sustainability to supply chain partners, policymakers and stakeholders.

The future looks bright for beef sustainability, from both research and innovation standpoints according to Stackhouse-Lawson.

"We know for sure what sustainability is, we are working on developing solutions that are scalable and a team at AgNext that has a lot of passion and pride in their work. Ultimately, we know we can meet our stakeholder goals through the combination of all these factors."

Wooten added that producers can support AgNext by putting into action the credible results and recommendations that come from those trials and solutions.

"Don't let quality results or information from this valuable and relevant research go unutilized and therefore negate continuous improvement within the beef value chain. As with other management changes, feedback will be critical for the teams to utilize in building long-term assessments." — **Brandi Buzzard Frobose, Red Angus Magazine editor**

Total Herd Reporting fee increased in summer 2023

Effective July 1, 2023, the Total Herd Reporting (THR) fee increased from the \$20 fee to \$27.50 annually per active cow (16 months or older). This was voted on by Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) Board of Directors in June 2022.

When was the last time the fee increased? 2010, when it was increased from \$15 to \$20 with a majority of services being combined to be an all-inclusive fee for services. Before 2010, bulls were subject to the same assessment as females. The fee originally started at \$11.50 for categories 1A, 1B & 2 in 1995 at the inception of THR.

What does this fee include?

- Reporting annual data for the cow-calf data or a reason code for THR compliance for reporting year.
- Transfer of animal 120 days from the date of sale (effective July 1, 2023, previously 60 days) at no cost.
- Additional data reporting at no added cost, i.e.: yearling, heifer exposure, foot and leg, etc.
- Correction on cow or offspring.
- Unlimited printing of registration certificate on either cow or offspring.
- Access to online database for reporting, transfers, RAAA-generated reports and EPDs.
- RAAA staff support, programs and resources.

How does this support the financial stability of the organization?

- Allows RAAA to be aggressive with the 2021-2026

Strategic Plan.

- Helps RAAA to maintain its current level of service.
- Supports the RAAA budget to be kept at breakeven or better than approved budget.

The Consumer Price Index is up 32% (July 2022) since 2010, while the Producer Price Index of wholesale-level prices is up 39%. Operating costs have risen significantly in all businesses, and RAAA is no exception.

Association changes since 2010:

- No DNA department in 2010 (three people currently).
- Increased Parentage Verification.
- Genomically-enhanced EPDs.
- Genetic Defect Monitoring.
- Increased size of marketing team.
- From four to seven (including tags).
- Attendance of 100-plus bull sales annually in 2022.
- Doubled in size of tag department.
- Tag program growth.
- Increased mandatory audits.
- Two geneticists versus one in 2010.
- Added director of education.
- IT department growth.
- Operating and maintaining our own online software package (REDSPro).
- Dedicated communications team.
- March 2010 magazine 106 pages versus March 2022 132 pages.
- Buckle and Banner/ju-

nior newsletter.

- Increased amount of eBlasts and media releases.
- Social media platforms to maintain.
- Genetic evaluation weekly versus bi-annually.
- Online database versus paper only.
- Decreased registration staff-four in 2010, down to two currently.
- More direct work with feedyards and packers.
- Greater attendance at industry events.
- Serving a much larger membership (currently at a record high of more 4,000).
- Expanded rules and regulations to track and execute.
- Registering of gene-edited animals.
- Animal permanent identification-added EIDs.
- Including various other miscellaneous items not listed here.

How does RAAA compare to other associations?

Very similar in cost. No association can be compared apples to apples due to the fact that every association is different in how the THR requirements are structured in regard to data reporting.

RAAA, however, is the only mandatory reporting association for all females on inventory—meaning that all females are opted into the program based on calving season, and RAAA doesn't have an outside program to pick and choose which animals data is submitted on. — RAAA

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RED ANGUS FEATURED SECTION

The sustainability of the ranch horse

Joe Leathers doesn't downplay the opportunity that currently lies at the feet of the western industry.

"All eyes are on us because of Yellowstone, and we have a unique opportunity because of this huge spotlight," he emphasized.

Leathers, general manager of the historic Four Sixes Ranch in Guthrie, TX, attested that the attention the western industry has been getting the past few years is unprecedented and cattlemen and women, ranchers and horse owners shouldn't hide their heads from the focus.

Animal rights activists, urban sprawl, policy decisions and environmental challenges are frequently addressed in the popular western-themed drama and, similarly, are realized daily by beef producers from all geographies and demographics.

However, in addition to a front-row seat to the challenges experienced by ranchers, the massive audience Yellowstone has amassed has also been

exposed to the art of the working ranch horse and its importance to the beef industry.

Four legs better than four wheels

The Four Sixes Ranch, along with the Dixon Creek Ranch near Panhandle, TX, are spread across 260,000 acres in West Texas and are peppered with canyons, brush and draws, and Leathers emphasized the need for good horses to run cattle.

"There's no other way for us to gather cattle without horses—a four-wheeler won't get where we need to go."

Tyson Johnson, ranch manager of Sooner Cattle Co. in Pawhuska, OK, agrees with that mindset and added that in some ranch locations across the U.S., four-wheelers aren't allowed, so horses are a necessity on the ranch.

From a non-mechanical standpoint, stewardship and animal well-being are of utmost importance to ranchers and using horses allows Leath-

ers and others to handle the herd in a low-stress way that is safe for all parties involved.

"Animal rights groups are always looking at us," said Leathers. "How we handle cattle has to do with the horses we use."

Leathers explained through animal handling and horsemanship, his crew can strip 400 calves in 20 minutes because the cattle remain calm and the calves aren't hot. A low-stress experience also ensures the herd won't dread returning to that pen in the future.

Shawn Tiffany, owner of Tiffany Cattle Co. in Herington, KS, stresses that horses are a stewardship commitment and help his crew provide high-quality care to the cattle in their care. Tiffany Cattle Co. uses horses in every aspect of its operation, which includes both grass cattle and feedyards.

"Horseback is the best vantage point to evaluate and manage cattle. We don't use four-wheelers at all with cattle because the fight or flight re-



Stewardship and animal well-being are of utmost importance to ranchers.

RAAA

sponse is lowered with horses. "We have a 0.7% death loss in the feedyard but the industry standard is 1.5-2%. The difference is partially due to pre-feedyard care but can

also be attributed to spotting sick cattle earlier from horseback," he continued.

Jed Roark, ranch manager of the ORO Ranch in Prescott, AZ, which comprises nearly 260,000 acres and is home to 3,000 pairs, joins the choir when it comes to the necessity of horses on the ranch.

"The ORO is rough with mountain ranges and our borders are canyons. There is no way to work the ranch without a horse."

"The ROs," as it's known throughout cattle country, requires its cowboys to ride company horses across the rough terrain. The horses raised and trained on the ORO, 2022 winner of the prestigious American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Best Remuda Award, are accustomed to the rugged environment and are better suited for that kind of ranch work than outside horses raised on the plains.

timeline—which is an error the Four Sixes, 1993 winner of the AQHA Best Remuda Award, does not commit.

"If you keep that 2-year-old until he's navicular and 18, what is he worth? Nothing. You're better off selling before you reach that point. Keeping pets isn't a business."

Turner Armitage, manager of the equine program at the esteemed A Bar Ranch in Claremore, OK, attests that horses are a major component of the ranch's business.

"Horses started out as a hobby for us, and we lost control," he explained jovially. "Our goal is to raise these horses for an intended purpose and get them in the right hands."

The A Bar, winner of 2020 AQHA Best Remuda Award, raises horses to fit the lifestyles of those who ranch, rodeo and show. Additionally, they created a futurity incentive that precedes their sale every fall—a show for people to buy A Bar horses, train for a year and come back to showcase the genetics and their horsemanship.

Both Armitage and Roark admit there's an opportunity cost to running horses as opposed to more cows.

"The horse business has to be profitable because a horse counts as 1.5 animal units. In order to be sustainable in the long run for the ranch, they have to be profitable."

Armitage, who serves on the ranching committee for AQHA, said they are always working to manage the balance of raising cattle and horses but also constantly have the betterment of the land at the top of mind.

While it's of utmost importance for many operations to use horses, preserving the western heritage and cowboy way of life also play a role in their continued presence.

"The American cowboy is iconic—a cowboy isn't a guy working with cattle. Part of the legacy and fabric of ranching is a cowboy horseback."

Armitage, Johnson and Roark all agree to some extent but perhaps Roark put it best.

"I believe that God created cattle to make good horses." —Brandi Buzzard Frobose, Red Angus Magazine editor



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| SIRE # | BULL # | DOB | BW | 205 AWW | WR | STAY |
|--------------------------------------|----------|---------|----|---------|-----|------|
| KRP HOLY PAY DAY 8221 #3984374 | #4706569 | 4/25/25 | 75 | 696 | 100 | 20 |
| BUF CRK FINAL ANSWER W004 #1329487 | #4706677 | 3/25/22 | 75 | 738 | 100 | 23 |
| KRP KANYON MAKER 3853 #1622622 | #4706453 | 4/23/22 | 78 | 696 | 102 | 22 |
| KRP MALBEC RED MILL 9636 #4172812 | #4706735 | 4/14/22 | 75 | 721 | 102 | 22 |
| KRP DOK KANYON BRITE 7359 #3783459 | #4706483 | 4/13/22 | 73 | 718 | 103 | 23 |
| RED U2 MALBEC 195D #3721545 | #4706813 | 4/3/22 | 72 | 777 | 105 | 21 |
| KRP OLY'S WANDER 7500 #3783603 | #4706803 | 4/19/22 | 78 | 714 | 105 | 23 |
| BUF CRK THE RIGHT KIND U199 #1260155 | #4706827 | 3/30/22 | 77 | 777 | 105 | 17 |
| KRP MAKE A MILL 2054 #1546984 | #4706421 | 4/19/22 | 82 | 728 | 106 | 24 |
| | #4706375 | 4/14/22 | 84 | 719 | 108 | 24 |
| RP OLY T'S ANSWER 8689 #3984648 | #4706667 | 4/27/22 | 78 | 732 | 108 | 20 |



RED ANGUS

FEATURED SECTION

Hub City auction recognized for supporting Red Angus producers

The Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) recently recognized Hub City Livestock Auction in Aberdeen, SD, for their excellence in marketing Red Angus and Red Angus-influenced cattle. The award was presented to Hub City Manager Glenn Gaikowski by RAAA Commercial Marketing Specialist Rachael Oliver on Jan. 10.

"Hub City has continually supported Red Angus producers throughout the years by hosting special Red Angus feeder calf sales and is well deserving of this award," said Oliver. "Glenn has been a huge Red Angus supporter

and without his tenacity for fair marketing, the demand for Red Angus feeder cattle in that region would not be where it is today."

RAAA works closely with forward-thinking livestock auction markets to best represent Red Angus producers and their livestock. Hub City's consistency in hosting Red Angus specials, the number of calves sold in these sales and promotion of the cattle were noted when determining which market would receive the honor.

Special Red Angus Feeder Calf Certification Program (FCCP) sales give buyers access to superior

Red Angus genetics while supporting ranchers seeking premiums for their high-quality Red Angus-influenced feeder cattle. Producers and RAAA are greatly appreciative of the efforts put forth by Hub City Livestock Auction to support Red Angus producers through tactical marketing and strategic partnerships.

For additional information on Red Angus value-added programs such as FCCP or Allied Access, or to learn more about Red Angus-specific marketing programs, please contact Rachael Oliver at rachael@redangus.org. — RAAA



RAAA

Hub City Livestock Auction, Aberdeen, SD, was honored for their commitment to and excellence in marketing Red Angus and Red Angus-influenced cattle.

Red Angus announces new director of commercial marketing

Kelly Smith, West Plains, MO, has been named the director of commercial marketing for the Red Angus Association of America (RAAA). In this role, Smith will lead the advancement of RAAA commercial marketing and value-added programs.

Smith brings a wealth of industry expertise, with more than 35 years of experience in animal nutrition. He has worked in various sales and management roles for Purina Mills, Adisseo USA Inc., and most recently, Hubbard Feeds. He earned his bachelor's degree in agriculture business from the University of Arkansas and began his career as the national field sales representative at the American Red Poll Association.

"We could not be more excited to have Kelly join us at Red Angus. He has a

combination of cattle business experience and expertise that is hard to find. Plus, he is a true leader, a man of integrity and enjoyable to work with," said Tom Brink, RAAA CEO. "Kelly understands the seedstock business and has spent years working with commercial cow-calf producers in many parts of the country. He is a great addition to our already strong marketing team at Red Angus."

As the director of commercial marketing, Smith will promote the Red Angus breed to seedstock producers, commercial ranchers, industry partners, feedlots, packers and consumers. He will also serve on the leadership team for RAAA to develop effective programs and assist with implementation of the breed's strategic plan.

For more information about the Red Angus Association of America or marketing programs for Red Angus-influenced cattle, visit RedAngus.org. — RAAA



Kelly Smith

RAAA

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Smart agriculture: Farming in the digital age

Nearly one-third of Missouri's economy is tied to agriculture. That's why the state's flagship land-grant institution, the University of Missouri (MU), has launched the Digital Agriculture Research and Extension Center. The center aims to help farmers and other agricultural producers move toward a future of sustainable agriculture by leveraging emerging digital technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) for increased agricultural productivity, sustainability, and profitability.

"The skills needed for today's farmers are not the same as they were five to 10 years ago, and it's important for us to train the next generation of farmers to adapt and make use of existing and future technologies," said Shibu Jose, associate dean for research at the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (CAFNR). "This is the future of farming in Missouri and elsewhere, and people are looking to us as a proven academic leader in this space."

Formed by a partnership between CAFNR, MU

Extension and the USDA Agricultural Research Service, the center will explore key areas in agriculture such as crop production, soil health, precision livestock farming and engineering innovations through research by faculty and students, and collaboration with industry partners and agencies.

"We want to investigate the next generation of technology," said Jianfeng Zhou, one of the center's co-directors and an MU associate professor of plant science and technology. "For both teaching and research purposes, it's helpful to adopt the next-generation tools designed to improve the efficiency of agriculture."

One component of the center will be a field demonstration site located at MU's South Farm called the MU Digital Farm. The farm will also be part of the Central Missouri Research, Extension and Education Center.

"By demonstrating new digital technologies at the digital farm, we will be able to document their benefits and use that information to show farmers

and other stakeholders how to use these digital tools, many of which have already been developed but are not fully adopted yet by the agriculture industry," Zhou said.

Adoption of any new technology takes time, and the center hopes to build trust and confidence in farmers and other stakeholders by being proactive in its education and outreach efforts.

"The Digital Agriculture Research and Extension Center will work with our MU Extension specialists to put new digital agriculture technologies into the hands of Missouri farmers," said Rob Kallenbach, associate dean of extension at CAFNR. "The information, demonstrations, trainings and research that will come out of this center will benefit our Missouri agricultural industry for



MU Extension
The center could help farmers be more efficient by using data-driven strategies—generated by AI—to make decisions on when, where and how much of the resources like nutrients and water are used in food production.

years to come."

Leading this new initiative with Zhou will be co-directors Kent Shannon, an assistant teaching pro-

fessor of plant science and technology and field specialist in ag engineering with MU Extension; and Ken Sudduth from

the USDA Agricultural Research Service. The center is planning a symposium for this spring. — **MU Extension**

January concludes with a general lack of snow in MT

At the beginning of January, more than half of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) snow monitoring stations in Montana

and surrounding river basins reported their lowest snowpack on record.

"Well above-normal precipitation was needed to

begin a recovery from lack of snow, yet precipitation was mostly below normal across Montana last month," said Eric Larson, USDA NRCS water supply specialist.

The exception was the northern Flathead and Kootenai river basins in Montana where total monthly precipitation was near normal. Other basins west of the Continental Divide received 70-90% of normal precipitation during January. East of the Continental Divide, the southern Rocky Mountain Front, central Montana, and part of southwest Montana received about 60-70% of normal January precipitation. The Gallatin, Upper Yellowstone, Bighorn, Powder, and Tongue river basins received less than 65% of normal January precipitation.

"January began with a promising storm that delivered snow to western Montana. During that time snow depth nearly doubled from about 35 to 70 inches at upper mountain elevations in northwest Montana. East of the Continental Divide, storm totals during the second week of January were about 6 to 18 inches," said Larson.

That storm was followed by very cold temperatures and relatively inactive weather. Sixteen SNOTEL sites recorded temperatures below -40 F and most SNOTEL sites in Montana dipped below -30 F mid-month. High temperatures on Jan 12 peaked below 0 F across much of the state. Active weather returned during part of the second half of January but was only significant in northwest Montana. Overall, during the second half of January the temperature was well above normal, and precipitation was well below normal for most of the region.

As of Feb. 1, snowpack percentages are still well below normal in all Montana river basins. Currently the Kootenai and northern Flathead river basin snowpack is highest at about 70% of normal.

All other basins have a snowpack that is between 40-60% of normal, except for the Upper Missouri and Sun-Teton-Marias snowpack which is between 35-45% of normal.

"More than half of NRCS snow monitoring stations recently measured for Feb. 1 remain at either their lowest or second lowest snowpack on record," said Larson. Current snow water equivalent deficits range from about 7-10 inches at upper elevations and 3-5 inches at lower mountain elevations across Montana.

"Considering fresh snow falls at roughly 10% density, that is upwards of 70-100 inches of snowfall behind normal in some mountain locations," said Larson.

With two to three months remaining of the normal snowpack accumulation season, it is going to take a major change in weather to rebound from some of those snowpack deficits.

"In recent history, February through April of 2003, 2011, 2014, 2017 and 2018 brought well above-normal precipitation across Montana. A three-month repeat like one of those years will be necessary to make gains by May 1," said Larson.

If precipitation is not above normal over the next several months, streamflow in Montana during the upcoming spring and summer season are likely to be below normal.

"The good news is, a winter storm is on the horizon, which will hopefully add to the snowpack across Montana in the coming days," said Larson.

Spring and summer water supply forecasts will be published by the NRCS in the March 1 Water Supply Outlook Report.

A full report of conditions on Feb. 1 can be found in the monthly Water Supply Outlook Report available on the Montana Snow Survey website. In addition, real-time snow survey data can be found at tinyurl.com/4et82rfe. — **USDA NRCS**

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LOT 6

C CUDA BELL 3010

AHA 4471083

CED 12.2
BW 1.7
WW 63
YW 92
MM 44
REA 0.85
MARB 0.46
CHB 180

A sure fire heifer bull and a 57 pound actual with a great calving ease figure. He also excels with elite marbling, ribeye and \$CHB combined with plenty of growth. We sold his sire to ABS and his dam is a first calf heifer by the young performance giant Belle Heir.

LOT 17

C GUARDIAN 3049 ET

AHA 4471102

CED 5.5
BW 2.7
WW 65
YW 101
MM 32
REA 0.74
MARB 0.49
CHB 173

This is a perfect blend of genetics with the power and performance of Guardian and the moderate maternal young donor 0119. All of the indicators lead you to believe this young sire has everything a cattlemen is searching for. Top shelf carcass genetics and maternal quality with the color and pigment.

LOT 55

C CJC 4264 ADVANCE 3125 ET

AHA 4471172

CED 5.7
BW 4.3
WW 62
YW 102
MM 36
REA 0.88
MARB 0.19
CHB 144

This will be the lead off bull in our 2024 Denver pen. He already has a win under his belt as he was named the 2023 Champion Horned Bull in Reno. He has the look and color pattern of a herd bull with so much power and performance. His mother 4264 is also the mother of herd sire Belle Heir, Real Deal, and grandmother of Guardian.

LOT 45

C CUDA VALIDATE 3108

AHA 4471156

CED 6.9
BW 1.1
WW 64
YW 92
MM 35
REA 0.88
MARB 0.56
CHB 147

This is one that we have been excited about all summer and he continues to impress. These Barracuda bulls are incredible but this sire is double bred for IMF being out of a Validated daughter who is a trait leader for carcass quality. He puts this together with low birth high calving ease indicators and has the pigment and look.

LOT 20

C GUARDIAN 3056

AHA 4471109

CED 0.4
BW 4.1
WW 73
YW 106
MM 40
REA 0.79
MARB 0.29
CHB 136

Here is a Denver pen bull with as much real muscle and shape as any. Dark red color with loads of pigment and one of the first Guardian sons to sell. This will be one of the top horned bull calves for sale this season.

LOT 80

C REIGN MAKER 3210 ET

AHA 4471585

CED 1
BW 0.3
WW 62
YW 96
MM 37
REA 0.84
MARB 0.12
CHB 150

We are very excited about this one and feel he has the opportunity to be as good as any we have produced. His donor dam 1311 has produced over 1.6 million dollars in progeny and is also the mother of Arlo who was the top selling bull and lead off bull in our Denver pen. He truly has it all with elite phenotype and EPD's that offer calving ease, performance, maternal and carcass all in one.

LOT 75

C 0195 0061 3195 ET

AHA 2068524

CED -1.3
BW 4.8
WW 76
YW 115
MM 36
REA 0.87
MARB 0.23
CHB 119

This Denver pen bull offers some outcross genetics and still has some of our most elite donors in his pedigree. He is a bold ribbed, easy fleshing sire that looks like he will pass on maternal and carcass traits.

LOT 137

C RESILIENT 3020 ET

AHA 2068514

BW 0.5
WW 81
YW 141
SC 126
CEM 12
MIEK 29
4W 82
4E 91
4G 82
4B 173
4C 314

This is the ideal combination of power and performance with carcass traits and maternal values. He has all the muscle and bone you could hope for in a bull who has a 1.22 Marbling and well over a 300 \$C. He is an ET calf from our strongest cow families.

LOT 139

C 0069 WHITEWATER 3023 ET

AHA 2068557

BW -0.3
WW 76
YW 135
SC 338
CEM 16
MIEK 38
4W 75
4E 88
4G 29
4B 173
4C 319

This ET bull calf and his full brothers have been standouts all summer and fall. His combination of calving ease and performance with phenotype and carcass traits place him in elite company. Over a 1.00 for both Marbling and REA and over a 300 \$C but still the kind you enjoy to look at.

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Campaign Seminar provides candidates with tools to win



MFBF

Candidates discussing strategy at the Montana Farm Bureau Campaign Seminar held Feb. 1-2 in Helena, MT.

Fifteen candidates, including several support staff, learned the nuts and bolts of running for public office. The candidates heard everything from fundraising to designing flyers, using social media, working with the media and hiring staff.

This is the first time at the training for Rep. Gary Parry (R-Colstrip), who explained that he initially signed up when he had an opponent in the primary; however, since signing up, his slated opponent took a governmental job, leaving Parry without opposition.

the commitment it takes to run a successful campaign," said Senecal, president of Northwest Counties Farm Bureau.

"I strongly recommend this training for anyone running for office or even thinking about throwing their hat in the ring. Even though this is the second time I attended, I learned so much that is truly applicable now that I am running for office." — MFBF

"We designed it to be non-partisan and want it to help people run on issues important to their communities."
— Mike Sistak

The Montana Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) hosted the Campaign Seminar event Feb. 1-2 at the Delta Colonial Hotel in Helena, MT. American Farm Bureau's Director of Advocacy and Political Management, Mike Sistak, taught the comprehensive course.

"The campaign school was designed to help anybody who has never been in the political process before, or maybe they have run before, but want to see what they can improve upon," said Sistak. "Participants learn things like fundraising and selecting their issues. American Farm Bureau created this program with both political parties, former elected officials and political consultants. We designed it to be non-partisan and want it to help people run on issues important to their communities."

Sistak hopes the main takeaway from the training is the issues a candidate selects. "In the environment we live in, there is so much focus on what is said in Washington and nationally that people lose sight of what matters at home. Your county supervisor, town council, school board, and state legislatures play a crucial role in the community. We tell the participants to select issues that matter to your community."

"I thought the school was very worthwhile, and I learned several new ideas, including how essential face-to-face interaction is when campaigning and how critical multiple mailings are to let constituents know what you are doing," Parry said.

The state representative noted that although he was elected for House District (HD) 39, his district has been changed to HD 35, which covers from Huntley to Miles City and from the northern border of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation to the southern shore of Fort Peck Reservoir totaling 10,800 people.

"I plan to send out mailings based on what I've learned at the campaign training," Parry noted. "The feedback you receive at this school is excellent. The content is concise but comprehensive and deals with all possible aspects you can use in campaigning."

Josh Senecal, a rancher from Ronan, attended the campaign seminar in 2022 to see what it was all about and to decide if getting involved in local politics was an option. This year, he was back, having filed to run for county commissioner.

"The whole two days were excellent and well worth my time. We learned how to run for office from start to finish and study

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S Wrangler 830 Reg: *19198304
BW: +0.1 | WW: 64 | YW: 118 | M: 26 | \$B: 140



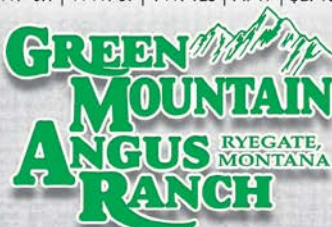
Sitz Stellar 726D Reg: *18397542
BW: -0.1 | WW: 69 | YW: 125 | M: 17 | \$B: 137



Sitz Virtue 11710 Reg: *19665175
BW: +3.6 | WW: 75 | YW: 143 | M: 31 | \$B: 143



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SALE CALENDAR

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ALL BREEDS

Feb. 17 — Great Basin Bull Sale, Fallon, NV
Mar. 1 — Intermountain Genetic Alliance, Bull Sale, Heber City, UT
Mar. 15 — Intermountain Genetic Alliance, Bull Sale, Baker, NV
Mar. 16 — UBLA, Bull Sale, Salina, UT

ANGUS

Feb. 12 — BB Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Connell, WA
Feb. 12 — Skyline Angus, Bull Sale, Stevensville, MT
Feb. 13 — South Mountain Cattle, Bull Sale, Caldwell, ID
Feb. 14 — Jindra Angus, Bull Sale, Clarkson, NE
Feb. 14 — Meadow Acres, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Feb. 15 — Krebs Ranch, Bull Sale, Gordon, NE
Feb. 16 — Hoffman Ranch, Bull Sale, Thedford, NE
Feb. 16 — Rees Brothers, Bull Sale, Morgan, UT
Feb. 17 — Great Basin Bull Sale, Fallon, NV
Feb. 17 — Redland Redbank Angus, Bull Sale, Worland, WY
Feb. 17 — Sandhills Source, Bull Sale, Thedford, NE
Feb. 17 — Schiefelbein Farms, Bull Sale, Kimball, MN
Feb. 19 — Frank Cattle & Genetics, Bull Sale, Chap-

pell, NE
Feb. 19 — Teixeira Cattle, Bull Sale, Terrebonne, OR
Feb. 19 — Weaver Ranch, Production Sale, Fort Collins, CO
Feb. 20 — Coleman Angus, Bull Sale, Missoula, MT
Feb. 20 — Kessler Angus, Bull Sale, Milton-Freewater, OR
Feb. 20 — Rooney Angus/7 Triangle 7 Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Brush, CO
Feb. 21 — Shaw Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Caldwell, ID
Feb. 22 — Van Dyke Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT
Feb. 23 — Hylene Angus, Bull Sale, Three Forks, MT
Feb. 23 — RS Angus, Bull Sale, Brownell, KS
Feb. 23 — Skinner Ranch, Bull Sale, Hall, MT
Feb. 23 — Star Gate Ranch, Bull Sale, Twin Falls, ID
Feb. 24 — Baker Angus, Bull Sale, Vale, OR
Feb. 24 — Lyman Livestock, Bull Sale, Salina, UT
Feb. 24 — RV Bar Angus, Bull Sale, Jensen, UT
Feb. 25 — Buchanan Angus, Bull Sale, Klamath Falls, OR
Feb. 26 — Circle L Ranch, Bull Sale, Dillon, MT
Feb. 26 — Colyer Angus & Hereford, Bull Sale, Bruneau, ID
Feb. 27 — Barker Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Burley, ID
Feb. 27 — Connelly Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Valier, MT
Feb. 27 — Haynes Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Ogallala, NE
Feb. 27 — J.C.Heiken & Sons, Miles City, MT
Feb. 27 — Thomas Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Feb. 28 — Price Cattle, Bull

Sale, Stanfield, OR
Feb. 29 — Wooden Shoe Farms, Bull Sale, Blackfoot, ID
Mar. 1 — Crouthamel Cattle, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Mar. 1 — Parry Angus, Bull Sale, Sterling, CO
Mar. 1 — Reminisce Angus, Bull Sale, Dillon, MT
Mar. 2 — 3C Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Stevensville, MT
Mar. 2 — Kimm Angus, Bull Sale, Three Forks, MT
Mar. 2 — Loya/Wardell Angus, Bull Sale, Platteville, CO
Mar. 2 — Lucky 7 Angus, Bull Sale, Riverton, WY
Mar. 2 — Trinity Farms, Bull Sale, Ellensburg, WA
Mar. 3 — Stevenson Angus, Bull Sale, Hobson, MT
Mar. 4 — Harrell Hereford & Angus, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Mar. 4 — Hopson Angus, Crescent, OK
Mar. 5 — 3-String Cattle & Dille Red Angus, Bull Sale, Castleford, ID
Mar. 5 — Allen Brothers, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Mar. 5 — Apex Angus, Bull Sale, Valier, MT
Mar. 5 — Ipsen Cattle, Online Production Sale, Dingle, ID
Mar. 5 — Manzano Angus, Bull Sale, Estancia, NM
Mar. 6 — Ox Bow Ranch, Bull Sale, Wolf Creek, MT
Mar. 6 — Snake River Valley Genetics, Bull Sale, Blackfoot, ID
Mar. 7 — Cannon Angus, Bull Sale, Preston, ID
Mar. 7 — Split Diamond, Bull Sale, Dillon, MT
Mar. 8 — Felton Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Fort Worth, TX
Mar. 8 — Green Mountain

Angus, Bull Sale, Billings, MT
Mar. 8 — Rollin' Rock Angus, Bull Sale, Pilot Rock, OR
Mar. 9 — Yardley Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Beaver, UT
Mar. 9 — Riverbend Ranches, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Mar. 11 — Pine Coulee Angus, Bull Sale, Hardin, MT
Mar. 11 — Spring Cove Ranch, Bull Sale, Bliss, ID
Mar. 12 — Veltkamp Angus, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT
Mar. 12 — Wagon Wheel Ranch, Bull Sale, Yuma, CO
Mar. 13 — Hornung Livestock, Bull Sale, Stratton, CO
Mar. 13 — Sitz Angus, Bull Sale, Dillon, MT
Mar. 13 — Udy Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Rockland, ID
Mar. 14 — Sunny Okanogan Angus Ranch, Production Sale, Omak, WA
Mar. 15 — Caywood Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Tendoy, ID
Mar. 15 — J Lazy S, Online Bull Sale, Salmon, ID
Mar. 15 — Montana Performance Bull Co-op, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT
Mar. 15 — TD Angus, Bull Sale, North Platte, NE
Mar. 16 — Nelson Angus, Bull & Female Sale, Salmon, ID
Mar. 16 — South Montana Angus Association, Bull Sale, Butte, MT
Mar. 16 — Ward Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Gardnerville, NV
Mar. 18 — Angus in the Basin, Bull Sale, Duchesne, UT
Mar. 18 — Herd Builder, Bull Sale, Othello, WA
Mar. 18 — Whistling Winds Angus, Bull Sale, Hingham, MT
Mar. 19 — Blevins Angus, Bull Sale, Charlo, MT
Mar. 19 — ELK Angus, Bull

Sale, Buffalo, WY
Mar. 20 — Lufkin Cattle, Bull Sale, Tendoy, ID
Mar. 20 — Wagonhammer Ranches, Bull Sale, Albion, NE
Mar. 21 — Carter Cattle, Bull Sale, Pingree, ID
Mar. 21 — Oft Angus, Bull Sale, Vale, OR
Mar. 21 — Vermilion Commercial Female Sale, Billings, MT
Mar. 22 — Vermilion Bull Sale, Billings, MT
Mar. 23 — Currant Creek, Bull Sale, Miles City, MT
Mar. 23 — Sinclair Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Buffalo, WY
Mar. 24-25 — Leachman Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Ft. Collins, CO
Mar. 26 — Bar JV Angus, Bull Sale, Sidney, MT
Mar. 27 — Peterson Grain and Cattle, Bull Sale, Havre, MT
Mar. 28 — Gartner-Denowh Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Sidney, MT
Mar. 29 — Silver Bit Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, May, ID
Mar. 30 — Diamond Peak Cattle, Bull Sale, Loma, CO
Apr. 1 — FBA Angus Ranch, Production Sale, Havre, MT
Apr. 2 — Hinman Angus, Bull Sale, Malta, MT
Apr. 4 — Arntzen Angus, Bull Sale, Hilger, MT
Apr. 6 — Botts Angus, Bull Sale, Huntley, MT
Apr. 6 — Brooks Chalky Butte, Bull Sale, Bowman, ND
Apr. 8 — C-Spear Angus, Bull Sale, Billings, MT
Apr. 9 — Hilltop Angus, Bull Sale, Denton, MT
Apr. 11 — Jocko Valley Angus, Bull Sale, Missoula, MT
Apr. 17 — Milk River Genetics, Bull Sale, Chinook, MT
Apr. 19 — DeGrand Angus, Bull Sale, Baker, MT
Apr. 19 — Timberline Angus, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT

Female Sale, Rockland, ID
Mar. 21 — Bar Star Cattle, Bull Sale, Musselshell, MT
Mar. 27 — NJW Herefords, Bull Sale, Sheridan, WY

MAINE ANJOU

Mar. 9 — Yardley Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Beaver, UT

RED ANGUS

Feb. 19 — Frank Cattle & Genetics, Bull Sale, Chap-pell, NE
Feb. 21 — Shaw Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Caldwell, ID
Mar. 1 — Sutherlin Farms, Production Sale, Stevensville, MT
Mar. 2 — Redland Red Angus, Bull Sale, Hysham, MT
Mar. 5 — Sandhills Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sidney, MT
Mar. 5 — 3-String Cattle & Dille Red Angus, Bull Sale, Castleford, ID
Mar. 8 — Leland and Koester Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sidney, MT
Mar. 12 — Loosli Red Angus, Bull Sale, Ashton, ID
Mar. 13 — Udy Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Rockland, ID
Mar. 16 — Iron Lorenzen Cattle, Bull Sale, Madras, OR
Mar. 16 — Milk Creek Red Angus, Bull Sale, Plevna, MT
Mar. 19 — Green Mountain Red Angus, Bull Sale, Logan, MT
Mar. 20 — Klompfen Red Angus, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT
Mar. 24-25 — Leachman Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Ft. Collins, CO
Mar. 25 — Axtell Cattle Co., Production Sale, Sterling, CO
Mar. 27 — Westphal Red Angus, Bull Sale, Grass Range, MT

SALERS

Feb. 12 — Big Sky Salers, Bull Sale, Dickinson, ND
Feb. 23 — Skinner Ranch, Bull Sale, Hall, MT
Mar. 26 — MJB Ranch, Bull Sale, Billings, MT

BALANCER

Apr. 13 — Bar T Bar Ranches, Bull Sale, Winslow, AZ

CHAROLAIS

Feb. 20 — V-A-L Charolais, Bull Sale, Vale, OR
Feb. 22 — Small Livestock, Bull Sale, Winnemucca, NV
Feb. 23 — Cowman's Kind, Bull Sale, Madras, OR
Mar. 12 — Romans Ranches Charolais, Production Sale, Harper, OR
Mar. 20 — Wagonhammer Ranches, Bull Sale, Albion, NE
Mar. 23 — Valley View Charolais, Bull Sale, Polson, MT
Mar. 24-25 — Leachman Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Ft. Collins, CO
Apr. 5 — Brevig Charolais, Bull Sale, Lewistown, MT
Apr. 6 — DeBruycker Charolais, Bull Sale, Great Falls, MT

GELBIEH

Feb. 24 — Black Gold Genetics, Bull Sale, Pritchett, CO

HEREFORD

Feb. 13 — South Mountain Cattle, Bull Sale, Caldwell, ID
Feb. 16 — Hoffman Ranch, Bull Sale, Thedford, NE
Feb. 16 — Rees Brothers, Bull Sale, Morgan, UT
Feb. 21 — Shaw Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Caldwell, ID
Feb. 26 — Colyer Hereford & Angus, Bull Sale, Bruneau, ID
Feb. 29 — Wooden Shoe Farms, Bull Sale, Blackfoot, ID
Mar. 4 — Harrell Hereford & Angus, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Mar. 5 — Ipsen Cattle, Online Production Sale, Dingle, ID
Mar. 9 — Northwest Hereford Breeders, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Mar. 11 — Holden Herefords, Bull Sale, Valier, MT
Mar. 12 — Cooper Herefords, Bull Sale, Willow Creek, MT
Mar. 13 — Udy Cattle, Bull &

STABILIZER

Mar. 24-25 — Leachman Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Ft. Collins, CO
Apr. 13 — Bar T Bar Ranches, Bull Sale, Winslow, AZ

COMMERCIAL

Feb. 29 — Western Video Market Internet Sale, CA
Apr. 11 — Western Video Market Internet Sale, CA

HORSE

Mar. 2 — Winnemucca Ranch, Rodeo Horse Sale, Winnemucca, NV
Mar. 4 — Harrell & Mackenzie, Quarter Horse Sale, Baker City, OR

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CASINO WILDCAT W113
 Sire: E&B Wildcat 9402
 AAA 20793578
 02/05/2023

| BW | WW | YW | Marb | RE | SM | SW |
|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| +1.6 | +92 | +173 | +55 | +86 | +54 | +72 |



DAL PORTO ICONIC B52
 Sire: DB Iconic 695
 20739038
 02/16/2023

| BW | WW | YW | Marb | RE | SM | SW |
|-----|-----|------|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| -.1 | +79 | +142 | +1.35 | +65 | +77 | +84 |



CASINO CONSTABLE W135
 Sire: Casino Constable T34
 AAA 20776628
 02/16/2023

| BW | WW | YW | Marb | RE | SM | SW |
|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| +2.2 | +86 | +128 | +7.5 | +92 | +84 | +82 |



CR BLOCKADE 325
 Sire: Hoffman LLL Blockade
 20821411
 01/22/2023

| BW | WW | YW | Marb | RE | SM | SW |
|----|-----|------|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| +8 | +79 | +137 | +1.64 | +70 | +72 | +73 |



CR CONSTABLE 351
 Sire: Casino Constable T34
 20824125
 02/14/2023

| BW | WW | YW | Marb | RE | SM | SW |
|------|-----|------|-------|-----|-----|----|
| +2.7 | +65 | +111 | +1.58 | +81 | +60 | |



DAL PORTO ICONIC B68
 Sire: DB Iconic 695
 20739078
 03/01/2023

| BW | WW | YW | Marb | RE | SM | SW |
|------|------|------|-------|-----|-----|-----|
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Extreme drought effects on grasslands underestimated

A first-of-its-kind international study, which includes research from Texas A&M AgriLife, has found that the effects of extreme drought on grasslands and shrublands have been underestimated.

Researchers simulated extreme short-term drought—commonly called “100-year drought”—at 100 sites across six continents. The results were recently published in the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).

“These droughts are going to happen more often, and be more intense, so it is important that we learn as much as we can about their potential impacts and find ways to help Texas landowners,” said Bill Rogers, Ph.D., a coauthor of the PNAS study and professor in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology. Rogers led the Texas-specific portion of this international study.

Impact of extreme drought

Scientists began organizing the International Drought Experiment, as the study is formally known, 10 years ago. All the research was done within a half-decade window. Within that window, researchers at each site simulated drought for a year. They focused on 100-year droughts—which historically have a 1% chance of happening each year—because such droughts are generally considered a

threshold at which an ecosystem is seriously strained.

The study ultimately included 170 authors, and results varied by region. According to the results of the study, 100-year droughts reduced key carbon processes in grasslands to a much greater degree than previously observed.

The drought the Texas A&M AgriLife team simulated did not impact the Texas test site as severely as other places included in the study, Rogers said, but it was still affected more than pre-

vious studies suggested. Rogers said follow-up research is necessary to determine whether Texas grasslands are more resilient than those of other places or if the Texas results were skewed by torrential rains that fell toward the end of the year-long observation period.

Rogers and his Texas A&M University colleagues—former graduate student Heather Hannusch, now with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and former postdoctoral researcher Alexandra Lodge, now program manager with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources—conducted the Texas study in 2018 and early 2019, crafting the experiment to match its counterparts around the world.

The experiment took place at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research station in Sonora, TX, located at the edge of the semi-arid Texas Hill Country. To simulate extreme drought, the researchers erected slatted covers over 5-foot-by-5-

foot trial plots to reduce the amount of rainfall. Over the course of a year, they measured the health of grasses and forbs beneath the covers and compared the results to other nearby plots.

Rogers said the increasing frequency of extreme short-term drought and the results of the experiment suggest that ranchers and other land managers in Texas may have to more actively manage rangelands in the coming decades. As rangeland ecosystems could lose some of their capacity to support livestock, ranchers may need to begin to choose grazing sites more selectively, he said.

“There is a cascading effect here that will impact individuals across a broad range of geographical—both rural and urban—and socioeconomic backgrounds,” Rogers said. “However, scientists, government officials, nonprofits and land managers are working on solutions.” — **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**

CBB elects new officers at 2024 winter meetings

Cattle producers Andy Bishop of Kentucky, Ryan Moorhouse of Texas and Dr. Cheryl DeVuyst of Oklahoma are the new leaders of the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion & Research Board (CBB). This officer team is responsible for guiding the national Beef Checkoff throughout 2024.

Bishop, Moorhouse and DeVuyst were elected by their fellow Beef Board members during their Winter Meetings, held during the 2024 Cattle Industry Convention in Orlando, FL.

Bishop, the 2023 vice chair, will now serve as the CBB's chair, while Moorhouse will transition from his role as the 2023 secretary-treasurer to become the 2024 vice chair. DeVuyst is the newest member of the officer team, taking on Moorhouse's former responsibilities as secretary-treasurer.

Andy Bishop

2024 Chair Andy Bishop and his wife Meagan of Cocks Creek, KY, are raising their four children on their registered Angus seed stock operation, Fairfield Farm. Bishop began his career teaching agriculture and moved into the field of agriculture lending in 2007. Bishop is the former chair of the Kentucky Beef Council and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Young Cattlemen's Conference. Bishop also served as a member of the Long Range Planning Task Force and as president of the NCBA Young Producers Council and the Kentucky Cattlemen's Young Producers group.

“The beef industry is in a unique situation as 2024 gets underway,” Bishop said. “Producers have been dealing with adverse weather and production cost conditions over the past few years, leading to herd liquidation. While things do seem to be improving, the Beef Checkoff must continue to be vigilant, developing the right programs and messaging to keep beef demand high. I'm excited to lead the CBB as we navi-

gate the opportunities and challenges this year sends our way.”

Ryan Moorhouse

Vice Chair Moorhouse grew up in North Central Texas on his family's cow/calf and stocker operation. After graduating from Texas A & M University, Moorhouse went to work for Continental Grain Cattle Feeding (now Five Rivers). He currently serves as the general manager for Hartley Feeders, a Five Rivers Cattle Feeding operation. A resident of Amarillo, TX, Moorhouse, his wife Colette and their two sons also operate a stocker operation back home on part of the family ranch.

Cheryl DeVuyst

Dr. Cheryl DeVuyst and her husband, Eric, own DeVuyst Ranch, a cow/calf and stocker operation. DeVuyst is also a professor of agricultural economics at Oklahoma State University and head of its ag econ department. DeVuyst is involved with numerous agricultural organizations, including Oklahoma CattleWomen, Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, NCBA, Oklahoma Farm Bureau, Pawnee County CattleWomen, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association and American National CattleWomen. She's also a faculty advisor for the Oklahoma Collegiate CattleWomen and is a past board member of the Western Agricultural Economics Association.

“Our CBB members and staff are incredibly fortunate to have three strong beef industry leaders and advocates like Andy, Ryan and Cheryl at the helm of this organization,” said Greg Hanes, CEO of the Cattlemen's Beef Board. “Each has unique experience and perspective to share, representing producers from across the U.S. As we begin our journey through 2024, I'm looking forward to working with this leadership team to launch programs

and initiatives that drive beef demand and benefit producers nationwide.”

For more information about the Beef Checkoff

and its programs, contact the Cattlemen's Beef Board at 303-220-9890 or visit DrivingDemandForBeef.com. — **CBB**



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Limited resource farms are in Atlantic, West

USDA identifies farmers and ranchers as limited resource (LR) producers as those who, for two consecutive years, oper-

ate a farm with gross farm sales less than \$180,300 (in 2020 dollars) and have total household income either below the fed-

eral poverty level for a family of four or less than half of the median household income in the county where they live.

Between 2017 and 2020, 9.3% of all U.S. farms had an LR principal operator, according to the Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS). Of the remaining farms, 76.3% had farm sales low enough to meet LR status, but did not meet other requirements, while 14.3% had gross farm sales above the LR threshold.

The ARMS data also reveal that the share of farms that were LR varied geographically, with lower proportions in the Plains region and higher proportions in the Atlantic and West regions. There were also within-region differences in the share of farms that were LR farms, such as the Midwest, where 4% of farms in Iowa and Illinois were LR while Missouri had roughly 12%.

This highlights differences in the scale of production, as well as differences in off-farm income and county median incomes. ARMS is the only nationally representative survey that collects the information needed to determine whether the principal operator on a farm meets the LR criteria. — **USDA Economic Research Service**



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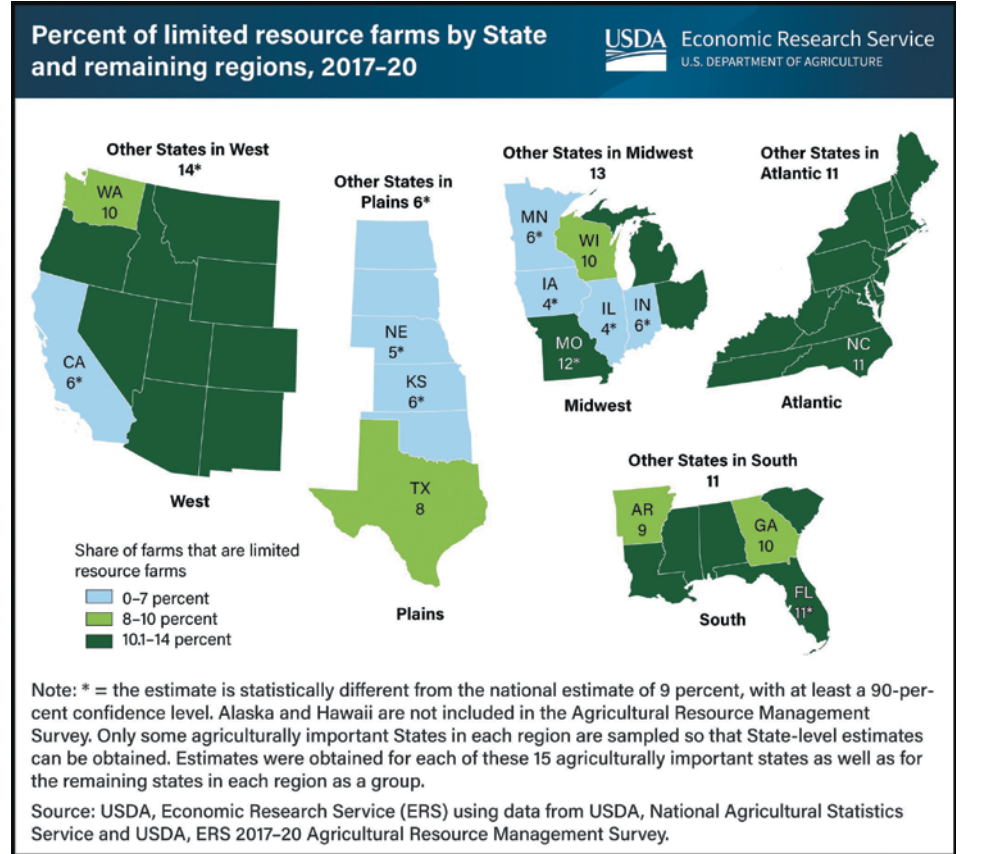
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Newsom announces strategy to help salmon populations

As California experiences hotter, drier temperatures due to climate change, Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) has announced the state's first strategy to protect and help restore salmon species to reduce their risk of extinction.

The California Salmon Strategy is a 37-page document that

outlines actions state agencies are already taking to stabilize and recover salmon populations. It also maps out additional or intensified actions needed in coming years. The document identifies six priorities and 71 actions.

The salmon strategy's priorities call for: removing barriers and modernizing infrastructure for salmon migration, restoring habitat, protecting water flows in key rivers at the right times, modernizing hatcheries, transforming technology and management systems, and strengthening partnerships.

California Farm Bureau senior policy advocate Alexandra Biering said, "Many of the strategy actions—from dedicated habitat to dam removal and ecosystem flows—require the participation of private landowners and water rights holders."

Biering said farmers would also like to see thriving salmon populations. She said the state's objective to "recover salmon in the state across their range is a worthy goal but one that might not be completely attainable."

The state's salmon strategy includes several projects that are already underway, including removal of four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River. The Copco 2 Dam in Siskiyou County was removed in 2023.

The deconstruction of two other Siskiyou dams, the Iron Gate and Copco1 dams, and the JC Boyle dam in southern Oregon is expected to happen in May or June.

Other ongoing efforts include a push by tribes and the Pacific Gas & Electric Co. to decommission and remove the Scott Dam on the Eel River in Mendocino County.

In addition, work continues

toward finalizing agreements for passage and reintroduction of fish in the Yuba River. Other efforts include developing minimum instream flows and a long-term management plan for the Scott and Shasta rivers in Siskiyou County and completing a salmon conservation and rearing facility below Friant Dam on the San Joaquin River on the border of Fresno and Madera counties.

Dennis Thibeault, executive vice president of forestry for the Humboldt Redwood Co. and the Mendocino Redwood Co., called the state's new salmon strategy "a major step forward."

He said, "Conserving this keystone species will require a coordinated effort throughout its range in California on both public and private lands."

In a related effort, the California State Water Resources Control Board, at its Feb. 6 board meeting, was set to consider a proposal to approve final biological goals for unimpaired flow objectives to help improve salmon populations in the Lower San Joaquin River tributaries.

The state's decision to set flows on the Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Merced rivers is part of the state's Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan.

The Newsom administration and the California Legislature have spent almost \$800 million in the past three years to protect and restore salmon.

With projections showing Chinook salmon population at historic lows last year, the salmon season was closed, and the state requested a federal fishery disaster declaration to support impacted communities.

— **Christine Souza, Ag Alert assistant editor, California Farm Bureau Federation**



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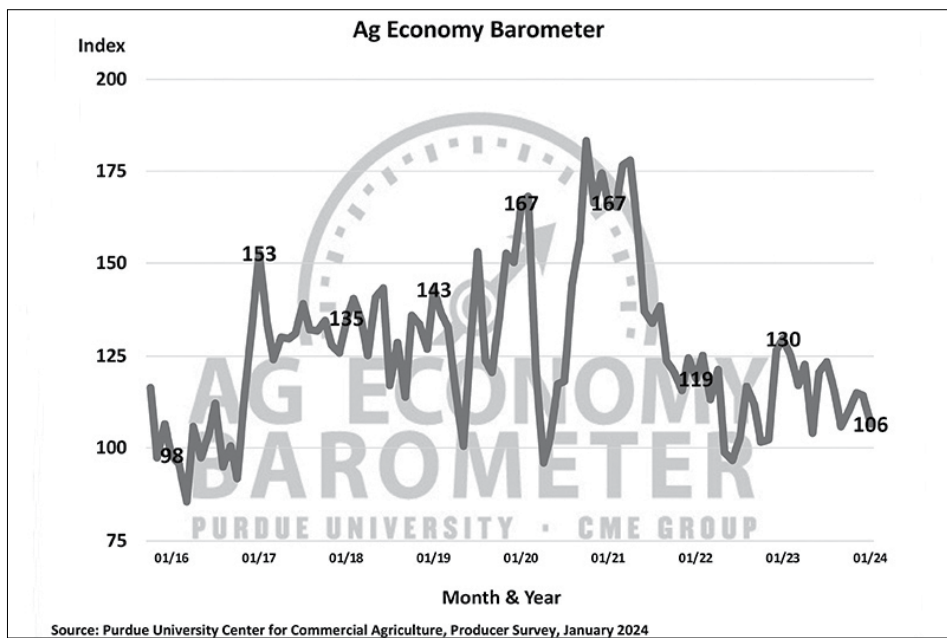
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Weakened commodity prices cast a shadow on sentiment



The most recent findings from the Purdue University/CME Group Ag Economy Barometer reveal a downturn in farmer sentiment at the start of 2024.

The January barometer fell to a reading of 106, 8 points lower than in December. Producers expressed a more pessimistic perspective about their farms' current situation and future prospects. The Current Conditions Index fell 9 points, and the Future Expectations Index dropped by 7, both compared to December. The anticipation of weaker farm income in 2024 contributed to the overall decline, reflected in the Farm Financial Performance Index at 85, a 12-point decrease from the previous month. This month's Ag Economy Barometer survey was conducted from Jan. 15-19.

of producers who chose higher input costs. This alignment indicates that U.S. farmers are worried about a possible cost/price squeeze leading to lower farm incomes," Mintert said.

The Farm Capital Investment Index fell to 35, 8 points lower than in December. This month, a shift occurred as fewer producers attributed their hesitation to make large investments to rising interest rates, which reversed a trend observed through much of 2023. Instead, more farmers cited high machinery and construction prices as reasons to defer investments. Meanwhile, among those deeming it a favorable time for large investments, an increased number pointed to expansion opportunities, while fewer referenced the rise in dealers' farm machinery

rose to 16%, up from 10% just three months ago, with a simultaneous drop in those expecting higher values from 35% to 31%.

Additionally, the January survey reveals a consistent interest in carbon capture, as 8% of respondents reported engaging in discussions about carbon contracts. Among those, 61% were offered payment rates below \$10 per metric ton, and 12% were offered a rate of \$30 or more per ton. — **Purdue University Extension**

There was an increase in the proportion of producers anticipating a decline in financial performance for the upcoming year.

"The number of producers pointing to lower commodity prices and lower farm income in 2024 significantly influenced the decline across all indices," said James Mintert, the barometer's principal investigator and director of Purdue University's Center for Commercial Agriculture.

There was an increase in the proportion of producers anticipating a decline in financial performance for the upcoming year, with the figure rising from 20% in December to 31% in January. Concurrently, the percentage of those expecting income levels to remain stable decreased from 63% to 53%.

"For the first time, the percentage of producers choosing lower commodity prices as a top concern matched the percentage

inventories as a motivating factor for investment.

This year, a greater number of producers expect their operating loan size to remain steady compared to last year, with fewer anticipating a larger loan. Of those expecting an increase, 61% cite rising input costs, down from 80% last year, while 23% attribute it to farm expansion, up from 15% in 2023.

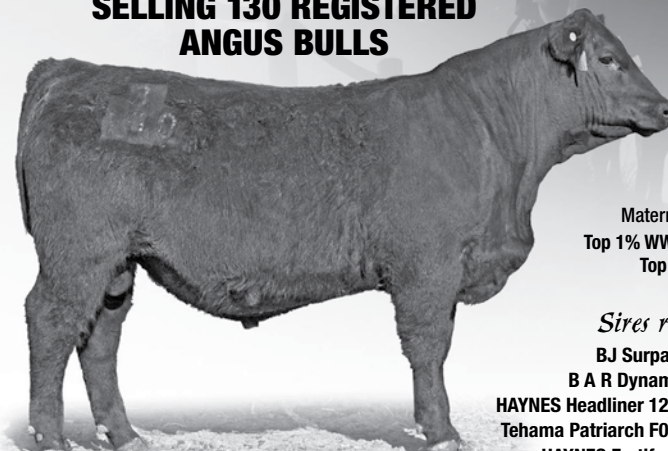
While the Short-Term Farmland Value Expectations Index declined to 115, indicating reduced optimism on the part of producers, the long-term index held steady at 150, suggesting enduring optimism. Notably, the proportion of producers anticipating a decline in farmland values for the upcoming year

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|------|-----|----|------|------|----|----|-----|-----|
| CE | BW | WW | YW | HK | CEM | SC | DOC | CW | REA | MR | SB | SI | SI | |
| 4 | 6.0 | 77 | 133 | 34 | 12 | 0.32 | 10 | 63 | 0.82 | 0.54 | 80 | 82 | 140 | 272 |

8/9/2022 P&P Score 43



BL KING COBRA 2114K
SIRE SA V Scale House 0845 DAM BL Farrah

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|-----|----|-----|------|-----|----|------|------|----|----|-----|-----|
| CE | BW | WW | YW | HK | CEM | SC | DOC | CW | REA | MR | SB | SI | SI | |
| -2 | 4 | 81 | 136 | 18 | 8 | 1.08 | 25 | 61 | 0.59 | 0.09 | 59 | 60 | 121 | 216 |

8/21/2022 P&P Score 41



RIMROCK ALCATRAZ 2320
SIRE HF Alcatraz 60F DAM Rimrock Sky Lady 1815

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|------|-----|----|------|------|----|----|-----|-----|
| CE | BW | WW | YW | HK | CEM | SC | DOC | CW | REA | MR | SB | SI | SI | |
| 3 | 1.5 | 69 | 127 | 32 | -1 | 0.36 | 28 | 52 | 0.90 | 0.53 | 63 | 67 | 145 | 251 |

1/14/2023



BL KODIAK MOMENT 2121K
SIRE BL Hulk 025H DAM BL Gunpowder and Lead 974G

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|------|-----|-----|----|------|------|-------|----|
| CE | BW | WW | YW | HK | CEM | SC | DOC | YG | CW | REA | MR | SB | SI |
| 12 | 0.4 | 75 | 133 | 26 | 4 | 0.93 | 14 | 0.1 | 26 | 0.05 | 0.52 | 71.33 | |

8/27/2022 P&P Score 38



RIMROCK ARCHITECT 2305
SIRE s Architect 9501 DAM Rimrock Rachel 2101

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|------|-----|----|------|------|----|----|-----|-----|
| CE | BW | WW | YW | HK | CEM | SC | DOC | CW | REA | MR | SB | SI | SI | |
| 11 | 1.3 | 57 | 105 | 31 | 9 | 1.52 | 30 | 45 | 0.44 | 0.71 | 79 | 65 | 141 | 262 |

12/31/2022



BL KEEPING KIND 2106K
SIRE LFL Gamer 9116G DAM CELL 7114E

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|------|----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-------|----|------|------|-------|----|
| CE | BW | WW | YW | HK | CEM | SC | DOC | YG | CW | REA | MR | SB | SI |
| 12 | -0.4 | 78 | 122 | 21 | 8 | 1.2 | 34 | -0.02 | 40 | 0.55 | 0.59 | 67.97 | |

8/19/2022 P&P Score 44

OTHER FEATURED SIRES:
BL Hulk, LFL Genetic Values, VAR, Conclusion, HF Roper, Cole Genesis, HF Alcatraz, SAV Scalehouse, HBRL Gateway, Ellingson Rangland, Mohen Prince, CELL History Maker

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MARKET NEWS

MARKET SITUATION REPORT
 WLJ compiles its market reports, ODJ stories and statistics from USDA and independent marketing organizations.

| MARKET AT A GLANCE | This Week: 2/8/2024 | Week Ago | Year Ago |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
| Choice Fed Steers | 176.00 ▲ | 175.77 | 158.26 |
| CME Feeder Index | 242.11 ▲ | 237.95 | 182.29 |
| Boxed Beef Average | 295.01 ▲ | 294.94 | 269.29 |
| Average Dressed Steers | N/A ▲ | 276.36 | 245.00 |
| Live Slaughter Weight* | 1,397 ▲ | 1,383 | 1,405 |
| Weekly Slaughter** | 637,000 ▲ | 618,000 | 641,000 |
| Weekly Beef Production*** | 536.8 ▲ | 522.5 | 529.1 |
| Hide/Offal Value | 11.69 ▼ | 11.72 | 13.3 |
| Corn Price | 4.33 ▼ | 4.48 | 6.71 |

*Average weight for previous week. **Total slaughter for previous week. ***Estimated year-to-date figure in million pounds for previous week.

| BEEF REPORT: Weekly Composite Boxed Beef | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|
| WEEK ENDING | COMPREHENSIVE Loads/Price | | PRIME Loads/Price | | BRANDED Loads/Price | | CHOICE Loads/Price | | SELECT Loads/Price | | UNGRADED Loads/Price | |
| February 2 | 7,136 | 296.35 | 231 | 327.52 | 1,446 | 301.33 | 2,055 | 293.75 | 671 | 285.71 | 2,732 | 265.97 |
| January 26 | 7,146 | 295.10 | 233 | 330.52 | 1,391 | 300.28 | 2,062 | 293.52 | 687 | 280.58 | 2,773 | 265.42 |
| January 19 | 6,567 | 288.25 | 212 | 324.39 | 1,216 | 295.10 | 1,926 | 287.31 | 615 | 272.24 | 2,597 | 259.79 |
| January 12 | 6,767 | 280.51 | 220 | 317.53 | 1,181 | 286.86 | 2,078 | 280.02 | 737 | 262.58 | 2,551 | 247.29 |

| Cutouts | | | | | | FED BOXED BEEF | | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|-----------------|--|----------|----------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| DATE | CHOICE | SELECT | COW BEEF CUTOUT | | 50% LEAN | 90% LEAN | | | | | |
| Feb 8 | 295.01 | 284.12 | 235.57 | | 96.63 | 305.36 | | | | | |
| Feb 7 | 294.98 | 285.42 | 232.87 | | 99.59 | 300.40 | | | | | |
| Feb 6 | 294.07 | 284.60 | 232.28 | | 102.06 | 299.82 | | | | | |
| Feb 5 | 293.48 | 283.77 | 227.34 | | N/A | 294.85 | | | | | |
| Feb 2 | 293.08 | 283.77 | 229.76 | | 100.89 | 297.00 | | | | | |

| CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 2/2 | 2/5 | 2/6 | 2/7 | 2/8 | High* | Low* |
| Feb. | 18055 | 17973 | 18300 | 18223 | 18378 | 19633 | 15310 |
| Apr. | 18370 | 18235 | 18608 | 18480 | 18658 | 19975 | 16853 |
| Jun. | 18178 | 18048 | 18313 | 18220 | 18373 | 18373 | 16668 |
| Aug. | 18168 | 18045 | 18240 | 18163 | 18260 | 18260 | 17005 |

| CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 2/2 | 2/5 | 2/6 | 2/7 | 2/8 | High* | Low* |
| Mar. | 24480 | 24275 | 24668 | 24555 | 24685 | 26833 | 21280 |
| Apr. | 25020 | 24825 | 25170 | 25120 | 25193 | 25723 | 21608 |
| May | 25528 | 25333 | 25633 | 25590 | 25630 | 25633 | 21920 |
| Aug. | 27008 | 26823 | 27095 | 27040 | 27060 | 27095 | 22268 |

*High and low figures are for the life of the contract.

| FED CATTLE TRADE | Head Count | Avg. Weight | Avg. Price |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| WEEKLY WEIGHTED AVERAGES | | | |
| Live FOB Steer | 34 | 1,350 | 176.00 |
| Live FOB Heifer | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Dressed Del Steer | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Dressed Del Heifer | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-------|--------|
| Live FOB Steer | 684 | 1,339 | 175.77 |
| Live FOB Heifer | 338 | 1,206 | 176.00 |
| Dressed Del Steer | 644 | 943 | 276.36 |
| Dressed Del Heifer | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|--------|
| Live FOB Steer | 2,708 | 1,394 | 158.26 |
| Live FOB Heifer | 2,708 | 1,354 | 157.74 |
| Dressed Del Steer | 36 | 905 | 245.00 |
| Dressed Del Heifer | 55 | 794 | 248.00 |

| NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: FEBRUARY 4, 2024 | | |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| | Domestic | Imported |
| Forward Contract | 19,737 | 3,080 |
| Formula | 275,498 | 2,376 |
| Negotiated Cash | 73,738 | 158 |
| Negotiated Grid | 54,601 | 1,119 |
| Packer Owned | 11,254 | N/A |
| Total | 434,828 | 6,733 |

| SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS | | FORWARD BEEF SALES | |
|-----------------------------|---------|------------------------|-------|
| Delivery Month | | Neg. Sales 0-21 days | 1,918 |
| Feb. '24 | 98,109 | Neg. Sales 21+ days | 1,228 |
| Mar. '24 | 117,136 | Formula sales | 3,715 |
| Apr. '24 | 157,778 | Forward contract sales | 274 |
| May '24 | 55,354 | Domestic sales | 6,063 |
| Jun. '24 | 64,790 | NAFTA Exports | 95 |

| CANADIAN LIVESTOCK PRICES & FEDERAL INSPECTED SLAUGHTER FIGURES | | | |
|---|--------|---------------|--|
| Alberta Direct Sales (4% shrink) | Price | Weekly Change | |
| Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs | N/A | N/A | |
| Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs | N/A | N/A | |
| Ontario Auctions | | | |
| Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs | 169.24 | +3.21 | |
| Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs | N/A | N/A | |
| Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs | 98.38 | +1.64 | |

*Price comparison from one week ago.

| Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Friday, January 26, 2024 | | | | |
|---|---------|--------------|---------|--|
| Steers: | Alberta | Saskatchewan | Ontario | |
| 501-600 lbs | 277.84 | N/A | 246.18 | |
| 601-700 lbs | 256.18 | N/A | 234.34 | |
| 701-800 lbs | 241.37 | N/A | 222.86 | |
| 801-900 lbs | 218.42 | N/A | 227.30 | |
| Heifers: | | | | |
| 401-500 lbs | 250.75 | N/A | 209.53 | |
| 501-600 lbs | 240.07 | N/A | 206.94 | |
| 601-700 lbs | 215.33 | N/A | 205.09 | |
| 701-800 lbs | 203.11 | N/A | 208.79 | |

| USDA MEXICO TO U.S. WEEKLY LIVESTOCK IMPORTS | | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Feeder cattle imports weekly and yearly volume. | | | | |
| Species | Current Week | Previous Week | Current Year-to-date | Previous Year-to-date |
| | 1/29/2024 | 1/22/2024 | | |
| Feeders | 25,600 | 28,577 | 107,755 | 106,283 |

| USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|---------|
| February 7, 2024 | | | |
| Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary | | | |
| Receipts EST: 6,600 | Week Ago Est: 6,400 | Year Ago Act: 15,450 | |
| Douglas, AZ | | Santa Teresa, NM | |
| Compared to Tuesday, steer calves and yearlings sold 2.00 higher. Heifers not tested. Trade very active, demand very good. Supply consisted of steers weighing 300-600 lbs. | | Compared Tuesday, steer calves and yearlings sold steady to 2.00 higher. Heifers steady. Trade very active, demand very good. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 300-600 lbs. | |
| Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2 | | Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2 | |
| 300-400 lbs | N/A | 300-400 lbs | 250-260 |
| 400-500 lbs | N/A | 400-500 lbs | 240-250 |
| 500-600 lbs | N/A | 500-600 lbs | 230-240 |
| Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2 | | Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2 | |
| 300-400 lbs | 297-307 | 300-400 lbs | 297-307 |
| 400-500 lbs | 277-287 | 400-500 lbs | 277-287 |
| 500-600 lbs | 257-267 | 500-600 lbs | 257-267 |

(slide 10 cents on steers and heifers basis 300 lbs. All sales fob port of entry.)

| Selected Auction | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Week Ending February 8, 2024 | | | | | | | | | | |
| DATE | MARKET | 200-300 lb. | 300-400 lb. | 400-500 lb. | 500-600 lb. | 600-700 lb. | 700-800 lb. | 800 lb. -up | SLAUGHTER COWS | PAIRS |
| February 2 | Blackfoot, ID | N/A | 240-325 | 260-328 | 250-308 | 225-298 | 215-264 | 190-236 | 88-108 | |
| February 1 | Burley, ID | 690 | 338-342.50 | 324.50-333 | 297-310.50 | 354-272 | 233-247 | 180-189 | 85-110 | |
| No report available | | | | | | | | | | |
| February 3 | Emmett, ID | | | | | | | | | |
| February 3 | Eugene, OR | 714 | 240-252* | 232-248* | 173-265* | 175-233* | 155-180* | | 85-105 | 540-1,300 |
| February 5 | Madras, OR | 942 | 205-242* | 325-357 | 310-365 | 264-314.50 | 245-268 | 203-229 | 95-124 | 1,800-2,250 |
| January 31 | Vale, OR | 720 | 280-320 | 270-324 | 235-307 | 239-272 | 208-240 | | 105-118 | |
| February 5 | Davenport, WA | 684 | 212.50-250 | 190-212.50 | 162.50-294 | 172.50-256 | 182.50-230 | 107.50-187.50 | 52-126 | |
| February 1 | Toppenish, WA | 1,310 | 160-172.50 | 150-270 | 172.50-272.50 | 141-267 | 170-225.50 | 100-165 | 96.50-125 | 1,250-1,450 |
| No report available | | | | | | | | | | |
| February 1 | Orland, CA | 1,423 | | 300-340 | 270-310 | 240-279 | 220-246 | | 100-119 | 1,800-2,650 |
| February 2 | Escalon, CA | N/A | | 280-329 | 250-293 | 220-270 | 200-225 | | 100-128 | 1,700-2,500 |
| January 29 | Famoso, CA | 223 | | | | | | | 75-93 | |
| January 31 | Galt, CA | | | | | | | | 90-125 | |
| No report available | | | | | | | | | | |
| January 30 | Salina, UT | 1,388 | 315-340 | 295-355 | 290-370 | 265-311 | 240-275 | 225-250 | 172.50-226.50 | 98.40-120.60 |
| | | | | 290-345 | 260-325 | 230-300 | 220-262.50 | 205-230 | 141.25-215 | 118.50-141.15 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|---------|---------------|---------------|
| February 1 | Orland, CA | 1,423 | | 300-340 | 270-310 | 240-279 | 220-246 | | 100-119 | 1,800-2,650 |
| February 2 | Escalon, CA | N/A | | 280-329 | 250-293 | 220-270 | 200-225 | | 100-128 | 1,700-2,500 |
| January 29 | Famoso, CA | 223 | | | | | | | 75-93 | |
| January 31 | Galt, CA | | | | | | | | 90-125 | |
| No report available | | | | | | | | | | |
| January 30 | Salina, UT | 1,388 | 315-340 | 295-355 | 290-370 | 265-311 | 240-275 | 225-250 | 172.50-226.50 | 98.40-120.60 |
| | | | | 290-345 | 260-325 | 230-300 | 220-262.50 | 205-230 | 141.25-215 | 118.50-141.15 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|--------|-----|---------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| February 5 | Iowa | 20,444 | 255 | 285-370 | 269-370 | 253.50-321 | 234-302.75 | 208-275 | 190-244.25 | 88.50-111 |
| February 6 | Miles City, MT | 1,862 | | 240-282 | 245-291 | 218-293.50 | 202-272.50 | 190-243.50 | 182-225 | 94-137 |
| February 7 | Bassett, NE | 4,315 | | | 350-376 | 299-356 | 268.50-306 | 244.50-259 | | 92-107.50 |
| February 3 | Ericson, NE | 4,310 | | | 307-320.50 | 285-315 | 272 | | | 88.50-124 |
| No report available | | | | | | | | | | |
| January 31 | Kearney, NE | 5,400 | | | 355-401 | 300-348 | 276.50-304.50 | 251-272.50 | 233.50-243 | |
| February 2 | Lexington, NE | 2,824 | | | 312-340 | 281-312 | 246.50-296 | 233.50-250 | 207.50-229 | |
| February 1 | Ogallala, NE | 6,000 | | | 355-370 | 330-372.50 | 293-331 | 262-318.50 | 250-279 | 221-249 |
| February 1 | Valentine, NE | 4,230 | | | 322.50-332.50 | 291-325 | 269-301 | 238-270 | 214-226 | 203.50-205 |
| No report available | | | | | | | | | | |
| January 31 | Torrington, WY | 3,984 | | | 337-345 | 303-332.50 | 267.50-305 | 241-263 | 215-244.50 | |
| February 2 | Lexington, NE | 2,824 | | | 271-300 | 263.50-281.50 | 234-269 | 225.50-234 | 187-217 | |
| February 1 | Ogallala, NE | 6,000 | | | 315 | 290-314.50 | 263-298 | 233.50-267 | 220.75-246 | |
| February 1 | Valentine, NE | 4,230 | | | 285 | 260-292 | 236-257 | 221-237 | 217 | |
| February 2 | Herreid, SD | 4,035 | | | 350-387 | 308-346 | 270-314 | 240-277 | 220-246.50 | |
| February 7 | Torrington, WY | 3,984 | | | 322.50-333 | 300-328 | 271-316 | 223.50-244 | | |
| February 2 | Herreid, SD | 4,035 | | | 375-395 | 345-364 | 323-345 | 278-312.50 | 250.50-265.25 | |
| February 1 | Valentine, NE | 4,230 | | | 319-347.50 | 303.50-321 | 283.50-308 | 249.50-282.50 | 231-265.25 | 191 |
| February 2 | Herreid, SD | 4,035 | | | 371-380 | 325-265 | 304-350 | 265-304 | 244.75-275.75 | 221.50-239 |
| February 7 | Torrington, WY | 3,984 | | | 315-332.50 | 280-314 | 265-286 | 250-269 | 223-240 | 220.50-238.50 |
| February 1 | Valentine, NE | 4,230 | | | 385-402 | 345-372 | 315-346 | 270-320 | 235-272 | 219 |
| February 7 | Torrington, WY | 3,984 | | | 321 | 310-338 | 275-325 | 247- | | |

Feeders encouraged to trade higher

MARKETS (from page 1)

head a week earlier. Projected total slaughter for a week earlier is expected at 637,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending Jan. 27 was 614,786 head. The average steer dressed weight was 912 lbs., 6 lbs. below the prior week.

"Packers' margins are red and slaughter has been cut Friday to stem losses. Packers are in no hurry to increase their cattle costs," Fish said. "Packers know their battle won't be won in a week but in a series of many weeks managing throughput and letting cattle marketing windows continue to get pushed back."

Boxed beef prices traded mostly sideways. The Choice cutout gained 7 cents to close at \$295.01, and the Select cutout gained 87 cents to close at \$284.12.

Feeder cattle

"It's a near perfect world Thursday for the feeder cattle complex as the futures see ample support from the live cattle contracts trading higher, feeder cattle demand in the countryside remains incredibly strong, fed cash cattle prices are expected to trade somewhat higher again this week, and corn prices continue to drift lower," ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, wrote in her Thursday midday comments.

Feeder cattle futures were higher over the week, with the March contract up about \$2 to \$246.85 and the April contract up \$1.40 to \$251.92.

Corn futures continue to trade lower, with the March contract down 14 cents to \$4.33 and the May contract down 13 cents to \$4.45.

The CME Feeder Cattle gained \$4.16 to close at \$242.11.

"Calf prices are returning to last year's highs. Competition for the smaller pool of calves will need to occur and some pastures may go unstocked this year," the Cattle Report wrote on Thursday.

Iowa: Russell Livestock in Russell sold 4,193 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, steers sold mostly \$2-8 higher. Heifers less than 500 lbs. sold sharply higher, while heifers 500 lbs. and greater sold \$2-16 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 731 lbs. sold between \$246-275, averaging \$260.02.

Kansas: Winter Livestock in Dodge City sold 1,834 head on Wednesday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers 800-1,000 lbs. sold \$4-5 higher. Steers 600-800 lbs. sold \$2-3 lower. Steer calves 400-800 lbs. sold \$5-8 higher. Feeder heifers 400-875 lbs. sold \$2-3 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 787 lbs. sold between \$225-242, averaging \$239.36.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold

15,000 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers sold steady to \$4 lower, with feeder heifers steady to \$5 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 775 lbs. sold from \$230-243, averaging \$237.99.

Montana: Miles City Livestock Commission in Miles City sold 1,546 head on Tuesday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers under 550 lbs. sold mostly \$5-10 higher, 550-749 lbs. sold mostly steady to \$10 higher and over 750 lbs. were not well compared. Heifer calves under 550 lbs. sold steady to firm, 550-599 lbs. sold mostly \$10 higher and over 600 lbs. were too lightly tested to develop an accurate market trend. A group of steers averaging 693 lbs. sold between \$268.50-282.50, averaging \$269.88.

Nebraska: Bassett Livestock in Bassett sold 4,315 head on Wednesday. Compared to the previous auction, steers 550-700 lbs. traded steady to \$7 higher. Heifers 500 lbs. traded \$4 lower, and 550-650 lbs. traded steady to as much as \$13 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 718 lbs. sold between \$265-272.50, averaging \$268.37.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 12,000 head on Monday. Compared to the last sale, feeder steers sold steady to \$4 higher and feeder heifers sold \$3-8 higher. Steer calves sold \$3-6 higher, and heifer calves sold \$1-5 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 772 lbs. sold from \$232-245.50, averaging \$240.63.

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Regional Cattle in Worthing sold 5,720 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, light steers 550-700 lbs. sold mostly \$4-7 higher. Heavier steers 750-900 lbs. traded mostly \$3-5 higher. Light heifers 500-650 lbs. sold mostly \$5-8 higher. Heavier heifers 700-750 lbs. traded \$5-7 lower. Yearling heifers 950 lbs. sold \$4 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 719 lbs. sold between \$252-273, averaging \$263.45.

Texas: Lonestar Stockyards in Wildorado sold 1,288 head on Tuesday. Compared to the previous auction, feeder steers and heifers traded mostly \$10 higher, with the exception of 600-650 lbs. steers which traded \$20 higher. Steer and heifer calves traded mostly \$5-10 higher, with instances of up to \$20-30 higher on calves under 450 lbs. Benchmark steers averaging 719 lbs. sold between \$241-248.50, averaging \$246.74.

Wyoming: Winter Livestock in Riverton sold 3,553 head on Tuesday. There were not enough comparable sales two weeks ago for an accurate trend on feeder calves. Benchmark steers averaging 728 lbs. sold between \$249-265, averaging \$259.52. — Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor

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m3cattlemarketing@gmail.com
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STAY UP TO DATE

Using cattle mineral as your ounce of prevention

Mineral can be more than just a way of efficiently delivering nutrition to your herd—it can also be a cost-effective health management tool. Your cattle mineral package can deliver critical trace minerals, vitamins and even additives that work to proactively address costly health issues.

Managing health through mineral is important to any herd's overall return on investment. Cattle mineral ensures performance is maintained.

In extreme cases where nutrition is imbalanced, death can be a side effect, meaning lost potential income. For instance, when phosphorus levels are not adequate, weaning rates suffer. Studies have shown a 25% reduction in calves weaned when no phosphorus is present.

Several cents per head per week invested in mineral can help combat challenges that can cost thousands. It's a smart investment.

Use mineral as a value-added tool for:

Foot rot

Foot rot is an infectious disease leading to swelling between the hoof claws. It is common during wet, muddy periods and can lead to lameness in cattle. When foot rot is prevented it can result in 20% more weight gained during a grazing season.

The dairy industry has seen how dialing in nutrition can help improve hoof health and limit issues like foot rot. Feeding trace minerals like zinc, iodine, copper and manganese can positively impact hoof health.

Organic iodine, scientifically called ethylenediamine dihydroiodide, is a more bioavailable—or readily digestible—form of the mineral. Feeding iodine at or above the National Research Council recommended level helps limit foot rot.

Zinc is also beneficial because it aids with skin integrity, which can make it harder for pathogens to breach the skin.

Grass tetany

Cool-season grasses risk being low in available magnesium during spring and fall, causing grass tetany. Symptoms of grass tetany include loss of muscle control, irritability and ultimately coma and death in cattle.

When cool-season grasses are in their key growth periods, potassium can also be higher than normal, causing magnesium to not absorb easily. Compounding the problem of grass tetany is the need for cows to have double the magnesium requirements when lactating, which tends to coincide with calving for both spring and fall calving herds.

A mineral higher in magnesium is a simple way to help prevent grass tetany and meet the needs of lactating females grazing cool-season forages. Provide high magnesium mineral two to three weeks before cattle are first exposed to lush grass to achieve consistent intake before the time of highest risk. Continue feeding for 60 days after the first sign of grass growth.

White muscle disease

When selenium or vitamin E is low in a cows' diet

during gestation, young calves can acquire nutritional myodegeneration (NMD), commonly referred to as white muscle disease. Calves born with low selenium or vitamin E levels suffering from white muscle disease can have two types: a congenital version and a delayed response version.

The congenital version of NMD impacts the heart and is fatal in most cases, with calves dying in a few days. The delayed response version results in weak calves that can't stand, but can be remedied with injectable selenium and vitamin E when calves exhibit symptoms.

Fortunately, white muscle disease is avoidable with balanced nutrition. If soil selenium levels are low, feeding higher selenium levels is recommended, especially during gestation.

Testing forages for selenium levels and other nutrients, particularly if you are in regions like the Pacific Northwest and Great Lakes, is a good idea to get a baseline of your mineral needs.

Urinary calculi

Male cattle can develop kidney stones or urinary calculi when there is an inverted calcium:phosphorus ratio in the diet. Urinary calculi can happen when feeding higher levels of distillers' grains or grazing forages that are high in phosphates.

A balanced cattle mineral program helps reduce the risk of urinary calculi by providing the correct calcium:phosphorus ratio.

Get extra benefits from additives

Minerals can also be a convenient way to deliver additives that support the health of your herd.

Fly control

Controlling flies means that those flies are less able to bite and stress your cattle. Reducing flies benefits the

immune system because cattle don't devote nutrients to fighting and avoiding flies.

An insect growth regulator in mineral can help to limit horn flies.

Bloat

The risk of bloat is common when grazing lush grasses during the early part of the grazing season. Ionophores added to mineral can

help relieve bloat.

Mineral intake is also key to increasing ionophore intake and limiting bloat when forage is lush. If the mineral isn't palatable, cattle won't consume the needed ionophore.

There's no "one-size-fits-all" approach for addressing all the issues that arise with herd management. — **Purina Animal Nutrition**

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| \$PROFIT | \$FEEDER | CED | BW | WW | YW | STAY | MARB | REA |
|----------|----------|-----|----|----|-----|------|------|------|
| \$11,453 | \$136 | 12 | -3 | 74 | 119 | 14 | 0.65 | 0.04 |



REG. #4776371

ILCC PRECISION 3985

HXC DAWSON X BROWN JYJ REDEMPTION Y1334

| \$PROFIT | \$FEEDER | CED | BW | WW | YW | STAY | MARB | REA |
|----------|----------|-----|------|----|-----|------|------|------|
| \$14,602 | \$124 | 17 | -4.9 | 70 | 117 | 17 | 0.57 | 0.14 |



REG. #4872084

ILCC OUTLAW 3101

COMPLETE X LSF RSL REBELLA 942-504

| \$PROFIT | \$FEEDER | CED | BW | WW | YW | STAY | MARB | REA |
|----------|----------|-----|------|----|-----|------|------|------|
| \$17,653 | \$174 | 15 | -3.9 | 65 | 110 | 14 | 0.72 | 0.29 |



REG. #4862824

ILCC CROSS BACK 3131

ILCC QUARTERBACK 902 X LORENZEN 6022 5/8 RA 1/4 GV 1/8 SM

| \$PROFIT | \$FEEDER | CED | BW | WW | YW | STAY | MARB | REA |
|----------|----------|-----|------|----|-----|------|------|------|
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