

INSIDE WLJ



CHAROLAIS FEATURE — Take a peek inside for the Charolais featured section this week! Page 22

CROSSING STATE LINES — NASDA members ask USDA to allow state-inspected meat and poultry products to be sold across state lines. Page 35

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"Tensions over the re-listed gray wolf were ratcheted up several more notches last week when Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer issued a blunt statement to Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar blasting the government for dallying over resolving the wolf issue. Schweitzer clearly indicated that Montana will begin exercising its authority to protect ranching and hunting interests that are threatened by the ever-expanding population of gray wolves," read the Feb. 28, 2011, WLJ cover story.

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Appeals court weighs rancher, packer label dispute

— Judges examine FMIA

The 8th Circuit Court of Appeals heard arguments in a dispute between South Dakota ranchers and four of the nation's largest meatpackers over the long-standing use of the "Product of USA" label on beef processed domestically but sourced from foreign-born cattle.

The case centers on whether federal law bars ranchers from pursuing state-law claims alleging that the label misled consumers and depressed prices paid to domestic cattle producers.

Background

Ranchers Tim Taylor and Bryce Baker filed a class-action lawsuit in 2023 alleging the labeling practices of the Big Four meatpacking companies—JBS Foods USA, Tyson Foods Inc., Cargill Meat Solutions Corporation and National Beef Packing Company LLC—have cost ranchers across the country billions of dollars in lost revenue annually since 2015. The ranchers claim that by labeling beef from imported cattle as "Product of USA," companies have paid domestic producers about

40% less per year on average since 2015.

In a Jan. 15, 2025, opinion and order, the U.S. District Court for the District of South Dakota granted in part and denied in part the meatpackers' motion to dismiss. The ranchers allege the companies imported live cattle from foreign countries, slaughtered and processed them in the U.S., and then labeled the resulting beef "Product of USA," even though the animals were not born or raised domestically.

The district court held that the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) does not categorically bar the ranchers' state-law restraint of trade and unjust enrichment claims. The court reasoned that although USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) had issued guidance allowing the label under its prior interpretation, that approval did not conclusively establish that the labels were not false or misleading. The court dismissed the ranchers' civil Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) claim but allowed their restraint of trade and unjust enrichment claims to move forward.

Under the FMIA, meat products may not be sold under labeling that

is "false or misleading," and the secretary of Agriculture must approve labels through FSIS. The statute also contains an express preemption clause barring states from

imposing labeling requirements "in addition to, or different than" federal standards.

See LAWSUIT on page 33



Adobe Stock/Canva

The 8th Circuit Court of Appeals will determine whether ranchers can pursue state-law claims alleging the "Product of USA" label misled consumers and decreased cattle prices.

US signs trade deal with Taiwan

— Increases beef market access

An agreement between the U.S. and Taiwan grants U.S. beef exports duty-free access to the Taiwan market, eliminating tariffs and reducing non-tariff barriers.

On Feb. 12, the U.S. and Taiwan signed the Agreement on Reciprocal Trade between the United States of America and Taiwan.

"The Agreement on Reciprocal Trade with Taiwan will eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers facing U.S. exports to Taiwan, furthering opportunities for American farmers, ranchers, fishermen, workers, small businesses, and manufacturers," said Ambassador Jamieson Greer.

He added that the agreement builds on the U.S.' economic and trade relationship with Taiwan and will enhance the resiliency of the U.S.' supply chains.

Agreement details

The agreement will eliminate or reduce 99% of tariff barriers, according to an Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) fact sheet. Taiwan will provide preferential market access for U.S. industrial exports and agricultural exports, including horticultural products, wheat, beef and beef products, dairy products, pork and pork

See TAIWAN DEAL on page 13

Five indicted in Agridime cattle fraud scheme

— One wanted by the FBI

Five individuals tied to Fort Worth-based Agridime LLC have been federally indicted for their alleged roles in a \$220 million nationwide fraud scheme involving cat-

tle purchase contracts, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas.

U.S. Attorney Ryan Raybould announced that a federal grand jury in Fort Worth, TX, returned the indictment on Feb. 11, charging the de-

fendants with multiple counts of wire fraud, conspiracy to commit wire fraud and money laundering.

"Thousands of unwitting investors, ranchers, and others in the cattle industry nationwide were drawn in and victimized by the defen-

dants' multi-million dollar scheme alleged in this indictment," Raybould said. "My office, in concert with our law enforcement partners, will hold these defendants accountable and pursue justice on behalf of the victims."

Those indicted include:

- Jed Wood, of Fort Worth, TX, charged with three counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of money laundering involving more than \$63,000 allegedly wired to a lender for a

"home payoff." Wood served as Agridime's operations director.

- Joshua Link, of Strafford, MO, charged with 10 counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire

See AGRIDIME on page 37

PERIODICAL: Time Sensitive Priority Handling

Cattle futures find gains over the week

Cattle futures posted stronger gains during the Presidents Day holiday-shortened week, supported by tight supplies and lighter slaughter totals.

Live cattle futures closed several dollars higher. The February contract gained \$5 to close at \$247.50, and the April contract gained about \$3 to close at \$243.42.

"It would appear as though the nearby contracts are trading higher, although no trade has developed yet in the fed cash cattle market, as traders know that supplies of market-ready cattle are going to be thin through the first quarter and potentially partway through the second quarter, which may be part of the reason why the February through June contracts are higher," wrote ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, in her Thursday midday comments.

USDA did not publish a Thursday report for cash trade by WLJ press time due to packer submission issues. Cash trade through Wednesday totaled less than 1,000 head. No market trends were noted.

Cash trade for the week ending Feb. 15 totaled 59,651 head. Live steers averaged \$245.26, and dressed steers averaged \$381.16.

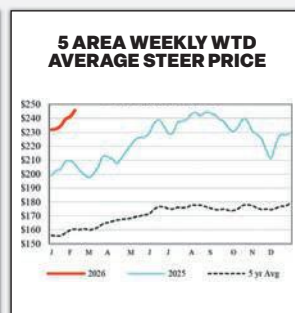
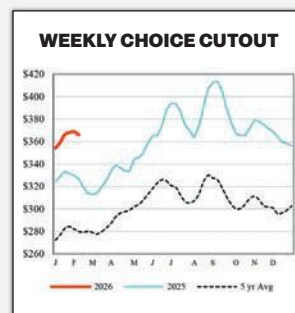
The national weekly direct beef type price distribution for the week of Feb. 9-16 was the following on a live basis:

- Negotiated purchases: \$245.30.
- Formula net purchases: \$244.49.
- Forward contract net purchases: \$241.22.
- Negotiated grid net purchases: \$250.62.

On a dressed basis:

- Negotiated purchases: \$381.09.
- Formula net purchases: \$384.53.

See MARKETS on page 39



LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
N/A	N/A	\$376.02
WEEK ENDING: 2-19-26		

COMMENTS

Framework fresh air

Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins said in a Farmer and Rancher Freedom Framework press release published Feb. 11, "Together, we will ensure that no law, no regulation, and no agenda will ever stand in the way of America's agricultural future."



IPSEN

According to the press release, the Farmer and Rancher Freedom Framework initiative proposes a series of four pillars:

- **Protect producers:** Defend farmers and ranchers from internal federal bureaucracy and politically motivated enforcement actions.
- **Preserve land and liberty:** Safeguard agricultural land from unnecessary federal projects and eminent domain.
- **Purge burdensome regulations:** Remove punitive rules that stifle productivity and reform environmental laws to balance conservation with common sense.
- **Partner for agriculture's future:** Unite federal, state and local leaders, along with industry partners, to fight lawfare and elevate public awareness.

The report highlights itself in a bold way, saying the "vision from Washington, D.C. will deliver greater transparency and fair treatment to farmers and ranchers." The report expands on the four pillars in efforts to streamline processes and available resources to farmers and ranchers. The report addresses permitting and compliance processes. Agricultural groups have reported that navigating water, grazing and environmental permits can involve multiple agencies and extended timelines. The framework recommends consolidating oversight where possible and establishing clearer timelines for agency decisions. Advocates argue that predictable permitting processes can reduce uncertainty for producers making long-term investments.

The proposal calls for a review of existing federal and state regulations affecting agriculture, with the stated goal of identifying duplicative or burdensome requirements that may increase operational costs without measurable environmental benefit.

Water access is another focal point. In western states in particular, water allocation and regulatory oversight have intensified amid recent drought conditions and competing demands. The framework emphasizes protecting established water rights and ensuring that agricultural stakeholders are represented in policy decisions affecting irrigation and livestock operations.

The initiative also includes provisions related to property rights and land management. The framework seeks to prevent regulatory expansion that could limit agricultural land use without direct legislative approval. In addition, it encourages voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs rather than expanded mandatory compliance measures.

Inputs including major increases in fuel, fertilizer, feed and labor expenses over the past decade with markets, especially on the commodity side, that haven't kept up with rising costs and inflation have hollowed out a lot of profit margins due to major price volatility and market swings. Reducing compliance costs could help stabilize operations and maintain domestic production.

The initiative also references national food supply concerns. The irony here is that commodity and grocery store prices are in headlines nearly every day, but still there continues to be trade wars and tariff retaliations that have more impact than simple supply and demand issues. Free markets have a way of fixing themselves without government interference. This initiative seems to drive the idea of less government interference and streamlined processes. The idea in itself is promising but only if it will do just that—reduce government influence and allow farmers and ranchers to competitively do business.

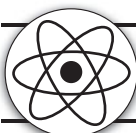
Almost immediately, environmental groups expressed concern that regulatory reductions could weaken safeguards related to water quality, endangered species and public lands. They emphasize the role federal and state agencies play in monitoring environmental impacts and maintaining consistent standards across regions.

In response, those behind the initiative said that the proposal does not eliminate environmental standards but instead emphasizes local collaboration and voluntary conservation. Many farmers and ranchers already participate in federal conservation programs, such as cost-share initiatives for soil health, water efficiency and habitat improvement. The argument here is that incentive-based approaches can achieve measurable outcomes while maintaining operational flexibility.

Rural economic impact is another area highlighted in the framework. Agriculture remains a primary economic driver in many counties across the West and Midwest. In these areas, farm and ranch income supports equipment suppliers, feed stores, transportation providers and local service industries. Supporters contend that regulatory predictability may encourage continued investment in agricultural communities.

As the initiative moves forward, legislative review and stakeholder input are expected to shape its final structure.

Many people still hold to the age-old adage that it's hard to trust the government to fix a problem the government created, and that skepticism seems to be the overarching theme throughout the proposal. For now, though, it's shaped as continued support from an administration that appears to be making an effort to work with ag groups, which is a huge breath of fresh air. — **LOGAN IPSEN**



RESOURCE SCIENCE

The *Western Livestock Journal* frequently has articles about wolves and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the western states. *WLJ* editors Charles Wallace and Anna Miller Fortozo do a great job writing many of these articles making the complicated biology, law and politics of wolf and ESA management understandable. For example, Miller Fortozo's article in the Dec. 1, 2025, *WLJ* describes proposed changes to ESA policy on critical habitat designations, interagency cooperation and threatened species protection. Articles in the Feb. 2, 2026, *WLJ* "Legal Ledger" describe that Colorado will not release any more wolves in the 2026 winter season, and there is a bill in Congress to remove the Mexican gray wolf from the ESA endangered species list.

Because wolves kill livestock and pets and the ESA is used to control land use including private property, these issues are important to agriculture and other natural resource industries (timber, mining, oil and gas). Despite *WLJ*'s fine efforts to make these issues understandable, the ESA in general, and wolves in particular, can be confusing. Most people aren't going to understand what critical habitat and threatened species are, why Colorado isn't releasing more wolves and why the Mexican wolf could be removed from the ESA. This is because legal cases are constantly changing these issues. But the basic science and management of wildlife should be understandable, especially for those who work on the land.

I've written about wolves and the ESA before (see the References at wlj.net) and here is a summary of the ESA and wolves as I understand it at this time. Recognize that these designations change with court cases and the subspecies and distinct population segment (DPS) designations are not scientifically definite.

The ESA allows listing of species, subspecies and populations called a DPS as endangered species. Science indicates that species are distinct types of animals like cattle, horses, dogs, elk, moose, etc. Subspecies and DPS are wildlife populations that differ from other populations of the same species in geographic range and traits like size, color and genetics. An example is the Mexican gray wolf subspecies in the southwest U.S. that is smaller than other gray wolves. It is important to recognize that Mexican wolves and other gray wolves are the same species, and that subspecies and DPS are simply populations in a specific area. I emphasize that subspecies and DPS are not scientifically definite because animals move over geography and time.

Gray wolves are a species that originally occurred across North America, and now occur in the western states, the states around the Great Lakes, Alaska and Canada. There are several subspecies and DPS of wolves that have been listed, or considered for listing,

as ESA endangered species. As noted above, the subspecies and DPS designations described below are not scientifically definite.

The Mexican gray wolf in Arizona and New Mexico is listed as a subspecies under the ESA. The wolves in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, eastern Washington and eastern Oregon are part of a Lower 48 states DPS and are not on the ESA list. They are the northern wolf subspecies and originated mostly from transplants from western Canada. Wolves in other western states are part of the Lower 48 states DPS and are on the ESA list. Wolves in Colorado originated from transplants from Oregon and Canada over the last few years, are the northern wolf subspecies, and are on the ESA list.

Wolves in the Great Lakes states (Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan) are part of the Lower 48 states DPS and are on the ESA list, although these designations have been challenged. The subspecies of Great Lakes wolves is uncertain. Wolves in Alaska are not on the ESA list. Wolves in southeast Alaska have been proposed for ESA listing as an endangered subspecies or DPS.

What does this mean? Wolves occur in populations in different areas that are considered separately under the ESA. This leads to scientific and legal debate over subspecies and population designations and whether they are endangered with extinction. But the wolf species is not endangered; they are common in Canada, Alaska, the Great Lakes states and the western states.

Regarding management, you know that managing livestock herds in different areas requires different management depending on range, winter weather, moisture, proximity to markets and other factors. This is also true for wildlife populations and is reflected in different management in your state's game management units. But is it appropriate to use a federal law, the ESA, for managing wildlife populations, including wolves? I think it's not. After all, it's the Endangered Species Act, not the Endangered Population Act.

The ESA results in the federal government taking wildlife management authority from the states. This seems inappropriate for populations like subspecies and DPS considering "species" in the name of the ESA. The federal government can help states manage wildlife populations with funding and expertise, but in my opinion, should not contrive the ESA to take wildlife population management authority from the states. — **Matt Cronin, *WLJ* columnist**

(*Matt Cronin is a biologist with Northwest Biology and Forestry Company LLC in Bozeman, MT, and a teaching professor at Montana State University. He may be contacted at croninm@aol.com.*)



GUEST OPINION

A TOUGH FARM ECONOMY DEMANDS ACTION FROM CONGRESS

As a farmer, I don't need a spreadsheet to tell me when times are hard. I see it every day and hear it in conversations with farmers across the country. The farm economy remains under real pressure, and for many farm families, the stress isn't letting up.

USDA's latest outlook confirms what farmers are experiencing firsthand, and it retells the story released just a few months ago. USDA has now sharply lowered its 2025 farm income outlook by \$25 billion, reinforcing that this downturn is deeper and more persistent than many anticipated. And in 2026, farm income is projected \$48 billion below the highs we saw just a few years ago. That reality weighs heavily on the people who grow our food, fuel, and fiber.

What makes this period especially challenging is the squeeze farmers are facing from both sides. Commodity prices remain low, while production costs continue to climb. Inputs like fuel, fertilizer, equipment and labor are still expensive, leaving margins razor-thin, or nonexistent, for many farm families.

The beef market may be strong, but it is masking weakness across the rest of agriculture. Outside of cattle, many farmers continue to face declining receipts, weak prices, and little room to recover rising costs. Even when cash flow improves on paper, that can be a reflection of relief from temporary assistance, not improved margins.

When margins disappear, so does flexibility. It becomes harder to plan, harder to invest and harder to weather unexpected setbacks like droughts, floods or market disruptions. For farm families, that uncertainty affects day-to-day decisions and long-term sustainability.

Record-high debt levels and strained credit lines are forcing tough choices on farm families who already operate in one of the most unpredictable businesses there is. Farm bankruptcies have increased for the second year in a row, and we continue to see farms closing at an alarming rate, with more than 160,000 lost since 2017.

Farmers are resilient, but resilience alone can't carry the weight of this prolonged economic strain. A strong farm economy isn't just about individual farms. It's about the stability of rural communities, local businesses, and the entire food supply chain Americans rely on.

This is exactly the moment when federal farm policy matters most—and why we urgently need a new, modernized farm bill. Outdated loan limits and underinvestment in research, conservation and rural development leave farmers with fewer options when prices are low and expenses remain high. A new farm bill is an opportunity to modernize these programs, so they actually work in today's farm economy, not the economy of nearly a decade ago.

At the same time, farmers can't afford to wait. While longer-term reforms are debated, farmers are facing immediate financial strain that threatens their ability to secure operating loans and plant another crop. Short-term economic assistance is needed now to help farmers bridge the gap and keep operations afloat until lasting solutions are in place. Recent investments and programs like the Farmer Bridge Assistance Program are a welcome first step, but they fall short of addressing the full scope of losses farmers are facing.

One thing I've learned over the years is that we can see real change when farmers speak up. Policymakers need to hear directly from the people living this reality. That starts with grassroots engagement. And that's where this Farm Bureau family comes through for our farms and our communities.

If you're feeling the strain of this farm economy, I encourage you to visit our Action Center to send a message to your members of Congress and share your story. When farmers engage, it strengthens our collective voice and helps move policy in the right direction.

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) will keep working for solutions in Washington, but we're strongest when we do this work together. — **Zippy Duvall, AFBF president**



Letters to the editor: Letters for publication must be no longer than 675 words and must include the writer's name, location and phone number. Phone numbers will not be published. Letters may be shortened for space requirements. Obituaries must be no longer than 700 words. Send a letter to the editor or obituary by emailing editorial@wlj.net or mailing to Western Livestock Journal, Attn: Editorial Dept., 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.

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CED +5
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WW +89
YW +152
Milk +23
PAP -2.10
CW +74
MB +1.49
RE +.73
\$AxH +204
\$AxJ +175
SM +71
SW +80
SF +116
SG +93
SB +209
SC +342

LOT 105

RIVERBEND CONGRESS N715

+*21202893 • BD: 12-26-2024

Sire: Crouch Congress • Dam: EPF Rita J106
MGS: EZAR Step Up 9178



CED +4
BW +23.9
WW +80
YW +139
Milk +24
PAP +3.03
CW +63
MB +.99
RE +.91
\$AxH +188
\$AxJ +171
SM +45
SW +70
SF +104
SG +75
SB +180
SC +278

LOT 123

RIVERBEND BLACK LABEL N714

*21202872 • BD: 12-24-2024

Sire: Riverbend Black Label J1810
Dam: WAR Blackbird C030 J4008 ET
MGS: Sitz Accomplishment 720F



CED +3
BW +3.0
WW +87
YW +151
Milk +35
PAP +.25
CW +62
MB +.70
RE +.46
\$AxH +87
\$AxJ +77
SM +63
SW +93
SF +99
SG +51
SB +150
SC +258

LOT 154

RIVERBEND GROWTH FUND N270

*21279507 • BD: 1-29-2024

Sire: Deer Valley Growth Fund
Dam: Riverbend Blackcap E455
MGS: EXAR Ten X 5006B



CED +12
BW +.6
WW +88
YW +160
Milk +33
PAP +.45
CW +94
MB +1.26
RE +1.68
\$AxH +300
\$AxJ +292
SM +77
SW +100
SF +152
SG +98
SB +250
SC +401

LOT 102

RIVERBEND CLARITY N223

+*21317261 • BD: 1-22-2025

Sire: Connealy Clarity • Dam: Lylester First Lady 667
MGS: SCC Tenacity 8102



CED +11
BW -2.0
WW +71
YW +129
Milk +33
PAP -3.27
CW +72
MB +1.40
RE +.73
\$AxH +227
\$AxJ +191
SM +72
SW +81
SF +124
SG +89
SB +213
SC +348

LOT 114

RIVERBEND CONGRESS N382

+*21280862 • BD: 2-7-2025

Sire: Crouch Congress • Dam: EXAR Elba 9501
MGS: Connealy Confidence Plus



CED +4
BW +3.9
WW +83
YW +138
Milk +34
PAP -.68
CW +73
MB +1.66
RE +.93
\$AxH +241
\$AxJ +202
SM +87
SW +91
SF +118
SG +107
SB +225
SC +379

LOT 170

RIVERBEND BOUGIE N220

+*21276941 • BD: 1-21-2025

Sire: BNWZ Bougie 1588 • Dam: Riverbend Blackbird H028
MGS: MOGCK Entice



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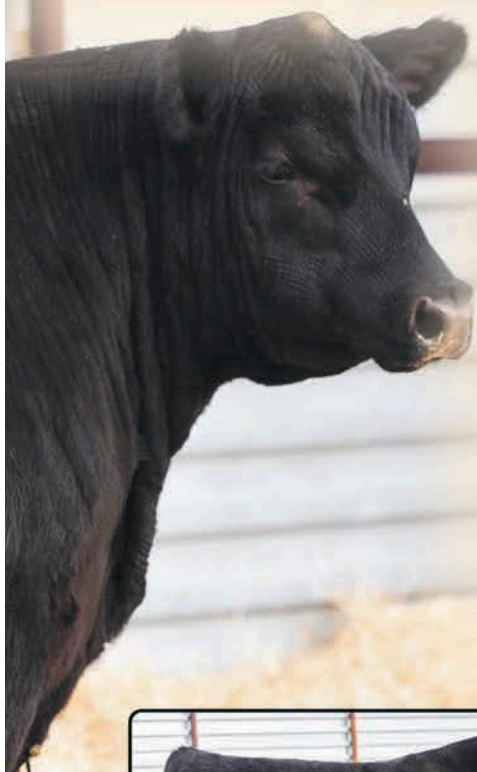
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WW Steakholder 5071 Reg: 21454135

CED	BW	WW	YW	ACT BW	WN WT ADJ
9	0.2	64	130	73	692



WW Steakholder 5132 Reg: 21454140

CED	BW	WW	YW	ACT BW	WN WT ADJ
7	1.1	70	122	82	690



WW Gratitude 5170 Reg: 21454160

CED	BW	WW	YW	ACT BW	WN WT ADJ
11	0.9	65	112	80	676



WW Wrangler 5342 Reg: 21457800

CED	BW	WW	YW	ACT BW	WN WT ADJ
14	-1.6	56	108	70	740



WW Bardolier 5109 Reg: 21454136

CED	BW	WW	YW	ACT BW	WN WT ADJ
10	-0.5	78	148	80	731



WW Hondo 5997 Reg: 21454146

CED	BW	WW	YW	ACT BW	WN WT ADJ
-1	3.3	90	149	91	775



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HMA

LEGAL LEDGER

CA grants protections to mountain lions

The California Fish and Game Commission on Feb. 12 unanimously voted to list a distinct population segment of mountain lions as a threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). The protections are granted to Southern California and Central Coast mountain lions. The California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is against the decision. "CCA has strongly opposed additional protections for Central Coast and Southern California mountain lions since 2019, when the Center for Biological Diversity and the Mountain Lion Foundation petitioned to list them under CESA," the association said in its weekly e-newsletter. While the group is disappointed by the listing, it said it is unclear whether the listing will impact ranchers' abilities to obtain depredation take permits, as Proposition 117 requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to issue take permits for mountain lions that stalk, injure or kill livestock or pets. However, CCA noted that the department's issuance of permits under a "three strike" policy makes it difficult, if not impossible, for ranchers to lethally remove mountain lions.

Bill introduced to protect industry from NWS

Rep. Ronny Jackson (R-TX-13) introduced the Safeguarding America's Food Economy and Controlling Agricultural Threats to Livestock and Enterprises (SAFE CATTLE) Act in mid-February. The legislation would establish a memorandum of understanding between the USDA and Department of Interior to carry out prevention and control efforts for the New World screwworm (NWS) in wildlife species on federal lands. The bill has the support of the Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA). "The SAFE CATTLE ACT ensures wildlife are properly included in disease monitoring efforts on U.S. soil, protecting our cattle herd as we plan for a potential outbreak that could devastate our nation's economy," said TSCRA President Carl Ray Polk Jr.

\$1.9B for ranchers affected by weather

The USDA's Farm Service Agency issued payments totaling more than \$1.89 billion for the Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP). Eligible applicants who applied for ELRP 2023 and 2024 Flood and Wildfire assistance will receive 100% of their eligible calculated payments. USDA is also making a second payment to producers who previously received their initial factored payment for ELRP 2023 and 2024 assistance for losses due to drought and wildfires. "Due to the program demand for drought and wildfire assistance, initial payments were factored to ensure total program payments did not exceed available funding," said USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins. "Additional funds remain so we are delivering on our Farmers First commitment to livestock producers and issuing a second payment in addition to making a full payment, with no factor, to eligible producers who applied for flood and wildfire recovery assistance."

CA high court will not hear groundwater case

The California Supreme Court will not review whether the 5th District Court of Appeals properly reversed a preliminary injunction against the state last year in a case brought by the Kings County Farm Bureau. In May 2024, the farm bureau sued the California Water Resources Control Board after the board placed the Tulare Lake sub-basin on probation for lacking a groundwater plan as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. As part of probation, farmers in the county will be required to meter and register their wells at \$300 each, report extractions and pay the state \$20 per acre-foot of water, according to a report by SJV Water. A Kings County superior judge issued a preliminary injunction against the decision, but the water board appealed to the 5th District last October and won. However, the Kings County Superior Court will review several issues in the case.

NE bill would establish state dietary guidelines

The Real Food Act, introduced by Nebraskan state Sen. Tanya Storer (R-43), would establish state-level dietary guidelines. The bill defines "dietary guidelines" as a "flexible whole food framework tailored to individual and family needs, preferences and financial situations." The proposed guidelines would emphasize high-quality proteins and fats from whole foods like meats, seafoods, nuts and avocados. The guidelines would also promote full-fat dairy products and fiber-rich whole grains.

Bayer settles Roundup cases for \$7.3B

On Feb. 17, Bayer announced a proposed \$7.3 billion class settlement to settle current and potential future cases in litigation against its glyphosate-based Roundup weedkiller. Under the settlement, the company will make capped annual payments that decline over time, spread out over a period of up to 21 years. "Litigation uncertainty has plagued the company for years, and this settlement gives the company a road to closure," said Bayer CEO Bill Anderson in an investor update. "This is a move to liberate the company from the litigation burden so our people can dedicate resources to cell and gene therapies, drought-resistant seed hybrids, and better ways of taking care of everyday health."

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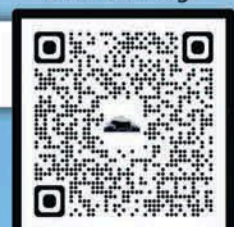
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House takes another stab at farm bill

They say the third time is a charm, so perhaps that will be the case with the latest effort to pass a farm bill.

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-PA-15) on Feb. 13 released the text of the committee's latest version of farm bill, the "Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026."

It has been dubbed by some as the "skinny" farm bill because the One Big Beautiful Bill Act already includes increased funding for Title I commodity subsidies and

crop insurance and some other programs. Still, the committee draft of the bill is 802 pages.

Thompson said in a news release, "A new farm bill is long overdue, and the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026 is an important step forward in providing certainty to our farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.

"We made historic agricultural investments last summer in the Working Families Tax Cuts (the One Big Beautiful Bill Act), but there are many key policy components

that remain to be addressed. With that in mind, the House Committee on Agriculture will begin marking up a new farm bill Feb. 23.

"This bill provides modern policies for modern challenges and is shaped by years of listening to the needs of farmers, ranchers, and rural Americans. The farm bill affects our entire country, regardless of whether you live on a farm, and I look forward to seeing my colleagues in Congress work together to get this critical legislation across the finish line," Thompson said.

Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN-02), the ranking member on the House Agriculture Committee, said on Feb. 13, "Our review of the legislative text is ongoing. Based on what I know, the Republican farm bill fails to meet the moment facing farmers and working people."

Craig added, "Farmers need Congress to act swiftly to end inflationary tariffs, stabilize trade relationships, expand domestic market opportunities like year-round E15 and help lower input costs. The Republican majority instead chose to ignore Democratic priorities and focus on pushing a shell of a farm bill with poison pills that complicates—if not derails—chances of getting anything done," Craig said.

"I strongly urge my Repub-

lican colleagues to drop the political charade and work with House Democrats on a truly bipartisan bill to address the very real problems farm country is experiencing right now—before it's too late," she said.

Thompson has said the bill contains several provisions written by Democrats, but a Democratic analysis of the bill showed that of the 274 provisions that Democrats submitted to the Republican majority, 28 were accepted, for a 90% rejection rate.

Among provisions released by the House Agriculture Committee GOP staff, the bill expands disaster programs such as the Tree Assistance program involving orchards and includes plant pests under the definition of "natural disaster." The bill also creates a framework for USDA to provide disaster aid to specialty crops that will be consistent across administrations. The bill also would create standing authority to provide ad-hoc disaster aid through block grants to states.

Addressing problems from last fall's government shutdown, the bill includes a provision that would ensure farmers are able to access Marketing Assistance Loans, even if there is a lapse in funding.

To deal with on-farm storage, the bill would expand low-cost financing options

for producers such as adding propane for drying and handling equipment to be included in those storage facility loans.

The bill also tweaks dairy risk management assistance by adjusting dairy production expenses.

In the credit title, the bill would increase loan limits for guaranteed operating loans to \$3 million and guaranteed ownership loans to \$3.5 million. Direct ownership loans would be increased to \$850,000, while direct operating loans would be increased to \$750,000. The bill also includes provisions meant to speed up approval times, especially for certified and preferred guaranteed lenders.

Among many other provisions, the bill:

- Reauthorizes the Conservation Reserve Program and keeps the cap on acres at 27 million.

- Transfers the Food for Peace international food aid program from the U.S. Agency for International Development to the Agriculture Department and reserves 50% of the resources in the program for the purchase and shipping of U.S. food.

- Increases access to the Real Energy for America Program.

- Increases requirements for reporting farmland ownership by foreigners.

- Increases funding for

farm export promotion programs.

- Ties the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to the administration's Make America Healthy Again agenda.

- Integrates the ReConnect program that furnishes loans and grants for rural broadband internet construction into the farm bill broadband program.

- Allocates research funding for specialty crops, innovation and crop insurance.

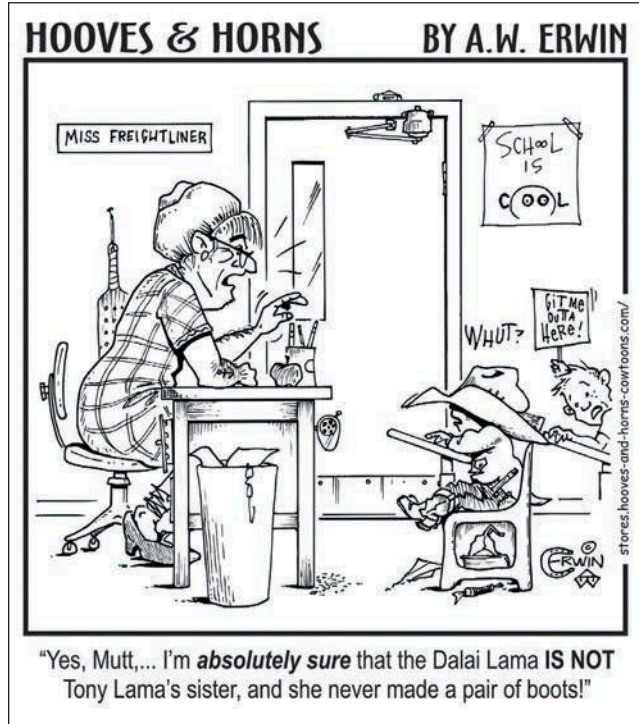
- Addresses state laws requiring standard living conditions for animals providing meat and eggs, such as California's Proposition 12, by stating that states and localities cannot require living conditions outside their jurisdiction.



- Allows auction owners to invest in packing facilities.

- Adds the Agriculture secretary to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States.

- Addresses tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) concentration in hemp.

- Requires uniform pesticide labeling by stating EPA has the sole authority for making safety findings for pesticides, blocking states from implementing tougher standards, such as California did. — **Jerry Hagstrom, DTN political correspondent and Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor**



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CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	MM	MG	REA	MARB	BMI\$	CHBS
3.4	2.9	71	114	1.5	32	67	0.77	0.38	447	192

HH Advance 5265N ET HH Advance 3037LET x CL 1 Dominette 0132H ET



CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	MM	MG	REA	MARB	BMI\$	CHBS
3.5	5.2	66	105	1.0	37	70	0.61	0.35	534	162

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27 Fancy Yearling Heifers

CL1 Domino 549N 1ET HH Advance 3027L x CL 1 Dominette 976G 1ET



CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	MM	MG	REA	MARB	BMI\$	CHBS
4.5	4.0	63	100	1.5	28	60	0.92	0.14	379	162

CL1 Domino 5121N HH Advance 3044L ET x CL 1 Dominette 280K



CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	MM	MG	REA	MARB	BMI\$	CHBS
9.5	1.0	57	93	1.1	39	67	0.61	0.43	497	169

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Colorado River states miss deadline, compromise nowhere in sight

Nevada and six other Colorado River states have failed to resolve a major disagreement on how to share the river's dwindling water supply, and did not reach a deal in time for a federally imposed Valentine's Day deadline.

At the center of the rift is whether upstream states will agree to mandatory water cuts during dry years and long-term conservation plans in order to spare downstream states from taking steeper cuts.

Negotiators for the Lower Basin states—Nevada, Arizona, and California—and Upper Basin states—Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming—have been at an

impasse for months on a compromise plan that could replace the river's operating guidelines set to expire at the end of 2026.

John Entsminger, Nevada's lead negotiator and general manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority, said negotiations between states have "yielded almost no headway" after years of being bogged down "by the same tired rhetoric and entrenched positions."

"The seven Colorado River Basin states have failed to reach an agreement to collectively protect our respective communities and economies in the face of almost certain reductions to our use of the river," said Entsminger

in a statement ahead of the deadline.

Prolonged drought driven by climate change has put immense pressure on the overtapped Colorado River which sustains agriculture in the West and provides water for 40 million people across seven U.S. states, 30 Native American tribes and parts of northern Mexico. Record low snowpack across the west this winter will likely strain the river further.

Historically, Lower Basin states have used nearly all their 7.5 million acre-feet Colorado River allocations under the 1922 Colorado River Compact, compared to the 4.5 million acres-feet used by the Upper Basin states.

In recent years, Lower Basin states have undertaken significant conservation efforts and have reduced their consumption from 7.4 million acre-feet in 2015 to just over 6 million in 2024.

In contrast, Upper Basin states have increased their usage in the past five years, from 3.9 million acre-feet in 2021 to 4.4 million in 2024.

Governors for the river's Lower Basin states issued a joint statement reiterating their stance that all seven basin states should be required to cut water use under any new guidelines.

"Our shared success hinges on compromise, and we have offered significant flexibility, allowing states without robust

conservation programs time to gradually develop these programs in ways that work in each state," the statement said.

In order to secure a seven-state agreement, Lower Basin governors said they have all agreed to reduce their state's Colorado River share. Arizona has offered to significantly cut its share by 27%, while California and Nevada have offered to cut 10% and 17% respectively.

Arizona's lead negotiator, Tom Buschatzke, said in a statement issued that Lower Basin states "have offered numerous, good-faith compromises to the representatives of the Upper Basin states. In that time, virtually all of them have been rejected.

"Arizona, California and Nevada have received one consistent message from our counterparts in the Upper Basin—there will be no firm commitment to reduce uses in the Upper Basin, no matter how dire the conditions of the river may be," he continued.

Upper Basin states argue they don't have the infrastructure to store water during dry years like Lower Basin states, and are already restricted by available supply every year.

In a joint statement, governors for the Upper Basin states said they have likewise "come together in good faith throughout this process" to reach a solution that works for each of the seven states, but reiterated that upstream states will only accept voluntary conservation plans.

The Upper Basin state governors said they "are putting every tool on the table available to us, including releases from our upstream reservoirs, a meaningful voluntary conservation both now and in the future, and continued strict self-regulation of water supplies."

The Upper Colorado River Commission, chaired by Colorado's lead state negotiator, did not immediately respond

to a request for comment.

Upper Basin states have also said they don't have the legal authority to significantly reduce flows to water users on their own under the 1922 Colorado River Compact.

Failure to reach a seven-state consensus could lead to litigation that would likely take decades to resolve. Last year, Arizona put a total of \$3 million into its Colorado River legal defense fund, and Gov. Katie Hobbs' (D) proposed budget for this year would put another \$1 million toward that fund.

Entsminger, Nevada's lead river negotiator, alluded to the possibility of litigation in the future if states can't reach a consensus.

"While I will continue to work with my Colorado River counterparts in hopes of finding a workable solution to this crisis, we must also prepare to fight for our water supply if it comes to that," Entsminger said in a statement.

Governors for Arizona, California, and Nevada said they are still committed to a seven-state solution despite missing the federal deadline and will continue to pursue a consensus.

If states can't reach a consensus, the federal government will need to implement its own plan. The Bureau of Reclamation, which manages water in the West under the Interior Department, needs to have a final plan in place by the time the 2027 water year begins in October.

In the absence of a seven-state agreement, the Bureau of Reclamation would likely impose a compliance option that relies on significant cuts to Lower Basin states to meet its deadline.

The Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of the Interior did not immediately respond to questions about how the missed deadline will impact the agency's strict timeline. — **Jeniffer Solis, Nevada Current**

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Lot 1 - Spring Cove Arthur 5N
REG 21284306 SIRE: Spring Cove Grant 200K DOB 01/07/25
CED+6 BW+9 WW+89 YW+162
Milk+32 CW+93 Marb+1.09 Rib+.96 SM+91 +SC+379



Lot 2 - Spring Cove Grant N26
REG 221293216 SIRE: Spring Cove Grant 200K DOB 01/16/25
CED+3 BW+1.0 WW+77 YW+137
Milk+23 CW+64 Marb+1.01 Rib+.56 SM+100 +SC+327



Lot 3 - Spring Cove Grant 23N
REG 21288678 SIRE: Spring Cove Grant 200K DOB 01/19/25
CED+3 BW+2.8 WW+87 YW+150
Milk+26 CW+75 Marb+1.11 Rib+.64 SM+80 SC+330



Lot 102 - Spring Cove Warbucks N48
REG 21292995 SIRE: Pine View Warbucks L114 DOB 01/26/25
CED+2 BW+2.7 WW+86 YW+147 Milk+23
CW+65 Marb+1.19 Rib+.85 SM+82 SC+325



Lot 86 - Spring Cove Warbucks 54N
REG 21353087 SIRE: Pine View Warbucks L114 DOB 01/26/25
CED+2 BW+7 WW+88 YW+151 Milk+32
CW+71 Marb+1.23 Rib+1.17 SM+101 +SC+359



Lot 101 - Spring Cove Warbucks 55N
REG 21285490 SIRE: Pine View Warbucks L114 DOB 01/26/25
CED+3 BW+2.5 WW+95 YW+162 Milk+25
CW+74 Marb+.91 Rib+1.32 SM+86 SC+326



Lot 175 - Spring Cove FEAT 158N
REG 21285016 SIRE: Sitz Feat 729H DOB 8/26/24
CED+11 BW+2 WW+85 YW+138 Milk+29
CW+69 Marb+.74 Rib+.98 SM+96 SC+316



Lot 193 - Spring Cove RENO 213M
REG 21127724 SIRE: Spring Cove Reno 4021 DOB 09/04/24
CED+2 BW+1.0 WW+88 YW+159
Milk+32 CW+76 Marb+1.06 Rib+.74 SM+69 SC+308



Lot 184 - Spring Cove Red State 201M
REG 21129238 SIRE: Pine View Red State DOB 8/28/24
CED+9 BW+6 WW+75 YW+140
Milk+34 CW+70 Marb+1.25 Rib+.87 SM+85 SC+353



Lot 213 - Spring Cove Feat 48N
REG 21020418 SIRE: Sitz Feat 729H DOB 01/26/24
CED+5 BW+2.8 WW+83 YW+140
Milk+23 CW+56 Marb+.67 Rib+.72 SM+87 SC+280



Lot 214 - Spring Cove Feat 34M
REG 21020313 SIRE: Sitz Feat 729H DOB 01/23/24
CED+8 BW+1.5 WW+83 YW+136
Milk+22 CW+62 Marb+.13 Rib+.84 SM+97 SC+268



Lot 223 - Spring Cove Compass 63M
REG 21020441 SIRE: Spring Cove Compass 28H DOB 01/30/24
CED+4 BW+2.5 WW+80 YW+137
Milk+21 CW+58 Marb+.95 Rib+.65 SM+89 SC+306

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Cargill to close its WI ground beef plant

Cargill will close its ground beef processing plant in Milwaukee, WI, leaving 221 without jobs.

In a notice announcement to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development from Cargill, the senior supervisor, HR business partner Amy Shaw, noted the plant will be permanently closing. Operations will stop on or around April 17 and fully close on or around May 31.

The facility specializes in producing ground beef for grocery retailers and food service customers and did not slaughter live cattle.

As reported by DTN in December 2024, Cargill, the country's largest privately held company, then announced the company would cut approximately 5% of its workforce, an estimated 8,000 people, as profit margins are coming down.

"To strengthen Cargill's impact, we must realign our talent and resources to align with our strategy," Cargill officials said in December 2024.

"Unfortunately, that means reducing our global workforce by approximately 5%. This difficult decision was not made lightly. We will lean on our core value of putting people first as we support our colleagues during this transition."

Cargill has similar facilities focusing specifically on ground-beef processing without slaughtering live cattle in North Kingstown, RI, and Camp Hill, PA. Other Cargill slaughter plants across the country process ground beef as part of their overall operations.

Cargill doesn't release specific production numbers for each plant, but produces nearly 11 billion pounds of boxed beef and byproducts per year across all plants.

Previously, Cargill had a beef slaughter facility in Milwaukee, which closed in 2014, noting a tight cattle supply at the time. — **Jeniffer Carrico, DTN senior livestock editor**

GDAR



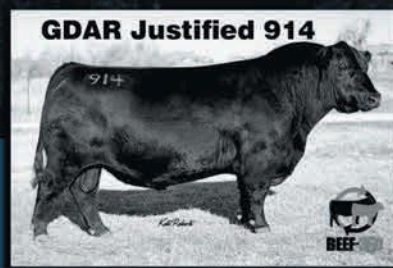
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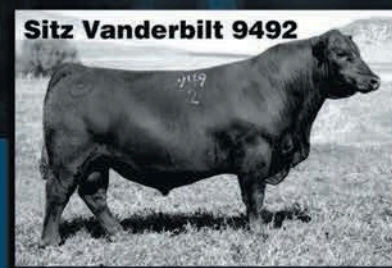
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The development of Oklahoma's beef cow herd

The Jan. 1 Oklahoma beef cow inventory was 1.966 million head, up 0.4% year over year. Oklahoma was one of

three of the top 10 beef cow states to have an increase in the beef cow herd last year, with the others being North

Dakota and Florida. Oklahoma is the No. 2 beef cow state (after Texas) and has been second consistently for

the past 12 years ahead of No. 3 Missouri.

As of Jan. 1, the Oklahoma beef cow herd was 8.9% larger than the Missouri beef cow herd and has averaged 4.2% larger since 2015. In the previous dozen years, from 2003-14, Oklahoma and Missouri were alternately the second and third largest beef cow states with Oklahoma averaging 98% of the level of Missouri beef cow herd.

The Oklahoma beef cow herd has averaged 1.99 million head for the past 25

years, with a low of 1.69 million head in 2013 and a high of 2.17 million head in 2021.

The Oklahoma beef cow herd has been growing relative to the national herd for more than 25 years (Figure 1). Oklahoma currently represents 7.1% of the national beef cow herd (Figure 2) and has averaged 6.5% for the past 25 years. From the 1960s through the 1990s, Oklahoma averaged 5.7% of the national beef cow herd.

The impacts of drought are also very evident in Fig-

ure 1. From 2010-13, the Oklahoma beef cow herd decreased by 18.3%. The Oklahoma beef cow herd began recovering in 2014, one year ahead of the cyclical low in total beef cow inventories. From 2021-24, the Oklahoma beef cow herd decreased 11% before increasing in 2025 and 2026, while the U.S. total beef cow inventory continued to decline. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

Figure 1. Oklahoma and U.S Beef Cow Inventory
1,000 Head, January

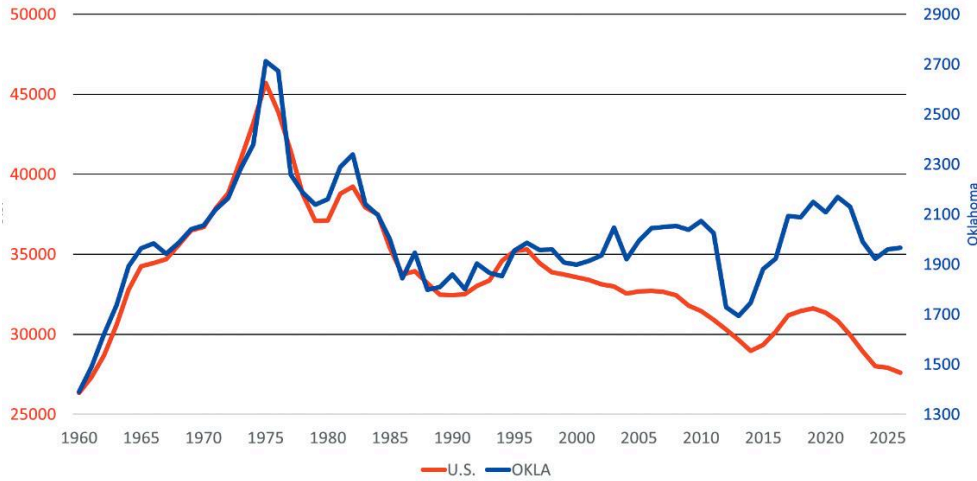
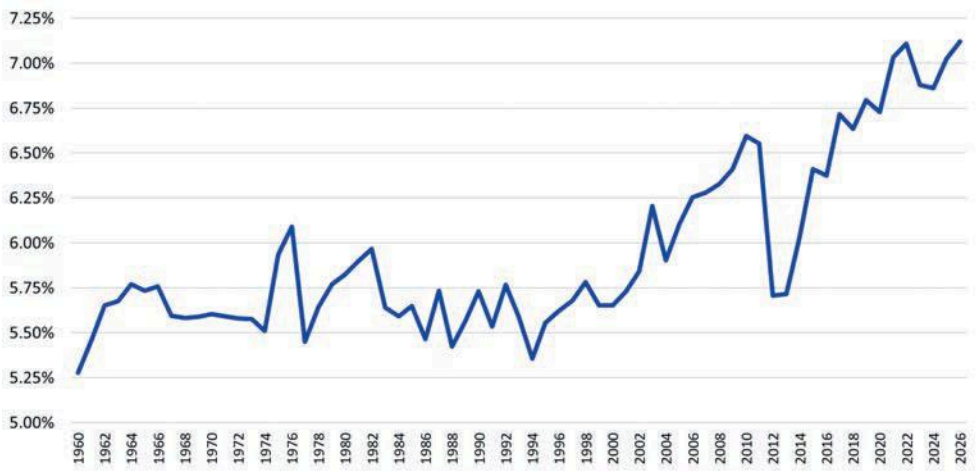


Figure 2. Oklahoma Share of U.S. Beef Cow Herd



Tricolored blackbird conservation partnership funding threatened

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced recently that the draft list of payment scenarios for the tricolored blackbird Regional Conservation Partnership Program omits silage delay as an option for program participants this year.

Delaying harvest of silage crops is the primary scenario used to compensate landowners impacted by nesting tricolored blackbirds, typically providing payments ranging from \$700 to \$1,100 per acre. The closest remaining option on the draft list is "delayed mowing on hay fields,"

which provides \$200 per acre.

According to California Farm Bureau staff, which has been monitoring the program, the decision to omit silage delay was made at the federal level within NRCS, while the state continues its efforts to advocate for the scenario's inclusion.

"The omission of silage delay as a payment scenario for the 2026 season would significantly hinder the ability to effectively protect tricolored blackbird colonies and to sustain strong partnerships with agricultural producers who

voluntarily participate in the program," said Richard Filgas, assistant director of policy advocacy for the California Farm Bureau.

California Farm Bureau is coordinating with other stakeholders—including Audubon, Western United Dairies, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and others—to urge NRCS to retain silage delay as a funding option.

It remains unclear when the payment scenarios will be finalized, though a decision is expected soon as the tricolored blackbird nesting season approaches. — **California Farm Bureau**

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CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$C
+17	-1.9	+70	+141	+32	+1.22	+59	+81	+343

LOT 12 DAL PORTO PROLIFIC D66
 *ELLINGSON PROLIFIC x #*CONNELLY EMERALD
 DOB: 3-2-2025 *21448803

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$C
-1	+2.8	+95	+167	+32	+96	+40	+91	+313

LOT 30 DAL PORTO IDENTIFIED D29
 +*SS IDENTIFIED 7551 x DPL BOUNDARY T72
 DOB: 2-3-2025 *21447196

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$C
+11	+7	+77	+135	+26	+1.22	+80	+89	+348

LOT 3 DAL PORTO JUSTICE D24
 *BEAR MTN JUSTICE x G A R SUNBEAM
 DOB: 1-30-2025 *21451755

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$C
+7	+1.2	+90	+165	+29	+90	+94	+61	+300

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LOT 1

LCC Essential 544



AAA 21440936

SIRE: AAR Essential
 MGS: Square B True North 8052
 CED +7 BW +1.7 WW +91 YW +148
 MILK +31 \$M +87 \$W +100 \$C +272

LOT 8

LCC Republic 537



AAA 21409523

SIRE: Raven Republic
 MGS: Sitz Accomplishment 720F
 CED +12 BW +0 WW +73 YW +125
 MILK +25 \$M +82 \$W +78 \$C +223

LOT 10

LCC Prolific 560



AAA 21411484

SIRE: Ellingson Prolific
 MGS: Riverbend 1682 E219
 CED +5 BW +1.7 WW +83 YW +153
 MILK +30 \$M +101 \$W +87 \$C +325

LOT 11

LCC Prolific 524



AAA 21411447

SIRE: Ellingson Prolific
 MGS: Sitz Resilient 10208
 CED -3 BW +3.9 WW +87 YW +158
 MILK +29 \$M +84 \$W +82 \$C +302

LOT 17

LCC Eternity 5124



AAA 21411445

SIRE: Sitz Eternity 739L
 MGS: Tex Playbook 5437
 CED +3 BW +1.7 WW +79 YW +141
 MILK +43 \$M +92 \$W +98 \$C +276

LOT 20

LCC Eternity 5108



AAA 21411460

SIRE: Sitz Eternity 739L
 MGS: Sitz Stellar 726D
 CED +10 BW -.2 WW +78 YW +142
 MILK +27 \$M +79 \$W +77 \$C +274

LOT 26

LCC Jameson N45



AAA 21409584

SIRE: Basin Jameson 1076
 MGS: Leadore Upward Z23
 CED +11 BW +3 WW +100 YW +165
 MILK +36 \$M +73 \$W +117 \$C +303

LOT 40

LCC Craftsman 5154



AAA 21409715

SIRE: Connealy Craftsman 1076
 MGS: Sitz Stellar 726G
 CED -.1 BW +2.0 WW +80 YW +139
 MILK +32 \$M +98 \$W +89 \$C +302

LOT 46

LCC Essential 529

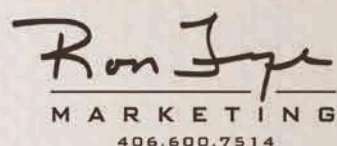


AAA 21440955

SIRE: AAR Essential
 MGS: Sitz Stellar 726D
 CED +8 BW +.5 WW +71 YW +122
 MILK +28 \$M +28 \$W +76 \$C +263

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House agrees to end tariffs on Canada

In a notable break from President Donald Trump's signature trade policy, several House Republicans joined Democrats in passing a resolution to terminate the president's national emergency at the northern border that triggered tariffs on Canada just over one year ago.

The measure, passed 219-211, revokes Trump's Feb. 1, 2025, executive order imposing tariffs on Canada, which he triggered under an unprecedented use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, or IEEPA.

Whether he has the power to

invoke tariffs under the 1970s law is under review at the U.S. Supreme Court, which heard arguments in November. An opinion, still not released, has been expected for months.

Reps. Don Bacon (R-NE-02), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01), Jeff Hurd (R-CO-03), Kevin Kiley (R-CA-03), Thomas Massie (R-KY-04) and Dan Newhouse (R-WA-04), broke ranks with the GOP to join Democrats in rebuffing Trump's levies on Canadian goods.

Rep. Jared Golden (D-ME-02) was the only Democrat to vote against the resolution.

Two Republicans, Greg

Murphy (NC-03) and Riley Moore (WV-02), did not vote.

The House vote occurred less than 24 hours after three House Republicans delivered a rebuke to Trump and joined Democrats in blocking House leadership's effort to extend a ban on bringing any resolutions to the floor that disapprove of the administration's tariffs.

Trump's centerpiece economic policy has drawn criticism over its on-again, off-again changes, causing uncertainty for business and costs passed along to consumers.

The vote also comes just

days after Trump threatened to close a new bridge between Windsor, Ontario, and Detroit, MI, if Canada does not negotiate a new trade deal with the U.S.

In a nearly 300-word post Feb. 9 on his platform Truth Social, Trump predicted that if Canada struck a deal with China, the eastern power would "terminate ALL ice Hockey being played in Canada, and permanently eliminate The Stanley Cup."

Rep. Gregory Meeks (D-NY-05), the resolution's lead sponsor, criticized Trump's "manufactured emergency"

regarding Canada.

"Canada isn't a threat. Canada is our friend. Canada is our ally. Canadians have fought alongside Americans, whether it was in World War II or the war in Afghanistan," Meeks said.

Meeks also said tariffs are costing his constituents up to \$1,700 per year.

"That's what this is about. It's about American people and making things affordable for them," Meeks said on the floor ahead of the vote.

Analyses from the Tax Foundation and Yale Budget Lab pin the average cost per household between roughly \$1,300 and \$1,750 from all current tariffs combined—not just import taxes on products purchased from Canada.

Rep. Brian Mast (R-FL-21) disagreed, arguing the cost amounted not to lost income but to drug overdose deaths attributed to illicit fentanyl.

"Who will pay the price? It's a very sad thing to have (been) asked by this colleague of mine ... because it's important to remember, what is this resolution? This resolution ends an emergency related to fentanyl," Mast said during pre-vote debate.

But U.S. Customs and Border Protection data from fiscal year 2023 to the present shows fentanyl seizures at the northern border dwarfed by the amount intercepted at the southwest border.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency identifies China as the beginning of the illicit fentanyl supply chain that moves

through clandestine labs in Mexico and then into the U.S.

Trump's Feb. 1, 2025, executive order conceded that Border Patrol agents seized "much less fentanyl from Canada than from Mexico last year," but claimed the amount seized at the northern border in 2024 was still enough to kill 9.5 million people.

The synthetic opioid "is so potent that even a very small parcel of the drug can cause many deaths and destruction to America(n) families," according to the executive order.

A handful of Republican senators have also rebuked at least one category of Trump's emergency tariffs.

In late October, Republican Sens. Mitch McConnell and Rand Paul of Kentucky, along with Alaska's Lisa Murkowski, Maine's Susan Collins and Thom Tillis of North Carolina, supported a joint resolution in a 52-48 vote to terminate Trump's 50% tariffs on Brazilian products, including coffee.

The president declared a national emergency and imposed the steep tariff on Brazilian goods on July 30 after accusing Brazil's government of "politically persecuting" its former far-right President Jair Bolsonaro for plotting a coup to remain in power in 2022.

The Senate vote marked a shift from two earlier efforts in April to stymie Trump's tariffs, including a measure to terminate the president's levies on Canadian imports. — **Ashley Murray, Washington State Standard**

Kansas land values reflect stability

Kansas agricultural land values appear to be stabilizing as producers enter 2026, according to Kansas State (K-State) University Extension experts.

After several years of rapid appreciation, the land market is showing more measured movement, influenced by profitability pressures, interest rates and the increasingly diverse ways land generates income.

K-State Extension land and crop market specialist Megan Hughes emphasized that land values are driven by more than just crop production potential.

"Things like hunting access or energy development can absolutely increase land value," Hughes said. "Those non-agricultural uses matter, and they're part of what keeps demand strong in certain areas."

Kansas producers are often highly diversified, operating across crops, livestock and alternative enterprises—a reality that directly affects land markets. Hughes noted that decisions about land cannot be made in isolation from the broader farm business.

"Because we tend to be so diversified, producers really have to consider all enterprises when making decisions," she said. "Low profitability in the crop sector will bleed over into everything else."

While land values remain relatively steady, economic pressures are building. Kansas net farm incomes in 2026 are projected to remain steady or decline slightly compared to 2025, adding another layer of caution for producers evaluating long-term investments.

Hughes stressed that interest rates continue to be a major driver in land market behavior.

"There are a lot of factors that go into land values, including interest rates, and it's something we'll be keeping a close eye on," she said.

She also reminded producers that the Kansas Land Values publication provides benchmark averages rather than precise pricing.

"Kansas land values are averages—they're not exact numbers," Hughes said. "Every parcel is different, and location, quality and use still matter."

Even for producers with no plans to enter the land market, shifts in land values can have significant ripple effects. Hughes explained that real estate makes up a substantial share of farm wealth nationwide.

"Real estate accounts for about 80% of farm assets in the United States," she said. "Any change in land values can affect a farm's financial position moving forward, even if you're not buying or selling land."

As economic conditions evolve, Kansas producers are encouraged to use land value data as a planning tool rather than a prediction, keeping a close eye on trends that influence both balance sheets and long-term resilience.

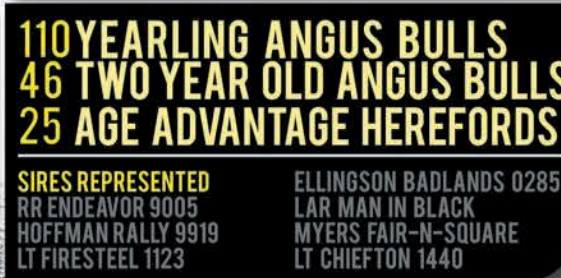
More information also is available in a new publication from K-State Extension, the 2025 Kansas Land Values Book, which can be accessed online at agmanager.info. — **K-State Research and Extension**

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Leaders, members engage in Washington advocacy meetings

Recently, Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA (R-CALF) leaders and members traveled to Washington, D.C., to carry the voice of independent cattle producers into meetings and events focused

on private property rights, agricultural freedom and the future of America's food supply.

R-CALF USA President Dave Hyde, Vice President Eric Gropper, Property Rights

Committee Chair Shad Sullivan, and former R-CALF USA President and Checkoff Committee Chair Brett Kenzy participated in the trip alongside several R-CALF USA members from across the West.

R-CALF USA leaders met with Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins to discuss priorities, including mandatory country-of-origin labeling (MCOOL) for beef, checkoff reform and protecting private

property rights. The group also met with Natural Resources Conservation Service Chief Aubrey Bettencourt.

While in Washington, R-CALF USA leaders and members also joined broader conversations with allied organizations and producer coalitions, including the Eat Real Food event and the Conservative Political Action Conference Rancher Coalition, where stakeholders discussed challenges facing rural America such as corporate consolidation, excessive regulations, MCOOL and the need for transparency in cattle markets.

"It was a tremendous trip and a tremendous opportunity to express to the secretary that it is an exciting time to be in the cattle industry," Kenzy said. "America has the best beef and the best consumers in the world. It's time to act like it."

"If cattlemen and consumers don't stand up and stand together, we will just see the status quo continue—shrinking productivity with a power-

ful few controlling a bigger piece of a shrinking pie. We need to trust in our system to rebuild our cow herd to a level that will allow American food security."

Several members of the group also attended USDA's rollout of the Farmer and Rancher Freedom Framework roundtable, an initiative aimed at addressing agricultural lawfare and reinforcing constitutional protections for landowners and producers.

"It was an honor to be included in these discussions impacting our land, our livelihoods and our food security," Sullivan said. "This trip was about promoting liberty and making sure the people who actually raise the cattle—not the corporations—have a seat at the table. We're encouraged by the progress being made and by the willingness in Washington to hear directly from producers. Freedom, fair markets and food security all depend on keeping ranchers at the center of these decisions." — R-CALF

Industry applauds trade agreement with Taiwan

TAIWAN DEAL (from page 1)

products, lamb and sheep meat, tree nuts, dog and cat food, ketchup, and peanuts.

Taiwan plans to increase its purchases of important U.S. goods, including \$44.4 billion worth of liquefied natural gas and crude oil, \$15.2 billion worth of civil aircraft and engines, and \$25.2 billion worth of power equipment, power grids, materials, generators, storage facilities, marine equipment, steel-making equipment and other equipment from 2025-29.

The U.S. will reduce its tariffs on goods from Taiwan, applying the higher of either the U.S. Most Favored Nation tariff rate or a tariff rate of 15%. The U.S. also identified certain products that will not be subject to a reciprocal tariff.

Taiwan must ensure its sanitary and phytosanitary measures are science- and risk-based and not functioning as disguised trade barriers. The country also may not adopt stricter standards through deals with other trading partners that indirectly shut out U.S. products. In addition, Taiwan may not add new certification demands that slow trade. If the country proposes new food safety or technical rules, the U.S. must get advance notice and an opportunity to give input.

On the beef side of things, Taiwan may not adopt measures inconsistent with the World Organization for Animal Health on bovine spongi-

form encephalopathy (BSE), and must recognize the U.S. as a negligible risk country for BSE. The country also must use maximum residue levels established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for ractopamine residue limits.

Taiwan will also reduce border inspections and eliminate the per-box inspection procedures and thawing inspection procedures for beef and beef products. Import permits will not be required for beef and beef products, and plants approved by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service will automatically be eligible for export to Taiwan.

Industry support

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) said the deal includes significant market access gains for U.S. red meat.

"USMEF greatly appreciates USTR's dedication to resolving Taiwan's tariff and non-tariff barriers on U.S. red meat through the Agreement on Reciprocal Trade," said USMEF President and CEO Dan Halstrom.

U.S. beef exports to Taiwan are valued at about \$650 million, he said, and the U.S. is the largest supplier of beef to Taiwan. The country is the fifth largest export market for U.S. beef.

"But there is still potential for further growth with the increased access for all U.S. beef products, including those in high demand for yakiniku barbecue and trendy

burger concepts," Halstrom said. "The elimination of tariffs on U.S. beef will definitely improve our competitiveness."

Halstrom added that the agreement also clarifies access for U.S. bison and removes tariffs on U.S. lamb, and that reducing tariffs and non-tariff barriers should also help U.S. pork exports.

"USMEF thanks the Trump administration for the continued focus on breaking down barriers for U.S. agricultural exports and we look forward to the successful implementation of the Taiwan agreement," Halstrom said.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) said the agreement strengthens one of the most important and fastest growing markets for U.S. beef.

"Duty-free access improves competitiveness and provides long-term certainty for producers who depend on export markets to maximize the value of every animal," said NCBA President Gene Copenhagen. "Foreign markets play a critical role in producer profitability with beef exports accounting for more than \$415 per fed cattle processed in 2024." — Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor

Farm and ranch succession workshops offered in NE

Nebraska farm and ranch families are invited to attend a free educational workshop focused on succession and estate planning. Hosted by the Nebraska Rural Response Hotline in collaboration with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture's Beginning Farmer Programs, Nebraska Extension and the Nebraska Farmers Union Foundation, these workshops are designed to help producers prepare for the future of their operations.

The Farm & Ranch Succession Workshop will take place March 11 in Curtis, NE, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. CST at Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture Welcome Center.

Speakers include Weston Svoboda, and Jessica Groskopf. This workshop will cover:

- Estate and succession planning: key considerations, decisions and available tools.
- Transfer, death, and tax implications including portability.
- The use of LLCs in succes-

sion planning: buy-sell agreements and asset protection.

- Options, lease rights and preemptive rights.
- Finance and management issues in succession strategies.

Refreshments for this event will be provided by the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

"This workshop is intended to help farm and ranch families start, continue, or refine their succession and estate plans," said Jessica Groskopf. "Planning for the future ensures a smooth transition to the next generation and protects the legacy of Nebraska's agricultural producers."

While the workshop is free, it is asked that you register ahead of time to help with preparations for refreshments and materials. To register or for more information, please contact the Nebraska Rural Response Hotline at 1-800-464-0258.

This event is based upon work supported by the USDA. — Nebraska Extension

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Study reveals wildfire risk, resource mismatch in CO

There is a mismatch between wildfire risk and mitigation resources across Colorado, Colorado State University (CSU) researchers found in a study revealing the areas of the state most vulnerable to wildfire.

The CSU research is the first to map local capacity to reduce wildfire vulnerability. Wildfire mitigation resources, from people who can do the work to funding to complete the work, are concentrated in the northern Front Range, the study found, while northwestern and southern Colorado are at high risk of wildfire but lack resources.

The insights are important as wildfires increase in frequency and severity across Colorado and the West; when policymakers, forest managers and local stakeholders understand risk and resource discrepancies, they can make informed decisions to better protect communities.

"As recent wildfires in Colorado and across the West have demonstrated, wildfire risk and impacts are not just challenges for single communities or landscapes," said Karissa Courtney, a wildfire social scientist with the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute who conducted the research as a graduate student at CSU.

Courtney developed an index outlining risk versus capacity using publicly available data to highlight areas of the state in need of support.

"Our research demonstrates

not only where and how communities experience vulnerability, but it points to ways that broader efforts from the state and society can address wildfire in a coordinated and collaborative way," she said.

Some of the counties impacted by the Lee Fire—the fifth-largest wildfire in Colorado history—were among the most at risk of wildfire but had fewer resources to reduce risk, respond to and recover from wildfire. The study identified Rio Blanco, Moffat and Garfield counties in far northwestern Colorado at high risk for wildfire but low capacity for mitigation. Other under-resourced counties at high risk are Huerfano, Archuleta, Conejos, Las Animas and Baca counties in southern Colorado.

Courtney said that although communities along the Front Range receive a disproportionate level of funding, wildfire risk is high in those communities—meaning risk and resources are aligned. The larger population and concentration of wealth in the Front Range equates to higher local capacity through successful grants, more staff and more training. These advantages, in turn, increase the likelihood of future funding.

However, money isn't the only way to build capacity, she added. Research found that relationships and collaborations can be key, particularly in rural communities.

"Folks are able to rely on partnerships and borrow equipment from each other, for

example, to get around not having enough money," Courtney said.

Factors the researchers used to determine capacity included funding from the state Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program (FRWRM), fire protection districts, forestry-related organizations, fire-focused collaboratives, past fuel treatments, Community Wildfire Protection Plans, homeowners associations and Firewise USA certification. Well-prepared areas around the state have achieved high capacity through different combinations of factors, showing there is not a single, prescriptive way to build capacity.

Courtney also is working with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) to monitor how FRWRM funding is helping to increase capacity to mitigate wildfire in communities across the state. The Colorado State Legislature allows up to 25% of FRWRM funding to go toward capacity grants to cover new equipment for slash removal or increased staffing, for example, while 75% goes to fuel reduction and forest health projects.

"The most important aspect of Karissa's research is highlighting areas where capacity is lacking, to give grant applicants from lower-capacity areas data that may increase their likelihood of funding," said Ethan Bucholz, manager of the CSFS Forest Monitoring Program, adding that the re-

sults suggest ways the grant requirements could be adapted to account for capacity.

"Currently, socioeconomic factors are considered to ease the economic burden for accessing these funds, but including Karissa's data may enable folks who score these grants to consider applicants'

local capacity context, serving as a starting point to bridge the gap in capacity across the state," Bucholz said.

Courtney said it's important to understand local context. She set out to do that in a related study in which she interviewed wildfire and forestry practitioners in 11 communi-

ties to learn how each community applied its specific resources to reduce wildfire risk and the outcomes from those efforts.

The second study is expected to be published soon and will offer recommendations to policymakers for reducing vulnerability. — CSU Extension

Providing better internet access in rural SD

South Dakota State University (SDSU) Extension is collaborating with AARP South Dakota and South Dakota's public libraries to give the state's rural citizens better access to the internet.

The Rural Library Hotspot Lending Program is a new initiative that will enable residents in four pilot communities to visit their local library and "check out the internet" by borrowing a hotspot device.

Lemmon Public Library, Hot Springs Public Library, Faulk County Library in Faulkton, SD, and Sinte Gleska University Library in Mission, SD, will receive several hotspot devices, like a phone or tablet, that community members can check out.

"This pilot program will not only support households in rural South Dakota facing af-

fordability barriers to home internet subscriptions, but also strengthen bonds between rural libraries and their communities," said Whoi Cho, assistant professor of applied economics in the Ness School of Management at SDSU.

Each library selected to be part of the program will receive mobile hotspots with internet service at no cost for one year. Libraries will be responsible for setting circulation policies, such as loan duration, late return fees and other usage guidelines.

"Access to reliable internet is a basic need for every home today," said Sarah Sellars, assistant professor and SDSU Extension sustainable farm and food systems specialist. "Without it, they may struggle with schoolwork or job searches, and they miss out on free digital resources of-

fered by South Dakota libraries. We're proud to be able to offer this hotspot lending program."

Any rural South Dakota library is eligible to apply by emailing Sellars at sarah.sellars@sdstate.edu.

Erik Gaikowski, AARP South Dakota state director, said more than 40% of households in some South Dakota counties do not have regular, reliable access to the internet.

"Many residents in South Dakota have limited or no internet access for work, study, or accessing vital services like health care," said Gaikowski. "This program will bring connectivity to people in rural areas needing support for everyday needs."

For more information, contact Sellars, or Cho at whoi.cho@sdstate.edu. — SDSU Extension

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BW	+2.0
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WSA status not warranted for several MT sites

Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) received federal agency backing on Feb. 12 for his bill to downgrade three remote Montana landscapes from potential wilderness to regular public forest.

Officials from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) told the Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining they supported Daines' bill, the Montana Sportsmen Conservation Act.

Chris French, associate chief for the USFS, told the subcommittee the Trump administration didn't support creating new wildernesses or wilderness study designations (WSA). BLM state official John Raby added that his agency was intent on fulfilling the president's agenda supporting "fire management, recreation, access... and domestic mineral production to the maximum practical extent."

Wilderness status is the highest level of protection for public lands. The late Montana Sen. Lee Metcalf passed a 1977

bill ordering the USFS to consider nine areas totaling more than 973,000 acres as potential wilderness in the state. A separate 1976 law, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, ordered BLM to assess its holdings for wilderness potential. In 2000, BLM set aside 38 WSAs in Montana totaling 447,327 acres.

All those places received WSA designations, and had wilderness-style restrictions on motorized access, logging and management imposed. Although USFS and BLM were supposed to complete reviews for the areas' permanent status as either federal wilderness or general public land, the WSA status has yet to be resolved.

Daines' bill would affect three WSAs in Montana. The Middle Fork Judith WSA covers 81,000 acres in the Lewis and Clark National Forest northeast of White Sulphur Springs. The Hoodoo Mountain and Wales Creek WSAs are on BLM land between Ovando and Lincoln. Each comprises about 11,500 acres.

In his bill, Daines cited a 2021 USFS assessment declaring the Middle Fork Judith "unsuitable for inclusion in the Wilderness Preservation System." He noted BLM made the same recommendation on Wales Creek and Hoodoo in 2020. Overall, more than 1.1 million acres of public land in Montana are still considered WSAs. Daines claimed at least 700,000 acres of that had been designated "unsuitable" for wilderness by their managing agencies. Returning those lands to general management would allow more hazardous fuels removal, motorized access and forest management, Daines said.

Outside the hearing, several environmental organizations criticized Daines' bill. Barb

Cestero, The Wilderness Society's Montana state director, called it "deeply flawed."

"It represents the kind of top-down, one-size-fits-all approach Montanans have consistently rejected," Cestero said in an email to Mountain Journal. She cited a 2024 statewide survey finding that 75% of Montana voters wanted to continue protection for WSAs.

Daines told the subcommittee that supporters of WSAs are stacking the deck. "There's so much misinformation and frankly lying on this issue," as said, arguing that the federal government had failed to meet its own five-year deadlines for resolving the status of the remote areas. In an email, Daines' spokeswoman Gabby Wiggins added that those three

areas in the bill had been found unworthy of wilderness designation by their management agencies, and that returning them to general use was supported by local officials and community groups.

Daines also claimed that those lands would still be protected by numerous other laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act and existing agency management plans. Daines' office did not return a request for additional comment.

However, the Trump administration has moved to restrain all those laws from impeding energy and timber development projects. And in answer to a question from New Mexico

Democratic Sen. Martin Heinrich, French said, "the needs for funding and staffing far exceed the requirements placed on us [in the USFS]."

Daines' bill was one of 23 considered at the Feb. 12 hearing. It must still be accepted by the full Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee before it can reach the Senate floor for a vote. No date has been set for further action.

During the hearing, several senators noted they were presenting bills in a third consecutive congressional session. Daines initially proposed the Montana Sportsman Conservation Act in 2021. He had previously tried to strip five areas totaling 449,500 acres of WSA status in 2019. — **Robert Chaney, Mountain Journal**

Training for responding to rodeo stock accidents

Responding to accidents is never an easy task. Responding to an accident that involves large trucks, people and animals can quickly turn into a chaotic event if the local response team is not prepared or trained to handle such an occurrence.

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension along with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has recognized the need to have a network of trained people across the state to respond to these situations. To help local law enforcement, fire crews, ambulances, veterinarians and other officials prepare for accidents involving livestock and livestock trailers, MSU Extension is coordinating specialized hands-on training for livestock accident responders.

Emergency Response to Accidents Involving Livestock (ERAIL) training focuses on managing the scene of an accident, organizing volunteers, and working to ensure public safety and animal welfare. Participants in the program learn about extricating trapped animals from trailers, managing an accident scene, chain of command, safe handling of large animals, and humane euthanasia techniques for severely injured animals as well as mortality management.

Throughout the year and especially during county fair season, a unique set of animal athletes are transported across the country to perform at rodeos. If you are a first responder, imagine responding to an accident involving a trailer load of 2,000-pound bulls, each complete with a set of horns. Yikes! This experience could be downright intimidating for many.

For the first time in the history of the ERAIL program, the MSU ERAIL team is teaming up with SouthPoint Ranch to offer a hands-on training op-

portunity for participants to learn more about rodeo stock. This training is an ERAIL special event opportunity to interact with bucking bulls and horses, roping steers and calves. The program will consist of both in-class training and hands-on animal handling.

- When: May 12.
- Time: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Where: SouthPoint Ranch, 6107 Cox Rd, Bellevue, MI 49021.

- Cost: \$75 per person or \$60 per person for groups of two or more, includes lunch.

- Participants must be at least 18 years of age.

Register for the ERAIL training at tinyurl.com/yfjcc9vb.

Captive bolt device training

In addition to the full day ERAIL rodeo stock training on May 12, supplemental training will be offered the evening of May 11. The captive bolt device euthanasia training is designed to teach first responders how to perform humane livestock euthanasia with a captive bolt device.

Workshop topics include identifying compromised animals, animal anatomy and target location, rules of animal ownership, animal restraint and animal safety.

- When: May 11.
- Time: 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Where: SouthPoint Ranch, 6107 Cox Rd, Bellevue, MI 49021.

- Cost: \$25 per person.
- Participants must be at least 18 years of age.

Register for the trainings at tinyurl.com/yfjcc9vb.

Questions about these respective training courses can be directed to Tom Guthrie at 517-788-4292 or guthrie19@msu.edu, Katie Ockert at ockertka@msu.edu or Megghan Honke Seidel at 517-884-7089 or honkemeg@msu.edu. — **MSU Extension**

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Lot 56 - HLS Mr Deadwood 5126
Poss Deadwood x PF 618 Henrietta Pride 4524
CED +13 WW +78 YW +143 CEM +11 Milk +30
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Lot 102 - HLSS Mr Kenny Rogers N004
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WA Fish and Wildlife saga deepens with claims of collusion

Two members of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission are pushing back on newly surfaced allegations that they shunned government transparency laws and appeared to have colluded with the leader of a wildlife advocacy group on policy matters.

A scathing 10-page memo says the behavior of commissioners Lorna Smith and Melanie Rowland posed “serious risks” to the state Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), “especially when it comes to avoiding a conflict of interest and favoritism.” The report also scrutinizes a former commissioner Gov. Bob Ferguson (D) chose to replace on the panel last year.

It is the latest twist in a multi-year drama involving the commission, which is often a battleground for groups fighting over how far the state should go in protecting wildlife or allowing

for hunting or fishing of various species. A separate probe ordered by the governor, looking at whether commissioners violated open meetings and public records laws, remains underway.

DFW Director Kelly Susewind had a top staffer prepare the newly released memo in May 2025. It was shared that month with Ferguson’s chief of staff and only became public through a records request by the Washington State Standard. Susewind’s move was unusual, as the commissioners oversee his department and he answers to the panel.

The report flags concerns about the named commissioners’ “tight relationship” with attorney Claire Davis, the president and chief executive officer of Washington Wildlife First.

While there are no transcripts of their frequent private meetings, the memo’s author said it looks like they

may have been “propagating an agenda” in line with the advocacy group’s policy priorities. Davis’ group, meanwhile, has been calling for Susewind to be removed from his job.

Rowland, Smith and Davis are blasting the memo, saying it is riddled with false and defamatory statements that harm their reputations. The commissioners worry it could unfairly influence the ongoing investigation.

Smith and Rowland each said they first saw the document Feb. 2 when told it would soon be released as part of a public records request.

It “is replete with assumptions, inferences, unsupported accusatory opinions, and incorrect conclusions,” Rowland wrote Susewind on Feb. 9.

Davis said Knoll “recklessly makes allegations of misconduct against me without any evidence of wrongdoing.”

Francisco Santiago-Ávila, Washington Wildlife First’s science and advocacy director, said they are poring through a trove of documents received from the department “that will help expose the selective, vindictive, and defamatory nature of this campaign to oust pro-wildlife commissioners. You will be hearing a lot more about this from us in the coming days and weeks.”

Smith said in a statement that when she first read the memo, “I was shocked to see the false and outrageous claims it contained, and even more so when I found out that it was written by an attorney.

“But after I reviewed it more carefully and compared it to other documents, the pieces began to fall together, and I realized that it reveals a lot about what department management has been doing behind closed doors over the past year,” she said. “I am

not going to comment further until I consult with my attorneys and decide upon my next course of action.”

Much of the commission’s strife can be traced to its controversial decision in November 2022 to stop recreational hunting of black bears in the spring.

Sportsmen’s Alliance, an Ohio-based organization, opposed the decision. Convinced commissioners misbehaved throughout the process, it sought their emails, texts and other communications to figure out if, in fact, they had failed to follow state law concerning the conduct of public meetings and preserving public records.

It took a lawsuit, but the group eventually received thousands of records in 2025.

On May 16, the group filed a petition asking Ferguson to remove commissioners Smith, Rowland, Barbara Baker, and John Lehmkuhl, alleging misconduct and malfeasance. They included some of the obtained records. Ferguson has not commented or acted on the petition.

Ten days earlier, Susewind had two boxes of records generated from the hunters’ group’s request delivered to Thomas Knoll Jr., the agency’s criminal justice legal liaison for law enforcement.

“Initial review of these documents raises concern regarding potential inappropriate conduct by several Fish and Wildlife Commissioners,” Susewind wrote Knoll on May 8. “I would like your independent assessment of the materials provided including a written opinion on whether the records indicate inappropriate conduct.”

Knoll submitted his memo on May 16 and Susewind shared a copy with Ferguson’s staff.

On June 20, the Office of Financial Management signed a contract with Chiedza Nziramasanga of Transformative Workplace Investigations to “provide a comprehensive investigation of a reported experience in a work unit to allow leadership to determine if any discrimination, retaliation and/or other policy violations occurred as alleged.”

It would not be until mid-August before Ferguson publicly acknowledged this investigation into the commission. He waited to do so until after Susewind formally asked him to look into the situation on Aug. 5.

The Knoll memo, along with the Sportsmen’s Alliance petition, was in the initial batch of documents provided to the investigator.

“This can be a good starting point to understand the issues that DFW had flagged,” Franklin Plaistowe, chief operations officer for Ferguson, wrote in an email to Nziramasanga.

Transformative Workplace Investigations was to turn in its final report on Friday, Feb. 13, but has received a one-month extension.

Susewind said he didn’t make the memo public last year because he did not want to “inadvertently bias that investigation.” He said commissioners could have seen it and all the other records generated from the Sportsmen’s Alliance request if they wanted.

“We did offer to go over documents with all commissioners both before and after the Thomas Knoll memo,” he said.

Commission Chair Jim Anderson agreed. “I was aware of it. I think we all had an opportunity to know what’s there,” he said.

Rowland and Smith said they don’t recall such an offer. “I most definitely did not see it,” Smith said.

‘Have each other on speed dial’

Soon after taking office, Ferguson withdrew two In-slee administration appointments to the commission. Materials obtained from the computer of one of those appointees, former commission vice chair Tim Ragen, steered Knoll’s attention to commissioners Smith and Rowland and Washington Wildlife First’s Davis.

Knoll contends the commissioners failed to recognize the importance of retaining records and did not promptly respond to records requests, including those involving commission-related communications made on personal devices.

Some of his sharpest critiques are directed at the relationship between Davis and Smith, Rowland and Ragen. He said they appeared to “have each other on speed dial.” They met regularly, often before commission meetings, and Davis corresponded directly with each, he noted, raising the spectre of potential conflicts of interest.

When Ferguson walked back Ragen’s appointment, Washington Wildlife First was among the groups that pressed the governor to keep him on the commission.

Knoll cited one email from 2023 where Davis invited commissioners to ask questions about a lawsuit she filed against the state agency on behalf of two clients.

“The record does not show what was discussed about the pending lawsuit, but this type of communication is clearly inconsistent,” with the commission rule to not engage in any activity which gives rise to the appearance of a conflict of interest, he wrote.

Rowland, an attorney, flatly denied discussing litigation against the department with Davis “or any other attorney for a party in litigation” with the agency.

Davis, in her statement, said her discussions with commissioners were “an appropriate, ethical, and protected exercise of my First Amendment right to speak to government officials on matters of public importance.” — **Jerry Cornfield, Washington State Standard**

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Obama-era greenhouse gas regulations rolled back

President Donald Trump and his top environmental policy officer finalized a move Feb. 12 to undo an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulation that laid the foundation for federal rules governing emissions of the greenhouse gases that cause climate change.

At a White House event, Trump and EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin said they were officially rolling back the “endangerment finding” that labeled greenhouse gases a threat to public health and provided a framework for the EPA to regulate emissions.

The 2009 finding, established under President Barack Obama, called climate change a danger to human health and therefore gave the EPA power to regulate greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide from cars and trucks.

Such regulations created a challenge for automakers and other industries, which dragged down the entire economy, according to Trump, administration officials and allies in Congress.

Democrats and their allies in environmental and climate activism, though, consider the measure a crucial tool to address climate

change and protect human health.

Undoing the finding will remove the economy-wide uncertainty, Trump argued.

“That is why, effective immediately, we are repealing the ridiculous endangerment finding and terminating all additional green emission standards imposed unnecessarily on vehicle models and engines between 2012 and 2027 and beyond,” he said.

Affordability argument

In its initial notice last year that it would repeal the endangerment finding, the EPA said it did not have the authority to regulate vehicle emissions.

With household costs, including transportation, expected to be a major theme in the fall’s midterm campaigns to determine control of Congress, members of both parties have framed it as an economic issue.

“This will be the largest deregulatory action in American history, and it will save the American people \$1.3 trillion in crushing regulations,” White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said at a press briefing.

Some Democrats and cli-

mate activists argue the rollback will hurt the country’s nascent renewable energy sector, driving up the cost of home heating, electricity and other common expenses.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) issued a lengthy joint statement slamming the announcement.

“The Trump EPA has fully abandoned its duty to protect the American people from greenhouse gas pollution and climate change. This shameful abdication—an

economic, moral, and political failure—will harm Americans’ health, homes, and economic well-being. It ignores scientific fact and common-sense observations to serve big political donors,” the senators said.

“This sham decision initially relied on a now thoroughly disgraced and abandoned ‘report’ by known climate deniers. Zeldin stuck to this charade anyway, undaunted by half a century of actual evidence, showing the fix was in from the beginning,” they continued.

Money and fossil fuels

The move outraged Democrats and climate activists when Zeldin first proposed it last summer. Climate activists say undoing the finding undercuts the federal government’s ability to address an issue critical to the U.S. and the entire world.

In a floor speech, Schumer blasted the rollback as a giveaway to fossil fuel companies, leaders of which contributed to Trump’s 2024 campaign.

Democratic attorneys general and environmental groups are likely to sue over the rollback. At least one lawsuit, from the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), was promised.

“EDF will challenge this decision in court, where evidence matters, and keep working with everyone who wants to build a better, safer and more prosperous future,” Fred Krupp, EDF president, said in a statement. — **Jacob Fischler and Ashley Murray, Washington State Standard**

Manage market volatility by selling direct beef

Despite cattle prices being near all-time highs, marketing beef direct-to-consumer still adds value to beef operations. Two updated University of Missouri (MU) Extension guides help producers understand the numbers and methods behind marketing your beef to consumers.

“Low cattle inventory has widened the gap between a finished animal’s live value and the total value of its retail cuts,” said Jake Hefley, MU Extension agriculture business specialist in Taney County. “Direct marketing gives producers an opportunity to capture part of that value rather than leaving it entirely to downstream segments of the supply chain.”

Producers can examine the revenue potential and additional costs of selling freezer beef with Evaluating Direct-to-Consumer Marketing Opportunities for Local Beef in Missouri and look at their cost of production to feed out their calves with On-Farm Beef Finishing Planning Budget. Both publications are available for free download at extension.missouri.edu/publications.

“Using both publications together helps producers compare the retail value of a processed animal with the cost to bring that animal to finished weight,” said Drew Kientzy, MU Extension senior research analyst. “Grocery store beef prices are front of mind for many consumers. Knowing your breakeven cost and offering competitive pricing for a high-quality product can

earn long-term customers.” Producers are encouraged to use the accompanying spreadsheet tools to help estimate the cost and revenue potential of their own direct-to-consumer beef sales.

Provide price stability

Strong markets draw attention, but producers know conditions can change quickly. When prices are high, it can be tempting to market everything through the sale barn, yet freezer beef doesn’t have to be an all-or-nothing decision, said Jennifer Lutes, MU Extension agricultural business field specialist in McDonald County.

Many farms can operate in both markets by selling more calves into today’s strong auction market while finishing a smaller number for direct customers (or at minimum not expanding direct-market commitments). The key is protecting your freezer-beef customer base now, Lutes said. Those relationships take time to build and will be the stabilizing income stream you’ll want in place when prices eventually ease.

“Consumers value quality and relationships, making the prices they are willing to pay less volatile than prices received at the local sale barn,” she said. “An established freezer beef business can help customers manage costs during high grocery prices and support farm income when cattle prices drop.” — **MU Extension**



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Shorter tylosin feeding periods reduce liver abscess risk

As consumer demand for beef continues to reach historic highs, feedlot operators are paying close attention to anything that affects cattle health, performance and carcass value—including liver abscesses, a longstanding and costly challenge in feedlot cattle.

To help address that issue, researchers from Texas A&M's Veterinary, Education, Research, & Outreach (VERO) initiative in Canyon, TX, partnered with the cattle feeding industry to study how tylosin, a commonly used feed antibiotic, can be managed to reduce liver abscess risk while also supporting responsible antibiotic use, including whether shorter feeding durations could still provide meaningful protection.

The Texas Cattle Feeders Association (TCFA)-supported study found that reduced-duration feeding strategies can lower liver abscess risk compared to not using tylosin at all,

though continuous feeding throughout the finishing period remains the most effective option for control.

Dr. Paul Morley, director of research for Texas A&M's VERO initiative within the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (VMBS), said the study was designed to help producers better understand the tradeoffs associated with different tylosin feeding strategies.

"Rather than prescribing a single solution, these findings provide producers, veterinarians, and nutritionists with clearer information to help weigh management decisions that affect animal health, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability," said Morley, the study's principal investigator.

A longstanding challenge

Liver abscesses have challenged the cattle feeding industry for decades,

with industry estimates suggesting that these infections cost the U.S. beef industry approximately \$257 million each year, which highlights the scale of the issue and its economic impact on feedlot operations.

"Liver abscesses represent a major loss to the cattle industry on an ongoing basis, and we're really no better at preventing them than we were decades ago," Morley said. "The only method that has consistently shown efficacy is feeding antimicrobials, primarily tylosin, and of course we want to use less if we can."

Beyond packer discounts, cattle affected by liver abscesses often gain weight less efficiently, making prevention both an animal health and economic concern for producers.

"There's evidence that cattle with abscesses don't perform as well," Morley said. "So, this is both a health and welfare issue."

Evidence-based insights

The study showed that cattle fed tylosin throughout the finishing period had the lowest overall risk of liver abscesses. Cattle fed tylosin for shorter periods still experienced reduced risk compared to cattle that received no tylosin, though not to the same degree as continuous feeding.

In practical terms, reduced-duration feeding refers to stopping tylosin earlier in the finishing period rather than feeding it continuously until harvest. Because cattle consume more feed as they grow, changes late in the feeding period have a larger impact on total antibiotic use.

"If producers stop use in the last 10% to 15% of the feeding period, it represents a significant portion of the total antibiotic use," Morley said.

That timing, he said, helps producers better un-

derstand how adjustments in feeding strategies affect both antibiotic use and liver abscess risk.

Morley emphasized that the project was built through extensive collaboration across the cattle feeding sector—a model he said reflects how complex industry challenges are addressed.

"This was truly an industry partnership that produced an industry-driven answer," Morley said. "It exemplifies how research at public universities is supposed to work. The scientists involved were not limited to academic—this was a multidisciplinary collaboration across the cattle industry, bringing together researchers from five universities, production scientists and veterinarians from private companies, and partners from the pharmaceutical sector."

The research was funded by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, conducted with invaluable support from a commercial feedlot where the research took place. Additional industry partners contributed data to ensure the findings had the greatest relevance for real-world production systems. This level of collaboration is especially important as consumer demand for beef remains strong and the industry seeks science-based solutions to support sustainable production.

"Consumer beef demand is at a 40-year high, which shows producers are taking many of the correct steps to produce a beef product

consumers desire," said Ben Weinheimer, TCFA president and CEO. "At the same time, the cattle feeding industry is always looking for ways to improve feeding efficiencies and cattle health."

Weinheimer said partnerships between member feedlots, allied industry, TCFA and Texas A&M's VERO program are critical to maintaining progress.

"Having science-backed information helps cattle feeders make decisions that move the industry forward," he said. "It also allows them to continue producing the highest-quality, safest beef for consumers—not just here in the U.S. but across the globe."

While the study provides clearer insight into how tylosin feeding duration influences liver abscess risk, Morley said important questions remain—particularly around why liver abscesses develop and how antibiotics reduce risk.

He said answering those questions will be key to identifying future prevention strategies that reduce reliance on antimicrobials while still protecting cattle health and performance.

For now, the research highlights the value of science-based, industry-driven collaboration in addressing complex challenges facing the cattle feeding industry—providing producers with data they can use to make informed decisions in a rapidly evolving production landscape. — Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

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Managing body condition scores for outliers

It's a question that many cattle producers often ponder: Is it more costly to have fat or thin cows in the herd, and how should they manage the problem?

On an episode of the Beef Cattle Institute's (BCI) "Cattle Chat" podcast, Kansas State (K-State) University experts discussed whether producers should be more concerned with a fat or a thin cow at the end of the calving season.

The consensus? The team agreed that thin cows are more costly due to potential calving difficulties and a longer infertility window between calving cycles, but "it depends on where we are in the production cycle," K-State veterinarian Bob Larson said.

"If we are late in pregnancy, we are headed into calving because I would rather cows be a little thin," he said.

Larson said thin cows in the herd produce less colostrum, which can affect the calf. The specialists note that if low body-conditioning scores are uncommon in the herd and there are cows with scores of 3 or 4, producers should bring them in for a closer look.

The possibility of a health issue in thin cows is more likely than in fat cows.

The experts noted that if producers are having difficulty with thin cows, it will take approximately 30-60 days to see a change, assuming a daily gain of two pounds.

"You're going to take at least 30 to 60 days to effectively change them," said Jason Warner, an associate professor of animal sciences, and Extension beef specialist. "Can I get a cow to gain two pounds a day? Yes, but that does take a lot of energy to be able to do that."

The K-State experts encourage producers to spend extra time checking on their thin cows to ensure there are no health concerns causing the issue. Being aware of the nutritional value of rations will also help when managing thin cows.

To learn more about managing body conditioning for cows or to learn more from the beef cattle experts, check out the BCI "Cattle Chat" podcast. For questions, reach out on social media or email bci@ksu.edu. — K-State Research and Extension

Three strategies to improve profitability for small cow-calf operations

Running a small cow-calf operation can be rewarding, but it is not without challenges. Larger farms spread their costs over more cows, making it harder for smaller herds to compete. There also tend to be scale efficiencies related to labor, input purchases and other expenses that make larger operations more economically efficient. But smaller producers can be profitable, and this article focuses on three strategies small operations should consider to improve their profitability.

Keep overhead costs in check

The reality is that an operation running 30-40 cows can't have the same overhead structure as one running several hundred. This sounds obvious, but some new cow-calf operations are badly overcapitalized from the start. Smaller operations should focus on being lean with respect to equipment, facilities and other fixed costs. In a lot of cases, this means limiting capital investment and ensuring that the scale of equipment is proportional to the scale of the operation.

However, performing custom work with owned equipment is another way to spread

that capital investment over more hours of use and add a second income stream. Regardless of what approach is taken, small cow-calf operations must be aware that disproportionately large overhead cost structures can be a major drain on profitability.

Outsource strategically

A small cow-calf operation does not have to do everything themselves and may be best served by outsourcing some farm operations. The first area that comes to mind is hay production. It may be more economical for a small cow-calf operation to purchase hay, rather than own hay equipment and devote land and time resources to producing it themselves.

In some areas, hay is not easy to source and may require significant effort. But by spending time developing relationships with hay producers and planning for winter feeding needs well in advance, the operation may be able to avoid significant hay production expenses.

Outsourcing other farm operations may also be worth consideration. For example, it may be easier to hire someone to transport cattle to market, rather than owning and main-

taining hauling equipment that isn't used very often. Heifer development is another area that can be a bit more challenging for small operations. It may make sense for a small operation to purchase a few bred heifers each year and focus on terminal production, rather than developing a small number of heifers on their own.

Outsourcing is typically justified on the basis of limiting investment (i.e. avoiding overcapitalization) or limiting variable expenses. But it also frees up another very valuable resource—time. Most small cow-calf operators have off-farm employment or other significant off-farm commitments.

By outsourcing some farm operations, additional time becomes available and can be devoted to the elements of the operation the farmer chooses to focus on.

Explore value-added opportunities

While the first two considerations were largely focused on cost control, this one is focused on the revenue side of the profit equation. Since production costs tend to be higher for smaller operations, it is even more imperative that they look for ways to add value to the cattle they sell.

Since they are likely to sell

cattle in smaller groups, they have an even greater incentive to consider co-mingled/value-added sales where they can potentially get price premiums associated with larger lot sizes and health programs. They also have more incentive to consider direct-to-consumer markets such as freezer beef, farmers' markets, etc.

While everyone will be comfortable adding value in their own way, the point is that smaller operations need to focus on ways to increase profit per head, since they have a smaller number of head from which to profit.

Small cow-calf operations

should recognize that they are unlikely to successfully compete with large operations on scale and cost efficiency. For that reason, they need to approach their operations differently and utilize the unique advantages that come with being lean and flexible.

By carefully managing their overhead cost structures and outsourcing operations that can be done more efficiently by other operations, they have the potential to see significant cost benefits. And by exploring value-added marketing opportunities, they may be able to capture revenue benefits as well. — **Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky**

Grazing during spring green-up

Seeing the bright green new growth pop up in pastures signals the end of winter and the transition into spring. As that short green carpet starts to come up, cattle start chasing that short growth and may turn their noses up to hay they were previously eating well. However, allowing cattle to nip off this short regrowth can slow down the pasture growth moving into the spring.

Research at the U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center in 2011 suggests that 500 pounds of forage growth per acre is lost when grass is grazed while still short in the spring.

How short should we graze pastures?

The type of grass in your pasture will determine how short it should be grazed. When grazing most grasses like fescue, orchard grass, Bermuda, timothy and crabgrass, you should leave 3 inches or more so the plant has enough leaf material to regrow in a timely manner. Grazing below 3 inches leads to slower regrowth and potential for root loss under the soil. If grazed short repeatedly, producers can start to see thinning forage stands and more weed encroachment in those pastures.

In Missouri, most cattle producers are grazing fescue. In addition to plant health concerns, the ergovaline in fescue constricts blood vessels and causes symptoms like heat stress, poor average daily gains, and loss of tail switches, ear-tips or gangrene of feet. The ergovaline is concentrated in the bottom couple inches of the plant, so maintaining a grazing height of 3 inches or higher limits the ergovaline that cattle consume and reduces some of those animal health con-

cerns.

Many livestock producers have incorporated native warm-season grasses like big bluestem, little bluestem, Indian grass and gama grass into their grazing systems. Those species have a taller growing point and should have 12 inches or higher left behind to regrow.

How do we avoid overgrazing at the beginning of spring?

Using a sacrifice lot or pasture is an effective way to minimize overgrazing on most of your pastures. Choose a pasture that may be weedy or need to be renovated and congregate your herd there while you feed hay during the winter. This allows you to keep the herd off the rest of the early grass growth until the pastures have grown to at least 6 inches.

Unrolling hay bales or moving hay rings across the sacrifice pasture helps to improve soil fertility by distributing manure and organic matter from wasted hay. Each winter, a new sacrifice pasture can be used to incrementally improve your pastures or you can have a designated sacrifice area for convenience if mud is not a major concern in your area.

What are the ultimate goals?

As spring comes and grass starts to green up, the main consideration is to limit your herd from setting back the pastures for the rest of the growing season by nipping off all the short growth. Using a sacrifice pasture and stored feed and hay lets you protect the rest of your pastures and make soil improvements over time.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Picking, University of Missouri (MU) Extension livestock specialist, at 417-256-2391 or pickinge@missouri.edu. — **MU Extension**

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Culver's debuts new FFA contest to support local chapters

With FFA Week at the end of February, Culver's is strengthening its support for the next generation of agricultural leaders with the launch of their brand-new True Blue Chapters Contest, along with in-restaurant efforts that allow guests to support local chapters. These initiatives kick off a year of continued investment in the future of agriculture through the national restaurant chain's Thank You Farmers Project.

The Culver's True Blue Chapters Contest builds on the brand's former FFA Ambassador Program, expanding its reach to support and celebrate even more FFA members nationwide. In this refreshed program, guests, FFA members and advisors are invited to nominate local chapters they believe should be recognized as a Culver's True Blue Chapter.

Those submitting a nomination will be prompted to

answer the following questions about the chapter:

- How is this FFA chapter involved in their community?
- How would the members and advisors in this FFA chapter make excellent representatives of their community, FFA and Culver's?
- Why does this chapter deserve to become a Culver's True Blue Chapter?
- Does the FFA chapter you're nominating work with a Culver's restaurant, and if so, which one?

Five chapters will be selected, each with the opportunity to earn up to \$2,500 by participating in Thank You Farmers Project events and activities throughout the year. The program recognizes chapters for their leadership, engagement and impact in their communities, while providing meaningful financial support to help fund local priorities and educational opportunities.

"At its core, FFA Week is about celebrating young people who are shaping the future of agriculture," said Alison Demmer, senior public relations manager at Culver's. "Through our Thank You Farmers Project, we're proud to support FFA members throughout the entire year to help chapters access resources, gain visibility and continue learning through hands-on experiences."

Nominations will be accepted through March 13. Chapters can be nominated at culvers.com/true-blue-chapters.

Culver's guests were also able to support the future of agriculture by donating \$1 in exchange for a Blue Barn decal at participating restaurants. Blue Barn decals were available Feb. 23-27. Guests who purchased a decal were invited to sign their name and display it on restaurant walls, creating a visible show of support for local FFA chapters.

Proceeds will benefit chapter programs and help support the next generation of agricultural leaders.

FFA Week serves as the first major initiative of Culver's Thank You Farmers Project in 2026. Throughout the year, the brand will continue to spotlight agriculture through a series of programs and moments, including:

- The Twelfth Annual Scoops of Thanks Day: This annual fundraiser invites guests to donate \$1 for a scoop of Fresh Frozen Cus-

tard, with all proceeds going to support local FFA chapters. In 2025 alone, over \$170,000 was raised through Scoops of Thanks Day. This year, Scoops of Thanks Day is May 7.

- National FFA Convention: Each year, Culver's has a presence at the National FFA Convention to connect with FFA members from across the country and encourage involvement at a local level.

- Concretes for a Cause: Every year during Concretes for a Cause, \$1 from

every Concrete Mixer sold is donated to a local food bank to help relieve food insecurity.

"FFA Week reminds us why this work matters," Demmer said. "Behind every meal we serve in our restaurants are farmers, families and young people who care deeply about the future of agriculture. Supporting FFA chapters is one way we can say thank you and continue showing up for the people who make our food system possible year-round." — **Culver's**

Cattlemen's Beef Board elects new officers for 2026

Cattle producers Dr. Cheryl DeVuyst of Oklahoma, Terry Quam of Wisconsin and Kalena Bruce of Missouri are the new leaders of the Cattlemen's

Beef Promotion & Research Board (CBB). Elected by their fellow CBB members at the 2026 Cattle Industry Convention in Nashville, TN, this new officer team is responsible for guiding the national Beef Checkoff throughout 2026.

DeVuyst, the 2025 vice chair, is now the CBB chair, while Quam will transition from his role as the 2025 secretary-treasurer to become the 2026 vice chair. Bruce is the newest member of the officer team, taking on Quam's former responsibilities as secretary-treasurer.

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 Agricultural Economics department.

DeVuyst is involved with numerous agricultural organizations, including Oklahoma CattleWomen, Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, National Cattlemen's Beef 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.

"As I step into this role, I do so at a pivotal time for the beef industry," DeVuyst said. "Producers are navigating a challenging environment shaped by tight cattle supplies, rising costs and an increasingly complex marketplace, all while consumer expectations continue to evolve. In moments like this, the role of the Beef Checkoff is more important than ever. It's an honor to serve as chair of Cattlemen's Beef Board and to work alongside other producers and industry partners who share a commitment to protecting and strengthening beef demand."

Vice Chair Terry Quam operates an Angus seedstock operation, Marda Angus Farms, in Lodi, WI.

Since 1940, the farm has raised cattle that meet the needs of commercial cattlemen and purebred producers throughout the country. Quam has been a longtime, active member of his community and the agricultural industry at large.

His activities and leadership roles include the Wisconsin Beef Council, NCBA, Farm Bureau, local and state cattlemen's associations, president of the Lodi Agricultural Fair, chairman of the University of Wisconsin Discovery Farms, the Cotton and Wisconsin Corn Boards and Wisconsin Corn Growers.

A fifth-generation farmer from Stockton, MO, Kalena Bruce is a licensed CPA with a bachelor's of science in accounting from Southwest Baptist University. She is the managing partner of Integrity Squared, a CPA firm she started more than a decade ago. Bruce and her husband, Billy, also run a commercial cow-calf operation. Bruce is a member of Missouri Farm Bureau, NCBA, the Missouri Cattlemen's Association, the Missouri Young Farmer & Rancher Committee and the American Foundation for Agriculture. She was also a member of Class XVIII Agriculture Leaders of Tomorrow.

"It's a pleasure to welcome this talented team of officers as they step into their roles for 2026," said Greg Hanes, CEO of CBB. "Their diverse backgrounds, leadership and passion for beef will be instrumental as we continue advancing the Beef Checkoff's work. I'm excited about what we can accomplish together as we focus on growing demand, strengthening consumer trust and supporting a strong future for the beef industry."

For more information about the Beef Checkoff and its programs, including promotion, research, foreign marketing, industry information, consumer information and safety, contact CBB at 303-220-9890 or visit drivingdemandforbeef.com. — **CBB**

52nd Bull Sale!

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LOOSLI FLASHDRIVE 524 • #5174189

ProS 157, HB 69, GM 88, CED 13, BW -0.6, WW 81, YW 133, ADG 0.33, DMI 1.27, MILK 32, ME 16, HPG 11, CEM 6, STAY 20, MARB 0.92, YG 0.11, CW 34, REA 0.26, FAT 0.04



LOOSLI FLASHDRIVE 529 • #5174199

ProS 158, HB 87, GM 70, CED 13, BW -1.9, WW 82, YW 144, ADG 0.39, DMI 1.35, MILK 33, ME 20, HPG 12, CEM 9, STAY 22, MARB 0.53, YG 0.09, CW 31, REA 0.14, FAT 0.02



LOOSLI COMPLETE 531 • #5174203

ProS 92, HB 40, GM 52, CED 13, BW -1.4, WW 84, YW 139, ADG 0.34, DMI 1.08, MILK 30, ME 16, HPG 15, CEM 7, STAY 13, MARB 0.40, YG 0.04, CW 25, REA 0.19, FAT 0.01



LOOSLI LEAD 533 • #5174207

ProS 120, HB 65, GM 55, CED 8, BW -1.6, WW 79, YW 126, ADG 0.30, DMI 1.02, MILK 28, ME 12, HPG 14, CEM 6, STAY 17, MARB 0.52, YG 0.22, CW 31, REA -0.07, FAT 0.04

Reference sires include:

Loosli Lead Off 333 • #4838476
Bieber Flashdrive L179 • #4789398

VGW Advantage 343 • #4766803
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Texas A&M Forest Service awards \$14M to fire departments

Texas A&M Forest Service approved an additional \$14 million in funding for grants to Texas volunteer fire departments on Feb. 13.

The 89th Texas Legislature approved a historic \$192 million appropriation to Texas A&M Forest Service through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program (RVFDAP), established by Texas House Bill 2604 in 2001.

fighting equipment and training.

This round of funding is the third scheduled dissemination of that allocation for Texas volunteer fire departments. This support addresses volunteer fire department requests for personal protective equipment and training aids that were requested on or before November 2024.

“With this funding from the

requests,” said Jason Keiningham, capacity building department head for Texas A&M Forest Service. “This provides support to some fire departments that may have been on waiting lists for years.”

Meeting rural fire department needs

The first two rounds of funding awards occurred in October, with \$164 million awarded for 558 fire trucks and 321 slip-on units or mobile water systems, and an additional \$17.6 million awarded in December for rescue equipment and dry hydrants. These

grants, along with this round, total \$195 million to Texas volunteer fire departments.

Although assistance requests made prior to November 2024 have been largely satisfied by this third round of funding from the recent legislative allocation, Texas volunteer fire departments continue to experience ongoing needs for vehicles, equipment, safety gear and training.

Recognizing this continuing need, during the legislative session, the RVFDAP also appropriated approximately \$88 million in base funding for fiscal years 2026-27—the most ever allocated—to address

ongoing needs for critical equipment at the local level.

“This additional base funding allowed us to increase reimbursement levels in certain categories to reflect rising equipment costs better, while also reducing the financial burden on departments by lowering cost-share requirements,” Keiningham said.

FireConnect access

Texas fire departments can access critical resources through FireConnect, a modernized, centralized database managed by Texas A&M Forest Service. Designed to enhance

operational and administrative effectiveness, FireConnect serves as a streamlined portal where departments can apply for state and federally funded grants and assistance.

Beyond financial support, the platform acts as a statewide directory for public and inter-agency use, offering a portal for incident reporting and a searchable equipment database. This new feature can help agencies during complex, fast-moving emergencies by rapidly identifying and securing the mutual aid equipment needed to protect Texas communities. — **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**

“This additional base funding allowed us to increase reimbursement levels in certain categories to reflect rising equipment costs better, while also reducing the financial burden on departments by lowering cost-share requirements.”

— Jason Keiningham

The program provides grants to rural volunteer fire departments for essential fire-

legislature, we’ve been able to expedite the awards schedule to cover the list of unfunded

What to know about New World screwworm

New World screwworm (NWS), *Cochliomyia hominivorax*, was eradicated from the continental U.S. decades ago through a coordinated effort that pushed the pest into Central America, and for years, a biological barrier was maintained in Panama. The fly resurfaced in southern Mexico in late 2024.

While the U.S. remains free of an established NWS population, recent developments, including sterile fly releases in Texas, expanded treatment options and new infrastructure investments, highlight continued concern among animal health officials.

NWS larvae infest open wounds and feed on living tissue, causing pain, swelling, foul odor and rapid tissue damage that can be fatal in less than two weeks if untreated. Female flies lay eggs in wounds, mucous membranes and body openings. In cattle, risk is highest after branding, tagging, dehorning, castration and at newborn navels, though even minor injuries can be targeted. Because females mate only once, control has relied on releasing sterile males to disrupt reproduction.

The sterile insect technique has historically been the hallmark of screwworm control and eradication. Sterile fly release has expanded into areas of northern Mexico and strategic locations up to 50 miles north into Texas. The goal is to create a preventive buffer zone inside the U.S., not just in Mexico, to intercept any flies that might move north. Movement controls have also been part of the re-

sponse, and southern border ports between the U.S. and Mexico remain closed to live ruminants.

Treatment options for control and prevention have also expanded, including emergency approval for macrocyclic lactone products including Ivomec (ivermectin) and Dectomax (doramectin). Exzolt Cattle-CA1 (fluralaner) has also been conditionally approved as a topical solution for prevention and treatment. Use of these products in response protocols may occur under veterinary guidance and, in some cases, extra-label drug use provisions.

The opening of the sterile fly dispersal facility in Edinburg, TX, in mid-February marked a major step forward. This facility will allow USDA to distribute millions of sterile male flies, strengthening the biological barrier designed to prevent establishment of the pest. USDA also announced plans for a domestic sterile fly production facility nearby.

The production plant represents an investment of roughly \$750 million and is expected to eventually produce up to 300 million sterile flies per week, reducing reliance on international production and significantly expanding preparedness and response capacity.

In parallel, the USDA NWS Grand Challenge was announced to provide up to \$100 million in funding to support research, surveillance and improved control tools aimed at preventing NWS. — **Rosslyn Biggs, DVM, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle specialist**

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CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	Claw	PAP	HP
15	-2.3	73	118	1.38	0.34	0.52	12.1
Milk	Teat	FL	CW	Marb	REA	SM	SC
30	0.85	1.14	51	0.57	0.96	94	270



SITZ Hi-Country 727N Reg # 21204880

CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	Claw	PAP	HP
4	0.8	75	130	2.60	0.30	2.56	9.3
Milk	Teat	FL	CW	Marb	REA	SM	SC
36	0.80	1.12	56	0.50	0.93	79	251



SITZ Hi-Country 692N Reg # 21204852

CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	Claw	PAP	HP
8	-0.8	71	127	1.05	0.24	-1.04	13.1
Milk	Teat	FL	CW	Marb	REA	SM	SC
28	0.85	1.25	55	0.71	0.93	92	290



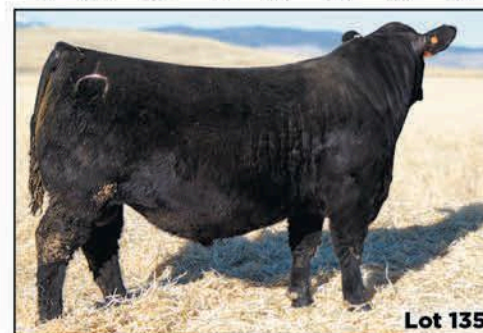
SITZ Insignia 671N Reg # 21251753

CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	Claw	PAP	HP
8	0.7	93	156	0.76	0.33	-0.73	20.4
Milk	Teat	FL	CW	Marb	REA	SM	SC
27	0.99	1.08	79	0.79	0.76	116	336



SITZ Heritage 698N Reg # 21204855

CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	Claw	PAP	HP
11	-1.5	71	132	0.88	0.45	1.62	13.8
Milk	Teat	FL	CW	Marb	REA	SM	SC
28	0.70	1.18	57	0.83	0.60	108	313



SITZ Eternity 597N Reg # 21204787

CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	Claw	PAP	HP
9	0.7	87	146	1.41	0.39	0.33	14.3
Milk	Teat	FL	CW	Marb	REA	SM	SC
31	0.85	1.14	78	0.78	1.00	100	341

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Records that matter: The data behind better cattle

Coming off the holidays, January always seems to be a whirlwind. Cattlemen's Congress, Denver and the mountain of catch-up creates a situation of more work for many of us. February is always welcome; the unofficial kickoff of spring bull sale season and calving season for many, it's the beginning of a fresh start. These months are also an opportunity to clean up, clean out and take stock of what worked and what didn't in the year prior. For me, the reflection always leads back to my notes and records from the previous year.

There's nothing glamorous about records. Whether they are jotted down on the backs of receipts, scribbled into a red book or entered key stroke by key stroke into a software program, the story they tell is one of the most invaluable pieces of both our personal operations and our collective Charolais story. They are the foundation of everything we do but often not exciting enough to ever be a coffeshop conversation.

Every jotted down note, scribble and key stroke takes us one step beyond assumption and one step closer to a data driven decision. And in seed-stock production our records—the data we record—becomes the bridge between the cattle

we raise and the value our customers have come to expect to capture. I don't have to tell anyone reading this that our commercial customer isn't buying a pedigree, they are buying the predictable performance and managed risk that pedigree helps to ensure. Solid, submitted data is how we continue to meet those expectations.

We need yearling weights. The gap we have in yearling weights submissions I would challenge our membership to rectify in 2026. As a breed membership that knows firsthand that pounds pay, we need yearling weights from a reliable, calibrated scale, on animals between 320 and 410 days old to paint the same picture for the industry that we see in our pastures year in and year out.

Without yearling weights, our genetic evaluation systems rely more heavily on correlated traits rather than actual measurements. Filling in the pieces of an animal's true performance record strengthens the predictive power for the traits our customers rely on us to deliver. Collecting and submitting yearling weights is one of the simplest, most cost-effective ways we can strengthen the confidence behind the cattle we market.

Remember, those weights

can easily be pulled from carcass ultrasound information but only if you, the member, request that those weights are contributed. Remember, genomic tests must be continually trained with actual phenotypic records for us to be able to get the most accurate information. And EPDs, as we all know, are only as good as the data we contribute to build them. Take advantage of the Genomic Credit Program in 2026. We're doing our best—the best in the industry—with a "help us help you" approach to genomic testing. We currently offer the cheapest genomic testing of all breed associations.

We should all be focused on tying more data to genomic testing, and the Genomic Credit Program incentivizes that for producers. It recognizes both the opportunity and the reality producers face. Genomic testing costs money, and like every other input, it has to earn its place. By helping offset that cost, the program lowers the barrier to participation while reinforcing the most important piece of the process: submitting data. The goal is not simply to test more cattle. The goal is to tie those test results back to weights, ultrasounds and other performance measures so our genetic evaluations continue to get stronger

and more reliable. When that happens, EPD accuracy improves faster, selection decisions get clearer and the cattle we market come with a higher level of confidence for the buyer writing the check.

Genomics are the escalator to breed improvement. Data and accurate, reliable records are the electricity that powers that escalator. The Genomic

Credit Program exists to encourage you to connect the dots between genomic test information, the data you capture and submit and the animals you visually assess every day. Without a connection between all three of those dots, we're leaving opportunity on the table as a breed, and you're leaving opportunity on the table for your customers. Wel-

come to the busy season. Let's continue to get it right. Collect the data that pays dividends for the operation, the association and, most importantly, the commercial customer. Let's make 2026 a year of record building and record breaking we can all be proud of. — **Brett Spader, American-International Charolais Association executive vice president**

Reimagining ranching and reclaiming value

Today's industrial beef industry strips away the identity of the rancher and the integrity of the product. At Charolais Craft Beef Cooperative, we believe it's time for something different—a model where the ranchers regain power, consumers know the story behind their beef and the Charolais breed finally gets the national platform it deserves.

We're not building a business for Wall Street. We're building a resilient, transparent, producer-owned system that turns cattle into legacy and

price-takers into profit-sharers.

What we're building

The cooperative starts small and smart:

- Five founding investors, each committing \$200,000 and 100 cattle/year.

- Cattle are toll processed, keeping value with the rancher.

- Growth is steady: as each seat generates revenue, a new one is added.

- 10-seat caper co-op, then a new regional co-op is launched.

This isn't just a brand. It's a system. Each cooperative is supported by professionals, governed by ranchers and focused on building a premium, national craft beef identity.

How it works

- Supply chain integration. From feedlot to foodservice, cattle stay within a trusted ecosystem.

- Guaranteed volume and quota. Investors secure processing capacity and distribution access.

- Revenue sharing. Proceeds flow back to seat holders based on cattle supplied.

- Access to lending. Seats can be collateralized—real equity, not just a buy-in.

This balance of ownership, cash flow and equity makes every seat an appreciating asset.

Investor returns

Each \$200,000 seat is projected to:

- Break even by year 3.
- Deliver \$1.2 million in cumulative proceeds over 10 years.

- Earn \$35,000 in year 1 and \$157,000 by year 10.

Returns are tied directly to cattle supplied, not manipulated by outside shareholders. Reserve, working capital and discretionary funds safeguard against volatility and allow for continued growth.

What you get for your investment

- Equity ownership: One seat = one vote plus real value.

- Fast payback: Early capital returns if unspent in year 1.

- Profit participation: Share in growing proceeds, starting year 1.

- Professional ops: General manager, admin, sales team—

your investment is managed smartly.

- Transferable asset: Seats can be passed down, sold or used for financing.

- Premium brand: Backed by the American-International Charolais Association (AICA) and managed by a national parent corporation.

This is agriculture meets entrepreneurship—built for families, corporate ranches, Indigenous groups and producers who want more than a price per pound.

Local roots, national reach

Each regional cooperative operates independently but under a unified brand managed by the Franchise Parent Corporation—a benefit corporation owned by AICA. It:

- Upholds brand consistency.

- Invests in national marketing and chef outreach.

- Supports legal and compliance across co-ops.

This ensures every co-op grows locally with national power behind it—a system that scales without losing its soul.

Real numbers, real returns

From cow-calf to processing, we break down every cost—feed, vet care, insurance, yardage—and back every assumption with USDA data and real market pricing (as of July 2025). That means:

- Transparent cost structures.

- 60/40 Choice/Select grading assumptions.

- Built-in margin for realistic and conservative financial planning.

Our financial model isn't fantasy. It's a conservative plan that's already proving profitable.

Join the movement

A \$200,000 seat buys you a stake in the future of beef:

- A voice in governance.
- A share in the profits.
- Collateral for growth.

- A place in history as we reshape ranching.

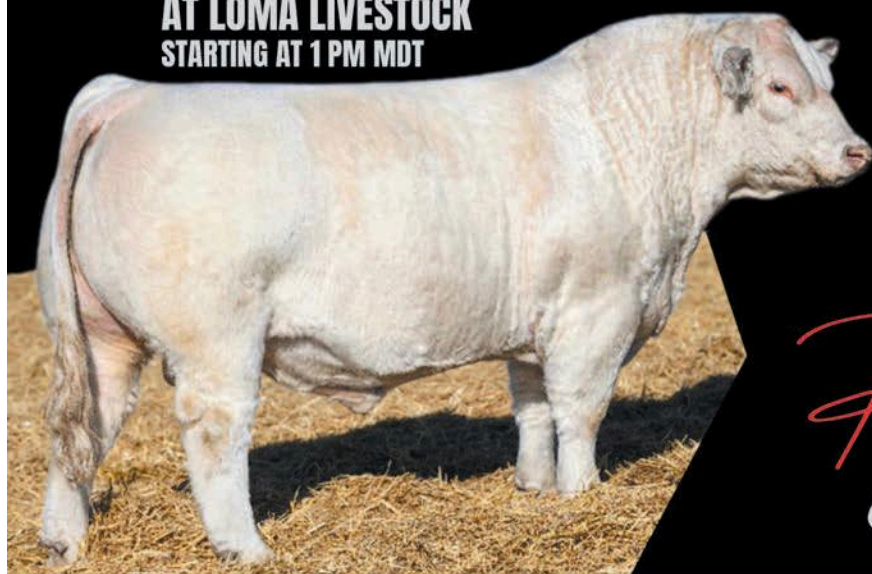
This isn't just about beef. It's about building a better system for generations to come.

For more information contact Larry Dalton at 587-223-5363 or yieldsolutionsinc@outlook.com. — AICA

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SATURDAY, APRIL 4TH, 2026

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Rethinking total industry value in beef

The American-International Charolais Association (AICA) is partnering with Frontier's Market and its advanced AI development team to tackle key challenges facing the beef industry—improving feed efficiency, enhancing red meat yield, increasing the accuracy of genetic selection tools for registered bulls and expanding understanding of how genetics can address industry needs through breed complementarity and heterosis.

The U.S. beef industry has always been defined by efficiency. Over the last seven decades, we've watched the cow herd shrink to its lowest level in 74 years—yet pounds of beef produced continues to climb. That's a true testament to the hard work, creativity and resilience of beef producers.

Charolais breeders have played a central role in this progress by creating genetics that respond to industry needs. Now, with land, labor and capital more limited than ever, it's time to focus squarely on efficiency and red meat yield and total profitability.

For decades, the industry rewarded "black-hided" commodity cattle and an over-focused focus on quality grade. But today's economics tell a different story.

Dr. Duane Wulf's Power of Yield Industry Study compared average Charolais and Angus non-parent bull EPDs.

The conclusion was clear: yield—not just quality grade—is the next major driver of profitability. Producing more pounds of high-quality beef with fewer resources is where the industry is headed—and Charolais genetics are uniquely positioned to lead.

In fact, industry benchmarks around yield value have risen by 18% in just six months. The signals are loud and clear: red meat yield matters more than ever.

Exclusive to registered Charolais sires, the Terminal Sire Index (TSI) is the most effective selection tool for maximizing red meat yield from British-based cow herds—without compromising feed efficiency, carcass quality, or key management traits.

Refined by Dr. Bob Weaber of Kansas State University, TSI reflects current grids and market realities and combines genomic-enhanced accuracy with real-world grid value weighting.

The result: confidence in bull selection and measurable profitability in the feedyard, which serves as the industry backbone to Value Trace's AI algorithm.

If TSI sets the direction, Value Trace delivers the proof. Exclusive to those using registered Charolais bulls, Value Trace is the first AI-driven breed association platform that integrates:

- Feeder calf marketing opportunities.

- Real-time feed efficiency and weight measurement.

- Kinship determination.
- Feedlot management and health behavioral insights.

- Pre-harvest actual red meat yield prediction, beyond yield grade.

- Genetic selection tools for registered Charolais sires and commercial dams.

- All backed by EPDs from registered Charolais sires, as proven by hundreds of thousands of real-world feedlot & harvest records.

By linking genomic predictions with real-world feedyard and harvest data, Value Trace creates a powerful feedback loop that both validates EPDs and rewards producers.

Pilot results

- 5.9% feed efficiency advantage. Charolais-sired cattle outperformed Angus-sired cattle in late-stage feed conversion.

- Reduced losses. Fewer cases of late-term heart failure than in straight-bred Angus fed cattle.

- Profit impact: Charolais cattle returned \$1,057.03 more per head profit compared to control cattle.

Value Trace also revealed opportunities to optimize harvest timing:

- Cattle pulled early: 13%.
- Profit increase: \$13,115.81 total (+5.9%).

- Per head profit: \$1,311.58.

By shifting harvest windows, producers captured

significant added value—proof that smarter data leads to stronger returns.

Why this matters now

Over-selection for quality grade has created unintended consequences: excessive resource use, rising feed costs, and serious yield-grade issues. The solution lies in Charolais genetics.

By enrolling calves in Value Trace, producers gain access to AI-driven insights and a premium marketplace where performance is verified—not assumed. Feeders can buy with confidence, knowing exactly what genetics bring to the table.

The market signals are

here—even if the cattle to meet them aren't. With packers developing more muscle-based grids and rewarding red meat yield, the opportunity is clear.

Remember: it takes three years from turning out a Charolais bull until his progeny are harvested. Don't miss the window to capture the market and profit potential.

By enrolling calves in Value Trace, producers gain access to AI-driven insights and a premium marketplace where performance is verified—not assumed. Feeders can buy with confidence, knowing exactly what genetics bring to the table—and how to manage them. — AICA

Built for today's beef industry—and tomorrow's

Over the last 20 years, the Charolais breed has made vast improvements in marbling. In fact, breed average marbling EPDs have nearly tripled—climbing from 0.06 to 0.17, a remarkable 183% increase. This upward trend means Charolais-sired cattle are better positioned than ever to meet the market's demand for high-quality beef.

At the same time, the entire beef industry has seen a major shift in growth and performance:

Finished feedlot weights and carcass weights have risen significantly over the past decade, with the 2025 average steer weights consistently at 1,600-plus pounds.

According to USDA trendlines, steer carcass weights increase by an average of 5.2 lbs. per year, and heifer carcass weights by 5.5 lbs. per year, as referenced by a constant upward trend over the last 45 years.

The prediction: this trend will continue and maybe accelerate thanks to the lowest U.S. national cow herd numbers in 74 years.

And every time carcass weights increase, Charolais genetics shine brighter. Why?

- Greater ability to grade Prime and Choice in an envi-

ronment of heavier carcasses.

- Charolais-sired fed cattle, no matter the dam, consistently deliver Choice and Prime in today's cattle feeding environment, plus allow for added efficiency and yield financial advantages.

- Reduced risk of bovine congestive heart failure (BCHF), a growing concern in high-performance cattle. Charolais genetics greatly reduce the incidence of BCHF in the nation's largely British-based cow herd, allowing for quality grade to be expressed without early mortality.

- Superior structural soundness to handle added weight without compromise.

- More efficient growth, delivering pounds that pay.

The Charolais advantage

In today's market—and the one ahead—Charolais cattle deliver quality, efficiency and durability. With the need for rising carcass weights and continued industry emphasis on high grading cattle, Charolais-sired fed cattle are positioned to add more value than ever before. — American-International Charolais Association

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The value of genomically enhanced EPDs

Lindskov Ranch sits in the wide-open plains of northwest

South Dakota near the town of Isabel, where cattle have been

part of the family's story since 1934. What began with Todd and Bryce Lindskov's grandfather, William "Bill" Lindskov, has grown into a multigenerational operation built on a herd

that delivers carcass performance and maternal strength with continuous improvement always top of mind.

Today, the ranch runs roughly 5,000 commercial An-

gus cows, all bred to Charolais bulls, along with 1,250 registered Charolais females and additional registered Angus, Hereford and Simmental herds. From the beginning, the Lindskov philosophy has centered on identifying cattle that can both mother and grow, because in their part of the world, functionality and longevity aren't optional.

"Our primary goal is to provide performance bulls to commercial breeders across the country," Lindskov says. "We put a lot of emphasis on feet, udder quality, and functional mother cows, because we know those traits are what it really takes to have a bull that will last for many years and many breeding seasons on big country, in tough conditions."

That balance between maternal strength and growth is what originally drew the Lindskov family to Charolais genetics decades ago. Todd and Bryce's father saw firsthand the advantage of crossbreeding black cows with Charolais bulls, and that early experience still shapes how the operation defines success today.

Finding the balance between maternal and growth is also the driver for the data collection Todd says has become a normal part of day-to-day operations on the ranch.

"We started collecting full DNA data around 2018. The initial goal was to make sure every calf was parent verified," Lindskov explains. "Now that we have collected data for nearly eight years, the majority of our cow herd is 100K tested, and DNA collection is just part of the rhythm of our operation."

Data collection formally begins at weaning, when calves are tagged, weighed, sampled, and processed. Weaning weights, yearling weights, and carcass data are the backbone of Lindskov's performance records, and although the market is flooded with software for record management, Lindskov keeps it simple.

"We use Microsoft Excel to track and submit data to the associations. Marisa, my wife, collects the majority of the data at weaning time and is also the one who submits all of our data to the associations," Todd says.

The most important shift, Todd shares, is that data collection has become part of the "normal" workload on the ranch.

"It has just become routine for our operation. We have never really stopped to think about how much time it takes because this is just how we operate now," he says.

tain matings to add more value to specific cows. If a cow is lacking milking ability, calving ease, or carcass traits—it's easy to look at those cows on paper and make breeding selections that will add more value to the next calf crop," he adds.

Data has also sharpened the culling process. Females that fall short on performance or maternal strength are culled more confidently and earlier than they have been in the past because the decision is truly black and white. Todd says that their operation has been able to confidently increase culling pressure on females that don't have enough performance or milking ability.

"If cows aren't performing and raising consistent calves, then they aren't benefiting the feeder cattle industry, and they don't belong here," he explains.

While phenotype still comes first at Lindskov Ranch, data provides the added layer of validation. Structure, udder quality, temperament, pigment and mobility are evaluated before numbers ever come into play. But once an animal passes that visual screen, performance data helps fine-tune selection.

"When we select females or bulls, our goal is to make sure they are functional cattle first. We look at phenotype, udder pigment, foot structure, and head," Lindskov explains.

"Once an animal passes those credentials, then we move to the paper and make sure performance, milking ability, and carcass traits are what we are looking for. Data has helped us, but we still have to keep good, functional, maternal cattle in the herd."

One key area of focus has been the spread between birth and weaning weights, selecting cattle that calve easily yet still wean off heavy calves. That balance is especially critical in a market environment marked by shrinking cow numbers and increasing production pressures.

"We have really focused on the spread between birth and weaning. We want bulls with calving ease and appropriate birth weights, but we also want those calves to wean off big."

"With the shortage of cattle in the U.S., we need to be raising feeder cattle that don't just get big but grade well while keeping birth weights modest. And that is what I believe the Charolais breed can offer better than any other."

Connecting the data dots

From a genetic evaluation standpoint, Mark Allan of Allan Genetic Solutions sees Lindskov Ranch as part of the solution to one of the breed's biggest challenges. While birth and weaning weights are widely reported across the Charolais breed, yearling weight submission lags, creating a critical gap.

"When you analyze breeders who are turning in birth, weaning, and yearling weight compared to those who stop at

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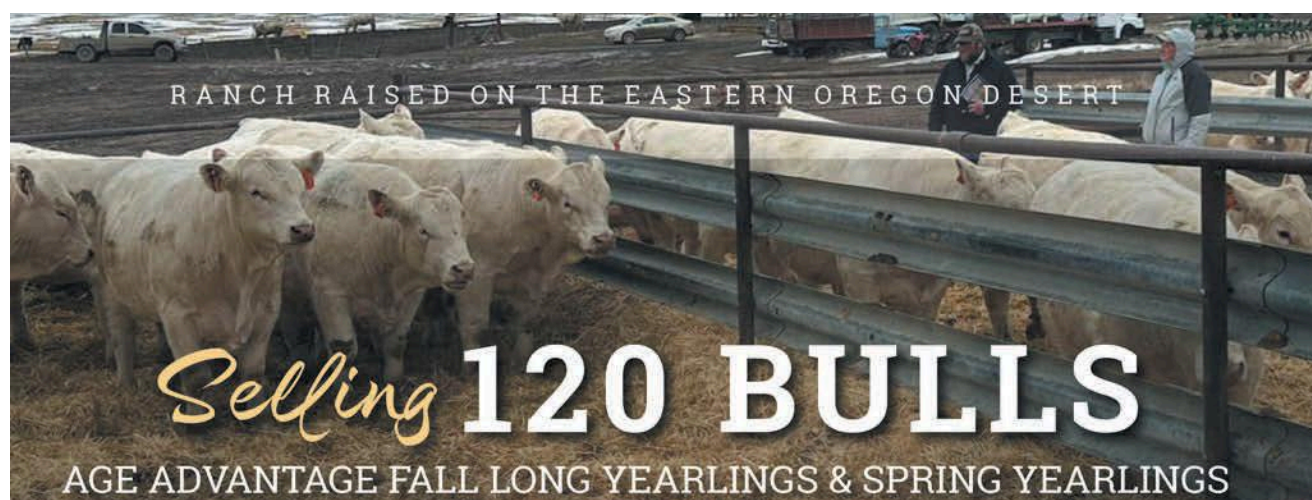
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AICA
Finding the balance between maternal and growth is a driver for Lindskov Ranch's data collection.

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Data for real-world decisions

Todd shares that the time and labor investment the ranch makes in data collection shows up as a return on investment when it's time to make mating decisions.

"When mating our cows for the AI breeding season, it has been a great tool to select cer-

Charolais

FEATURED SECTION

weaning, the difference in accuracy is massive," Allan explains. "Breeders who do not turn in yearling weights see their EPD accuracies fall back to parent-average levels in later generations. That dramatically reduces the predictive power of their genetic evaluations."

He says yearling weight is not simply another number. It is a key indicator of growth potential and a foundational input for multiple economic traits. From Allan's perspective, yearling weights represent a pivotal moment where genetics transition from early growth expression into true performance potential. Without them, long-term genetic comparisons weaken.

"There are breeders turning in ultrasound data but not turning in yearling weights, even though a weight is required for ultrasound adjustments. If that yearling weight never moves into the evaluation as a yearling record, we are losing one of the most valuable data points we can collect. If we want to improve the accuracy of EPDs and selection tools across the entire breed, yearling weight has to become top of mind," he says.

Allan frames data collection as both a technical responsibility and a customer service obligation. When breeders fail to submit complete performance records, it impacts not only on their own herds but also the reliability of the tools their customers rely on to make purchasing decisions.

"If you are not collecting data, you are not allowing the tools to maximize the prediction of outcomes for your customers," Allan explains. "You are limiting the ability of those buyers to make confident decisions based on accurate genetic merit."

Much like Lindskov LT Ranch operates, Allan emphasizes that genomics and EPDs are never meant to replace phenotype or management. Instead, they work best when paired with complete performance records.

At NextGen Cattle Company in Paxico, KS, Joe Epperly sees the downstream impact of data collection every day. Managing roughly 800 cows and marketing 700 to 800 bulls annually across registered Charolais, Beefmaster and Angus genetics, Epperly operates in a closed, vertically aligned system that includes a feedlot. That structure allows him to see genetic outcomes from birth all the way to the rail.

"At our company, we embrace genomics because we get all individual carcass data through our feedlot," Epperly explains. "We feed that information back into the breed associations because it allows us to make better long-term decisions when it comes to selection, feeding, and marketing."

Epperly believes data collection is no longer optional for seedstock breeders who want to remain competitive.

"If registered breeders do not continue to collect data and make EPDs more relevant and accurate, large commercial operations will outrun us,"

he says. "There will be no reason for those outfits to buy their bulls from registered breeders if we cannot offer superior predictive value."

For Epperly, genetics never leave the operation. The cattle NextGen Cattle Company sells eventually come back through the company's feeding system. The full-circle perspective mirrors Lindskov LT Ranch and Allan's viewpoints. Todd shares that the operation collects data because of their understanding of how those genetics will represent years of downstream impact for the industry. All three cattlemen understand that the decision to use the genetic assessment tools available today will shape commercial, and ultimately seedstock, profitability long after the trailer gate closes.

"If you are a cow-calf producer and you're not worried about what happens to those calves after they leave your ranch, you are going to get discounted," Epperly says. "If you're a seedstock producer and your bulls don't work for your customers long term, that will come back and affect your reputation and your market. Everything in the cattle industry is full circle."

With first-calf heifer prices and replacement costs at historic levels, Epperly believes genomically enhanced EPDs now serve as a form of financial insurance.

"If you are talking about a \$30-to-\$50-dollar genomic test on a \$5,000 bred heifer—that is cheap insurance to know that she has a higher likelihood of staying in the herd for seven, or even eight years," Epperly explains. "As we continue to collect longevity and udder data, it will not surprise me if lenders eventually start requiring that type of information on high-dollar female purchases."

For Lindskov Ranch, Allan Genetic Solutions and NextGen Cattle, data collection is not about chasing trends. It is about building predictable, profitable systems that benefit producers at every level.

From Lindskov's perspective, the biggest return on investment is confidence.

"Being able to market bulls and semen to other countries already knowing our cattle are parent verified and PA-free has taken a lot of uncertainty off our shoulders," Lindskov explains. Epperly agrees. For NextGen Cattle Company, data and profitability are inseparable.

"If we want to make animal and herd improvements in fertility, feet, longevity, growth, and carcass traits all at once, data has to drive that process," Epperly says.

And for those who see the big picture the motivation is simple: data collected on one operation doesn't just improve that operation, it improves the breed and the industry.

"If we as a Charolais breed can continue to show that our cattle wean off big, feed well, and grade in the end, it makes marketing our breed to commercial cattlemen easier," Lindskov says. "And that should be a goal we all have."
— AICA

AICA announces new coat-color genetic test

The American International Charolais Association (AICA) is pleased to announce the availability of a new optional coat-color genetic test for Charolais cattle: the KIT-PINZ coat color test.

The KIT locus underlying color pattern in Charolais—sometimes referred to as the "skunk tail" pattern—appears to be a naturally occurring underlying coat color pattern in some Charolais genetics. This pattern is most commonly identified by a white tail and, in some cases, a white line extending over the tail head and down the tail. Due to the presence of the Charolais dilution gene, this color pattern is not often observed in purebred Charolais cattle and is more commonly expressed in crossbreeding situations.

Importantly, the KIT color pattern has no negative correlation with any other trait in the Charolais breed. It represents an underlying coat

color pattern that appears to trace back to original Charolais origins and is not associated with performance, functionality or production concerns.

Research indicates that the KIT locus exhibits codominant inheritance, meaning the phenotype may be expressed in both heterozygous and homozygous animals. The KIT-PINZ mutation itself is incompletely dominant, resulting in varying degrees of white expression among affected progeny. Calves receiving one copy of the KIT-PINZ mutation and only one copy of the dilution gene will express the phenotype, which may include smokey or tan coloration along with some degree of white in the tailhead and tail.

To ensure scientific accuracy and validation, AICA engaged Dr. Jon Beever at the

University of Tennessee to assist in identifying the mutation and developing a reliable test for commercial use. Dr. Beever has validated the KIT-PINZ test across multiple bloodlines and sires and has confirmed the ability to identify both heterozygous and homozygous animals.

At this time, samples are submitted directly to Beever, and members are highly encouraged to track shipments. The preferred courier for sending samples is UPS, due to challenges with deliverability with the lab address and U.S. Postal Service. Turn-around time from sample receipt to results is comparable to other genotyping providers. Ear tissue samples are preferred, while hair and blood cards may require additional processing time.

Until the KIT-PINZ test can be incorporated into AICA's 100K genomic testing panels, members interested in test-

ing should contact Beever directly at 217-841-0813 or jbeever@tennessee.edu.

The cost of the KIT-PINZ coat color test is \$17 per animal.

As with all new technologies, AICA's objective is to provide members with accurate, validated tools that support informed breeding and marketing decisions. Participation in this testing is entirely optional, and the availability of this test does not alter breed standards, registration requirements, or AICA policy.

If you have questions about the KIT-PINZ test or would like additional information, please contact the AICA staff. We appreciate your continued engagement as we work to responsibly introduce new genetic tools that are grounded in sound science and transparency.

— Brett Spader, AICA executive vice president

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What does an \$85B railroad merger have to do with MT?

Last month, the host of the "Montana Talks" morning radio show spent a 10-minute segment interviewing a BNSF Railway official about the company's opposition to a proposed merger between two rival railroads.

To even the most well-informed listener, the segment may have been the first time they heard about the plan to combine the railroads Union Pacific (UP) and Norfolk Southern (NS), into a coast-to-coast behemoth spanning more than 50,000 miles of track

and 43 states. If approved by federal regulators, it would be the largest railroad in America by tens of thousands of miles.

The proposed merger has drawn attention from businesses and Montana's congressional delegation in Washington, D.C., who have signed letters urging regulators to proceed with caution and conduct a "rigorous and comprehensive review."

With elected leaders expressing concern in Montana, one would think UP and NS are major players in the state.

They're not. In fact, more than 90% of Montana's railways are controlled by one company: BNSF.

So, what does this (mostly) out-of-state railroad merger have to do with Montana? Here's an explanation.

While the proposed merger of UP and NS has gotten little media attention in Montana, it's a big deal in the railroad world. On July 29, 2025, UP announced its intent to acquire NS for \$85 billion in a transaction that would create the largest railroad in the country and

the first single-rail line connecting the East and West coasts.

UP and NS are two of the six large "Class I" freight railroads that operate in North America. Together, these six operators cover about 140,000 miles of track, with two major railroads in the west, two in the east and two in Canada (although the Canadian operators have a major presence in the Midwest). At one point, there were dozens of Class I railroads, but through consolidation, there are now only six.

UP was founded in 1862 and built the eastern half of the First Transcontinental Railroad, which was completed in 1869. Today, it operates 32,200 miles of track in 23 states, mostly west of Chicago, IL. Last year, the company made more than \$7 billion moving freight. Its primary competitor is BNSF.

NS was founded in 1982 following the merger of the Norfolk & Western Railway and Southern Railway. It operates 19,420 miles in 22 states in the East. Its primary competitor is CSX Transportation.

UP President Jim Vena, who

is expected to remain as the head of the railroad if his company acquires NS, has said the merger would benefit shippers, the environment and the nation by offering cheaper freight transportation and by taking an estimated 2 million trucks off America's highways annually. Vena has said it is possible because a single-line railroad could offer better shipping rates, especially in the Midwest, where shippers often have to deal with multiple railroads, thereby increasing prices.

The Utah & Northern Railway Company, a subsidiary of UP, became the first railroad to reach Montana when it built its line over Monida Pass on the Idaho-Montana border south of Dillon in May 1880. The railroad eventually reached Butte and Garrison. But today, UP operates only as far as Butte, MT, meaning it serves only 125 of the state's 3,700 rail miles, or about 3%. More than 90% of the rail mileage in the state, about 3,400 miles, is controlled by BNSF, according to the Association of American Railroads. NS has no track in Montana.

In December, UP and NS submitted their application to merge with the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, the independent federal regulator that oversees railroads, which will have the final say on whether the two railroads can combine. Since then, the two railroads and their competitors have aggressively rallied support for and against it. Leading the charge against the merger is BNSF.

BNSF has argued that the merger would be "anti-competitive," and would give rail shippers—including Montana farmers—fewer options, thus increasing prices. For example, if a farmer near Great Falls, MT, ships grain to an East Coast community served by NS, the shipping charge could increase once NS is part of UP. For its part, UP has denied that it would increase rates.

Opponents have also pointed to the chaos that ensued after previous mergers, particularly in the 1990s. Perhaps the most notorious was the 1996 UP-Southern Pacific merger, which led to a "service meltdown" as rail yards across the country were jammed with late trains, and the railroad lost billions of dollars in profits. The

railroad mergers of the 1990s were so disruptive that the U.S. Surface Transportation Board imposed a temporary ban in 2000 and later issued new requirements for combining major railroads. A quarter century later, no major railroad has attempted to merge under the revised rules.

While UP is a comparatively small player in Montana, both it and BNSF have been lobbying stakeholders and elected officials here in favor of and against the merger. In December, both railroads reached out to state legislators with their take on the combination. Since then, a number of politicians—including all four members of the state's Washington D.C. delegation and Montana Attorney General Austin Knudsen—have agreed with BNSF's take and signed on to letters to federal officials, urging a rigorous review. Among their chief concerns is the impact it could have on pricing for agricultural producers, but the letters also note potential major impacts on the shipping of consumer goods, construction materials, fuel, food and more.

"If approved, a combined UP-NS would handle more than 40% of all U.S. freight rail traffic ... a transcontinental system spanning 50,000 route miles across 43 states," read a joint letter from Sens. John Hoeven (R-ND) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and co-signed by 16 others. "Service interruptions of this magnitude could have severe consequences, especially for agricultural producers. Time-sensitive shipments during harvest could be delayed or spoiled, export windows could be missed, and access to global markets could be sharply reduced."

The first question for federal regulators to consider after UP and NS submitted their application in December was whether the agency had enough information to review it. In January, the board ruled it did not and rejected the initial application. The two railroads have said they will revise their applications to include the requested information and try again. If the STB does accept the application, the review is expected to take more than a year, ensuring that the issue of mega railroad mergers isn't going away any time soon. — **Justin Franz, Montana Free Press**

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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.)

March 1 – The Harvey L. & Maud C. Sorensen Foundation is proud to honor the legacy of Duncan C. McCormack III—an avid rancher, outdoorsman and educator—through an annual scholarship for students pursuing degrees in livestock management. To view the application, visit tinyurl.com/44ye4u7d.

March 1 – The NILE Foundation is now accepting applications for scholarships for the 2026-2027 academic year. Scholarships will be awarded and announced in April. Details: thenile.org.

March 1 – The North Dakota Stockmen's Foundation Scholarships are now open for applications. To view details, visit tinyurl.com/33h7acev.

March 13 – The Livestock

Marketing Association has announced that applications are now open for its 2026 scholarship programs, offering two distinct opportunities to support students pursuing education and careers connected to the livestock marketing industry. Details: lmaweb.com.

March 15 – The Montana Stockgrowers Foundation is encouraging students to apply for scholarships through its Heritage Scholarship Program. Applications: mtbeefoundation.org.

March 15 – The Montana Stockgrowers Association is now accepting applications for the 2026 Young Cattleman's Conference. This national leadership and advocacy program will be held May 28 through June 4. Details: mtbeef.org.

April 15 – Undergraduate college students pursuing agricultural communications careers can apply now for up to \$3,000 in scholarships from the Agricultural Communicators Network. Details: agcommnetwork.com/scholarships.

FFA advisers do more than teach ... they inspire

Each year hundreds of South Dakota students learn about agriculture and are inspired to lead and serve by the efforts of their agriculture education teachers/FFA advisers. In honor of FFA Week, Feb. 21-28, South Dakota Farmers Union (SDFU) would like to thank these men and woman for their positive impact on the next generation.

Cayla Graves

An agriculture education teacher and FFA adviser for 14 years, Cayla Graves said based on her experience there are two things her students will always remember after they graduate.

"Yes, I teach them a lot of important information about agriculture. And they will remember some of it. They will always remember the gestation of a sow because it's three months, three weeks and three days. But I know they will forget much of what I teach. But I also know students are not going to forget how I made them feel," Graves said. "I always just think, 'If I can be their bright spot for the day, and let them know that I care, even if home life stinks or their friends stink'—every kid needs to know that somebody cares for them."

Graves' efforts are not lost on her students, explained Mallory Gant, a senior at Platte-Geddes High School and FFA chapter president. "Mrs. Graves cares on a deeper level," Gant said. "My freshman year I was new to Platte-Geddes. I knew no one. Walking into ag class was so intimidating and I was so nervous. Mrs. Graves welcomed me right away and she pushed me to do Creed Speaking and I went to state that year."

Witnessing FFA members grow and thrive is the rewarding part of teaching, Graves said. "Being an ag teacher is so special because I don't just get to know my students between the bells—I get to really know them because of all the extra time we spend together for FFA events and contests," Graves said. "When I encourage a student to try something because I see their potential and then they succeed—that's all I ever wanted in this job—to see them realize their own potential."

Graves recalled another freshman she encouraged to compete in the FFA Creed Speaking contest. The Creed Speaking contest is a contest where students memorize the FFA Creed and then present it before a panel of judges.

"I had a freshman look at a paragraph of the Creed and he had it memorized just like that. I said, 'You have to do this.' And he said, 'No, I'm not going to and act like a Disney character.' And I said, 'You have a gift of memorizing, and this contest would be so awesome for you.' He fi-

nally committed and now he's hooked. Now he wants to try a different contest next year."

Graves credits her mom, Carla Christiansen, a school secretary with her empathy. And she credits her grandma, Phyllis Christiansen, a school principal, with encouraging her to become a teacher.

"I was initially a pre-pharmacy major. But after I did some job shadowing, I realized, this is not for me," Graves said.

A farm kid from Volin, SD, Graves was actively involved in Ceres Women's Fraternity—an agriculture-focused organization at South Dakota State University (SDSU). So, when she began looking for another career focus, her Ceres' sisters encouraged her to consider agriculture education.

Just like job shadowing showed Graves pharmacy was not the right fit, student teaching showed her that teaching was. "Student teaching was hard, but it seemed right because I could share my love for agriculture with kids and teach them about agriculture and also life skills," she said.

Graves got her first teaching position a few years after graduation. She was working for the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association but needed a different job because she was getting married to a Platte farmer. Fortunately, about the time Graves moved to Platte, the school was looking for a new agriculture education teacher. The time commitment it requires to be an FFA adviser in addition to teaching can feel overwhelming at times. But Graves said it is this extra time that she spends before and after school and on the weekends with her students because of FFA contests, workshops and conventions that makes her career one she loves.

She also values the fact that her young daughters, Talli and Tressa, get to also spend time with her students outside of kindergarten and third grade. "When I stay after school helping students practice or prepare for an FFA contest, my girls are here with me. And I love the way my school kids love my biological children," Graves said. "Just the other day I was helping a student scan some forms and I looked up and my girls were dancing with some of my students to a song on the radio."

Shane Gross

Hitchcock-Tulare FFA adviser and agriculture education teacher Shane Gross frequently tells his students, "You never know what you are going to end up doing for a career, so the more information and skills you can gain today, the more prepared you will be."

Gross knows this based on first-hand experience. He graduated from SDSU

planning to pursue a career in agriculture business but ended up teaching agriculture education instead.

Fourteen years later, he said he is happy his career path took the unexpected detour that it did. "I appreciate the variety of the work I do," Gross explained. "I'm not tied to one specific topic or space. Each class is so different. I could be in the shop teaching or in the classroom teaching about animal science or plant science or teaching hydroponics or helping students change the oil in a tractor or process meat."

With the overarching goal of exposing his students to a broad look at agriculture as well as diverse leadership opportunities, Gross has a rule that freshmen and sophomore FFA members need to try new and different contests. "I push our students to experience as many new things as I can. This may

mean they only compete in one specific contest for one or two years, and maybe they will not win the state competition, but by the time they graduate they will have experienced more than one career development area."

While diverse experiences are important, Gross is also determined to help students discover their talents, explained senior Sienna Stoner. "I was doing meats judging and I really was not catching on. So, Mr. Gross asked, 'Are you open to trying something else? I'm willing to help you.' And then he asked me what I was interested in. We decided the nursery landscape career development event would be a good thing for me to try. We learned about the contest together. The first year it was rocky, but I did really well last year, I placed in every event and qualified for state."

The culture of success that Mr. Gross fosters is the reason Chapter President Regan Lutter enjoys taking agriculture education classes and being involved in FFA. "I like all the different variety of skills we gain through contests—like land judging or parliamentary procedure. Everyone is welcome in FFA, and everyone has a place where they can excel. FFA is literally built so that everyone can join, no matter what your background is," Lutter said.

This is exactly the message Gross shares with students. "You don't know that you will like something until you try it. It's good to get out of your comfort zone. There are alumni who didn't want to try meats judging, but they did, and it turned out they really liked it. And then they ended up judging meats on the SDSU meats team," Gross explained.

Like his students, Gross

attended Hitchcock-Tulare High School. He taught for eight years at another school, but decided to return home in 2020. "Mr. Brink built a really strong program, and the community had high expectations, so I am grateful I was able to teach and learn and grow so that I could return home a seasoned teacher," Gross said.

Gross added that his hometown supports FFA. "I always stress to my students how good our school district, our administration and our school board is to us," Gross said.

Gross enjoyed his FFA experience so much that as a senior he ran for a state FFA office and was elected to serve as the 2008-2009 state FFA treasurer.

To enjoy videos of FFA members sharing their thoughts about their FFA advisers and participating in FFA, visit sdfu.org. — **Lura Roti for SDFU**



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CED +15.3. BW -1.3. WW +95. YW +150. Milk +38.
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Pinpoint forecasting among the tools WSU brings to agriculture

We've come a long way from the Old Farmer's Almanac: These days, when farmers need to know about tomorrow's weather—or next month's weather—they can get a close-to-home forecast from Washington State University's (WSU) AgWeatherNet.

That system does more than predict temperatures and precipitation. Drawing on data from 370 public-private stations across the state, it uses machine learning (ML) to power tools that help growers predict wheat yields, anticipate problems with pests, protect against frost and high heat, schedule irrigation, and more.

As the amount of location-specific data grows, it will fuel even more refined microclimate forecasting—down to the level of an acre.

"It is happening now and we are improving it further," said Lav Khot, the director of AgWeatherNet and a professor of precision agriculture in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering with a

focus on agricultural automation. "That's where AI comes in: How can we mine the information from this data and make better management decisions? It's really changing the game."

WSU is playing a vital role in connecting big data with modern farming—marrying the strength of high-tech research with the public-service mandate of a land-grant institution to help farmers at every stage, from preparing for the growing season to harvest.

StockSmart, a tool developed at WSU in conjunction with the University of Arizona, uses GPS data to help ranchers and land agencies determine how much forage is available for livestock and where. A ML guided metric developed in WSU Veterinary Extension uses data from dairy cattle to evaluate the disease burden among herds. WSU's smart orchard testbed in Mattawa, WA, is demonstrating how new smart agricultural technologies can be integrated and evaluated for

meaningful adoption on the ground.

All helping to pave the way for the farm of the future.

WSU's role at the forefront of AI in agriculture is reflected in its leadership of AgAID, a \$20 million institute established with funding from the USDA as part of the National Science Foundation's National AI Research Institutes program. The Institute combines the efforts of multiple research institutions, industry, and government partners to address agricultural challenges in the Pacific Northwest.

The institute's mission is to build and sustain partnerships between AI and agricultural communities, driving research and the transfer of knowledge to meet some of agriculture's biggest challenges, including labor shortages, water availability, and climate change.

"Agriculture, globally speaking, is experiencing a revolution because of how much data is being generated and gathered," said Ananth

Kalyanaraman, the director of AgAID and professor and director of the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. "There's been a deluge of data. The immediate question when there is a lot of data is what you do with it—what is the value of data? The value is the information you can get to understand what is going on in the fields."

In addition to research, the institute has an educational goal—teaching students, obviously, but also helping introduce farmers and farm workers to new technologies. WSU and AgAID are in a prime position to do such outreach, based on the trust established over many years of the university's land-grant service.

"We need academia in the middle—academia is the way to connect big tech to a rural, societal challenge like agriculture," said Kalyanaraman, who also heads up the Advancing AI Research Working Group formed by the WSU Office of Research. "I think

that education and workforce development very much have to go hand in hand with research when it comes to AI."

Forecasting streamflows

Most of the stream water that irrigates crops in the West comes from melting mountain snow. Being able to predict how much water the mountain snow will produce is crucial for farmers and resource managers.

One recent example is a new tool developed by Kalyanaraman's lab in collaboration with Kirti Rajagopalan, an assistant professor in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering, that could someday provide daily or weekly forecasts for water availability similar to weather forecasts, based on how much snow is in the mountains. Predicting how much water will be available is important for irrigation, flood prevention, fisheries, and hydropower.

In a recent publication, the WSU team demonstrated that their model was more accurate in predicting the snow-water equivalent—the amount of water available in the mountain snowpack—than current models in most cases across 500 locations, for both daily and weekly forecasts.

The plan is to eventually produce a public dashboard that agencies could use for both short-term and long-term planning.

That tool is just one of the ways that WSU researchers are working to build data to fuel AI applications to help farmers succeed.

"There are many different kinds of data we gather to

understand different crop stresses and predict the crop stresses in advance, so the farmer can make better decisions," Kalyanaraman said.

WSU researchers are working to build data to fuel AI applications to help farmers succeed, including the ability to understand and predict different crop stresses.

Khot said that a key element of refining the precision of crop stressors forecasting is farm-level data—information on everything from soil conditions to tree canopies to local microclimates. The AI/ML driven decision support tools available through AgWeatherNet are already more precise than other forecasting models.

But the network is working with farmers to get them to contribute more localized information about conditions through AgWeatherNet Smart Farms and smartphone applications driven crowdsourcing.

"We are educating growers so they can collect better quality data on their farms that will contribute to realize AI-driven smart farms in the near future," Khot said.

As more and more such information is gathered, it will feed AI models to make ever more precise predictions.

"If you have the data sets that are collected for your block, you can synthesize everything and get the information in a quick second about your crop health, where the crop is doing well or poorly, and associated inputs management decision making" he said. "I'm just amazed at all the possibilities of what crowdsourced quality data and AI can bring into precision farming in the state of Washington." — WSU Extension

NMSU to host NM Youth Ranch Management Camp

New Mexico State University (NMSU) will host the New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp (NMYRMC) June 21-26 at the CS Ranch in Cimarron, NM. The camp is open to all youth, ages 15-19, who want to learn more about ranch management.

Applications are now open, and the deadline is May 1. Applicants who are accepted will be notified by May 8. The camp will invite 30 participants, including three out-of-state applicants. The registration fee of \$400 or payment arrangement is due on or before May 22. Scholarship opportunities will be available. Upon acceptance, participants should contact an NMYRMC committee member for additional information.

"We want participants to enjoy their experience," said Sid Gordon, NMSU Cooperative Extension Service Otero County Extension agent and co-chair of NMYRMC. "We want to open their minds to opportunities they have in agriculture, and we would like them to go on to NMSU, but more importantly, we hope they come

away with an interest in a possible career in agriculture or natural resources. We need young people to go into these fields."

At the camp, high school-age students will be introduced to the many aspects of operating a ranch, from financial statements and marketing strategies to producing quality beef and managing natural resources and wildlife. Participants will receive college-level, hands-on curriculum to develop a ranch management plan for a scenario comparable to the host site.

"The collaboration between Extension specialists, county Extension agents and members of the ranching industry provides an opportunity for youth to learn about the many aspects of ranching," Gordon said.

Established in 2011, this year marks the seventh time the camp will be held on the CS Cattle Company's 130,000-acre ranch at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo mountain range.

To learn more or apply, visit nmyrm.nmsu.edu/index.html. — NMSU Extension

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Meat Institute updates animal welfare standards

The Meat Institute has released updated Animal Welfare Audit standards and Recommended Animal Handling Guidelines, reinforcing its commitment to humane treatment, employee safety and continuous improvement. President and CEO Julie Anna Potts said humane handling remains foundational to an ethical food system. Developed by the Institute's Animal Welfare Committee in collaboration with Temple Grandin of Colorado State University, the audit is certified by the Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization and supports the Protein PACT goal that 100% of members pass third-party audits by 2030. Updates include scored criteria for improvement, expanded bison audits and consistent vocalization scoring. Changes will be highlighted at the Institute's May conference in Kansas City, MO.

CCA seeks producer traceability feedback

The Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) is urging producers to weigh in on proposed traceability regulations. In a recent post on Facebook, CCA announced it has launched an online survey to gather feedback on anticipated amendments to Part XV (Traceability) of the Health of Animals Regulations. CCA stressed that the proposed regulations are not yet in place and that survey responses will guide its next steps and will be used only in aggregate, with no personal information shared. The outreach follows the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's decision to delay publication of the amendments. The survey is available at survey.monkey.com/r/XB6R2ZV.

Anthrax confirmed in Idaho herd

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) confirmed an anthrax case in a beef herd in Cassia County. Anthrax is caused by *Bacillus anthracis*, a bacterium that forms spores and can persist in soil for years. Livestock may become infected by ingesting or inhaling spores from soil, water or plants. Signs include sudden death, weakness, fever and respiratory distress. ISDA is coordinating with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. No human cases have been reported, and none of the affected cattle entered the food supply. State officials said vaccination, carcass disposal and monitoring are underway. Producers should contact a veterinarian if anthrax is suspected.

MABA launches strategic conservation initiative

The Make America Beautiful Again (MABA) Commission launched MABA 250, a strategic conservation initiative chaired by Department of the Interior Secretary Doug Burgum. The effort is intended to guide conservation policy while promoting outdoor recreation and resource development. MABA 250 outlines priorities that include balancing stewardship with economic growth, expanding access for hunting and fishing, increasing voluntary conservation, reducing regulatory barriers and supporting species recovery and habitat management. The commission will release a report outlining accomplishments during the opening of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library as part of America 250 commemorations in July.

BLM launches Materials Access Program

The Department of the Interior announced a Materials Access Program through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to expand access to sand, gravel and stone materials. The program sets a tiered fee system. Tier 1, for 0 to 50 tons, sets a \$400 fee per transaction. Tier 2, for 51 to 150 tons, sets a \$1,500 fee per transaction. State and field offices will apply the procedures to land open for disposal of mineral materials under resource management plans. A Community Pits Mapper available at tinyurl.com/5dfpy96p uses data from the U.S. Geological Survey, showing pit locations, materials, pricing and contacts.

Idaho ground beef recalled for E. coli

CS Beef Packers LLC, a Kuna, ID, establishment, is recalling about 22,912 pounds of raw ground beef that may be contaminated with *E. coli* O145, according to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). The products were produced Jan. 14 and include 10-pound chubs labeled "Beef, Coarse ground, 73L"; "Fire River Farms Classic Beef Fine Ground 73L"; and "Fire River Farms Classic Beef Fine Ground 81L". The items bear the establishment number EST. 630 inside the USDA mark of inspection. They were shipped to distributors in California, Idaho and Oregon. FSIS advises foodservice locations not to serve the products and to discard or return them. No confirmed illnesses have been reported.

ND plant gains USDA inspection

1481 Meats confirmed it became a federally inspected slaughter facility on Jan. 1, according to a report in the Minot Daily News shared on the company's Facebook page. The plant is one of 14 federally inspected meat facilities in North Dakota. In a statement, the company said federal inspection allows locally raised beef to access additional markets while meeting food safety standards. With a USDA inspection, the company can ship products across state lines. Its website lists fresh and frozen meats, dairy products and other items.

Freeze branding for permanent identification

To improve efficiency of cow-calf operations, it is imperative to identify individual cattle and maintain accurate production records. One type of permanent identification is branding. A fire brand can be used but many producers prefer freeze branding.

Freeze branding is performed using a coolant and copper or copper-alloy branding irons. Two common freeze branding methods include using either liquid nitrogen or a combination of dry ice and alcohol as a coolant. Most producers get better results with dry ice and alcohol, but locating dry ice can be a challenge. Liquid nitrogen can be purchased from welding supply stores and AI companies.

Freeze branding is relatively stress-free for the animal and causes little or no damage to the hide. Unlike fire brands, freeze brands result in reduced incidences of blotching. On the downside, freeze branding takes more time, can be more costly and over time, brands may fade. Until you are satisfied your procedure is working, ear tags and tattoos are recommended as addi-

tional forms of identification.

It is best to freeze brand during the spring or fall months while the hair is growing. As the brand is applied, melanocytes (pigment-producing cells in the skin) are destroyed, and subsequent hair growth is white. The effectiveness of freeze branding is usually better for black and red cattle than for white cattle. Do not freeze brand when it is rainy, windy or humid. In these bad weather conditions, the irons change temperature rapidly, hindering the branding effects.

At Oklahoma State University (OSU), the Purebred Beef Cattle Center uses the following tools and procedure to freeze brand.

Materials needed

- Methanol (found at any oil supply company). At least 15 gallons for a full day.
- Dry ice (typically found at Homeland grocery stores). At least 50 pounds for a full day.
- Plastic or Styrofoam cooler (large enough for coolant mix and all irons).
- Pair of clippers with fine

blades or 22 comb premiers (and source of electricity for clippers).

- Spray bottle or empty dish wash bottle.
- Rice root brush.
- For best results, use a brand that is 3 to 3 1/2 inches. Others are too small or get too large as cattle mature.
- Squeeze chute to properly contain the animal for safety.
- Stop watch (or some means of timing).

Procedure

First, break the dry ice into smaller cubes in a plastic or Styrofoam cooler. Dump the methanol onto the dry ice, covering the numbers or letters on the brand and ice. For best results, let the irons activate for 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Put the animal in a tightly confined squeeze chute for everyone's safety.

Shave a patch where you intend to brand the animal. Typically, brands are on the shoulder, mid-rib or hip area. At OSU, the shoulder and hip are utilized. The area shaved is usually 12 inches long and 4 inches tall for a 4 number

identification.

Spray the shaved area with methanol and wipe off excess with a rice root brush.

Place the brands on the skin for one minute. It is vital to keep the irons pressed evenly against the skin for the best results.

Brands will need to spend at least one to two minutes in the coolant between each use.

Depending on labor available to assist, you can typically do two numbers at a time. More than that can become cumbersome to keep even or level.

Once finished, you will notice the skin will start to peel off within three to four weeks and white hair will grow back six to eight weeks after branding.

Primarily permanent identification means we don't need to worry about lost ear tags. Hip brands are easier to read and identify in larger pastures or during heat detection. If desired, brands can replace tattoos as permanent identification. — **Mark Z. Johnson, OSU Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**

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New metric could improve beef-on-dairy genetic evaluations

Incorporating earlier-in-life growth metrics into the National Cattle Evaluation could strengthen genetic predictions for beef-on-dairy cattle, according to Ryan Boldt, Ph.D., lead geneticist for International Genetic Solutions (IGS).

Boldt said that a research project he's part of builds on earlier work that integrated beef-on-dairy records into evaluations for carcass traits. By capturing

more phenotypes from crossbred calves, researchers hope to refine selection tools, improve indexing and provide producers with better insight into growth performance at multiple stages of an animal's life.

Carcass data paves the way

Previous efforts to include beef-on-dairy data in the national evaluation

have yielded significant benefits for carcass trait records. Historically, carcass data represented only 1-2% of animals in the evaluation. With the addition of beef-on-dairy phenotypes, that share has risen to 12-15% for recent birth years.

The increase parallels the growth in genomic data over the same period. High genetic correlations between beef-on-dairy and native beef animals for carcass traits have allowed these phenotypes to be analyzed as the same trait and ensures that data from one system benefits the other.

This expansion has also had spill-over effects across breed associations. While all beef-on-dairy data currently comes through a single association, sire relationships connect across multiple databases to spread the benefit of additional records throughout the IGS system.

Shifting focus to early growth

Building on carcass trait integration, the project examines earlier-in-life weights, particularly a feedlot entry weight collected at around 140 days of age. Researchers wanted to determine if such measurements could be included alongside traditional growth traits—birth weight, weaning weight and post-weaning gain—in the national evaluation.

The study compared data from two streams: native beef animals (beef-on-beef) and beef-on-dairy calves. For birth weight and post-weaning gain, high genetic correlations (0.89 and 0.91, respectively) suggested that these traits could be analyzed jointly across both groups.

Weaning weight was more complex. While heritability estimates were higher than traditional literature values, the genetic

correlation between beef-on-beef weaning weight and beef-on-dairy adjusted 205-day weight was lower at 0.65, prompting further investigation.

Researchers discovered that the average age at feedlot entry for beef-on-dairy animals was about 140 days, with most weights collected between 100 and 160 days of age. When these weights were adjusted to 205 days using the standard nonlinear function for native beef, the fit was poor.

A linear adjustment, by contrast, matched the beef-on-dairy data more closely, with a strong relationship ($R^2 = 0.94$) between age and weight. This finding prompted a shift in strategy: rather than forcing these weights into a 205-day framework, the 140-day feedlot entry weight would be treated as its own trait in the evaluation.

Distinct relationships, genetic links

When modeled as a 140-day weight, the genetic correlation with native beef weaning weight dropped to 0.41, suggesting that while related, the two traits capture different biological information.

An unexpected finding was the weaker-than-anticipated correlation between birth weight and early growth in beef-on-dairy calves compared to native beef animals. This may reflect differences in management systems, given that beef-on-dairy calves are not raised by their dams and follow a unique production path from birth through feedlot entry.

Despite these differences, heritability estimates for the 140-day weight and other traits fell in line with typical expectations when maternal effects for native beef weaning weight were included.

Implementation plans

Based on the results, the proposed approach is to maintain the traditional growth analysis—including birth weight, weaning weight, post-weaning gain and weaning weight maternal—while adding a separate trait for the beef-on-dairy 140-day adjusted weight.

This new metric is expected to be especially valuable for beef-on-dairy indexing and will help associations design tools that account for growth differences at specific time points. While it may not offer much benefit for traditional beef-on-beef programs, the data could improve predictions for systems relying heavily on beef-on-dairy production.

Notably, 140-day weights will not factor into weaning weight maternal EPD calculations, since beef-on-dairy calves are raised in artificial rearing systems rather than by their dams.

The integration of beef-on-dairy data continues to deliver advantages beyond its own sector. High-use AI sires in dairy herds generate large numbers of progeny records, which boosts the accuracy of EPDs for both carcass and growth traits.

In some carcass weight analyses, dairy breeds rank third and fourth in the number of sires with high-accuracy EPDs. This is a testament to the power of these connected data streams. Distributions of EPDs for Holstein and Jersey sires often match or exceed those of beef breeds in certain traits, underscoring their genetic diversity and potential for targeted selection.

With implementation underway, researchers expect the addition of the 140-day weight to enhance the precision of beef-on-dairy genetic evaluations. By leveraging the strong genetic correlations where they exist and accounting for differences where they don't, IGS aims to maximize the utility of every available data point.

"As we continue to expand the number of phenotypes and records from this valuable data stream, it's critical to incorporate them in ways that improve accuracy for both beef-on-dairy and native beef predictions," Boldt said.

The project reflects a broader shift in cattle breeding: embracing new metrics and production realities while ensuring that genetic tools remain relevant across diverse management systems.

Takeaways

- Beef-on-dairy data boosts evaluation accuracy. Incorporating beef-on-dairy records, especially carcass traits, has significantly increased phenotypic data in the National Cattle Evaluation, which benefits multiple breed associations.

- 140-day weight offers a new growth metric. Feedlot entry weight at about 140 days is a distinct, heritable trait for beef-on-dairy calves to be added separately to growth evaluations instead of adjusting to 205 days.

- High genetic correlations for some traits. Birth weight and post-weaning gain in beef-on-dairy and native beef animals are closely related, and therefore, allow for joint analysis. Weaning weight shows weaker genetic links.

- Management differences shape results. Beef-on-dairy calves' unique production system, including artificial rearing, influences growth patterns and reduces correlations seen in traditional beef cattle.

- Broader industry benefits. Data from high-use AI dairy sires enhances EPD accuracy across the IGS network, with some dairy breeds showing competitive or superior genetic diversity in certain traits. — **Beef Improvement Federation**



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BQA has high value for producers and consumers

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA), a program developed by cattlemen in cooperation with the USDA, is central to ensuring beef products are raised with animal welfare, food safety and responsible management in mind. In Nebraska, veterinarians are directly involved in that work, helping producers apply research-based practices to their operations, which ultimately affects what reaches the consumer.

Sierra Rush, DVM, is one of those veterinarians. Through her work with feedlot and cow-calf operations through Rice Veterinarian Services in Broken Bow, NE, Rush is involved in BQA training. This allows her to work directly with producers to improve cattle care and management practices.

"Veterinarians are the middlemen, really," she said. "We work with the producers, and then we work with Nebraska BQA, and we're given that research on how best we can use husbandry skills to advance care at the production level."

Rush said her involvement in BQA stems from seeing how closely animal care and consumer trust are connected.

BQA boosts public confidence by letting consumers know "that we are doing everything we absolutely can do at each operation to make sure welfare is top priority," she said.

As a veterinarian, Rush brings research-backed knowledge and hands-on experience into BQA trainings. She uses research to explain why certain practices matter, while helping producers understand how those practices fit into daily operations.

By using research to support BQA practices, Rush helps producers understand that the program is not about meeting minimum requirements but, rather, about improving consistency and accountability across the beef supply chain.

Rush's trainings focus on key BQA areas including animal behavior and handling, herd health management, biosecurity, record keeping, emergency action planning and transportation. She also incorporates mobility scoring and handling discussions that relate directly to cattle condition prior to transport, an important factor in both animal welfare and beef quality.

She often addresses BQA principles when visiting an operation, helping producers see how small changes can improve outcomes.

"When we're working cattle, I'm not afraid to kind of have a conversation when cattle aren't flowing down the alley very well," said Rush, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) alumna.

"Like, how about we do it this way?" That approach has helped build trust and has led to a strong number of producers returning to her BQA clinics. Many attend not only to maintain certification but also to better understand how research-based practices could improve animal care.

Rush is especially focused on supporting young producers and employees who may be newer to the industry.

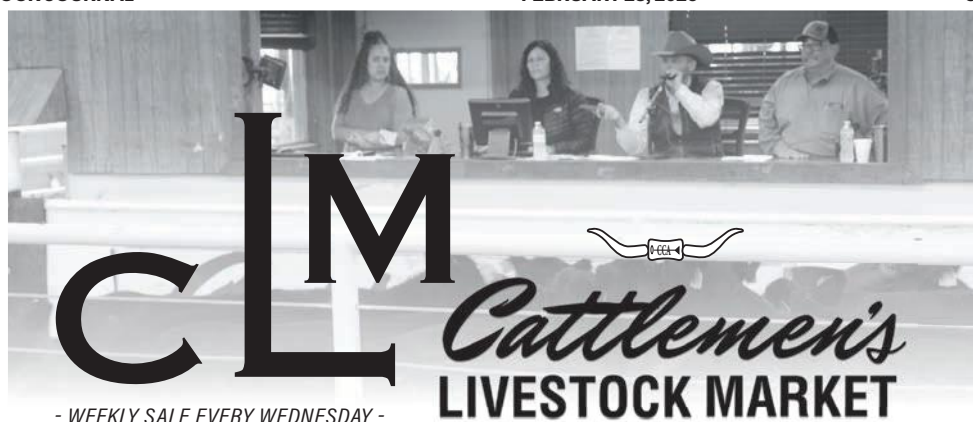
"When young producers think of BQA, they think of the general, typical things like where to give shots or hot shot use," she said. "But there's so much more with the program."

After BQA trainings, Rush often sees management changes that reflect the principles of BQA.

Examples range from "the smallest things like how to mix a vaccine, to producers calling me to sit down and help them create a biosecurity plan," she said.

Rush also serves as a trainer and member of the newly formed Nebraska BQA advisory board. She said the program has historically been more focused on feedlot operations, but she sees it continuing to expand across all sectors of the industry as operations switch over to younger people.

By connecting research to daily cattle care, veterinarians like Rush help ensure BQA remains an effective tool for producers and a source of confidence for consumers. — UNL Extension



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Defining cow efficiency

When it comes to cow efficiency, beef producers often focus on outputs like weaning weights and pregnancy rates. Kansas State (K-State) University beef cattle experts recently discussed which performance metrics really matter on a Beef Cattle Institute (BCI) "Cattle Chat" podcast episode.

Researchers defined cow efficiency as the relationship between feed intake and pounds of calf weaned per cow exposed, a metric that directly affects profitability. However, beef cattle nutritionist Phillip Lancaster suggested accurately measuring that relationship remains a challenge—especially when forage intake is involved.

"We as researchers need to work on these math equations to make them more accurate for the type of cows we have today," K-State veterinarian Bob Larson said.

"We want to get to the point where we can measure efficiency better, but it is currently impossible to accurately measure forage intake," Lancaster said.

Without precise intake data, researchers rely on models and indicators to evaluate how cows convert available resources into reproductive

and growth outcomes.

Despite those limitations, the discussion reinforced several core principles producers can apply in their operations. The team stressed that efficiency is strongly tied to adequate nutrition, sound animal husbandry and maintaining proper body condition, particularly heading into calving.

"Sometimes the math clearly shows how thin cows going into the calving season can affect fertility and overall efficiency," Larson said. Poor body condition at calving often results in delayed rebreeding, fewer pounds weaned and higher costs per cow—all of which reduce system efficiency.

While research continues to refine efficiency models, producers can protect herd performance by focusing on fundamentals: matching cow size to the environment, ensuring nutritional needs are met and managing body condition before calving begins.

To learn more about managing body conditioning for cows or learn more from the beef cattle experts, check out the BCI "Cattle Chat" podcast. For questions, reach out on social media or email bci@ksu.edu. — K-State Research and Extension

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Preparing Missouri's next generation of farmers

Every farmer understands a basic truth: A good harvest does not happen by chance. It takes planning, preparation and decisions made long before crops ever emerge from the soil.

Farm succession works the same way.

Across the U.S., farm families are entering a season of transition that will shape not only individual operations but also the future of rural com-

munities and the agricultural economy. For many families, the question is no longer if transition will happen, but how, and whether the next generation will be ready to step in when the time comes.

The urgency is real. An estimated 70% of U.S. farmland will change hands in the next 20 years. At the same time, agricultural census data show farmers age 65 and older are the fastest-growing segment of

the farm population, now representing nearly 40% of producers. Together, these trends make it clear why succession planning matters more now than ever.

prepare succeeding farmers for the realities of running an operation. Successful transition depends on long-term development. Skills, confidence and experience must be built well before formal succession planning begins.

That preparation often starts in youth. Programs such as 4-H help young people develop leadership, communication and problem-solving skills while exposing them to agriculture as a viable career path. These early experiences encourage entrepreneurial thinking and show that modern farming extends far beyond production.

On the farm, MU Extension promotes a gradual transfer of responsibility. Rather than treating successors only as hired labor, families are encouraged to assign management of specific enterprises or business functions. Managing a livestock enterprise, cropping system or marketing plan allows young farmers to make decisions, learn from mistakes and build confidence in real-world conditions.

MU Extension supports this process with research-based education in crop and livestock management. From agronomic decisions and animal health to risk management and marketing strategies, producers receive practical guidance that strengthens productivity and resilience as responsibilities grow.

Innovation also plays a growing role in long-term viability. MU Extension works with families exploring value-added enterprises such as specialty livestock, agritourism or on-farm processing that can generate additional income and support multiple family members. These opportunities help farms adapt in a changing agricultural economy.

More than a financial transaction

Farm succession is the process of preparing the next generation to step into farm management and ownership while helping senior operators move into new roles, either on or off the farm. It is often treated as a legal or financial exercise, but for most families it is much more personal and complex.

Families often struggle to find solutions that feel fair when some family members work in the operation and others do not. At the same time, there are real concerns about the long-term viability of the farm. While land values have increased significantly, farm income has not kept pace. In many cases, land no longer generates enough cash flow for a beginning farmer to purchase it outright, even when part of the operation is inherited.

Retiring farmers must balance retirement income needs, tax implications and the desire to keep the farm intact. Just as challenging are the emotional realities. For many producers, farming is more than a business. It is identity, purpose and daily rhythm. Letting go of control can feel like losing part of oneself, which is why planning is often delayed until illness, death or conflict forces decisions.

Like skipping field preparation and hoping for a good yield, avoiding these conversations rarely leads to a successful outcome.

Preparing for life after the farm

University of Missouri Extension (MU) helps retiring farmers navigate this transition by creating space for honest conversations and realistic planning. Specialists often serve as trusted third parties, helping families talk through sensitive issues that are easy to avoid. Because they are not part of the family or the operation, MU Extension staff can help keep discussions focused, productive and forward-looking.

MU Extension also encourages families to see succession as a gradual process rather than a single handoff. Transferring responsibility over time allows senior operators to step back at a manageable pace while building confidence in the next generation. This approach reduces fear around letting go and creates clearer expectations for everyone involved.

Just as important, retiring farmers benefit from thinking intentionally about what comes next. Instead of viewing succession as walking away, many find meaning in mentoring or coaching successors. Others step fully away to focus on family, community involvement or personal interests. Planning for life after transition helps maintain a sense of purpose while giving successors room to lead.

Preparing the next generation

MU Extension also works to

Community matters

For many young people, returning to the farm is about more than the operation itself. They want to know whether they can build a life in the surrounding community.

Reliable internet, health care, schools and social connections all influence that decision. MU Extension supports communities through work in broadband access, workforce development and local leadership. Reliable internet in particular helps families stay connected, pursue education and access remote work opportunities that can supplement farm income. These factors make rural life not just possible, but attractive.

Keeping family farms viable is about more than preserving tradition. It sustains the food system, strengthens rural economies and protects land that has been stewarded for generations. With so much farmland poised to change hands, the future depends on whether today's farmers plan ahead and whether tomorrow's farmers are prepared to lead.

Succession planning is not a single decision made at retirement. It is a long-term investment in people. Just as with any crop, the harvest depends on what is planted and tended today. By planning early and intentionally, farm families can help ensure their operations continue to grow for generations to come. — MU Extension

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RE +.65 | \$M +107 | \$W +90



LOT 3 - CR MT VARSITY 5148
Reg #21429746 - Sire: S A V Varsity 2750
BW +3.4 | WW +86 | YW +153 | Marb +.94 |
RE +1.12 | \$M +75 | \$W +72



LOT 6 - CASINO OCONEE Y170
Reg #21417000 - Sire:Yon Oconee H146
BW +.9 | WW +85 | YW +138 | Marb +.49 |
RE +1.21 | \$M +95 | \$W +89



LOT 7 - CASINO BROADCAST Y176
Reg #21417003 - Sire: Connealy Broadcast
BW +2.9 | WW +89 | YW +160 | Marb +.69 |
RE +.42 | \$M +66 | \$W +76



LOT 10 - CR MT MAN IN BLACK 5135
Reg # 21404010 - Sire: LAR Man In Black
BW +.9 | WW +81 | YW +138 | Marb +.98 |
RE +.8 | \$M +107 | \$W +82



LOT 17 - CASINO CONSTABLE Y182
Reg # 21417005 - Sire: Casino Constable T34
BW +1.7 | WW +89 | YW +150 | Marb +.93 |
RE +.68 | \$M +88 | \$W +83



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TX dairy producers offset lower milk prices with higher calf prices

Dairy producers are facing a decline in milk prices but beef prices are up and providing added revenue to help them weather the storm, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service dairy specialists.

The beef-on-dairy breeding program is as much or more of their business as the milk marketing, said AgriLife Extension dairy specialists Jennifer Spencer, Ph.D. and Juan Piñero, DVM, Ph.D., both in the Texas A&M Department of Animal Science.

"Today, dairies are depending more on calf prices, where beef-on-dairy calves have gone from \$600 per calf in 2024 to as high as \$1,500 per calf for Holstein/Angus cross calves now," Piñero said.

He said recent data from CattleFax indicated 3.22 million beef-on-dairy animals were sold in 2024, where 10 years previously, there were only 50,000 head sold. This is also helping the dairy industry fill supply gaps within the beef industry amid historically tight cattle supplies.

In the marketplace

The Southwest Marketing Area Market Administrator's Jan. 13 report showed Texas milk production increased by 1.2 billion pounds from 2024, increasing from 17 billion pounds in 2024 to 18.2 billion pounds in 2025.

Spencer and Piñero said this is primarily due to the increased number of dairy cows in the state, as well as

"Keeping the same high rate of expansion we have had for the last 10 years would be challenging as more cows would demand more forage production and more forage production would demand more water."

— Juan Piñero

improved genetics, nutrition and practices that promote cow comfort.

The Statistical Uniform Price report showed milk prices decreased from \$20.55/cwt in December 2024 to \$16.93/cwt in December 2025. Cheese prices also decreased from \$18.62/cwt to \$15.86/cwt, for the same time periods.

Butter prices declined the most, from \$2.50 per

pound in July 2025 to \$1.50/lb. by December, according to the report.

The price of butter is going down because cows are producing milk with higher butterfat content due to genetic and nutritional improvements, Piñero said. It's a case of supply and demand. Dairy producers don't get paid by fluid milk, but rather by milk components such as butterfat and

protein. While the protein price has gone up slightly, the increase in butterfat has prompted those prices to decline.

Consolidation continues

Overall, consolidation continues among Texas dairies, with operation numbers decreasing, but the number of dairy cows increasing, Spencer said.

According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Texas lost 10 dairies in 2024 and another 10 in 2025, going from 294 to 274 in the past two years. Cow numbers, however, increased from 675,000 to 705,000 head in the same period.

Based on the current and expected milk processing capacity, both Spencer and Piñero said that Texas milk production is expected to continue growing in 2026 but at a slower rate compared to the previous

10 years.

Some of that slowdown is due to dairy expansion in other states. An example of this is the considerable expansion in western Kansas over the last three years. Another part, Piñero said, is the ongoing water challenges in the Texas Panhandle.

Piñero said from 2016 to 2021, Texas milk production increased at an average rate of 7.6% per year. From 2024 to 2025, it slowed to 7%. Similarly, from 2016 to 2021, Texas dairy cow inventory increased at an average of 4.6% per year. From 2024 to 2025, that growth was at 4.4% per year.

"Keeping the same high rate of expansion we have had for the last 10 years would be challenging as more cows would demand more forage production and more forage production would demand more water," he said. — Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Packers: USDA had authority to set standards

LAWSUIT (from page 1)

Under prior federal policy, meat could be labeled "Product of USA" so long as it was processed in the U.S. even if the cattle were born and raised abroad. A stricter standard took effect this year, requiring that animals be born, raised, slaughtered and processed domestically to bear that claim. The meatpackers argue the new rule cannot retroactively govern conduct that complied with the earlier federal policy.

The case was docketed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit in May 2025, after the district court's ruling. In support of the ranchers' appeal, a bipartisan group of 11 state attorneys general—including Colorado, Kansas, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming—filed an amicus brief urging the appellate court to uphold the ability of states to enforce truth-in-labeling laws against misleading marketing of foreign-sourced beef under the U.S. label.

Arguments before the 8th Circuit

Arguing for the meatpackers, attorney Aaron Van Oort framed the dispute as one about federal supremacy. He told the panel that Congress gave the secretary of Agriculture exclusive authority to set labeling standards and that states may not impose requirements "in addition to or different than" those federal standards.

Van Oort emphasized that at the time the labels were used, FSIS had adopted a policy allowing the "Product of USA" claim for meat processed domestically. If that standard was flawed, he argued, the proper avenue was an Administrative Procedure Act challenge against the sec-

retary, not a state-law damages action against regulated entities.

Several judges questioned the extent of federal preemption. One judge posed hypotheticals about scenarios where a state might interpret a labeling standard differently from the federal government. Van Oort responded that once the secretary sets a standard under the FMIA, states may not contradict that standard by imposing separate requirements.

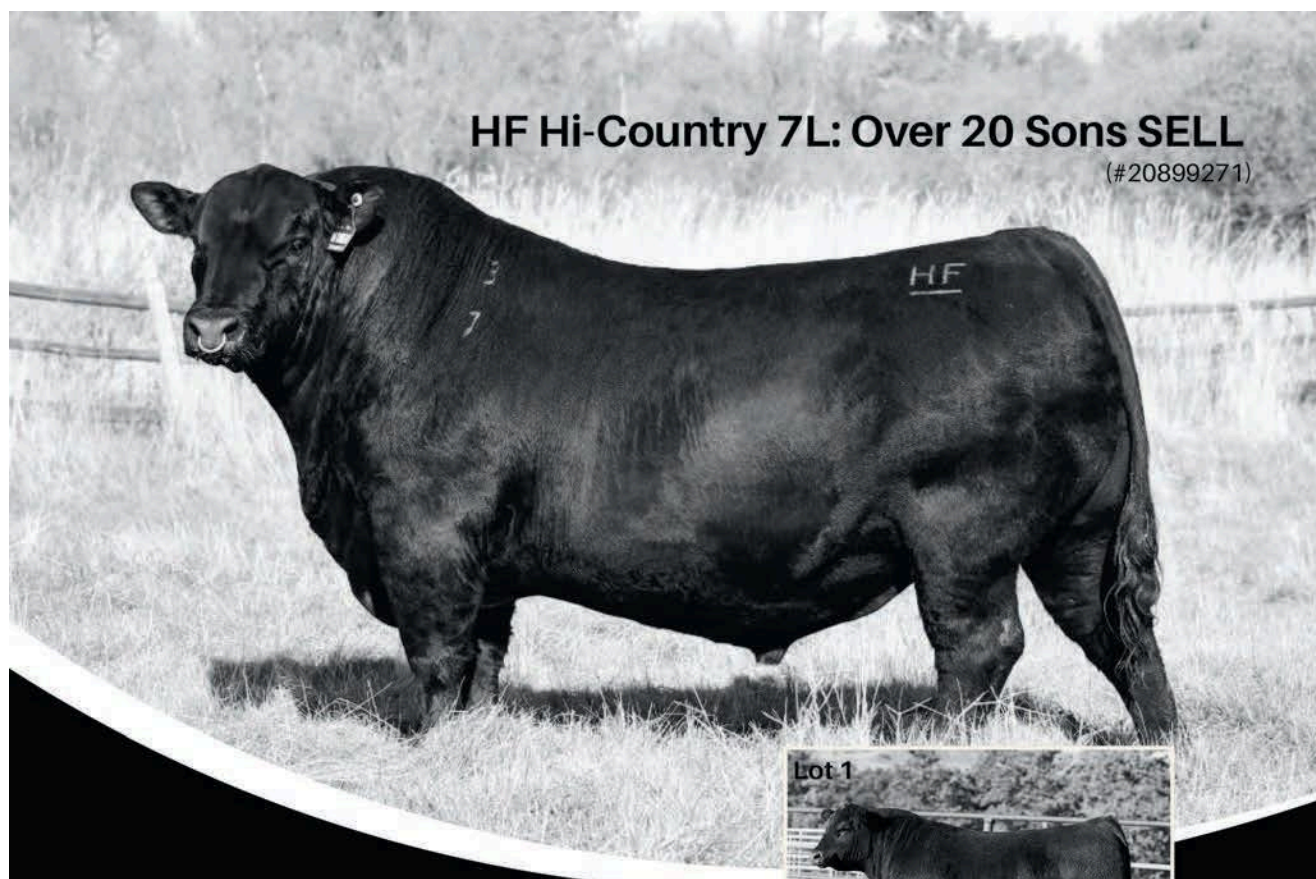
Van Oort also suggested that, because the companies relied on a federally approved standard, retroactive damages could be inconsistent with the statute's structure.

Blair Dunn, representing the ranchers, argued that FSIS's prior "policy book" was guidance rather than a regulation adopted through formal rulemaking and therefore should not carry a binding, preemptive effect.

Dunn emphasized that the FMIA requires labels to be both approved and not false or misleading, describing those as independent requirements. In his view, approval alone does not shield a label from scrutiny if it gives consumers a false impression about country of origin.

Judges pressed Dunn on whether allowing state-law claims risks creating inconsistent standards across the country. Dunn responded that the FMIA contemplates concurrent state enforcement of misbranding provisions and that Congress did not make the secretary the sole arbiter of what is misleading.

The appellate panel did not indicate when it will rule. Its decision could clarify how far federal labeling approvals shield companies from state-law claims and how courts interpret the FMIA's preemption clause in disputes over country-of-origin labeling. — Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor



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WSU transforms waste into energy

Turning waste from food, yard trimmings and other living organisms into usable nutrients, energy and fuels is an evolving necessity, one that Washington state has been tackling head-on for nearly 20 years.

The Waste to Fuels Technology partnership was initially funded by the state legislature in 2006 and led by the Washington State Department of Ecology. It brought multiple state and federal agencies together with scientists from Washington State University (WSU) to work on diverse projects that reduce waste in landfills while creating economic marketplaces for energy and other products.

"Humans are responsible for a tremendous amount of organic waste, from food to farm to yard waste and more," said Mark Fuchs, an Ecology scientist who led the partnership from its start until his retirement in 2020. "When waste goes into places like landfills or lagoons, it creates methane. We thought: Why not separate organic waste, process it, and harvest the energy? Then we can also recover the rest as soil amendments, fertilizers and more."

Fuchs enlisted specialists on a variety of topics to work together. The state funded WSU studies on how to create biochar, harvest farm waste into energy, and more. The Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources (CSANR) was one of the key WSU partners.

Shulin Chen, a WSU professor in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering, was involved very early in the partnership. Fuchs said Chen's efforts laid a groundwork for the overall success of the project. Two decades of impactful science has benefited the entire state and Pacific Northwest.

"Having this partnership allowed us to take a relatively small amount of funding and engage many WSU researchers and Extension personnel," said Georgine Yorgey, a senior research fellow with CSANR and director of the WSU Energy Program. "It created a brain trust, encouraging faculty to be more engaged and think about these problems."

Digesting waste

Yorgey and Chad Kruger, CSANR director, both said the two-decade partnership boosted researchers as well as the waste processing industry around the state, allowing for widespread benefits. One primary focus of the partnership was processing organic waste at dairies, which saw huge advancements.

Due to its inherent properties, the dairy waste can be processed together with food wastes to generate electricity or natural gas while recycling nutrients and generating products like animal bedding or soil amendments.

"People involved in the partnership knew they needed to help the industry evolve to address waste and needed to engage the land-grant university," said Kruger, who was recently named WSU associate vice president for research advancement and strategy. "New ideas infected the marketplace; it created a level of awareness the marketplace could respond to and grow around."

A direct outcome of the partnership is the development of 25 on-farm anaerobic digesters around the Pacific Northwest, which generate \$2.5 million worth of electricity each year. That number was zero in 2006 when the partnership started.

"The state wanted the digesters to come online, and they are probably the single biggest carbon reduction strategy implemented in the state," Kruger said. "We were able to work with the Department of Ecology to bring them online in a way that kept people safe, helped the environment, and enabled projects to move forward."

The partnership didn't build the digesters, but it supported the people building them and provided necessary knowledge.

"I'm thrilled we played a role in that overall success," Yorgey said.

Biochar advancements

Another concentration for the partnership involved biochar, a carbon produced when biomass waste is heated which is used to seques-

ter carbon. WSU's biochar involvement in the partnership came when Fuchs reached out to Manuel Garcia-Perez, then early in his career in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering.

"I was fascinated by the topic," Garcia-Perez said. "Today, we have biochar in soils, concrete, and plastics. WSU is one of the best places in the world for modeling biochar, all because Mark Fuchs reached out and inspired the work we've been doing for 20 years."

Now chair of his department, Garcia-Perez used the relatively small funding from the partnership to do foundational work on the topic. That work led to multi-million dollar, federally funded research projects, bringing more money into the state than had ever been spent to work on a topic benefitting everyone.

"Funding from the partnership allowed me to focus on societal problems," he said. "I was working as a public servant, doing the best work possible on a complex problem."

"This is what a land-grant should be, working with state agencies and companies to help move the state forward. We were the research arm of the Department of Ecology, fundamentally, and it felt great to be part of this bigger team with a long-term commitment to building something."

Over the years of the partnership, biochar has grown from a research concept to a small but vibrant industry, with approximately 25 producers of biochar and biochar equipment across the Pacific Northwest, Yorgey said.

Going forward

In 2025, funding for the partnership was cut back by over one-third, down to \$140,000 for the biennium. The partnership may not receive funding beyond the current fiscal year, said Canming Xiao, the partnership's current contract manager at the Department of Ecology.

"It has been a very impactful and fruitful partnership for Washington," said Xiao, who earned a Ph.D. from WSU and worked on projects related to the partnership as a student. "We know there is more work to do, and we hope that funding returns."

Though they are proud of the outcomes already in place, the CSANR team agrees that there's more to be done.

"Sometimes government can be a problem, a roadblock for the marketplace," Kruger said. "In this case, the government agency regulating waste made a long-term investment in cutting-edge solutions that successfully helped industry, solved problems, and engaged scientists. Washington is better when we can find ways to get value out of things we throw away. This partnership really delivered for our state." — **WSU Extension**

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Research fund drives vaccine breakthroughs for cattlemen

The Livestock Memorial Research Fund, an arm of the California Cattlemen's Association, is on a roll.

Since its establishment in the 1980s, members of the livestock community have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to promote scientific and educational projects to benefit the industry, while also providing scholarships for graduate students in ag-related fields.

Their signature projects have included working to develop three important vaccines to address serious problems cattlemen encounter. The first one was approved for use in late 2020, the second is showing great promise with hopes of being approved within a couple of years and a third effort is now underway, said Research Fund committee member Tom Talbot.

These grants have been crucial seed money to help researchers attract larger grants from state and federal sources.

"Researchers can show them, look—California ranchers are excited about this, support the project and it's important to the industry," said Talbot, a rancher and veterinarian in Bishop, CA.

Talbot said the Research Fund has built up an endowment over the years to fund research and scholarships but also relies heavily on the sale of raffle tickets at the cattlemen's association's annual convention. The prize is a stock trailer that for more than 15 years has been purchased with donations by California Farm Credit associations.

Ag West Farm Credit California President Kevin Ralph said Farm Credit has been proud to sponsor the prize each year, and to see the Research Fund's investments pay off.

"The vaccines already on the market or in the development stage will prove to be incredibly valuable for California ranchers and save them collectively mil-

lions of dollars a year," Ralph said. "Farm Credit is proud to have played this ongoing role in the Research Fund's successes."

Farm Credit associations supporting the Research Fund are AgWest Farm Credit, American AgCredit and CoBank. These organizations are part of the nationwide Farm Credit System—the largest provider of credit to U.S. agriculture.

The first vaccine was developed to prevent a dangerous ailment called epizootic bovine abortion, a tick-borne disease that for decades had caused tens of thousands of cows in the West to abort their calves.

"That was truly a home run for the industry," said Talbot, a rancher and veterinarian in Bishop. "The efficacy of the vaccine has just been outstanding."

While detailed statistics are not available, Talbot said the vaccine has caused the loss rate of calves to drop from between 10%

and 40% in tick-infested areas down to the 5-10% range today.

The Research Fund contributed nearly \$350,000 to the research over several years.

For the past several years, the Research Fund's has been supporting efforts to create a vaccine against another major tick-borne illness called bovine anaplasmosis. This disease, caused by bacteria that infects the red blood cells of cattle, leads to anemia, weight loss and even deaths that cost U.S. ranchers hundreds of millions of dollars in economic losses each year.

The work involved genetically modifying the pathogen in a lab. By deleting a specific gene and then injecting the modified pathogen into cattle, the animals were immunized. Talbot is hopeful that the vaccine could hit the market within a couple of years, which he said would be a

significant development for California ranchers.

The Research Fund is now providing seed money for studies into developing a third vaccine, this one to prevent pinkeye, another common livestock disease. The bacteria-caused disease, largely spread by flies, costs producers nationwide over \$150 million a year due to reduced weight gain (as much as 20-35 pounds per calf), along with lower milk production and sale value.

2026 marks the third year the Research Fund has contributed to this vaccine research.

"We have high hopes for it as we move forward and the funding has helped allow him to recruit additional funds to support research for the beef cattle industry," he said.

Talbot said the Research Fund has contributed about \$50,000 to each of these two projects.

Besides helping fund

vaccine projects, the Research Fund also has awarded over \$150,000 in graduate-level scholarships for students in fields that would benefit cattle production.

Pierce Mallery, director of regional banking with American AgCredit, said Farm Credit financially supports several ag-related scholarship programs each year because highly educated professionals must be trained to provide people with the skills and services the industry will continue to need.

"The Research Fund is investing wisely in developing the lawyers, veterinarians and other skilled professionals the industry will need to meet the challenges of tomorrow," Mallery said. "Farm Credit strongly supports programs to train people to help ensure that agriculture continues to thrive in California." — **Farm Credit**

NASDA calls for interstate meat sales

Members of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) are calling on the USDA to create an additional pathway allowing meat and poultry products processed at state-inspected facilities to be sold across state lines.

The policy amendment, adopted during NASDA's 2026 Winter Policy Conference, encourages USDA to modify an existing program or establish a new one within the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). The proposal would allow products from state-inspected facilities to enter interstate commerce, provided those programs are deemed "at least equal to" federal inspection standards.

Currently, facilities operating under state inspection programs that meet the "at least equal to" benchmark are held to the same food safety standards as federally inspected plants. However, their products are limited to sales within state borders. NASDA leaders argue that the restriction prevents many small- and medium-sized processors from accessing broader markets, even though they already meet the same safety requirements as their federally inspected counterparts.

NASDA CEO Ted McKinney emphasized the role state agriculture departments play in ensuring food safety and supporting local processors.

"One of state agriculture departments' most critical roles is safeguarding the nation's food supply, detecting and preventing the spread of foodborne illnesses and supporting small and medium-sized

producers," McKinney said. "With our ability to conduct inspections on behalf of the federal government, saving federal resources, paired with our close relationships with local processors, we have a unique opportunity to efficiently help small-medium sized processors expand their markets regionally."

While some state-inspected plants have considered transitioning to full federal inspection to gain interstate access, NASDA noted that many smaller facilities struggle to secure federal licensure. Limited availability of federal inspectors can make it difficult to schedule inspections at times that align with plant operations, creating logistical and financial hurdles.

Under the proposed approach, qualifying state-inspected facilities could access regional and national markets without duplicative oversight, provided their inspection systems continue to meet USDA's equivalency requirements.

"Allowing meat and poultry products from state-inspected meat processors to be sold in interstate commerce is a win-win for everyone," McKinney said. "Providing more market opportunities for small businesses, more options for consumers and saves federal resources."

NASDA members contend that expanding interstate access would strengthen regional food systems, support small processors and enhance consumer choice while maintaining rigorous food safety standards already in place at the state level. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

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Reclaiming harsh habitats with black soldier fly larvae

Extreme environments—on Earth and beyond—limit human habitation due to high levels of soil contaminants,

making food production difficult. With instrumental funding from the WoodNext Foundation, researchers from

Texas A&M University hope to rehabilitate extreme environments by integrating entomology, robotics, artificial

intelligence (AI) and sensor technology.

The WoodNext Foundation manages the philanthropy of

tech innovator and Roku CEO/founder Anthony Wood and his wife, Susan.

While they may sound like pests, black soldier flies could hold the key to reclaiming extreme environments. Their larvae can recycle organic waste and produce protein and fertilizer. But most importantly, the larvae can remove toxic substances from the materials they are fed.

This interdisciplinary project aims to develop autonomous systems for cultivating plants, recycling with black soldier fly larvae, and generating healthy, fertile soil suitable for human habitation.

Reclaiming extreme environments through manual labor is impractical due to the high cost of energy and resources, as well as the dangers posed to workers. This challenge led to the development of a multidisciplinary project.

"This project exemplifies the interdisciplinary research that is necessary to tackle the complex problems we face in today's world," said Guillermo Aguilar, Ph.D., department head and professor in the Col-

sors will detect soil composition, contaminant concentrations and nutrient dynamics.

"The successful contaminant removal and soil restoration this project intends to achieve will empower land managers, farmers and governments to address polluted environments previously regarded as lost," said Aguilar.

Aguilar's soil-sensing data will be used in combination with robotics systems, built by Minghui Zheng, Ph.D., an associate professor in the mechanical engineering department, to automate remediation tasks.

Zheng said the robotic systems will form a physical backbone for the closed-loop, autonomous remediation system capable of adaptive operation with minimal human intervention.

"By shifting labor-intensive and potentially dangerous tasks to automated robotic platforms, the technologies developed here can significantly reduce human exposure to hazardous environments," said Zheng.

"The successful contaminant removal and soil restoration this project intends to achieve will empower land managers, farmers and governments to address polluted environments previously regarded as lost."

— Guillermo Aguilar

50th Annual Production Sale

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BW	WW	Milk	YW
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Stryker x Frontman 4504
Dam posts 7 WR 104

A-A-R Justified N100



Reg. 21385428

BW	WW	Milk	YW
-0.2	+81	+31	+126

Justified K012 x Frontman
Dam posts 5 WR 107

A-A-R Bridger 5403



Reg. 21480380

BW	WW	Milk	YW
-0.9	+67	+32	+118

Bridger x Stunner
Out of a long line of top cows

A-A-R Axell 5507



Reg. 21442918

BW	WW	Milk	YW
+0.5	+85	+28	+157

Axell x Stellar
4 star calving ease with big performance

A-A-R Hilger 5919



Reg. 21427712

BW	WW	Milk	YW
+0.6	+70	+30	+118

Hilger x Justified
Dam posts 6 WR 107

A-A-R Padre N121



Reg. 21480390

BW	WW	Milk	YW
-0.5	+74	+33	+132

Padre x Outside
Maternal brother to Genex sire Reservoir

A-A-R Axell N023



Reg. 21403681

BW	WW	Milk	YW
+2.3	+94	+32	+156

Axell x Duke
WR of 115 and YR of 118

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BW: 66 WW: 675



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MUSGRAVE AMBITION X O'REILLY FACTOR
BW: 78 WW: 700

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lege of Engineering J. Mike Walker Department of Mechanical Engineering. "Nobody is an expert in every field needed to combat a challenge of this scale, but collectively, we provide a unique expertise that is capable of addressing this problem."

Jeffery Tomberlin, Ph.D., a Texas A&M AgriLife Research Fellow and professor in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Entomology, will lead the biological integration project using black soldier fly larvae.

Tomberlin's expertise in entomology provides the team insight into black soldier flies and their ability to remove toxic substances from the environment. This understanding is crucial for the project's success.

"We live in a changing world where land is limited. By reclaiming extreme terrestrial environments, we are creating resources for humanity. If successful, such methods can be applied globally but also beyond Earth, such as in orbit, or on the moon or Mars," said Tomberlin, who also serves as director of the National Science Foundation Center for Insect Biomanufacturing and Innovation.

This research is supported by the Woods through the WoodNext TAMU Fund, a fund of a donor-advised fund program. Guided by the Woods' overall mission to advance human progress and remove obstacles to a fulfilling life, the WoodNext Foundation makes grants and investments in areas including scientific and biomedical research, mental health, homelessness, education, nature conservation, disaster recovery and economic opportunity. — Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Technology takes on toxic soils

Aguilar will contribute to the project by developing advanced sensors to obtain real-time soil data. The sen-

Smarter soil recovery through AI

Xiao Liang, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the Zachry Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, will lead the AI component of the project. Liang's background in machine learning and environmental systems optimization will enable the creation of an AI platform that dynamically adjusts conditions to improve efficiency, scalability, and reduce human intervention.

"Our goal is to make large-scale soil remediation faster, smarter and more sustainable. By integrating AI with biological and mechanical systems, we can turn contaminated land into productive soil with minimal manual oversight," said Liang. "The same technology could be applied in the future to extraterrestrial environments, enabling autonomous agriculture on Mars or the moon—critical for long-term human habitation."

This research is supported by the Woods through the WoodNext TAMU Fund, a fund of a donor-advised fund program. Guided by the Woods' overall mission to advance human progress and remove obstacles to a fulfilling life, the WoodNext Foundation makes grants and investments in areas including scientific and biomedical research, mental health, homelessness, education, nature conservation, disaster recovery and economic opportunity. — Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

USDA proposes new line speeds rule

Making the case Americans need more affordable protein in their diets, USDA again proposed to increase line speeds at the country's pork and poultry plants.

Line speeds for processing poultry and pork have been a long-standing issue sparking proposed rules, pilot projects, studies and litigation over the past decades.

The latest updates in the federal inspection systems for the plants "reflect years of data and experience, and are designed to lower costs for American families, reduce outdated regulatory barriers for processors, and support a more efficient and resilient food supply," USDA stated.

"As secretary, my responsibility is to ensure that American families have access to affordable, safe, and abundant food," said USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins. "These updates remove outdated bottlenecks so that we can lower production costs and create greater stability in our food system."

The announcement also comes after the Trump administration proposed a new food pyramid that doubles the volumes of recommended protein in diets.

The new proposed rule was filed by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and includes a 60-day comment period.

Meat industry groups praised USDA's latest proposed rule while union leaders argue the rules will increase the risks of injuries for workers in those plants.

Harrison Kircher, president of the National Chicken Council, thanked Rollins and the Trump administration, saying they are following 30 years of studies and data to increase line speeds at poultry plants.

The National Chicken Council said, "It is important to note that the part of the processing line (evisceration) that deals with the speed increase is almost entirely automated. This modernized system has been studied, debated, and reviewed in depth for two and a half decades to assure its effectiveness in further modernizing chicken inspection while improving food safety and protecting workers. Research has confirmed that higher evisceration line speeds in chicken processing plants do not lead to increased food safety risks."

The National Pork Producers Council said the removal of

maximum line speed limits for establishments operating under the New Swine Inspection System will allow them "to set their own line speeds based on their demonstrated ability to maintain process controls and food safety, rather than adhering to a strict maximum speed limit."

The Meat Institute said the proposed rules changes will increase production and innovation, helping to ease prices for consumers and benefiting livestock and poultry producers.

"With this long overdue regulatory certainty, our member companies can invest in their operations to continue growth of the processing sector which benefits the consumer with more affordable and nutritious food," said Julie Anna Potts, president and CEO of the Meat Institute.

USDA in the first Trump administration finalized eliminating the cap of 1,106 hogs per hour (hph). The United Food and Commercial Work-

ers Union sued in a U.S. District Court in Minnesota over the reduction in FSIS inspectors in the rule. The court also ruled USDA failed to consider public comments on worker safety when implementing the rule. That effectively rolled back the inspection system back to the 1,106 hph standard.

In 2022, on a trial basis, USDA granted six large plants—making up 19% of daily hog processing—the ability to operate at maximum line speeds ranging from 1,206 hph to 1,450 hph. USDA has continued to grant waivers for those plants to continue to operate at higher speeds ever since.

In their statements, the National Chicken Council and Meat Institute both cited studies released by USDA at the end of the Biden administration last year, which the industry groups stated, "found no statistically significant associations between line speeds and increased worker safety risk."

The poultry study showed 81% of workers at poultry plants were at greater risk of musculoskeletal disorders but didn't specifically attribute those injuries to higher evisceration rates.

Researchers found the musculoskeletal disorder risk was greater among workers who worked at a higher piece rate, a job-level measure of work pace. Piece rate had little or no association with evisceration line speed, the poultry report stated.

Workers who were surveyed by physicians reported more severe levels of pain.

A substantial proportion of workers who were surveyed reported experiencing moderate to severe levels of work-related pain causing some to have difficulty maintaining the pace of their work or to consider quitting their job. Further, pain interfered with some workers' activities outside of work and resulted in others taking time off from work.

A report on line speeds last

year by the group Investigate Midwest also pointed out the studies underrepresented former workers who left processing plants because they could not handle the higher line speeds.

In the pork study, the results were more mixed, showing the higher line speeds and injuries varied by establishment. Increased evisceration line speed increased the risk of worker injury at one establishment, and importantly, increased evisceration line speed also decreased the risk of worker injury at a different establishment. Although simultaneously increasing line speed and reducing musculoskeletal disorder risk was possible, it was observed at only one of six establishments.

Still, both the USDA poultry and pork studies recommended meatpackers implement ergonomic programs and monitoring of worker safety if they increase line speeds. — **Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor**

FBI issues federal arrest warrant for Joshua Link

AGRIDIME (from page 1)

fraud and two counts of money laundering, including wiring more than \$527,000 to purchase real property. Link served as executive director.

• Tia Link, of Smithton, MO, charged with three counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of money laundering, including wiring more than \$527,000 to purchase real property. She served as marketing director.

• Taylor Bang, of Kildeer, ND, charged with eight counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of money laundering. Bang served as a cattle broker.

• Royana Thomas, of Arlington, TX, charged with six counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of money laundering. Thomas served as financial controller.

Scheme spanned three years

According to the indictment, from January 2021 through December 2023, the five defendants, acting through Agridime, allegedly orchestrated a fraud scheme targeting individual cattle purchasers, ranchers and feedlots nationwide.

Prosecutors allege that Agridime represented that it would use investor funds to purchase specific, individual cattle on behalf of each buyer, raise those cattle and ultimately sell meat from the same animals for a profit. Investors were promised returns ranging from 15-32% on cattle contracts.

In reality, the indictment alleges the defendants did not use victim funds as represented. Instead, prosecutors claim

newer investor funds were used to pay Agridime's operating expenses, cover obligations owed to earlier purchasers, fund personal expenses and acquire real property. The company allegedly purchased only a fraction of the cattle it claimed to secure.

Federal authorities contend the defendants fraudulently collected more than \$220 million from over 2,200 victims nationwide through public and private advertising statements. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) estimates that more than 2,000 cattle contract buyers suffered losses totaling approximately \$115 million.

On Jan. 29, a federal arrest warrant was issued for Joshua Link in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, Fort Worth Division. The FBI is seeking the public's assistance in locating Link, who has known ties to Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Arkansas, Colorado and Arizona. The FBI requests that the public contact the agency with any information regarding Link's location at tips.fbi.gov.

Tia Link and Bang appeared for arraignment before a U.S. magistrate judge in Fort Worth and were released under pre-trial supervision. Wood and Thomas are scheduled to appear for arraignment on Feb. 25.

If convicted, each defendant faces up to 20 years in federal prison for each wire fraud count and up to 20 years for the conspiracy charge. The money laundering counts carry potential penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment per count.

Authorities emphasized that an indictment is an allegation and that all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law. — **Charles Wallace, WJ contributing editor**

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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: 2/19/2026	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	N/A ▲	N/A	200.00
CME Feeder Index	376.02 ▲	374.36	278.51
Boxed Beef Average	N/A ▲	364.84	312.63
Average Dressed Steers	N/A ▲	N/A	N/A
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,467 ▲	1,466	1,439
Weekly Slaughter**	541,000 ▲	536,000	561,000
Weekly Beef Production***	483.1 ▲	477.5	489.2
Hide/Offal Value	11.92 ▲	11.86	11.89
Corn Price	4.28 ▼	4.31	5.03

* 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 13	6,409	366.87	275	380.68	1,214	368.66	1,895	365.30	512	360.11	2,513	345.19
February 6	6,607	366.50	272	379.84	1,170	371.37	2,102	362.90	587	359.82	2,475	346.06
January 30	6,803	366.55	304	379.63	1,216	372.15	2,058	362.18	512	358.79	2,712	343.98
January 23	7,184	364.45	301	380.40	1,306	369.21	2,116	361.28	585	357.27	2,876	342.61

Cutouts					
DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT	50% LEAN	90% LEAN
February 19	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
February 18	363.80	360.63	330.86	143.66	428.49
February 17	364.76	360.22	324.12	154.10	416.59
February 16	367.77	361.23	329.17	157.03	426.03
February 13	364.47	363.42	331.03	151.34	434.78

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle							
	2/13	2/16	2/17	2/18	2/19	High*	Low*
Feb.	24308	N/A	24700	24685	24775	24775	16853
Apr.	24063	N/A	24400	24300	24413	24830	16668
Jun.	23615	N/A	23923	23883	23958	25018	17005
Aug.	23373	N/A	23643	23635	23688	25093	18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle							
	2/13	2/16	2/17	2/18	2/19	High*	Low*
Mar.	36615	N/A	37225	37170	37190	38103	21920
Apr.	36345	N/A	36945	36883	36960	38280	22268
May	35943	N/A	36508	36500	36600	38020	22460
Aug.	35958	N/A	36485	36490	36563	37860	24118

* 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	N/A	N/A	N/A
Live FOB Heifer	139	1,330	249.00
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	N/A	N/A	N/A
Live FOB Heifer	194	1,200	243.00
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	265	1,575	200.00
Live FOB Heifer	600	1,500	200.00
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: FEBRUARY 15, 2026		
	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	35,376	4,137
Formula	228,440	1,918
Negotiated Cash	72,776	134
Negotiated Grid	30,278	1,793
Packer Owned	9,616	N/A
Total	376,486	7,982

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month		Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,735
Feb. '26	155,025	Neg. Sales 21+ days	862
Mar. '26	145,289	Formula sales	3,694
Apr. '26	181,950	Forward contract sales	117
May '26	80,993	Domestic sales	5,616
Jun. '26	94,611	NAFTA Exports	87

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		224.73	-0.81
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		223.23	-0.71
Ontario Auctions			
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		231.74	-2.72
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		229.81	-2.70
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs		146.11	+1.56

* Price comparison from one week ago.

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, February 17, 2026			
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	501.48	519.01	447.76
601-700 lbs	449.87	442.30	419.63
701-800 lbs	399.15	401.04	388.46
801-900 lbs	363.91	364.49	351.30
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	494.65	506.87	419.59
501-600 lbs	458.46	457.12	373.99
601-700 lbs	409.86	402.47	346.03
701-800 lbs	361.12	365.87	318.71

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
Feeder Cattle	2/9/2026	2/2/2026	0	230,638

IMPORTS SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE		
February 19, 2026		
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary		
Receipts EST: N/A	Week Ago EST: N/A	Year Ago Act: 1,450

THIS REPORT WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED AFTER MAY 12TH 2025. THE BORDER WILL BE CLOSED FOR LIVESTOCK IMPORTS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	N/A
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	N/A
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	N/A

Selected Auctions										
Week Ending February 19, 2026										
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
No report available										
February 12	Blackfoot, ID		597.50-622.50	577.50-587.50	467-523	391-452.50	373-401	359	127-185	
February 12	Burley, ID	459	529-585	501-514	449-500	411-415	337		187-196	3,400-3,700
No report available										
February 14	Emmett, ID			455-470*	320-440*	320-407*	355-370*	288-327*	140-169	1,975-3,000
February 14	Eugene, OR	657	340-480*	300-485*		325-395*	245-325*	255-290*	160-174	1,100-3,700
No report available										
February 11	Madras, OR			435-488					168-185	
February 11	Vale, OR	413			361-390				167-188	
February 16	Davenport, WA	208	495-530	270-515	387.50-455	372.50-400	345-347.50	267.50-340	91-224	
February 12	Toppenish, WA	1,238	400-525	380-499	330-480	329-387.50	325-345	187.50-302.50	160-168	2,850-3,300
February 12	Orland, CA	1,000		400-575	350-510	300-443	300-380	300-333	150-186	2,500-5,925
February 13	Escalon, CA	N/A		380-540	330-490	280-427	280-350		150-195	2,000-4,000
February 16	Famoso, CA	101	440-500	425-485	380-475	350-410	320-350	270-320	125-220	
No report available										
February 17	Turlock, CA	565	430-540	425-500	390-437	370-420	350-395.50	310-335	130-168.50	
No report available										
February 17	Salina, UT								169-201	

Feeder prices for steers & heifers reflect medium and large 1 cattle, unless otherwise noted; * Indicates medium and large 1-2										
February 12	Orland, CA		400-575	350-510	300-443	300-380	300-333	150-186	2,500-5,925	
February 13	Escalon, CA	N/A						115-140		
February 16	Famoso, CA	101	440-500	425-485	380-475	350-410	320-350	270-320	125-220	
No report available										
February 17	Turlock, CA	565	430-540	425-500	390-437	370-420	350-395.50	310-335	130-168.50	
No report available										
February 17	Iowa	17,121	645	480-627.50	490-617.50	445-545	391-483	360-421	320-397	
February 17	Miles City, MT	578		467.50-610	435-550	391-499	349-447.50	309-432.50	275-370	
February 18	Bassett, NE	5,670		635-680	532.50-603	480-560	423-494	386-446	349-394	
February 14	Ericson, NE	5,220		620-650	567.50	480-517.50	422.50-460	393-421.50	355.75-391	
No report available										
February 11	Keamey, NE	3,900		608	515-566	475-532.50	421-480	398-413	336-384.50	160-177.50
February 13	Lexington, NE	4,100		615-650	545-605	493-547.50	426-492.50	385.50-436.50	307.50-340	176-195
No report available										
February 12	Valentine, NE	670								3,900-4,950
February 13	Herreid, SD	3,846		610	528-601	470-532.50	409.25-467	371-402.50	350-379.50	
February 18	Torrington, WY	1,607		500	500-525	405-485	382-439	349.50-402	361.50	

February 12	Willcox, AZ	898	672-680	573-705	516-574	456-500	377-400		140-165	
February 17	Colorado	4,297	439-505	461-520	461-494	398-421	346-370		150-180	2,500-3,300
February 11	La Junta, CO	1,459		580-630	507.50-615	412.50-530	386-485	332.50-410	317.50-372	3,300
No report available										
February 18	Dodge City, KS	2,917		465-525	427.50-502.50	389-442.50	352.50-420	331-389	285-332	1,850-3,925
February 12	Salina, KS	2,726		440	562.50-585	491-550	415-470.50	372-411	328-367	
February 19	Clovis, NM	1,868	680-700	550-680	490-615	405-515	385-429	342-400	270-362	2,600-3,650
February 18	El Reno, OK	6,106	645	555-620	370-541	400-497	345-420	330-392	311-317	1,200-3,050
February 18	McAlester, OK	720		550-670	540-660	480-540	410-475	372-415	300-377	
February 17	Oklahoma City, OK	6,698		510-620	460-560	400-490	359-420	340-373	280-343	
February 13	Cuero, TX	1,634	562-725	526-700	475-600	425-550	398-445	359-400		150-179
February 12	Dalhart, TX	2,331	492-610	451-560	417-535	366-500	349-485	323-358		182-190
No report available										
February 12	Tulia, TX	1,017		582.50-620	500-555	427.50-492.50	390-442.50	365-405	335-370	2,600-3,400
February 12	Tulia, TX		625	550-575	535-540	452-530	440	360-395	335-356	
February 13	Alabama	10,535		450-470	432-482	385-435	362-385	334	305	175-185

February 13	Alabama	10,535		600-750	530-687.50	480-645	424-550	365
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January cattle on feed expected below 2025 levels

MARKETS (from page 1)

• Forward contract net purchases: \$366.11.

• Negotiated grid net purchases: \$375.75.

Slaughter through Thursday was estimated at 427,000 head, compared to 454,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for a week earlier is projected at 541,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending Feb. 7 was 538,907 head. The average steer

dressed weight was 981 lbs., the same as the prior week.

"A most harmful market outcome is a market where both processors and cattle feeders are posting losses. The slaughter is likely to remain near the current range for the coming weeks as packers adjust to the (Tyson) plant closing and new adjusted slaughter rates in the remaining plants," the Cattle Report said on Thursday.

USDA did not publish a Thursday report for boxed

beef prices by *WLJ* press time due to packer submission issues. On Wednesday, the Choice cutout closed at \$363.80 and the Select cutout at \$360.63, steady to lower than a week earlier.

"Uncertainty regarding the potential for a strike at the JBS Greeley, CO, facility continues to loom," wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, in *The Beef on Thursday*. "And packer margins have edged into monstrous losses, a result of record high fed cattle prices last week

and sluggish seasonal beef demand."

Analysts expected Friday's Cattle on Feed report to show cattle on feed as of Feb. 1 at 98.5% of last year. Placements for January are expected to be 96.7%, and marketings at 87%.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures closed several dollars higher. The March contract gained about \$5 to close at \$370.27, and the April contract gained about \$4 to close at \$367.65.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index gained a couple of dollars to close at \$376.02.

Corn futures were slightly lower, down about 6 cents to \$4.25 on the March contract and down about 5 cents on the May contract to \$4.36.

Iowa: Russell Livestock in Russell sold 5,855 head on Monday. Compared to the last

auction, steers 550 lbs. and under sold sharply lower, while steers over 550 lbs. sold mostly steady to \$10 higher. Heifers sold \$12-21 higher, except 650-700 lbs. sold \$2 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 727 lbs. sold between \$387-424, averaging \$404.60.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Missouri sold 10,500 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, at the mid-session, feeder steers sold from \$5 lower to \$15 higher. Feeder heifers sold from \$10 lower to \$10 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 783 lbs. sold from \$357-387.50, averaging \$366.87.

Nebraska: North Platte Stockyards in North Platte sold 1,995 head on Tuesday. Compared to the last auction, steers and heifers sold mixed to mostly higher. Benchmark steers averaging 774 lbs. sold between \$390-405, averaging

\$398.90.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 6,500 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, at the mid-session, feeder steers sold steady to \$4 higher and feeder heifers sold \$5-10 higher. Steer calves sold mostly steady, and heifer calves under 500 lbs. sold steady to \$5 higher while over 500 lbs. sold \$4-8 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 780 lbs. sold from \$364-390, averaging \$372.93.

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Regional in Worthing sold 5,666 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers sold steady to \$5 higher, with instances of \$10 higher. Feeder heifers traded unevenly steady. Benchmark steers averaging 726 lbs. sold between \$393-431, averaging \$405.86. — Anna Miller Fortozo, *WLJ* managing editor

SD bill would allow more direct-to-consumer meat sales

South Dakota Gov. Larry Rhoden (R) signed a bill into law recently that will make it easier for South Dakotans to buy meat directly from cattle producers, if Congress changes a related federal law.

Currently, consumers can't buy cuts of meat directly from cattle producers if that meat was not processed at a state- or federally inspected facility. A common workaround is buying the animal from the producer and having it processed at a meat locker that has "custom-exempt" status. Those facilities are exempt from the Federal Meat Inspection Act requirements for carcass-by-carcass inspection, but are reviewed periodically for safety.

The bill that passed both legislative chambers and earned the governor's signature will allow South Dakotans to buy individual cuts of meat from a cattle producer if the meat was processed at a custom-exempt facility—but only if Congress first changes federal law to permit those sales.

The state law would apply to meat from cattle, sheep, swine or goats raised by the producer for at least 90 days, then slaughtered at a custom-exempt meat locker. The law would limit sales to direct, in-person transactions by the

producer to a consumer at the producer's primary residence, at a farmers market, or at another temporary sales venue.

South Dakota Rep. John Shubeck (R-Beresford), who farms and raises cattle, was the bill's main sponsor. He said meat processed at a custom-exempt locker is already widely consumed. He said reputational accountability between the producer, butcher and consumer minimizes risk.

"In that case, you're saying, 'Hey, I trust the farmer,'" he said. "In the other case, you're saying, 'I trust the inspector.'" — **South Dakota Searchlight**



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SALE REPORTS

UPSTREAM RANCH PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 7, Taylor, NE
23 Angus bulls... \$12,348

9 Red Angus bulls 11,361
324 Hereford bulls 9,730

36 Hereford bred heifers 10,972
2 Red Angus bred heifers 8,750

Auctioneers: Seth Weishaar & Lynn Weishaar
TOPS—Hereford bulls:
UPS Red Cloud 4250 ET, 5/12/2024 by Churchill Red Cloud 0376H ET; to Mayo Ridge Ranch, Scott City, KS, \$51,000. UPS Red Cloud 4251 ET, 5/12/2024 by Churchill Red Cloud 0376H ET; to Ollrich Bros. and Dvorak, SD, \$24,000. UPS Perfecto 4180, 4/28/2024 by H Perfecto 9020; to Brian Lennemann, Franklin, NE, \$21,500. **Bred heifer:** UPS Miss Houston 4247 ET, 5/10/2024 by SHF Houston D287 H086 bred to Churchill Laredo 3146L ET; to Richard and Nancy Scheid, Hazen, ND, \$47,500. — **TY GROSHANS**

JINDRA ANGUS PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 11, Clarkson, NE
173 Angus bulls... \$10,182
44 Angus open heifers 5,443
Auctioneer: Matt Lowery
Sale Manager: American Angus Hall of Fame
TOPS: Jindra Endeavor J 0375 2904, 3/7/2024 by Foxhovens Endeavor 203; to Rain Rock Cattle, AB, \$94,000. Jindra Endeavor 302355, 1/24/2025 by Foxhovens Endeavor 203; to Nemeth Angus, Ludell, KS, \$90,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

Auctioneer: Rick Machado
TOPS—Angus bulls:
Frank Eternity 5062, 1/28/2025 by SITZ Eternity 739L; to Elrod Farms, Talmo, GA, and ST Genetics, Navasota, TX, \$50,000. Frank Eternity 5068, 1/28/2025 by SITZ Eternity 739L; to Quarter Circle E, CA, and Elwood Ranch, Montague, CA, \$20,000. Frank North Star 5001, 1/12/2025 by Bear Mtn North Star; to D&D Cattle Co., Flowery Branch, GA, \$19,000. **Red Angus bulls:** FFG Reputation 5059, 1/27/2025 by C-T Reputation 0094; to Niobrara Red Angus, Niobrara, NE, and Red Diamond Land & Cattle, Salado, TX, \$72,000. FFG Grindstone 5042, 1/24/2025 by HXC Grindstone 9908G; to Croissant Cattle Co., LaGrange, WY, \$18,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

WERNING CATTLE CO. PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 10, Emery, SD
156 Angus & SimAngus bulls \$16,753
74 Angus & SimAngus bred heifers 14,752
2 SimAngus donor cows 14,500
Auctioneers: Dustin Carter & Jered Shipman
Sale Manager: Innovation AgMarketing
TOPS—SimAngus bull: W/C Statesman 3044N, 2/27/2025 by TSN Statesman K006; \$295,000. **Simmental bull:** W/C Statesman 714N, 1/20/2025 by TSN Statesman K006; \$105,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

BOOTH'S CHERRY CREEK RANCH BULL SALE
Feb. 12, Veteran, WY
103 Angus bulls... \$11,583
Auctioneer: Lander Nicodemus
TOPS: Cherry Crk Advance M92 S, 9/2/2024 by Cherry Crk Advance G248 S; to Crow Valley Ranch, Carpenter, WY, \$28,000. Cherry Crk Blue Collar M169S, 9/24/2024 by Cherry Crk Blue Collar G275; to Dyer Ranch, Crawford, NE, \$22,000. Cherry Crk Blue Collar M88 S, 9/1/2024 by Cherry Crk Blue Collar G275; to James LaRue, Poncha Springs, CO, \$21,000. Cherry Crk Command M245 S, 10/17/2024 by Cherry Crk Command J506 S; to Cobb Cattle Co., Savery, WY, \$20,500. — **TY GROSHANS**

MCCLUN'S LAZY JM RANCH PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 17, Torrington, WY
37 Angus bulls... \$10,649
38 Hereford bulls 6,803
10 Angus open heifers 5,100
5 Hereford open heifers 5,000
Auctioneer: Lander Nicodemus

BROBERG CHAROLAIS BULL SALE
Feb. 11, Tilden, NE
66 Charolais bulls \$9,897
Auctioneer: Seth Weishaar
Sale Managers: CK Sales and Marketing
TOP: Broberg's Miles M229, 9/19/2024 by CCC Miles 2080 P; to Jack Davis, Princeton, KS, \$18,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

POWDER RIVER ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 13, Buffalo, WY
125 Angus bulls... \$11,392
Auctioneer: Mark McNamee
TOPS: PRA Black Mass 5270, 2/23/2025 by #B Bar Black Mass 3045; to Lands B Bar Angus, Wibaux, MT, \$26,500. PRA Rock 5358, 3/5/2025 by Coleman Rock 7200; to Caleb Schlautmann, Gillette, WY, \$23,500. PRA Bulldogger 5339, 3/3/2025 by PRA Bulldogger 1197; to EB Ranch, Broadus, MT, \$20,000. PRA Black Mass 503, 1/15/2025 by #B Bar Black Mass 3045; to Child Land & Livestock, Cheyenne, WY, \$19,500. — **TY GROSHANS**

TOPS—Angus bulls: MC Stock Fund M64 DTM, 9/12/2024 by EXAR Stock Fund 9097B; to Lori Sturgen, Garrett, WY, \$19,000. MC Surpass 208M, 8/27/2024 by BJ Surpass; to Laurie Mills, Casper, WY, \$19,000. MC Black Bandolier M40, 9/1/2024 by Quaker Hill Black Bandolier; to Booth's Cherry Creek Ranch, Veteran, WY, \$16,000. **Hereford bull:** MC Monument 232M, 9/6/2024 by KCF Bennett Monument J338; to Dana Wudtke, Idalia, CO, \$15,000. **Open heifer:** MC Georgina 64N, 2/13/2025 by Cherry Crk Behind The Scenes; to Bonne & Melanie, Veteran, WY, \$7,250. — **TY GROSHANS**

RAML CATTLE BULL & FEMALE SALE
Feb. 13, Goodwin, SD
98 Angus bulls... \$11,581
69 Simmental bulls 10,620
34 Angus bred heifers 9,566
30 Simmental bred heifers 8,075
Auctioneer: Dustin Carter
TOPS: RAML Stillwater 5308, 12/14/2024 by LT Stillwater 2241; to Wilbar Cattle Co., Dundurn, SK, \$75,000. RAML Platinum 5875, 1/2/2025 by Coleman Platinum 2622; to 3K Cattle, Pukwana, SD, and Prairie Winds Cattle, Lawton, OK, \$50,000. RAML Platinum 5402, 12/31/2024 by Coleman Platinum 2622; to Hamilton Farms, Cochrane, AB, \$30,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

BURGESS ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 6, Homedale, ID
50 Angus bulls... \$8,680
19 Commercial bred heifers 5,050
Auctioneer: Kyle Colyer
TOPS: Bar X Cache 1N, 1/5/2025 by Riverbend Cache K1019; to Bartell Ranches, Orovida, NV, \$20,000. Bar X Cache 30N, 2/22/2025 by Riverbend Cache K1019; to Crown Cattle Co., Seneca, OR, \$12,500. — **JARED PATTERSON**

FRANK CATTLE & GENETICS BULL SALE
Feb. 16, Lodgepole, NE
61 Angus bulls... \$11,040
34 Red Angus bulls 10,852

ELKINGTON POLLED HEREFORD & SOUTH DEVONS PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 6, Idaho Falls, ID
17 South Devon bulls \$6,662
66 Polled Hereford bulls 6,367
14 Polled Hereford bred heifers 4,946
11 South Devon bred heifers 4,373
Auctioneers: Butch Booker & Cotton Booker
TOP: EBE Elker Brooker 790M, 3/28/2024 by EPHR Elker Brooker 182H; to Commercial Buyer, ID, \$12,250. — **JARED PATTERSON**

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KLAMATH FALLS BULL SALE
Feb. 7, Klamath Falls, OR
12 SimAngus
bulls \$8,563
58 Angus bulls 8,289
1 Polled Hereford
bull 8,000
8 Hereford bulls 7,813
5 LimFlex bulls 7,550
1 Simmental bull 7,250
5 Red Angus
bulls 7,250
1 Shorthorn bull ... 6,000
20 Commercial open
heifers 5,030

Auctioneer: Eric Duarte
TOPS: CWT Ratified 9583-456, 3/15/2024 by Poss Ratified; to Rolfe Ranch, Broadbent, OR, \$12,750. ADs Gibson 452, 10/1/2024 by Baldrige Gibson G859; to Chase Ranch, Grenada, CA, \$12,500. ADs Movin On 456, 10/7/2024 by Baldrige Movin On G780; to Di-Rich Ranch, Dorris, CA, \$12,000. — **JARED PATTERSON**

BB CATTLE BULL SALE
Feb. 9, Connell, WA
52 Angus bulls. ... \$8,008
48 Hereford bulls ... 7,249
Auctioneer: Jake Parnell
TOPS—Angus bull: BB Coalition 5008, 1/4/2025 by U-2 Coalition 206C; to Loren Mrnak, Gardnerville, NV, \$20,000, 1/2 interest. **Hereford bulls:** BB 8164 Domino 4198, 11/19/2024 by BB 375 Domino 8164 ET; to Case Ranch, Eldorado, TX, \$21,000. BB 0045 Mark Don 5021, 1/5/2025 by BB 7035 Mark Don 0045; to Case Ranch, Eldorado, TX, \$14,500. — **JARED PATTERSON**

SOUTH MOUNTAIN CATTLE BULL SALE
Feb. 10, Marsing, ID
116 Angus bulls \$9,915
Auctioneer: Jake Parnell
TOPS: S M C Network 5054, 11/5/2024 by Hart Network; to Bill Marek, White Bird, ID, \$25,000. S M C Testament 5097, 11/6/2024 by Tehama Testament; to Bill Marek, White Bird, ID, \$18,500. S M C Heat Seeker 5019, 10/28/2024 by Baldrige Heat Seeker H925; to Eagle Creek Land & Cattle, Eagleville, CA, \$18,000. S M C Rise Above 5078, 11/3/2024 by Stellpflug Hoffman Rise Above; to Desert View Ranch, Melba, ID, \$17,000. — **JARED PATTERSON**

MEADOW ACRES ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 11, Stanfield, OR
92 Angus bulls. \$8,521
2 Angus open
heifers 4,800
Auctioneers: Butch
Booker & Cotton Booker
TOPS: Meadow Acres Prolific 519, 9/7/2024 by Ellingson Prolific; to Clint Sexson, Stanfield, OR, \$16,000. Meadow Acres Prolific 589, 11/15/2024 by Ellingson Prolific; to Archie Lembcke, Moses Lake, WA, \$15,000. Meadow Acres Trademark 550, 9/7/2024 by J Trademark 1037; to Harder River Ranch, Hooper, WA, \$14,000. — **JARED PATTERSON**

BARCK CATTLE CO. BULL SALE
Feb. 12, Culver, OR
58 SimAngus
bulls \$10,444

Auctioneer: Eric Duarte
TOPS: Bar CK Im Ur Huckleberry 4015M, 9/15/2024 by KBHR Quigley C154; to Broken Bar M Ranch, Wellfleet, NE, \$25,000. Bar CK K43 4128M, 10/29/2024 by RFG Versatile K43; to Will Townsend, White Sulphur Springs, MT, \$17,000. Bar CK K43 4086M, 10/9/2024 by RFG Versatile K43; to Will Townsend, White Sulphur Springs, MT, \$21,500. Bar CK K43 4147M, 11/14/2024 by RFG Versatile K43; to Will Townsend, White Sulphur Springs, MT, \$18,000. — **JARED PATTERSON**

DUTCH FLAT ANGUS & CX RANCH PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 13, Lewiston, ID
29 Hereford
bulls \$13,069
40 Angus bulls 10,400
6 SimAngus bulls ... 8,542
1 Hereford pick of heifer
calf 11,250
5 SimAngus
females 4,160
15 Angus females. ... 3,740

Auctioneers: Butch
Booker & Cotton Booker
TOPS—Angus bulls: Dutch Flat Highlander M236, 9/10/2024 by Baldrige Highlander; to Leslie Taplin, Anatone, WA, \$15,500. Dutch Flat Institution M215, 9/15/2024 by Kenny Institution 2010; to Klaveano Ranches, Pomeroy, WA, \$14,500. Dutch Flat Institution M196, 9/15/2024 by Kenny Institution 2010; to Klaveano Ranches, Pomeroy, WA, \$14,250. Dutch Flat Bellringer M148, 9/6/2024 by Boyd Bellringer 2010; to Harder River Ranch, Hooper, WA, \$14,000. **Hereford bulls:** CX 2052 Advance 4047, 9/11/2024 by HH Advance 2052K; to SK Ranches, Ellensburg, WA, \$21,000. CX 2052 Advance 4049, 9/17/2024 by HH Advance 2052K; to SK Ranches, Ellensburg, WA, \$21,000. CX 2052 Advance 5017, 1/27/2025 by HH Advance 2052K; to SK Ranches, Ellensburg, WA, \$18,000. CX 2052 Advance 5018, 1/29/2025 by HH Advance 2052K; to SK Ranches, Ellensburg, WA, \$18,000. **Pick of heifer calf:** Pick of 2026 CX Ranch Heifer Calf Crop; to Buford Ranches, Welch, OK, \$11,250. — **JARED PATTERSON**

MODOC BULL SALE
Feb. 13, Alturas, CA
4 SimAngus
bulls \$12,438
54 Angus bulls 9,375
Auctioneer: Eric Duarte
TOPS—Angus bulls: KD Ranger 2536, 9/25/2024 by Connealy Commerce; to King Farms & Cattle, Malin, OR, \$24,000. KD Heritage 2542, 9/25/2024 by S S Niagara Z29; to Buck Parks, Adin, CA, \$12,500. **SimAngus bulls:** BKDR Fusion M535, 9/25/2024 by HILB Oracle C033R; to John Rohrbaugh, Cobelo, CA, \$13,000. BKDR Myles M549, 9/27/2024 by CDI Trustee 387F; to Jenny Fairdo, Lakeview, OR, \$16,500. — **JARED PATTERSON**

GREAT BASIN BULL SALE
Feb. 14, Fallon, NV
1 Brangus bull ... \$13,000

13 Charolais
bulls 8,365
163 Angus bulls 7,779
12 Hereford bulls ... 7,125
2 Red Angus
bulls 6,500
10 SimAngus
bulls 6,125
2 Balancer bulls ... 5,500
30 Commercial
pairs 5,600

Auctioneer: Jake Parnell
Sale Manager: M3
Marketing
TOPS: Sterling Noble-mann, 7/30/2024 by Basin Jameson 1076; to Alta Genetics, Baraboo, WI, \$40,000. RMR Raven Congress Veto 462, 11/28/2024 by Crouch Congress; to Stevenson Down T Angus, White Sulphur Springs, MT, \$28,000. Bishop Feat N2671, 1/5/2025 by Sitz Feat 729H; to Silver State Angus, Gardnerville, NV, \$25,000. Bishop Keystone N1809, 1/10/2025 by Basin Keystone 2021; to Grimmus Cattle Co., Hanford, CA, \$27,500. — **JARED PATTERSON**

BAUMGARTEN CATTLE CO. PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 6, Belfield, ND
91 Hereford
bulls \$10,786
10 Hereford bred
heifers 9,600
54 Commercial open
heifers 3,679
Auctioneer: Roger Jacobs
TOPS: 5188, 2/28/2025 by CL1 Domino 267K1ET; to Austin Jarecke, Atkinson, NE, \$55,000. BCC L1 Diamond 5197N, 3/1/2025 by CL 1 Domino 267K1ET; to Rod Gierau, Springville, NE, \$24,000. BCC Debonair 5132N, 2/18/2025 by BCC Debonair 3170LET; to Kohn Herefords, Jamestown, ND, \$19,000. BCC Achievement 542N, 1/28/2025 by CSC 913 Accomplice 206; to

Jeff Snieder, Arcadia, NE, \$17,000. BCC Debonair 5173N ET, 2/27/2025 by BCC Debonair 3170L; to Jake Drost, Arcadia, NE, \$17,000. BCC Festus 5189N, 2/28/2025 by Stellpflug Gunsmoke 222 ET; to Jerry Nickelson, Waynoka, OK, \$17,000. — **KEVIN MURNIN**

FRIEDT HEREFORDS PRODUCTION SALE
Feb. 11, Dickinson, ND
17 Hereford 2-year-old
bulls \$9,808
31 Hereford yearling
bulls 9,031
60 Commercial bred
heifers 4,445
207 Commercial open
heifers 3,251

Auctioneer: Scott
Weishaar
TOPS—2-year-old bull: FH 1312J Advance 4171, 4/30/2025 by HH Advance 1312JET; to Rafter Double U Ranch, Bowden, AB, \$20,000. **Yearling bulls:** FH 3004L Domino 544, 2/19/2025 by HH Advance 3004L; to Woroniecki Ranch Quarter Horses, Hebron, ND, \$23,500. FH 3004L Advance 558 HJD, 2/19/2025 by HH Advance 3004L; to Woroniecki Ranch Quarter Horses, Hebron, ND, \$19,500. FH 3124L Skyler 545 MD, 2/19/2025 by UU Big Sky 3124L; to Dukart Ranch, Manning, ND, \$15,500. — **KEVIN MURNIN**

LASSLE RANCH SIMMENTALS BULL SALE
Feb. 12, Glendive, MT
116 Simmental yearling
bulls \$11,107
13 Simmental bred
heifers 6,115
Auctioneer: Roger Jacobs
TOPS—SimAngus yearling
bulls: LRS 116N, 3/8/2025 by Gibbs Kingpin 1140J; to Trauernicht Sim-

mentals, Wymore, NE, \$24,000. LRS 9133N, 3/11/2025 by CCR Bedrock 517J; to Maloney Angus and Simmentals, Turner, MT, \$20,000. **Simmental yearling**
bulls: LRS 741N, 3/4/2025 by KBHR Discipline L046; to Black Summit Cattle, Powell, WY, \$25,000. LRS 1180N, 3/16/2025 by LRS Ranger 445K; to Double T Simmentals, Turtle Lake, ND, \$22,000. LRS 933N, 3/8/2025 by KBHR Discipline L846; to McGregor Land and Livestock, Hooper, WA, \$20,000. **Yearling bull:** LRS 980N, 3/11/2025; to Emmons Ranch, Olive, MT, \$22,000. — **KEVIN MURNIN**

BIG ROK ANGUS BULL & FEMALE SALE
Feb. 14, Detroit Lakes, MN

63 Angus bulls \$7,321
9 Angus bred
heifers 6,889
Auctioneer: Mitch Barthel
TOPS—Angus 2-year-olds: Big Rok Dynamite 458, 6/24/2024 by Sitz TLS Dynamite 299G; to SHB Angus, Rearden, WA, \$14,000. Big Rok Prolific 4109, 7/3/2024 by Ellingson Prolific; to Ty Peterson, Rosholt, SD, \$11,000. 4112, 7/3/2024 by Stellpflug Hoffman Rise Above; to Jason Horn, Gonvick, MN, \$11,000. 477, 6/29/2024 by Sitz TLS Dynamite 299G; to Allen Olson, Menahga, MN, \$10,000. **Yearling bull:** Big Rok PSI 516, 2/25/2025 by HA PSI 031; to Border Farms, Lancaster, MN, \$10,000. — **KEVIN MURNIN**

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SALE CALENDAR

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ALL BREEDS

Mar. 6 – Intermountain Genetic Alliance, Bull Sale, Heber City, UT
Mar. 18 – Western Breeders Association, Bull Sale, Eltopia, WA

ANGUS

Feb. 23 – Circle L Angus, Production Sale, Dillon, MT
Feb. 23 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Bull Sale, Bruneau, ID
Feb. 23 – Reyes/Russell Angus, Bull Sale, Wheatland, WY
Feb. 24 – Barker Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Burley, ID
Feb. 24 – Connelly Angus, Bull Sale, Valier, MT
Feb. 24 – Haynes Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Ogallala, NE
Feb. 24 – Thomas Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Feb. 25 – Price Cattle & Murdock Red Angus, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Feb. 25 – TC Ranch, Bull Sale, Franklin, NE
Feb. 26 – 3 String Cattle, Bull Sale, Shoshone, ID
Feb. 27 – Samaria Hills, Bull Sale, Malad, ID
Feb. 27 – Skinner Ranch, Bull Sale, Hall, MT
Feb. 27 – Star Gate Angus, Bull Sale, Twin Falls, ID
Feb. 28 – 44 Farms, Bull Sale, Cameron, TX
Feb. 28 – Baker Angus, Bull Sale, Vale, OR
Mar. 1 – Camas Prairie Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Lewiston, ID
Mar. 1 – Stevenson Down T Angus, Bull Sale, White Sulphur Springs, MT

BALANCER

Mar. 2 – Clear Creek Angus, Bull Sale, Chinook, MT
Mar. 2 – Harrell Ranch, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Mar. 3 – Allen Brothers Cattle, Bull Sale, North Powder, OR
Mar. 3 – Ipsen Cattle, Production Sale, Online
Mar. 4 – Ox Bow Ranch, Bull Sale, Wolf Creek, MT
Mar. 4 – Snake River Valley Genetics, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Mar. 5 – Cannon Angus, Bull Sale, Preston, ID
Mar. 5 – Split Diamond Ranch, Bull Sale, Dillon, MT
Mar. 6 – Crouthamel Cattle, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Mar. 6 – Leadore Angus, Bull Sale, Leadore, ID
Mar. 6 – Parry Angus, Bull Sale, Sterling, CO
Mar. 7 – 3C Cattle, Bull Sale, Stevensville, MT
Mar. 7 – Kimm Angus, Bull Sale, Three Forks, MT
Mar. 7 – Loya/Wardell Angus, Bull Sale, Platteville, CO
Mar. 7 – Lucky 7 Angus, Bull Sale, Riverton, WY
Mar. 9 – Dal Porto Livestock, Bull Sale, Anselmo, NE
Mar. 9 – Pine Coulee Angus, Bull Sale, Hardin, MT
Mar. 9 – Spring Cove Ranch, Bull Sale, Bliss, ID
Mar. 10 – Wagon Wheel Ranch, Bull Sale, Yuma, CO
Mar. 11 – Hornung Livestock, Bull Sale, Stratton, CO
Mar. 11 – Udy Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Rockland, ID
Mar. 12 – Leadore Angus, Bull Sale, Dillon, MT
Mar. 12 – Sunny Okanogan

GELBVIEWH

Feb. 27 – Pot of Gold Bull Sale, Montrose, CO

HEREFORD

Feb. 23 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Bull Sale, Bruneau, ID
Feb. 25 – EF1 Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Carpio, ND
Feb. 26 – L Bar W Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Columbus, MT
Feb. 27 – Jamison Herefords, Bull Sale, Quinter, KS
Mar. 2 – Clear Creek Angus, Bull Sale, Chinook, MT
Mar. 2 – Harrell Ranch, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Mar. 9 – Holden Hereford, Production Sale, Valier, MT
Mar. 9 – Northwest Hereford Breeders, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Mar. 10 – Cooper Herefords, Production Sale, Willow Creek, MT
Mar. 11 – Udy Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Rockland, ID
Mar. 12 – Leadore Angus, Bull Sale, Dillon, MT
Mar. 12 – Sunny Okanogan

Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Omak, WA
Mar. 12 – Wheeler Mountain Angus, Bull Sale, Whitehall, MT
Mar. 13 – Rollin' Rock Angus, Bull Sale, Pilot Rock, OR
Mar. 13 – SHB Angus & GPAR, Bull Sale, Rearden, WA
Mar. 13 – Thomson Land & Livestock, Bull Sale, Blackfoot, ID
Mar. 14 – Koberstein Farms Angus, Ogallala, NE
Mar. 14 – Riverbend Ranch, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Mar. 14 – Yardley Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Beaver, UT
Mar. 16 – JR Ranch & Sackman Cattle, Bull Sale, Othello, WA
Mar. 16 – Rancho Casino/ Cox Ranch, Bull Sale, Purdum, NE
Mar. 16 – Whistling Winds Angus, Bull Sale, Hingham, MT
Mar. 17 – 7n7 Ranch & Curtiss Cattle, Bull Sale, Enterprise, OR
Mar. 17 – Bartels Angus, Bull Sale, Riverton, NE
Mar. 17 – ELK Angus, Bull Sale, Buffalo, WY
Mar. 18 – Lufkin Cattle, Bull Sale, Tendoy, ID
Mar. 19 – Carter Cattle, Bull Sale, Pingree, ID
Mar. 19 – Oft Angus, Bull Sale, Vale, OR
Mar. 20 – Caywood Angus, Bull Sale, Tendoy, ID
Mar. 20 – Montana Performance Co-op, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT
Mar. 21 – Chundy Land & Cattle, Bull Sale, Ogallala, NE
Mar. 21 – Nelson Angus Ranch, Bull & Female Sale, Salmon, ID
Mar. 21 – South Montana Angus Association, Bull Sale, Butte, MT
Mar. 24 – Bar JV Angus, Bull Sale, Fairview, MT

CHAROLAIS

Mar. 6 – Crouthamel Cattle, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Mar. 24 – Romans Ranch, Bull Sale, Westfall, OR
Mar. 28 – Valley View Charolais, Bull Sale, Polson, MT
Apr. 2 – Midland Bull Test, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT
Apr. 3 – Brevig Charolais, Bull Sale, Lewiston, MT
Apr. 11 – Hebbert Charolais, Bull Sale, Hyannis, NE
Apr. 18 – Lindskov's LT Ranch, Bull Sale, Isabel, SD

LIMOUSIN

Mar. 4 – Snake River Valley Genetics, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Mar. 21 – Ochsner Limousin, Bull Sale, Kersey, CO

LIM-FLEX

Mar. 4 – Snake River Valley Genetics, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Mar. 21 – Ochsner Limousin, Bull Sale, Kersey, CO

MAINE ANJOU

Mar. 14 – Yardley Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Beaver, UT

OPTIMIZER

Feb. 27 – Skinner Ranch, Bull Sale, Hall, MT

RED ANGUS

Feb. 25 – Price Cattle & Murdock, Red Angus Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Feb. 26 – McCann Red Angus, Bull Sale, Lewiston, ID
Mar. 3 – Dille Red Angus, Bull Sale, Buhl, ID
Mar. 3 – Sandhills Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sidney, MT
Mar. 7 – Redland Red Angus, Bull Sale, Hysham, MT
Mar. 10 – Loosli Red Angus, Bull Sale, Ashton, ID
Mar. 11 – Udy Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Rockland, ID
Mar. 13 – Leland Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sidney, MT
Mar. 18 – Klompain Red Angus, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT
Mar. 21 – Iron Lorenzen, Bull Sale, Madras, OR

SIMANGUS

Feb. 24 – Barker Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Burley, ID
Feb. 25 – Price Cattle & Murdock Red Angus, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Feb. 26 – Meyring Cattle Co., Production Sale, Alliance, NE
Feb. 27 – Samaria Hills, Bull Sale, Malad, ID
Feb. 27 – Star Gate Angus, Bull Sale, Twin Falls, ID
Feb. 27 – Wishbone Simmentals, Bull Sale, Frannie, WY
Feb. 28 – Lyman Livestock, Bull Sale, Salina, UT
Mar. 3 – Allen Brothers Cattle, Bull Sale, North Powder, OR
Mar. 5 – Kearns Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Rushville, NE
Mar. 7 – Powerline Genetics, Bull Sale, Castle Dale, UT
Mar. 7 – Trinity Farms, Bull Sale, Ellensburg, WA
Mar. 11 – Hornung Livestock, Bull Sale, Stratton, CO
Mar. 13 – Powerline Genetics, Bull Sale, Arapahoe, NE
Mar. 14 – Yardley Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Beaver, UT
Mar. 19 – Western Cattle Source, Bull Sale, Crawford, NE
Mar. 20 – Black Summit Cattle, Bull Sale, Powell, MT
Mar. 21 – Chundy Land & Cattle, Bull Sale, Ogallala, NE
Mar. 24 – Open Gate Simmentals, Bull Sale, Augusta, MT

SIMMENTAL

Feb. 26 – Meyring Cattle Co., Production Sale, Alliance, NE
Feb. 27 – Wishbone Simmentals, Bull Sale, Frannie, WY
Feb. 28 – Lyman Livestock, Bull Sale, Salina, UT
Mar. 5 – Kearns Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Rushville, NE
Mar. 7 – Powerline Genetics, Bull Sale, Castle Dale, UT
Mar. 13 – Powerline Genetics, Bull Sale, Arapahoe, NE
Mar. 14 – Yardley Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Beaver, UT
Mar. 19 – Western Cattle

Source, Bull Sale, Crawford, NE
Mar. 20 – Black Summit Cattle, Bull Sale, Powell, MT
Mar. 24 – Open Gate Simmentals, Bull Sale, Augusta, MT

STABILIZER

Mar. 23 – Leachman Cattle,

Bull Sale, Meriden, WY

COMMERCIAL

Feb. 27 – Western Video Market Auction, Cottonwood, CA
Mar. 20 – Western Video Market Auction, Cottonwood, CA

HORSE

Feb. 28 – Winnemucca Ranch, Horse Sale, Winnemucca, NV
Mar. 2 – Harrell Ranch, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Mar. 3 – Ipsen Cattle, Production Sale, Online

APEX

Angus

53rd PRODUCTION SALE


1:00 PM MST | Lunch: 11:30
 At the ranch • Valier, Montana

MARCH 3, 2026 | 1:00 PM

GENETIC TESTED
110 Yearling Bulls

MATERNAL POWER
160 Yearling Heifers
Bangs Vaccinated, Ready To Breed

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 Apex Black Rifle 263
 Basin Rangeland 3511
 Apex Exclusive 550
 BNWZ Bougie 1588
 LAR Man In Black
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 Basin Jumbo 1315
 And Others



Lot 3
Reg: *21474370

Sire: MATH Black Rifle 5099 MS: Apex Pay Dirt 055

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 WITH 50 HEAD OR LESS

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Tuesday, MARCH 17

45 ANGUS AND BWF 4-7-YEAR-OLD FALL 3-IN-1 PAIRS FROM ONE RANCH.
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OREGON

135 BULLS

Yearling and 18 Month Old Red Angus,
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ILCC PROFIT CHECK 5024



*Checkmate x
Profitmaker*

CED	20	STAY	17
BW	-4.8	MARB	0.86
WW	82	REA	0.26
YW	126	REG. #	5137629

ILCC DIPLOMAT N103



*Hollywood x
Beverly Rose C556*

CED	15	STAY	11
BW	-2	MARB	0.83
WW	93	REA	0.16
YW	157	REG. #	5183461

ILCC NEXT LEVEL 5023



*Checkmate x
Takeback
75% RA | 25% SM*

CED	15	STAY	12
BW	-4.1	MARB	0.54
WW	87	REA	0.9
YW	134	REG. #	5137689

ILCC PROMINENT N164



*Identity x
Seneca*

CED	11	STAY	15
BW	-1.5	MARB	0.56
WW	96	REA	0.46
YW	150	REG. #	5183439

ILCC CAPTAIN M55



*Captain x
Sensational Commit*

CED	13	STAY	18
BW	-3.2	MARB	0.54
WW	69	REA	0.25
YW	112	REG. #	5121535

ILCC CAPTAIN M13



*Captain x
Oracle*

CED	18	STAY	15
BW	-5.5	MARB	0.54
WW	59	REA	0.25
YW	96	REG. #	5147393

ILCC STEP UP 5017



*Step Up x
Lrz Asset 5027
62% RA | 19% GV | 19% SM*

CED	8	STAY	10
BW	0.1	MARB	0.63
WW	103	REA	0.62
YW	162	REG. #	5137641

ILCC HOLLYWOOD N233



*Hollywood x
Beverly Rose C556*

CED	8	STAY	8
BW	0.5	MARB	1.00
WW	103	REA	0.43
YW	174	REG. #	5184973

+200 COMMERCIAL PAIRS, FALL BRED COWS, AND REPLACEMENT HEIFERS

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