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INSIDE WLJ

ANIMAL CRUELTY — Lincoln County, NE, men arrested on felony charges after law enforcement find dead cattle on family ranch. **Page 9**

AI FEATURE — With breeding season quickly approaching, learn about the advantages of using AI in a commercial herd, causes of retained placenta, using proper AI technique and more in this week's AI and Genetics special feature. **Page 21**

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

With advancements in E. coli testing technology reported in last week's issue of *WLJ*, let's look back at the improvements in detection happening 15 years ago. A March 10, 2008, *WLJ* article reported, "DuPont and the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) are teaming up to find new ways to detect an E. coli strain in beef that, even in low concentrations, can cause severe illness. Through a cooperative research and developmental agreement, the U.S. Meat Animal research center (USMARC) at Clay Center, NE, and DuPont Qualicon will develop a new test for E. coli O157:H7, a pathogen that led to more than 30 million pounds of ground beef being recalled in 2007."

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DOI to restore bison on Tribal lands

— Once numbered 60 million

The Department of the Interior (DOI) announced an initiative with government agencies, states and Tribes to restore populations of the American bison and the prairie grassland ecosystem using the "best available science" and "Indigenous knowledge."

Secretary's Order 3410 will establish a Bison Working Group (BWG) with government agencies with bison equities to develop a Bison Shared Stewardship Plan. The plan will provide the framework for American bison restoration, including strengthening long-term conservation partnerships.

"The best science shows that returning bison to grasslands can enhance soil development, restore native plants and wildlife, and promote carbon sequestration, thereby providing benefits for agriculture, outdoor recreation and Tribes," the order states.

According to the order, BWG will begin work on a strategy to ensure the long-term conservation of genetic diversity and identify approaches for new, healthy herds of wild bison through "translocation of bison, while minimizing cattle introgression." Within 90 days of the order, the U.S. Park Service will initiate talks with Tribes and other

See BISON on page 14

Kaibab National Forest

The Department of the Interior is planning an initiative to reintroduce bison to the prairie grassland ecosystem. Pictured here, bison grazing in the Kaibab National Forest of Arizona.

Compensating ranchers for grazing losses from green energy

— AZ bill

An Arizona House committee recently passed a bill to compensate ranchers for losses in grazing land from wind and solar energy development in the state.

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure voted on Feb. 17 to move forward House Bill (HB) 2411, which stipulates any business that constructs a solar or wind project which reduces the size of a grazing lease must compensate the lessee for the loss of profits, loss in value, the cost to relocate and the cost to litigate losses due to the reduction of the lessee's operation on federal and state land.

At the hearing, most commenters were against the bill as it was written, citing it singles out an industry, and ranchers would be paid in perpetuity for lost profits rather than just for improvements.

Stan Barnes, a lobbyist for Interwest Energy Alliance, said the solar industry is good economically for the state. Barnes noted when a farmer, rancher or any other person is outbid on state trust lands, they are already compensated for the costs they put in. Barnes noted that he is a fourth-generation farmer in Pinal County, AZ. If a homebuilder buys the property, they are only reimbursed for the infrastructure that was put into it, not "the perceived profit in the future." Barnes said leaseholders already know there is a possibility their lease will not be renewed, or somebody will benefit the trust more than them and leaseholders will be removed.

Mike Gardner, a lobbyist for the Arizona Solar Energy Industries Association, said as worded, the bill creates a "slippery slope" and would require payments "in perpetuity," and the bill is picking "winners and losers." Gardner said if you are a rancher, you should hope that a solar or wind company takes over your lease because you would be paid forever. Otherwise, ranchers would only be paid once if it is another industry.

Sandy Bahr, Arizona chapter director for Sierra Club, said the organization opposes the measure from an economic standpoint. Bahr said grazing permits are not benefitting state trust lands and that commercial leases provided the best economic impact as the proceeds go to supporting public schools and other government functions. Bahr cited figures from the Land Department in 2022, which said it collected more than $54 million from leasing public lands. Of that total, Bahr noted only $2.2 million was from grazing, where leases cover nearly 88% of state trust lands.

Bahr said the bill singles out the solar and wind industry and would "hinder something that is now an important part of our economy."

Rep. Marcelino Quinonez (D-AZ-11)

See SOLAR BILL on page 10

USDA proposes new 'Product of USA' regs

— Public comments accepted

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is proposing to update the regulatory requirements of the "Product of the USA" label. The agency claims the new rules will help connect the voluntary label's claims with the actual consumer understanding of the label. The announcement has received mixed reactions from industry groups.

The proposed rule would allow voluntary "Product of the USA" or "Made in the USA" label claims to be used on meat, poultry and egg products only when they are derived from animals born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the U.S.

"These proposed changes are intended to provide consumers with accurate information to make informed purchasing decisions," said USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack. "Our action today affirms USDA's commitment to ensuring accurate and truthful product labeling."

Under the revised regulations, the label claim would continue to be voluntary, and it would remain eligible for generic label approval.

The rule also proposes allowing other voluntary origin claims seen on meat, poultry and egg products sold in the marketplace. The claims would need to include a description on the package of all preparation and processing steps that occurred in the U.S. upon which the claim was made.

USDA said its rule-making is supported by petitions, thousands of comments from stakeholders and data. The department launched a survey in the summer of 2021 to understand what the "Product of USA" claim meant to consumers. The results of the survey showed the current labeling claim is misleading consumers, with the majority

See USA PRODUCT on page 17

Feeder contracts soar higher; corn plummets

Strong demand in the countryside, along with lower corn prices, sent feeder cattle soaring higher this week. Cash trade was slow but steady, and numbers will likely be lighter than a week earlier.

Live cattle futures traded steady over the week, with the April contract up 70 cents to $164.80 and the June contract up 22 cents to $159.67.

"It's no surprise that the live cattle contracts are trading lower with no cash cattle trade having been reported and after seeing Thursday morning's pitiful export report," ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, wrote in her Thursday midday comments. "Traders are trying to be patient as they know that feedlots will likely push the cash cattle market higher again this week, but the pain in waiting the week out is seeming to get to them."

Cash trade was light through Thursday early afternoon, with only about 11,000 head sold. Live steers sold from $162-165, and dressed steers sold for $265.

Cash trade for the week ending March 5 was 90,533 head. Live steers averaged $164.94, and dressed steers averaged $264.59.

"Talk of another cooler cleaning for next week is making the rounds and considering last week's fairly big negotiated trade volume, this week's trade may be just fully steady," wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, in The Beef on Thursday. "There have been big gains for five consecutive weeks totaling almost $10/cwt. A pause would not be unusual."

The national weekly direct beef type price distribution for the week of Feb. 27 to Mar. 6 was the following on a live basis:

- Negotiated purchases: $164.87.
- Formula net purchases: $165.28.
- Forward contract net purchases: $171.91.
- Negotiated grid net purchases: $167.64.

On a dressed basis:

- Negotiated purchases: $264.70.
- Formula net purchases: $262.88.

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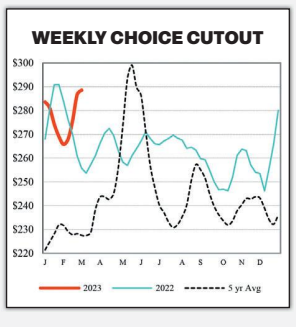

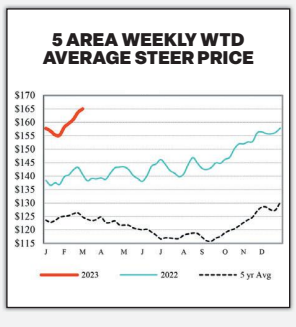

PERIODICAL : Time Sensitive Priority Handling

COMMENTS

New label regs coming soon?

CROW

More big news for meat labeling from the government: USDA is acting and has proposed a new rule. According to a USDA press release, "Under the proposed rule, the 'Product of USA' label claim would continue to be voluntary. It would also remain eligible for generic label approval, meaning it would not need to be pre-approved by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) before it could be used on regulated products but would require supporting documentation to be on file for agency inspection personnel to verify.

"The rulemaking also proposes to allow other voluntary U.S. origin claims we see on meat, poultry and egg products sold in the marketplace. These claims would need to include a description on the package of all preparation and processing steps that occurred in the United States upon which the claim is made."

It's hard to figure out what USDA is thinking, rolling out this proposed rule for using "Product of USA" labeling. Yes, you guys that want a born, fed and harvested in the USA label, you got your way—sort of. Frankly, you always had the right to use that label, if you could back it up.

So how do you think processors of animal products are going to respond to a voluntary rule? They will more than likely ignore it. A voluntary rule for meat packers to identify every production step in animal agriculture just isn't going to go far. This is a specialty product issue and will not add much value to live cattle prices, in general.

In order to justify this worthless rule, USDA conducted a consumer survey that suggests that consumers will pay up for labeling. The survey says, "The average consumer was willing to pay $1.15 (CI 95%: $0.92 to $1.38) more for a 1-lb. package of ground beef made from cattle that were born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the United States than an identical package of ground beef made from cattle that were only processed in the United States. Because the CI does not include 0, we can reject the null hypothesis that the difference between the amount eligible consumers are willing to pay for ground beef bearing different definitions of the 'Product of USA' labeling claim is not statistically different from 0.

"Based on the results of these analyses, the average eligible higher-income consumer and the average eligible lower-income consumer are both willing to pay more for ground beef, NY strip steak, and pork tenderloin labeled with the 'Product of USA' labeling claim compared with a product without this claim. When comparing the marginal (willingness to pay) values for the two income groups, we found that the differences were not statistically significant."

They sure are attempting to tell us that labeling has a clear benefit to some segments of the beef supply chain. Product differentiation is important in many markets, but it's already occurring. This will not have a major effect on the boxed beef cutout or fed cattle prices.

Last time we went through this exercise, Mexico and Canada complained to the World Trade Organization, who ruled they could place retaliatory tariffs on U.S. products to the tune of $1 billion, if my memory serves me right. Mexican cattle lost $40/cwt overnight and Canadian-fed cattle were discounted about $15/cwt. We always seem to forget this is a North American beef infrastructure and has been ever since I can remember. I get the idea that relabeling foreign beef as a product of the U.S. is not a good thing. So where is the label for that? Where is the label for commingled ground beef? Should it say "Product of NAFTA and Other Suppliers"? If you're going to label, get serious about it.

Nearly everything the government has done lately has been about buying votes for the Biden administration and this supposed rule is no different. We have dozens of surveys that tell us that consumers want more transparency. But telling us versus how they actually spend their money are two completely different measurements. Consumers who want those transparent products can already find them.

I fear the day when they attempt to make meat labeling mandatory, and it will happen. Then we need to get serious about animal identification—one doesn't go without the other. The cattle industry has been asking for a lot of favors over the past two years. The best government program has been risk insurance. You never want the government to determine cattle market values; that will be the demise of the cattle industry. What they do best is inspect our products for safety and consistency and report the market. Not make the market. By the way, I'm getting tired of winter, but keep praying for spring rains—it feels right. — **PETE CROW**

DITTMER'S TAKE

HELPING OR HURTING?

USDA has been a worry for the beef industry in 2023, such as possibly throwing down mandates on fed cattle marketing. Here comes another one. USDA has issued a proposed labeling change that they think will give consumers more information. But because the billions of pounds of beef that go through retail establishments each year aren't like other products, the opposite could happen.

The rule would keep a "Product of USA" label on beef voluntary, but if the package were to carry that label, the packer and the retailer would have to be sure the critter that piece of beef came from was 1) born, 2) raised, 3) slaughtered and 4) processed in the U.S.

The rule doesn't even mention the "fed" segment of the production chain.

The purpose of this rule is supposed to be giving consumers more accurate information as to the origin of the product. But since over 90% of the muscle cuts they see in the store are born, raised, fed and slaughtered in the U.S., they are already getting what they assume to be true nearly always.

Many consumers assume that "Product of USA" is an indication of quality. It really is not. The quality grades Choice or Prime does that. "Product of USA" does not. It implies safety, wholesomeness and quality. The inspection stamp guarantees safety. Consumers assume their retailer has chosen to present a product that is safe to eat. They also assume that their retailer is presenting a quality product. They tend to mentally conflate the two.

In reality, USDA might be inadvertently removing some of that confusion and conflation. Because, as a matter of overwhelming practicality and cost, packers and retailers will be forced to drop the "Product of USA" label entirely. Because beef is not a manufactured product—assembled from parts bins marked with the global source—there is no reasonably affordable way to guarantee where a particular piece of beef in the case came from; e.g. the U.S. or Canada. The odds are about 92 to 8, according to statistics. But retail beef labeling doesn't work that way. The retailer—and back one step to the packer—has to be able to state unequivocally that anything on the label is 100% accurate. Having a label that is not correct can shut your meat case down instantly.

So what is likely is most of the beef in any major retailer's beef case would no longer be labeled "Product of USA." Retailers and packers can't afford to guarantee it under our mainstream system, and they can't make a mistake.

That label would only be there if it comes from a defined, source-verified program that tracks cattle from birth to harvest and has the ID and records to prove it. Years ago, that option would not have been available, except from a local producer and locker plant. Today, they can have more options if the quality suits them and they can afford it.

Ironically, the same fringe that opposes individual animal ID that would go part way to making such a program doable at more reasonable prices, are the same folks that say they want birth-to-harvest product labeling possible, like under this labeling regulation. Of course, they ultimately want it to further their anti-trade agenda. They want to enable mandatory country-of-origin labeling as a tool to keep out beef and cattle from other countries.

We were in one of the big plants recently. They can track carcasses pretty well with tags and sorts. But that is not the same as tracking every piece of beef from an entire carcass. We forget exactly how much, but there are over 600 pieces of beef from each carcass. Tracking every piece would be mind-boggling.

If there is a problem, it is consumer confusion as to what's quality and what's inspection. All the beef in their meat case has been USDA inspected or inspected under USDA standards. Doesn't matter whether it was born here, Canada or Mexico. If it's presented for sale here, it was USDA inspected and is safe.

That confusion of quality and inspection is what many of the "Product of the USA" label proponents want to exploit. They want consumers to think only American-born, raised, fed and processed beef is safe. It is part of their goal of keeping cattle prices up, not by continually improving animal health, performance and carcass quality, but by keeping any competition, no matter how small a percentage, out of the country.

This proposed rule is coming from USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, the inspection agency, not USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, the beef grading agency. — **Steve Dittmer, *WLJ* columnist**

(Steve Dittmer is the author of the Agribusiness Freedom Foundation newsletter. Views in the column do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of* WLJ *or its editorial staff.)

GUEST OPINION

FROM CONGRESS TO COURTROOMS, NCBA IS DEFENDING YOU

Today, cattlemen and women across the U.S. face turbulent times. The return of long-standing issues like "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) and new Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings are just two examples of misguided, ineffective and poorly implemented policies coming from federal regulators in Washington.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is leading the fight against these harmful regulations, not only in the halls of Congress and federal agencies but in the courtroom as well. Currently, NCBA is engaged in two lawsuits against federal authorities: the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recently announced WOTUS final rule and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) listing of the lesser prairie chicken under the ESA.

On Dec. 30, 2022, the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers announced the final "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States'" rule. Scheduled to take effect in March 2023, this rule will create new uncertainty for farmers, ranchers and landowners across the country. Immediately after the final rule was released, NCBA and a coalition of national associations filed a lawsuit to stop the rule from taking effect.

Rather than clarifying the WOTUS definition, this new rule allows EPA inspectors and the Army Corps of Engineers to exert federal authority over small creeks or ponds that might only hold water right after a rainstorm—a far cry from the oceans, large lakes and rivers that traditionally fall under the EPA's purview.

Worst of all, the rule would impact our ability to effectively manage water features on our property, including ditches and isolated ponds. Imagine having to get a federal permit before building a new stock pond or road across your pasture. This is unacceptable, which is why we are in federal court to make sure this rule is dead in the water.

While we continue our years-long fight against WOTUS, NCBA is also engaged in litigation on ESA listings. In January 2023, NCBA sent a notice of intent to sue the Department of the Interior and the USFWS over the listing of the lesser prairie chicken.

Cattle producers' conservation efforts are the only reason the lesser prairie chicken survives today. The bird favors a habitat with a variety of plants, which is best achieved through cattle grazing. Despite our good work, the USFWS has further penalized cattle producers and created a system ripe for abuse. For cattle producers in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Texas, the USFWS has opened the door to activist groups having an outsized say over livestock grazing practices.

The USFWS arbitrarily divided the population into two distinct population segments (DPS); in the Southern DPS when the lesser prairie chicken is considered "endangered," any take of the bird could mean legal liability for landowners. In the Northern DPS, the USFWS created a 4(d) rule which offers a way for producers to limit their liability in case of incidental take (the accidental killing of a lesser prairie chicken) by having a grazing management plan on file. Unfortunately, the USFWS will rely on third parties to review those grazing plans, putting special interest groups over producers who know the land best.

Beyond our formal litigation efforts, NCBA worked with our allies in Congress to delay the effective date of the lesser prairie chicken designation. While this is only a temporary solution, NCBA is working hard to protect cattle producers from the harmful effects of this listing.

As a cattle producer myself, I am extremely proud of NCBA's work defending our policy priorities in court. I certainly couldn't fight USFWS in court myself or read each new bill introduced in Congress, but NCBA fights on our behalf—on Capitol Hill, through agency rule-makings and in courts across the country. I want to make sure that generations 100 years from now can still enjoy our farming and ranching way of life. That is only possible if NCBA has the strength to keep fighting for us.

If you have already joined NCBA, thank you for your membership, but we need your friends and neighbors to join us too. Take a moment to talk to those around you and explain the importance of joining NCBA. NCBA is our voice from Congress to the courtroom and these fights are too important to sit out. — **Todd Wilkinson, NCBA president**

WLJ

Letters to the editor: Letters for publication must be no longer than 675 words, must refer to an article that has appeared within the month, and must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Addresses and phone numbers will not be published. Letters may be shortened for space requirements. Send a letter to the editor by emailing editorial@wlj.net or mailing it to Western Livestock Journal, Attn: Editorial Dept., 7355 E. Orchard Road #300, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.

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G2013
5-Star CE, Top 6% $Ranch, Top 4% $Profit

2026
Top 3% $Ranch, Top 3% $Profit

2056
3-Star CE, Top 1% $Ranch, Top 1% $Profit

2209
Top 5% $Ranch, Top 13% $Profit

55 NO-WORRY CALVING EASE BULLS

2118
5-Star CE, Top 2% $Ranch, Top 2% $Profit

2290
5-Star CE, Top 8% $Ranch, Top 4% $Profit

2318
4-Star CE, Top 12% $Ranch, Top 1% $Profit

2331
4-Star CE, Top 3% $Ranch, Top 2% $Profit

40 SOUTHERN BALANCERS BULLS

2131
Top 19% $Ranch, Top 8% $Profit

2216
5-Star CE, Top 12% $Ranch, Top 7% $Profit

2284
5-Star CE, Top 13% $Ranch, Top 12% $Profit

2326
Top 9% $Ranch, Top 8% $Profit

18 ANGUS & HIGH % ANGUS BULLS

2015
4-Star CE, Top 0.2% $Ranch, Top 0.1% $Profit

2045
5-Star CE, Top 10% $Ranch, Top 2% $Profit

2079
4-Star CE, Top 15% $Ranch, Top% $Profit

2141
Top 10% $Ranch, Top 2% $Profit

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THE VIEWPOINT

with Dr. Douglas Corey

This exclusive column found only in WLJ features unique perspectives from some of the nation's top producers, marketers, animal health experts, economists and more.

Dr. Doug Corey has been on the forefront of animal welfare issues in the rodeo industry, having served as a volunteer and chairman of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association's (PRCA) Animal Welfare Council for many years, along with serving as the animal welfare adviser for Western Justice and several other industry organizations. Doug was instrumental in developing PRCA's "Guide to Veterinary Services at PRCA Rodeos" and creating a full-time animal welfare position at the organization.

Doug received his DVM from Colorado State University and practiced veterinary medicine in Tennessee before moving back to Adams, OR, where he lives on his wife's family ranch. He has a background in cattle and sheep ranching on his family's side, along with hunting and raising timber. At his practice in Walla Walla, WA, his main emphasis was equine, although he did work with some other large animal livestock.

One of the hottest topics on Doug's radar today is the ordinance pushed forward by Los Angeles city councilman Bob Blumenfield that would alter the rodeo industry as we know it today. In Blumenfield's February 2021 motion, it requested the city attorney to create an ordinance that would ban "electric prods or shocking devices, flank or bucking straps, wire tie-downs, sharpened or fixed spurs or rowels, and lariats or lassos" from use in rodeos in the city of Los Angeles.

The city attorney finalized the language of the proposed ban in December 2021, but a final vote has not yet been taken by the Los Angeles City Council.

"PRCA and PBR already have rules and guidelines in place for mistreatment or any type of abuse," Doug told *WLJ*. "It's essentially a zero-tolerance policy."

He said the ordinance was poorly written, and its reference to "wire tie-downs," is not even accurate, because if wire was ever used for tie-downs, it has not been the case for many years. All tie-down materials are to be constructed with or covered by soft leather. "That's how poorly written some of these things are," he said.

The ordinance also wants to eliminate sharpened or fixed spurs, but PRCA rules require spurs to be dull and to roll freely.

Flank straps enhance the bucking action of an animal that has the natural inclination to buck, Doug said. Under PRCA standards, flank straps for bucking horses are fleece-lined and covered by sheepskin, and as the horse exits the bucking chute, they are pulled snugly like a belt. Flank straps are fitted with a quick-release, so they are able to be easily pulled off by a pickup rider. Flank straps for bulls are made of soft, cotton rope, and are tied depending on the bull's preference.

"PRCA really has no rodeos in LA," Doug said, "but if the ordinance passes, one of the problems with its passage is it may go to other big cities or counties that are not favorable to the Western lifestyle. And the ordinance could even end up in the state legislature and become a bill for the state."

Doug continued, "If something passes in a liberal state like California, I think the chances are it can go to other states, too."

Courtesy photo

Dr. Doug Corey

"This ordinance says we like to abuse and torture animals," Doug said. "There's nothing further from the truth. Because if there's anybody that cares as much about animals, it's probably the Western way of life. This is an attack on our Western way of life."

> *"If there's anybody that cares as much about animals, it's probably the Western way of life."*
>
> *—Doug Corey*

Doug emphasized that safety is taken very seriously at all PRCA or Professional Bull Rider (PBR) events, with veterinarians and livestock ambulances required onsite at all events. Safety ratings at events are very high, with injury rates at less than 1%. There are around 70 guidelines and rules in place to ensure the health and safety of livestock in PRCA events, which are being continuously updated.

Doug said the Los Angeles ordinance would affect events other than PRCA and PBR rodeo events, including events that celebrate the history of Mexican and Black cowboys. The ordinance would have implications for rodeos such as the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo, which commemorates the contributions of Black cowboys in building the American West; and charreria events, the traditional Mexican rodeo sporting event where charros demonstrate their horsemanship and roping skills.

On board with welfare

Doug said that one of the most important aspects of animal welfare in rodeo events is the education component. "You have to get everyone to buy into animal welfare," he said. "The stock contractors, the contestants, the committees that put on rodeos … all of those are very important.

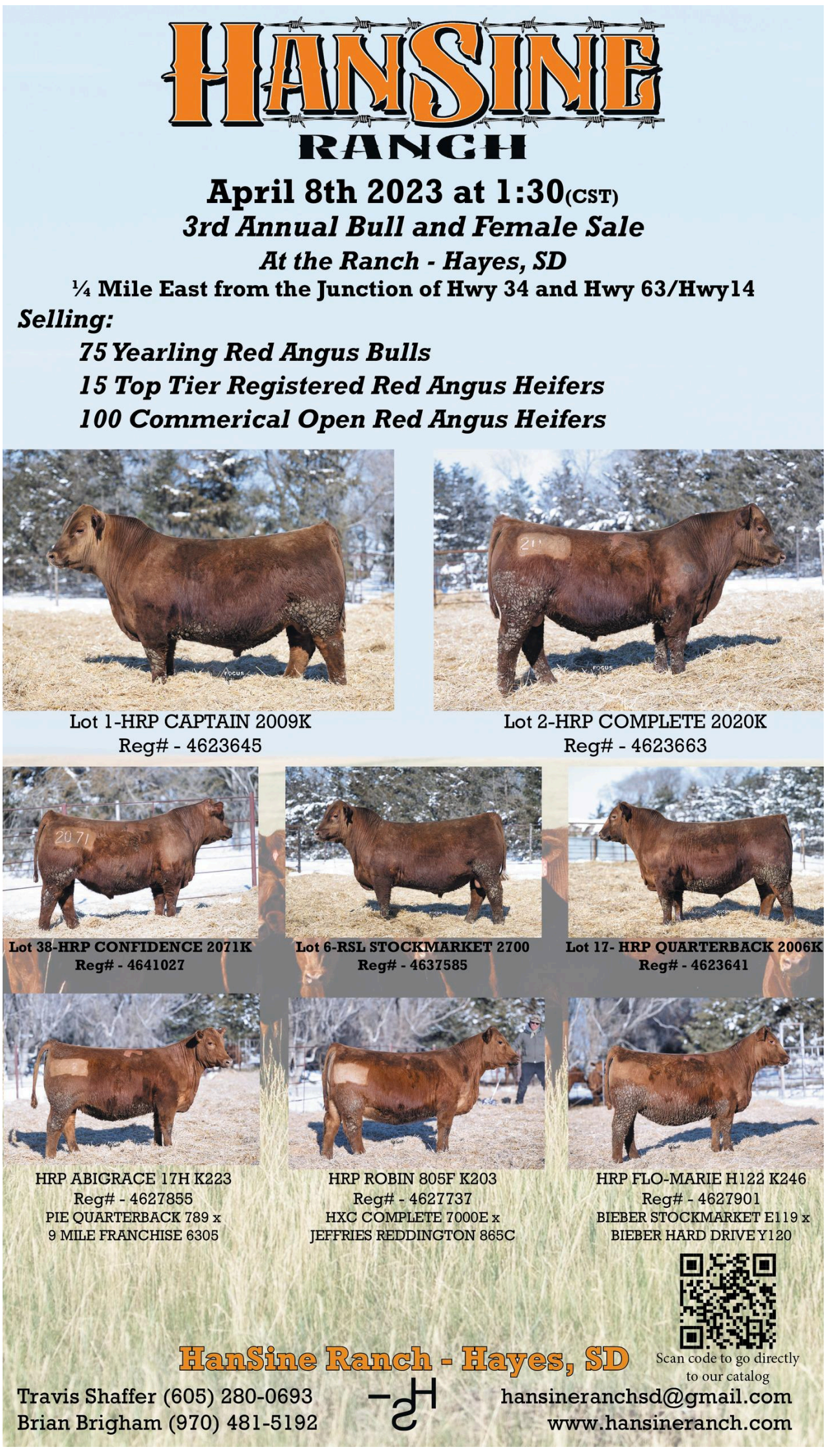
"There are many things that we used to do on ranches that are no longer acceptable in this day and age," he said. He pointed to the often-used talking point of, "My dad did it this way, my grandfather did it this way, it will be okay if I do it that way." To which Doug says, "Well, not really anymore."

When animal welfare first became a priority for PRCA, there weren't yet surveys and statistics related to welfare, and there were only a handful of people involved, Doug said. The effort eventually grew to hiring a livestock welfare coordinator and beginning to track statistics around the '90s.

"You always have to turn in after an event is over how many animals there were, how many injuries and what events they were injured in," he said. "We keep track of all of that and then we put that all together into statistics, which has been very helpful."

Doug emphasized that those who own livestock do not want to see their animals injured, but most people who oppose rodeo events have already made up their minds, as shown by the ordinance's introduction.

"It's the Western way of life," Doug concluded. "A lot of people have moved to the cities and urban areas and kind of forgot where food all comes from. I think they've lost touch with the way a lot of things have gone. I think it's an extremely important aspect of our life that we need to keep that culture and that heritage alive." — **Anna Miller, *WLJ* managing editor**



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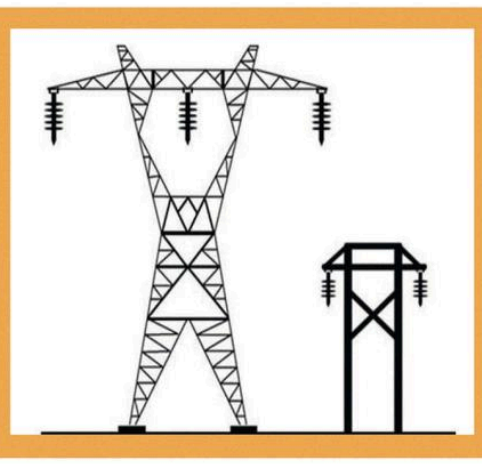

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Cattle and beef market indicators all green

For the first time in several years, it appears that all segments of cattle and beef markets are on the same page and responding to tightening supply fundamentals. The complex linkages across cattle and beef markets mean that the dynamics of market adjustments are relatively slow under the best of circumstances. Delays due to the pandemic in 2020 stretched into 2021 and drought impacts since late 2020 contributed to a delayed transition of fundamentals from feeder cattle markets through fed cattle markets and into beef markets.

Cattle numbers have declined for several years since the peak beef cow herd in 2019. Declining calf crop numbers (from the 2018 peak) should have led to peak cyclical beef production by 2020. Pandemic delays pushed beef production from 2020 into 2021. Drought liquidation in 2021 and 2022 led to further short-term increases in beef production. Record beef production in 2022 occurred four years after the peak calf crop.

Drought the past two years resulted in additional heifer placements and caused early marketing of calves in 2022 that maintained feedlot inventories above year-earlier levels until late in the year. Feedlot inventories have declined year over year for five consecutive months and will continue decreasing. Feedlot marketings and beef production were higher year over year in January, but that appears to be changing.

Lower carcass weights and declining cattle slaughter have year-to-date beef production down 4.5% by early March. The decrease in cattle numbers since the 2018 peak calf crop has finally worked through the system. Cattle slaughter and beef production are expected to decrease for the balance of 2023 and beyond. With continuing drought conditions, it is not clear exactly how cattle and beef market timing will develop going forward, but the question is not one of whether beef production will fall, but rather how fast and how much it will fall in 2023.

The auction price for 500-pound steers in Oklahoma recently was $239.66/cwt, the highest price since September 2015. The record high price for 500 lb. steers in Oklahoma was $312.72/cwt in November 2014. The price of 825 lb. steers was $181/cwt, the highest price since October 2015. The all-time peak price for these steers was $238.87/cwt in October 2014. The live five-market average price of fed steers was $165.07/cwt, the highest fed price since April 2015. Fed prices hit a record level of $171.38/cwt in November 2014. Cattle prices are expected to continue trending higher in 2023, and new record cattle prices will happen, if not in 2023, then at some point in the next two or three years.

Higher cattle prices will push wholesale and retail beef prices against beef demand, which remains strong but somewhat muted currently. There will be resistance to higher beef prices, but the reality of decreasing beef supplies will ultimately push beef prices higher. It will take some time for domestic and international demand to adjust to limited beef supplies. In the meantime, all the margins between cow-calf and consumer will be squeezed. The tightest pinch-point in this process will be when heifer retention begins in earnest to rebuild the herd. That will likely begin in late 2023 and continue through 2024 and perhaps beyond. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

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Despite storms, CA water challenges persist

As still more storms dumped new snow onto California's burgeoning snowpack, water managers, farmers and environmentalists gathered in Sacramento recently to discuss long-term challenges to secure a more certain water future.

The fresh snowfall contrasted with challenging water realities discussed at the 61st California Irrigation Institute Annual Conference. With a theme of "One Water: Partnering for Solutions," the event focused on addressing impacts of climate change, including warming conditions and frequent droughts that severely diminish the snowpack and state water supplies.

The gathering emphasized solutions that some speakers said could be aided through partnerships among different water interests.

"We've certainly adopted a one water approach, and that really is breaking down the silos within our own utility and then taking that same approach as we think about building partnerships outside of the utility," said Paula Kehoe, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission director of water resources. "We recognize that there's definitely opportunities, but it takes a lot of hard work. There are many solutions to our challenges."

In describing the state's "hotter, drier new normal," Karla Nemeth, director of the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), which operates the State Water Project, said the state's water supply is much improved since last December.

Lake Shasta, California's largest reservoir, was framed by heaps of snow. Its water level as of the beginning of March had risen to 83% of the historical average. But Nemeth warned that the state's hydrology is variable, and snow levels in some regions are below average.

"The snowpack is much more intense in the central and southern Sierra, less so in the northern part of the country," Nemeth said. "In fact, we're a little bit below average. These storms may push us over that, which would be terrific, but what is important is the northern part of the state is where we have our biggest reservoirs that feed both the state and federal water projects, which is really a backbone of water management here in California."

Prior to the last few weeks of storms, she said, California had less than an inch of rain from late January to the first two weeks of February. "When it's not raining, it's actually getting drier, and that really represents a shift over our observed hydrology over the past hundred years."

Warmer temperatures, Nemeth said, have water managers looking at the amount of water lost to evapotranspiration.

"We need to develop and appreciate the actual growing sliver of water that is either sinking into the soil or is evaporating given the role of temperature," she said.

DWR is also focusing on forecasting improvements and looking at soil moisture modeling to better understand how much water can be counted on from storms following dry conditions, Nemeth said.

As part of a panel discussion, Sacramento Valley farmer Fritz Durst discussed his approach to sustainable farming, including the use of no-till and other soil-health practices that retain water and improve yields.

Durst, who grows mainly dryland crops, said "the climate change we're seeing today has really added a substantial amount of risk" to farming.

"We're seeing much warmer temperatures in the summertime and colder temperatures in the winter," said Durst, who farms rice, alfalfa, sunflowers, tomatoes and cereal crops near Knights Landing, CA, and is a Sacramento River settlement contractor.

By farming sustainably, Durst said, he uses water to benefit wildlife and fish, and he is able to make a profit.

"We've been very proactive in the Sacramento Valley, especially in the rice realm, where besides providing food for human beings, we provide food for shorebirds and waterfowl," he said. "We provide food for fingerling salmon, and we have a plethora of different types of mammals and reptiles living around our fields. We're trying to help not just ourselves but the environment we live in."

Nemeth said water management must emphasize the "need to share the resource, so that we can continue to thrive both economically and environmentally." She said it is important for water managers to add flexibility to the water system.

To respond to changing conditions, she said, investments must be made in construction of aboveground and belowground water storage, desalinization and water recycling.

Local agencies are working on groundwater recharge and demand management to comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, a 2014 law that requires efforts to bring depleted groundwater basins into balance.

Jeevan Muhar, general manager of the Arvin-Edison Water Storage District, a federal Central Valley Project contractor based in Kern County, CA, said it is important to invest in construction of new infrastructure and repairs of existing conveyance facilities.

Touting partnerships between agencies as a path to water-management solutions, Muhar described the cooperative relationship the water district enjoys with the large water provider in neighboring Los Angeles County.

"One of our largest partners is the Metropolitan Water District," he said. "We were one of the first ag-urban partnerships, and I'm proud to say that we continue to have that partnership.

"Talk to your neighbors. Your neighbors might already have those facilities, and you should be able to capitalize on what folks are doing around you," Muhar added. "I definitely encourage you to think outside the silos and break those down. We have to."

Working collaboratively with various interests, he said, his district is trying to solve problems, noting that there are "some synergies in working with flood plains and recharge and solving water quality problems all at the same time, so that we can move forward and not continue to fight."

Robyn Grimm, climate-resilient water systems director for the Environmental Defense Fund, discussed work with local partners to develop tools, systems and approaches to manage water and land resources.

"Ultimately, all of us in the room here, we're trying to get to the same place where our water systems are in balance, and we're using our water supplies in a way that results in a sustainable and resilient California with ongoing agricultural production, beautiful places to recreate, a strong economy and a healthy environment," Grimm said. "It is a big lift to get there, and change is really hard, and the system is ever evolving and changing. We need to trust one another and work together." — **Christine Souza, assistant editor of Ag Alert, California Farm Bureau Foundation**

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 15 – The Nebraska Cattlemen Research and Education Foundation is now accepting scholarship applications for the 2023-24 academic year from qualified youth in Nebraska with an interest in the beef industry. Applications for $1,000 scholarships are due by March 15. Applications can be found at nebraskacattlemen.org.

March 17 – The Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association is now accepting applications for two summer 2023 internship programs. All experiences are paid and offer hands-on opportunities to play an active role in association happenings. Details: tscra.org/who-we-are/employment.

March 17 – The Public Lands Council is awarding two Nick Theos scholarships for $250 (in addition to hotel and registration costs) to attend the annual Spring Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., April 24-25. Details: publiclandscouncil.org/nick-theos-plc-scholarship-program.

March 24 – The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is accepting applications for public policy interns for the fall 2023 semester. Applications are available at ncba.org/about/opportunities-for-students. Questions about the internship program may be directed to Justyn Tedder at jtedder@beef.org.

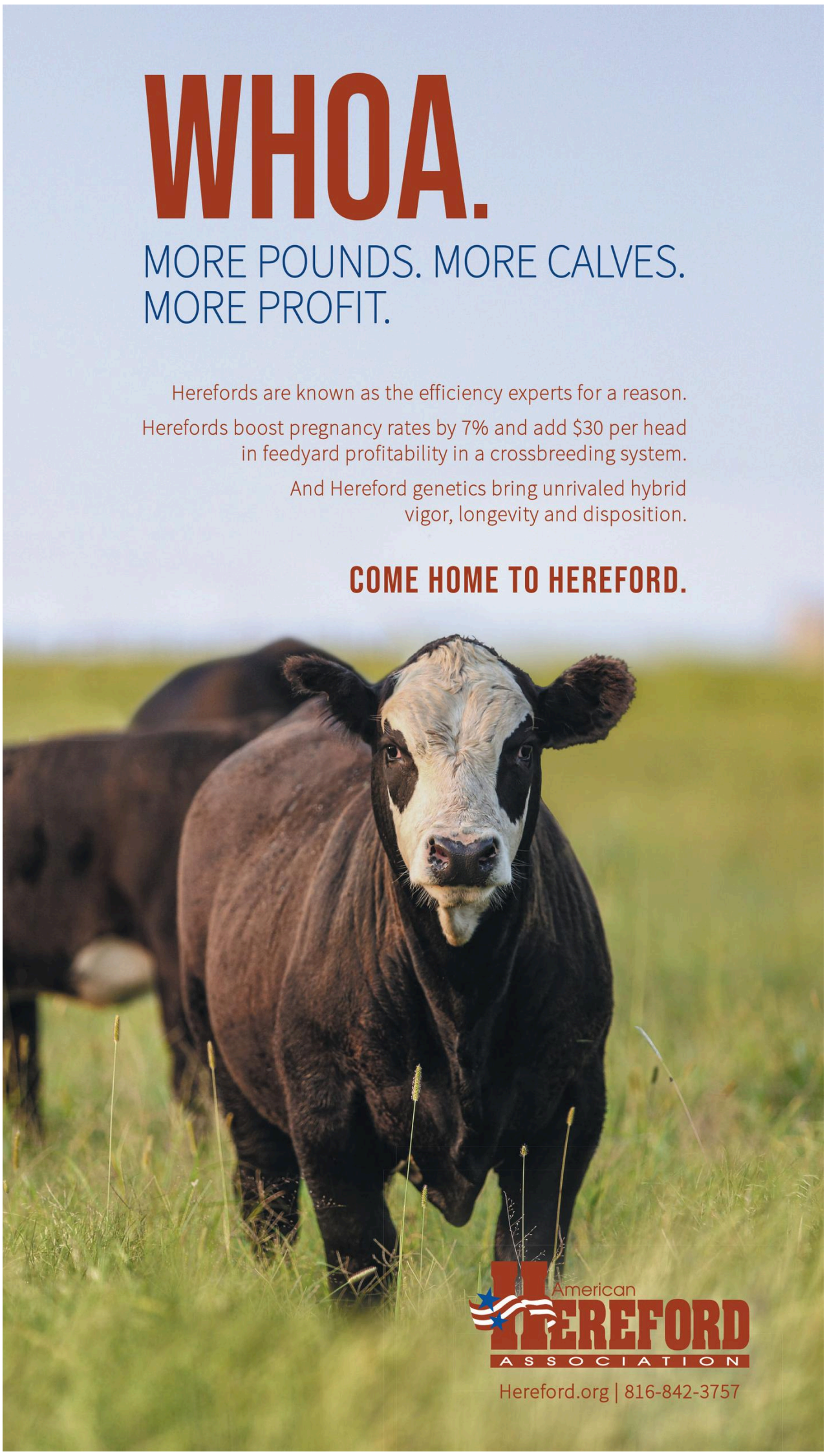
March 26 – The Oklahoma Cattlemen's Foundation plans to award more than $30,000 in scholarships to undergraduate students. The scholarships are available for current college students at an Oklahoma college or university with definite plans to continue in the fall or graduating high school seniors who have an interest in the beef cattle industry. Application details: okcattlemen.org/scholarship-opportunities.

March 31 — The Livestock Marketing Association is launching a new one-time scholarship to applicants who are interested in or display knowledge or understanding of the importance of the agriculture industry and its supporting entities, as well as plan to use their career to advocate for the advancement of the livestock marketing industry. Details: www.lmaweb.com/about/scholarships.

Prepare for changes in purchasing livestock antimicrobials

NDSU

Beginning in June 2023, livestock owners will need a prescription from a licensed veterinarian to purchase all medically important antimicrobial drugs.



Beginning in June of 2023, livestock owners will need a prescription from a licensed veterinarian to purchase all medically important antimicrobial drugs, said Dr. Gerald Stokka, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension veterinarian and livestock stewardship specialist. Currently, there are several antibiotics sold over the counter (OTC) that do not require a veterinary prescription to purchase.

The changes being implemented in 2023 are the latest in a plan put into place in 2012 by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). At that time, the FDA recommended limiting the use of antimicrobial drugs that are considered necessary for assuring animal health to include veterinary oversight or consultation.

Following this guidance, in 2013, recommendations regarding the transition of medically important antimicrobials administered through feed and water required either a veterinary feed directive (VFD) or a prescription status. This guidance resulted in the use of these products now being authorized by a veterinarian within a veterinary client-patient relationship (VCPR). The new labels implementing this policy went into effect in January 2017.

> *Animal owners still have access to medically important antimicrobials to address animal health issues in consultation with their veterinarian to obtain a prescription.*

The most recent guidance document pertains to transitioning the sale and use of the remaining medically important OTC antimicrobials to prescription status. Once the recommendations have been fully implemented, all dosage forms of medically important antimicrobials approved for use in animals can only be administered under a prescription from a licensed veterinarian with a VCPR and only when necessary for the treatment, control or prevention of specific diseases.

The most common products in this category include penicillin (both procaine and procaine/benzathine formulations), all oxytetracycline products including 100, 200 and 300 mg/ml injectable formulations, and the sulfa class of antimicrobials. A list of all products changing to prescription status can be found at www.fda.gov.

"Antimicrobials for use in livestock can be purchased from a veterinary clinic or from a registered animal health retail facility," said Stokka. "The veterinarian with which your operation has a VCPR will need to provide a prescription to the retail operation to allow for the purchase.

"This VCPR implies a relationship with the operation, knowledge of the operation and knowledge of the animals' need for antimicrobial treatment," added Stokka.

The retailer, if not already registered with the state of North Dakota as an animal health retail facility, will need to apply through the North Dakota Board of Pharmacy. In addition, one person associated with the facility must be registered as a veterinary dispensing technician to assure documentation and proper product labeling.

After June 11, all new products entering distribution channels that were formerly purchased OTC must be labeled as prescription products. However, the FDA intends to allow existing inventory of OTC-labeled products that may already be in distribution channels to deplete.

New inventory with changes that reflect the change from OTC status will be labeled with new labels indicating prescription status. The wording is as follows, "Caution: Federal law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian." This statement must appear on the container label.

Animal owners still have access to medically important antimicrobials to address animal health issues in consultation with their veterinarian to obtain a prescription. Drug sponsors, which means drug manufacturers, have two years to voluntarily comply with the guidance. This voluntary compliance began in June of 2021.

"The livestock industry continues to respond to changes regarding the use of antimicrobials," said Stokka. "We have adopted the concept of judicious use as part of our commitment to antimicrobial stewardship, and the careful and responsible management of antimicrobial resources. The principles are simple: use only when necessary, and use under the direction of a veterinarian with a valid VCPR."

— NDSU Extension

Outlook for the 2023 grazing season

"Despite residual impacts of the 2021 drought, we had good forage production in 2022 due to high rainfall in the fall of 2021 and timely spring rainfall," said Miranda Meehan, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension livestock environmental stewardship specialist. "However, as we moved into summer and fall, precipitation was below normal across the state, causing drought conditions to return."

As of March 1, 70% of North Dakota is experiencing some level of drought. The two factors that will influence forage production in 2023 are April through June precipitation and grazing management in 2022.

Fall plant tiller development has a direct impact on plant growth during the subsequent year for all cool-season grasses, which are dominant in our grassland. Cool-season grass tillers, such as western wheatgrass, Kentucky bluegrass, smooth brome grass, green needlegrass and crested wheatgrass, that developed from late August through early October are the first plants to green up in the spring. If these tillers are eaten or die due to drought, then spring growth must occur from new tillers developed in April and May.

"Unfortunately, the fall drought conditions likely impacted tiller development," said Kevin Sedivec, NDSU Extension rangeland management specialist. "Heavy grazing during the fall that resulted in the removal of the growing point (between the bottom two leaves) from tillers will cause additional stress and tiller mortality. In the event of high fall tiller mortality, grasses will need to develop a new tiller in the spring, delaying growth two to four weeks."

Tillers that develop in the spring come from buds that broke dormancy in the spring, usually when soil temperatures stay about 40 F for three or more days, whereas the tillers established in the fall will grow as soon as temperatures reach 32 F for five consecutive days.

Heavy grazing use in the fall not only delays growth but causes reductions in overall plant growth and forage production. Data collected by NDSU Extension found that severe grazing use, greater than 80% removal of available forage, reduces growth of cool-season grasses and forage production. Forage production was reduced by as much as 57% on sites evaluated as having severe grazing use the previous fall.

2022 forage production in pounds per acre as influenced by grazing use was slight-moderate (<40%), full (40-60%), close (60-80%) and severe (>80%) in the fall of 2022.

NDSU

Fall plant tiller development has a direct impact on plant growth during the subsequent year for all cool-season grasses.

In addition to management, April through June precipitation drives forage production in North Dakota. Due to the dominance of cool-season grasses, rains during this period are responsible for 80-90% of forage production in the state.

To help plan for the 2023 grazing season, NDSU Extension developed the following scenarios based on precipitation and management:

- If spring precipitation is normal, expect a delay in plant development and lower production due to a loss in tiller development following the dry fall. Further reductions will occur if pastures were grazed heavily in the fall.
- If spring precipitation is 130% or more above normal, expect normal to above normal forage production.
- If spring precipitation is below normal, expect reduced forage production and a decline in forage quality earlier in the season.

"Regardless of spring precipitation, ranchers should prepare for a one- to two-week delay in growth this spring due to poor tiller development this fall," said Meehan. "This delay will be greater on pastures that were grazed heavily this fall due to increased tiller mortality. Expect pastures that received heavy use in the fall to have reduced forage production this year."

To prevent further reductions in plant health and production, Meehan and Sedivec recommend delaying pasture turn-out until the dominant forage species in a pasture reach grazing readiness. Grazing readiness for most domesticated pastures is at the 3-leaf stage, whereas grazing readiness for most native range grasses is the 3 1/2-leaf stage.

"When production is low due to delayed tiller development, it becomes easy to run out of forage more quickly if you go to full stock too early, leading to over-use," said Sedivec. "This over-use during early green-up leads to reduced plant vigor and reduced leaf area, impacting photosynthesis and reducing food (carbohydrate) stored in roots. In the end, you may sacrifice 45-60% of forage production for the year by grazing too early."

Timely precipitation is critical to forage growth and production. Equally critical is the use of management practices that maintain healthy, vigorous plant communities that can withstand disturbances. Regardless of what spring brings we encourage you to have a drought plan in place with well-defined trigger dates to reduce risk on your ranch. — **NDSU Extension**

Family faces felonies on animal cruelty

Two Lincoln County, NE, men were arrested on numerous felony counts of alleged animal neglect and cruelty after law enforcement authorities and brand inspectors found more than 150 dead cattle on a county ranch and seized more than 1,100 animals.

According to information from the Lincoln County Sheriff's office, father and son Larry, 75, and Matthew Mikoloyck, 41, were charged with 150 counts of animal cruelty and neglect resulting in death, which is a class IIIA felony for each offense. Both men were jailed and bonded out on 10% of $100,000 from the Lincoln County Detention Center.

Class IIIA felonies in Nebraska are punishable by up to three years in prison and nine to 18 months of post-release supervision.

"Over the last several weeks, deputies continued to investigate the abuse of livestock on several different areas of rural Lincoln County," the Lincoln County sheriff said in a news release.

"During the investigation, information was gained that numerous cattle, horses and other livestock were not being taken cared for. Deputies, with the help of the Nebraska Brand Inspectors Office and Nebraska State Patrol aircraft, completed an investigative search warrant to inspect the livestock on at least five sections of property" operated by the Mikoloycks.

Investigators not only found more than 150 dead cattle on March 1 but also "observed numerous sick and dying cattle including bulls, cows and calves."

Deputies seized and transported more than 1,000 bulls, cows and calves to a North Platte, NE, sale barn operated by North Platte Stockyards LLC, where a licensed veterinarian inspected them.

According to a report from KRVN News, the men also were charged in nearby Logan County with six felony counts of abandoning and cruelly neglecting livestock, resulting in death, as well as 12 misdemeanor counts of cruelly mistreating an animal.

"Numerous cattle had to be put down on scene, as they were very sick, injured and dying," the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office said.

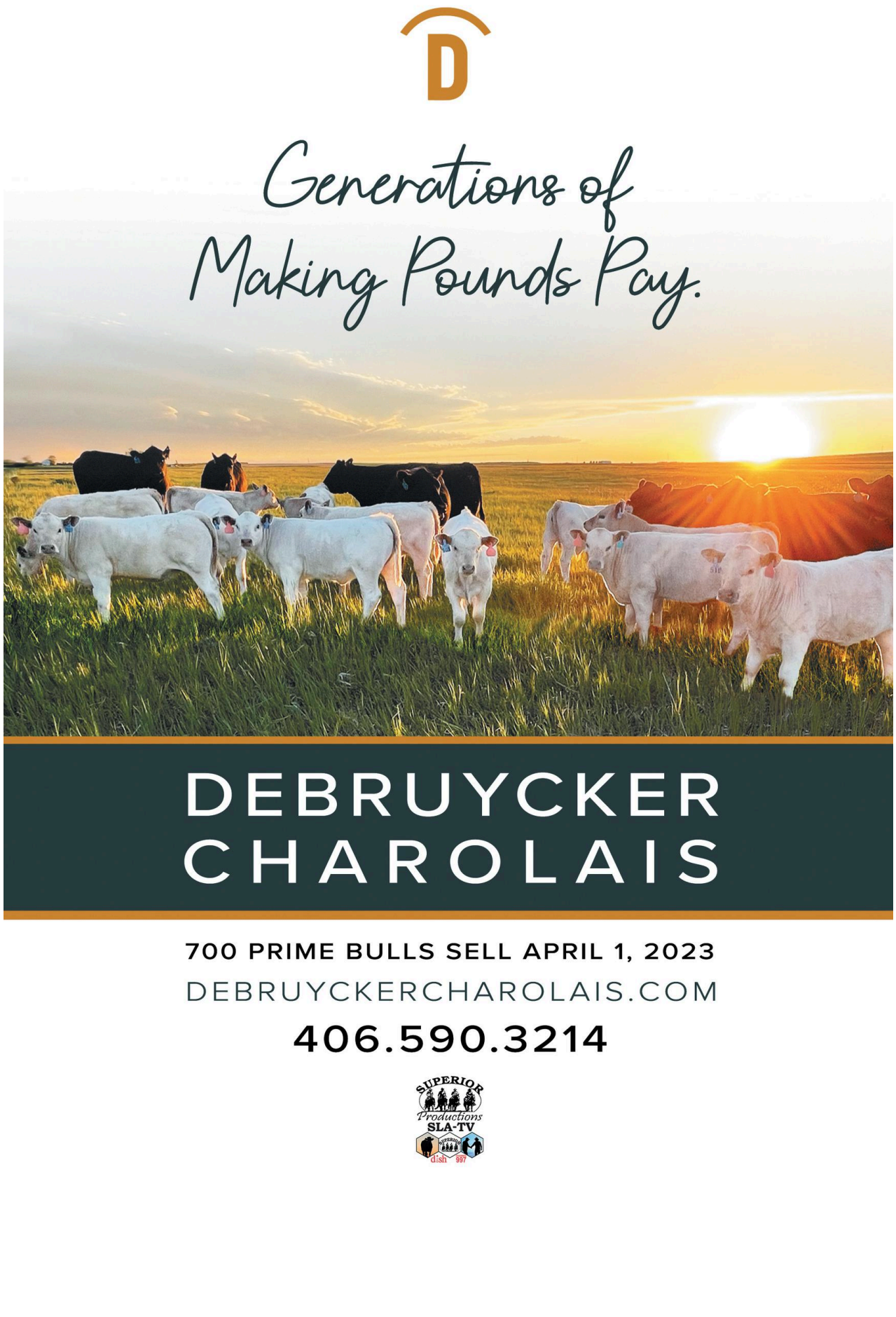
Deputies observed "very little substantial food sources" for the animals and no water to sustain most of the herd, according to the Lincoln County sheriff's news release.

NTV News reported that on Jan. 23 a Logan County sheriff's deputy was called to the area of Avenue 70 and Road 10 in the county after receiving a report of cattle on the roadway. Larry Mikoloyck was issued a citation for having eight head of cattle on the roadway.

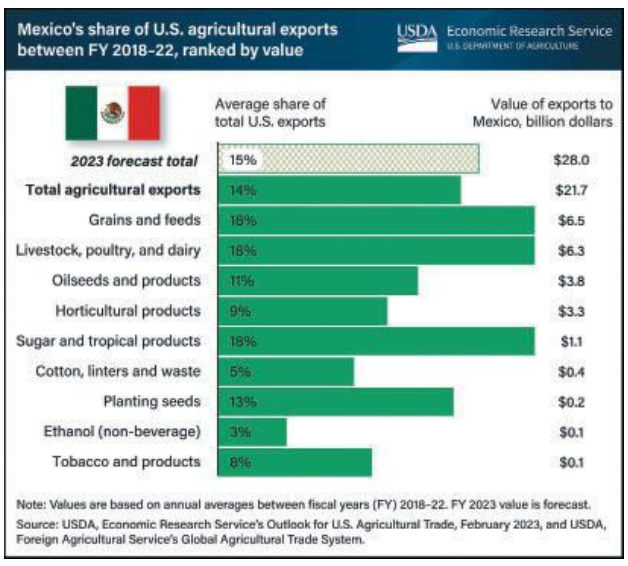
NTV reports a deputy observed the cattle drinking from puddles and eating forage from alongside ditches and crop ground owned by other residents.

On March 2, deputies from Lincoln County, with the help of the Nebraska Brand Inspectors Office, served a warrant to seize all the cattle on properties operated by the Mikoloycks. Deputies were assisted by the Logan County, Thomas County Sheriff's Office and the Lincoln County Sheriff's Posse.

The investigation is ongoing, the sheriff said, and "additional charges for Larry and Matthew Mikoloyck will be forthcoming." — **Todd Neeley, DTN staff reporter**



14% of all US agricultural exports destined for Mexico



With a total value of $28 billion, Mexico is projected to be the U.S.' second largest destination for U.S. agricultural exports in fiscal year 2022 (October-September), after China. Between fiscal years 2018 and 2022, Mexico's share of all U.S. agricultural exports rose from just under 13% to about 14% and is forecast to reach 15% in fiscal year 2023.

Mexico's share of U.S. exports varies by product. On average, Mexico purchased $6.5 billion in U.S. grains and feeds per year from fiscal years 2018 to 2022, accounting for 18% of the largest export commodity group. Demand for grains and feed has been spurred by the expansion of Mexico's cattle industry and growing consumption of animal products.

Between fiscal years 2018 and 2022, Mexico's imports of livestock, poultry and dairy products represented an average of 18% of total U.S. exports and accounted for $6.3 billion in sales. In recent years, Mexico's imports of U.S. dairy and poultry have been particularly strong, with demand for nonfat dry milk and chicken cuts driving Mexico's import share as high as 24%.

Bilateral trade between Mexico and the U.S. is facilitated by relatively low transportation costs as well as trade advantages afforded by the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement. These factors, as well as sustained demand, are expected to continue fueling growth in U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico through fiscal year 2023. — **USDA Economic Research Service**

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Energy development concerns ranchers

SOLAR BILL
(from page 1)

also said the bill is singling out the solar and wind industry. Removing references to those industries would "level the playing field" of who reimburses ranchers, he said. Quinonez said ranchers should be compensated if grazing land is removed.

Jeff Eisenberg, a lobbyist for the Arizona Cattle Growers Association, said ranchers have come to him and are concerned that the energy development proposals will affect their operations and are concerned it will possibly force them to close.

> *Brawley said a renewable energy company went to the Bureau of Land Management and filed an application for a 35-year lease on 20,000 acres, which his family leased.*

"We're responding to a human need, it's not political, it's not about solar," Eisenberg said at the hearing.

Eisenberg stressed that while it is not about solar, if any development takes away people's livelihoods, they should be compensated.

Mark Brawley, a fourth-generation rancher from Safford, AZ, told the representatives he is not against renewable energy, but it should be done "the right way, with the right technology and in the right location." Brawley continued that business owners and ranchers should be compensated and given an opportunity at the table.

Brawley said a renewable energy company went to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and filed an application for a 35-year lease on 20,000 acres, which his family leased. Brawley noted that BLM did keep his family informed of the progress of the process, however, he never met with anybody from the company during the process. Brawley said he received a call from BLM that the application had been withdrawn.

Brawley said he thought a lot about the financial loss had the project proceeded, and said due to the ranch's location to two transmission lines, it is a matter of time until there will be a new application. Brawley gave a financial analysis based on if the application had proceeded and said the losses for 35 years would be approximately $2 million. Brawley also noted the amount of water the solar industry would use compared to his operation, and said water is a precious resource within the state. Brawley continued the loss of that acreage, about 31% of their grazing, might make the operation no longer financially viable.

Rep. David Cook (R-AZ-07)—the bill's sponsor—said there are still some issues that need to be worked out with the bill, including what is "credible evidence" of expenses and who will determine what that entails. Cook also said capping the payments may also need to be worked out.

The committee members who voted against moving the bill forward expressed the bill needs to be worked on and rewritten.

An amendment by Cook on the House floor on March 2 clarified ranchers would be reimbursed at fair market value for "loss of profits through the end of the lease term or for five years after the size of the lessee's grazing operation is reduced, whichever is longer."

An amendment by Rep. Alexander Kolodin (R-AZ-03) on March 7 would change the language from "whichever is longer" to "whichever is shorter." — **Charles Wallace, *WLJ* editor**

Farmer sentiment dips lower in February

The Purdue University/CME Group Ag Economy Barometer dipped 5 points to a reading of 125 in February. Farmers' perspectives regarding both current conditions on their farms and expectations for the future also weakened. The Index of Current Conditions fell 2 points to 134, and the Index of Future Expectations declined 6 points to 121. The Ag Economy Barometer is calculated each month from 400 U.S. agricultural producers' responses to a telephone survey. The latest survey was conducted Feb. 13-17.

"Increased concern over the risk of falling output prices, rising interest rates and uncertainty over the future growth of U.S. agricultural exports is weighing on producers' minds," said James Mintert, the barometer's principal investigator and director of Purdue's Center for Commercial Agriculture.

Producers' expectations for their farms' financial performance in 2023 compared to 2022 weakened in February. The Farm Financial Performance Index declined 7 points to a reading of 86. Farmers continue to point to concerns about higher input costs (38% of respondents), rising interest rates (24% of respondents) and lower output prices (18% of respondents) as their biggest concerns for the year ahead.

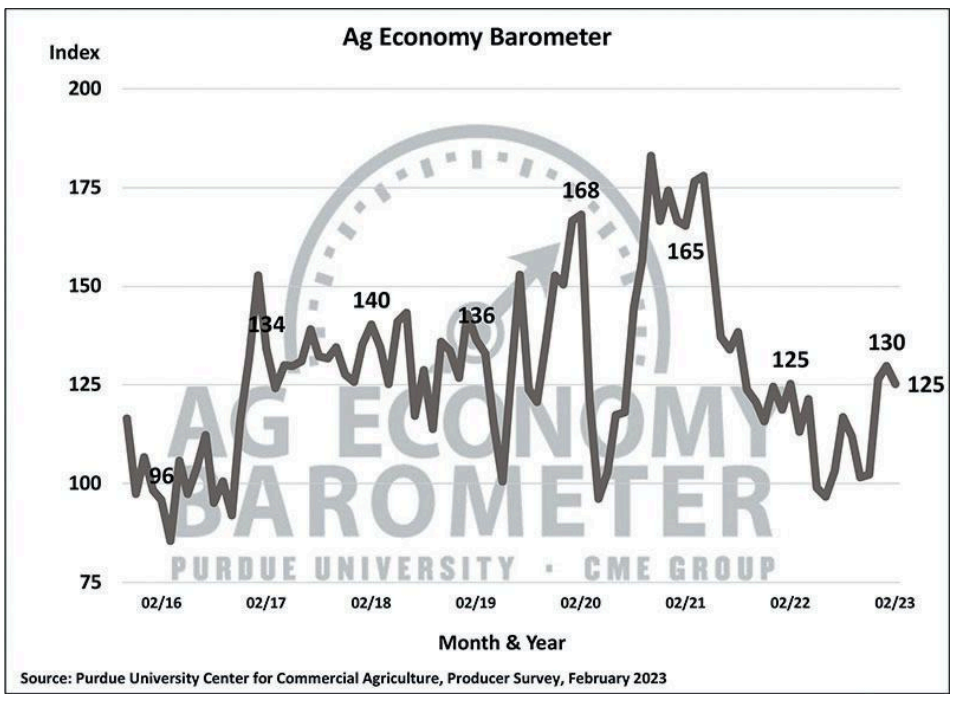
Agricultural exports have been a key source of growth for U.S. agriculture for decades. Beginning in 2019, the Ag Economy Barometer survey routinely included a question asking producers about their expectations for agricultural exports in the upcoming five years. Since peaking in 2020, when just over 70% of respondents said they expected exports to increase in the upcoming five years, the percentage of farmers looking for exports to grow over time has drifted lower. In February, just 33% of survey respondents said they expect exports to increase, which leads Mintert to suggest that a lack of confidence in future agricultural export growth is contributing to weakened sentiment among producers.

Despite strong farm income, the February reading of the Farm Capital Investment Index changed little, rising 1 point to a reading of 43. This month, 72% of producers said it is a "bad time" to make large investments in their farming operation, while just 15% reported it is a "good time" to make such investments. The disparity between producers' responses to the question and actual farm equipment sales continues to be focused on costs. Of those who said now is a "bad time" to make large investments, 45% of respondents said it was because of an increase in prices for farm machinery and new construction, while 27% of respondents said it was because of "rising interest rates."

Producers' expectations for short-term and long-term farmland values fell in February but remain positive. The Short-Term Farmland Value Index declined 1 point to 119 while the Long-Term Farmland Value Index dropped 5 points to 137. Although both indices remain above 100, indicating a positive outlook on farmland values, the percentage of producers who said they expect values to decline over the next five years reached 19% this month, the highest percentage since this question was first routinely included in barometer surveys in 2019. Still, over half (56%) of respondents expect values five years from now to be higher than today. This month just 33% of respondents said they expect values to rise in the next 12 months, while 14% said they expect values to weaken.

Each February, the barometer survey includes a question focused on farm growth, asking respondents about the annual growth rate they expect for their farm over the next five years. This year 49% of respondents said their farm either had "No plans to grow" (33%) or "Plan to exit or retire" (16%). Of those respondents who expect their farms to grow, 19% expect it to grow by "Less than 5% annually," and 22% said they expect it to grow by "5% to 10% annually."

Leasing of farmland for solar energy production is a hot topic in many parts of the U.S. Since the spring of 2021, the barometer survey has periodically included questions about the discussions farmers are having with solar companies. In both the January and February 2023 surveys, just over 10% of respondents said they had discussed a solar lease with a company. Of those who indicated they had been in discussions, nearly half (48%) of respondents said they were offered a lease rate above $1,000 per acre, up from a low of 27% and a high of 35% in previous surveys. This month's survey findings suggest companies have started to increase lease rates they are willing to pay. — **Purdue University Extension**



Controlling spring alfalfa weeds

Spring is a critical time to control weeds in alfalfa. For Roundup-ready or tolerant varieties, glyphosate applications sprayed in early spring can assist alfalfa in effectively overcoming emerging weeds, but Roundup isn't the only good weed control option.

When weeds grow faster than stressed alfalfa, seedlings are robbed of moisture, nutrients and light. Left uncontrolled, weeds can thin stands, weaken plants and lower yields. For broadleaf weeds, mowing may be an option while the alfalfa is growing slowly. Adjust mowing height so several leaves remain on the seedlings after clipping to aid in alfalfa regrowth. However, if mower clippings smother young alfalfa seedlings, then alternative herbicide application may still be your best weed control option.

The Nebraska Extension "Guide for Weeds, Disease and Insect" publication EC-130 provides comparison herbicide response ratings. When establishing new alfalfa stands, Eptam, Balan DF and Trust are labeled. For seedling alfalfa, post-emergent herbicides include: AIM, Moxy 2E, Poast, Buctril, Raptor, Select Max, Prowl H2O, Warrant, Pursuit, Arrow and Butyrac 200.

For established alfalfa, labeled broadleaf or grassy herbicides include: Aim, Moxy 2E, Butytrac, Chateau, Gramoxone, Karmex, Metribuzin, Prowl H2O, Treflan, Arrow, MCPA Amine, Warrant, and Velpar.

Remember that bottom-line improved herbicide effectiveness begins with applying products early while the weeds are less than 4 inches tall. As always, read and follow label directions for application rates and conditions. — **Todd Whitney, Nebraska Extension educator**

Vermilion Ranch 5,500 ANGUS SELL

Vermilion G017 Bomber K061

Lot 1 - AAA 20352476

BW	WW	YW	MILK	$W	$C	Act BW	Adj WW	Adj YW
+.2	+91	+154	+22	+83	+276	70	844	1466

SIRE: *Vermilion Bomber G017 MGS: Vermilion Want To

Vermilion Mcilroy K188

Lot 65 - AAA *20352578

BW	WW	YW	MILK	$W	$C	Act BW	Adj WW	Adj YW
+2.4	+85	+154	+28	+78	+317	76	729	1342

SIRE: Connealy McIlroy MGS: Vermilion Privilege C206

Vermilion Three Rivers K136

Lot 21 - AAA 20352545

BW	WW	YW	MILK	$W	$C	Act BW	Adj WW	Adj YW
+1.7	+95	+164	+17	+72	+307	92	821	1416

SIRE: Ellingson Three Rivers 0065 MGS: Casino Bomber

Spring Performance Sale

THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2023

Heifers sell at the South Pryor Development Center, Billings, MT - 12:00 NOON

Second Annual Embryo Sale MARCH 23

200 embryos from Vermilion's best sell at the Public Auction Yards, Billings, MT - 6:00 PM

FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2023

Bulls sell at the Public Auction Yards, Billings, MT - 11:00 AM

500 TOTAL PERFORMANCE YEARLING ANGUS BULLS

Bulls sired by:
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March means planning for Meat In Day

Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA), its affiliates and members, plus the broader beef community, are excitedly planning for the 2023 #MeatIn Weekend March 18-19. Each year, "Meat In Day" in Colorado celebrates the contributions of livestock production and agriculture, while also uplifting those in need and supporting local causes.

What are your #MeatIn Day Plans? CCA wants to know! If you or your affiliate have special plans for the weekend, please share your event details with CCA. Community members can call the office to learn about Meat In Day activities and events, and CCA is more than willing to share your local events with those interested.

CCA will be supporting Beef Sticks for Backpacks again this year to support feeding hungry kids across the state.

How will you #MeatIn?

• Attend a #MeatIn Day event!

Similar to the past few years, there are local events popping up across the state and restaurants and businesses running beef/meat specials. Share your information and photos with CCA, and let them know how your events went.

• Share your stories on social media!

Last year, social media and news outlets were flooded with support for beef production and Colorado's agriculture industries. This year is another opportunity for you to create a unique social media post, letter to the editor or radio slot.

• Show your beef industry pride!

The Colorado Beef Council has materials available to celebrate BEEF month in Colorado. Visit www.cobeef.com to place your orders. Keep in mind, quantities are limited, so order soon. Better With Beef banners are also available for purchase and can be shipped directly to you. Visit betterwithbeef.org for more information on ordering banners, or contact the CCA office at 303-431-6422 or info@coloradocattle.org to place your order.

• #MeatIn Day messages

Remember, write your post to show your audience why this issue should matter to them. Use a local spin and connect to your communities. Has there been an issue brought up in your community related to the beef industry? Now is the time to pivot to positive messages! Your personal connection and stories as a producer and/or consumer of beef is important to share.

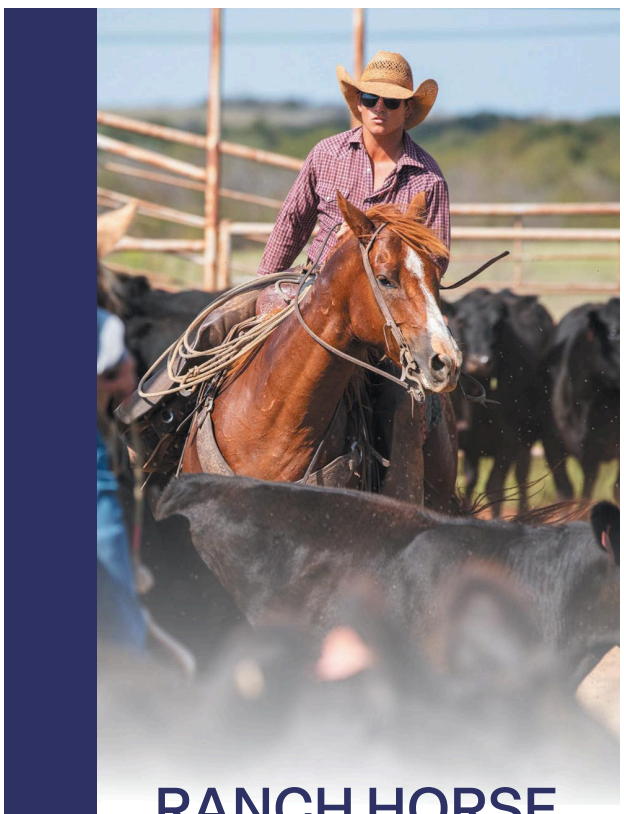
Some messaging to remember

• It is important to recognize the contributions from agriculture and the beef industry span beyond a single day. Rather, we recognize how important beef production is on an ongoing basis to our communities, environment and economy.

• Colorado agriculture and beef production are a dynamic, strong and principal part of Colorado's past, present and future. Colorado beef fuels our economy and our bodies. Additionally, not only have beef producers increased sustainability 5% in the last six years, but they also contribute invaluable benefits such as wildlife habitat, open space and recreational opportunities on over half of Colorado's lands.

• The goal of this day is to not only celebrate our industries but pay it forward and continue our fight to end food insecurity in Colorado and support efforts to promote and protect agriculture and food production in our state.

• If you are looking for some facts, figures or information about the beef industry to add to your posts or beef up your messaging, a great resource for facts about the beef industry is betterwithbeef.org and www.cobeef.com. — **CCA**



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STORY SHORTS

Meat purchases above 2019 levels

According to the 18th annual Power of Meat report released on March 7, shoppers spend more than $15 in the meat department per trip and average nearly one trip to the meat department per week—up nearly 5% since 2019. While the report shows half of consumers buy their meat at supermarkets, they are also turning to supercenters (35%), club stores (4%) and hard discounters (5%) for their meat purchases. Two-thirds have changed the type, cut and brand of meat to save money, 42% buy only the amount needed and 35% stock up when meat is on sale. Of the 33% of Americans who said they want to eat less meat or chicken, 52% cite cost as the reason (up from 16% in 2020). Despite rising food costs, the volume of meat purchased was down 2.5% from 2021 levels. "Meat continues to meet the needs of American families across a wide range of priorities and preferences," said Julie Anna Potts, president and CEO of the North American Meat Institute (NAMI). The report is conducted annually by NAMI and the Food Industry Association.

Gene-edited pig resistant to PRRS

Acceligen, a precision breeding company, announced its successful breeding of gene-edited pigs with resistance to porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS). PRRS affects pigs' health, wellness and productivity and causes an estimated $500 million in losses to the industry. Acceligen used protein modifications developed by Kansas State University to breed pigs naturally resistant to PRRS. According to Acceligen, breeding pigs resistant to PRRS may reduce the environmental impact of pork production by improving efficiency. "This is an exciting time to be at the forefront of this impactful breeding application in sustainable agriculture," said Tad Sonstegard, CEO of Acceligen. "Our goal is to use the best tools for breeding and selection to create a better future for animals, farmers, consumers and the environment. Gene-editing is one of the most powerful breeding tools that allows us to address some of the biggest challenges facing the pork industry and to create a more sustainable and ethical food system."

Hawaii could expand deer processing

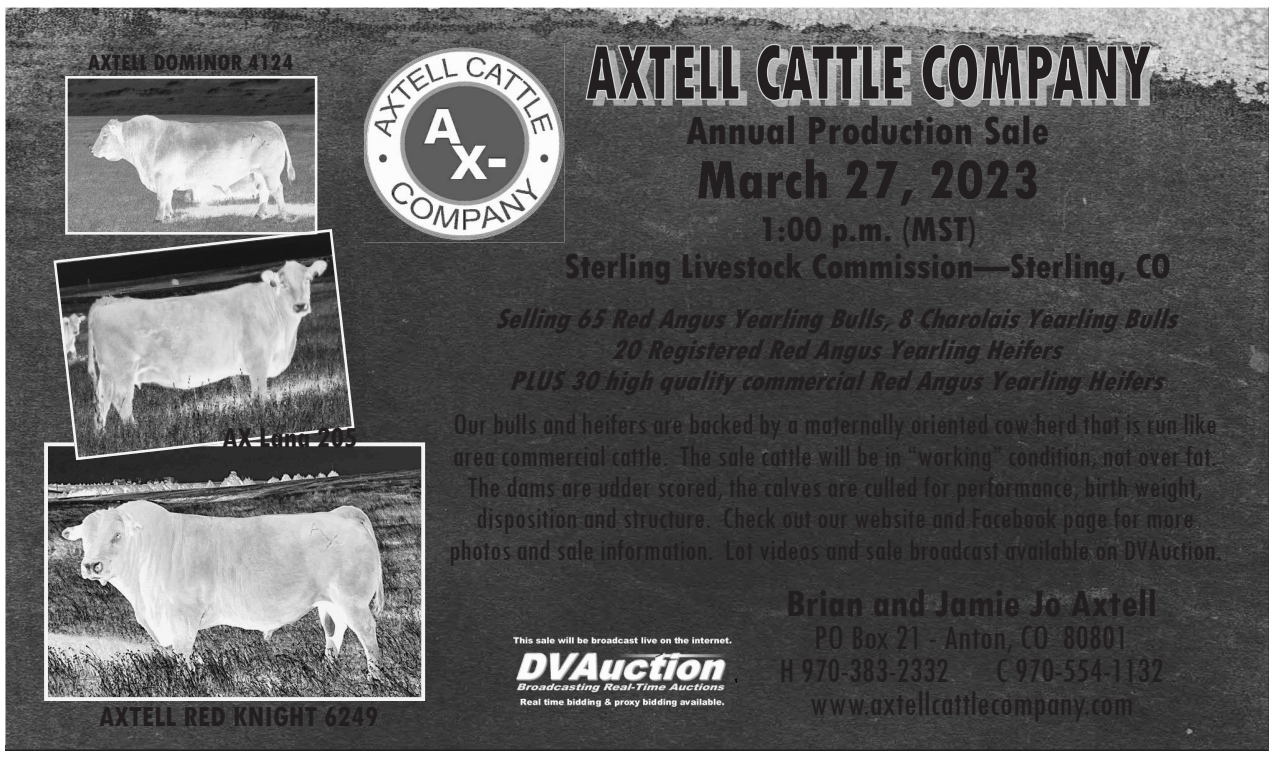
After an uptick in the axis deer population in Maui County, HI, Senate Bill 1486 SD1 could be a solution to control the population. The bill would expand the state's meat processing and distribution capacity to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services. Maui County councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura told local news outlet KITV4, "It's just going to open the door to really mitigate the overpopulation of deer, we need to bring the numbers down and it's a food source." Sugimura continued that passing the law could help other industries and those in need. As of *WLJ* press time, the bill had moved to the House. A House version of the bill (House Bill 606 HD1) has moved to the Senate.

Antimicrobial resistance gene found

Researchers at the University of Saskatchewan discovered a gene in antimicrobial resistance that encodes for an enzyme named EstT. The enzyme can "turn off" or inactivate macrolides, a class of antibiotic drugs commonly used to treat disease in cattle and other livestock. Tylosin, tilmicosin and tildipirosin are some antibiotics classed as macrolides. They are used to treat illnesses in cattle, such as bovine respiratory disease and liver abscesses, as well as other diseases in livestock and companion animals. The research team, led by assistant professor Dr. Tony Ruzzini and in collaboration with Dr. Murray Jelinski, previously identified this gene commonly found in many animal pathogens and their microbiomes, but its purpose remained a mystery. Ruzzini said his team found the gene in a cluster with three other antimicrobial resistance genes. After identifying the gene, they cloned it and tested it against a panel of antibiotic drugs from different classes. Ruzzini added that his research team is continuing to learn more about how EstT works.

$89 million allocated for processing

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the Biden administration is investing $89 million for the startup and expansion of independent meat processors. USDA also announced the initial steps the department is taking to create a more competitive marketplace for seeds and other agricultural inputs. USDA is providing grants under the Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program to increase available financing for independent processors, alleviate bottlenecks, and create opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs in rural communities. USDA is investing in Alabama, Georgia, Maine, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota. Among the projects are Lewis and Clark Development Group, Mandan, ND, which is receiving $5 million to support the expansion of meat and poultry processing.



COMING EVENTS

(Send calendar of events information to editorial@wlj.net.)

March 27-29 – The American Sheep Industry Association's Spring Trip to Washington, D.C., is set for March 27-29. Sheep producers from state and national associations across the U.S. will visit the nation's capital to meet with their congressional delegations on issues of interest to the industry. Producers interested in joining the trip should contact their state sheep association executive, or Peter Orwick at peter@sheepusa.org.

April 24-25 – The Public Lands Council's 2023 Legislative Conference will be held in-person in Washington, D.C. Attendees will hear from congressional members, policy experts, scientists, partner group representatives and other industry professionals dedicated to Western lands, waters and perspectives. Details: publiclandscouncil.org/2023-legislative-conference.

May 4-5 – The 2023 Animal Agriculture Alliance's Stakeholders Summit is slated for May 4-5 in Arlington, VA. Full agenda and registration: whova.com/portal/registration/annua5_202305.

May 21-27 – Save the date for the Nebraska Sandhills Ranch Tour, presented by Western Livestock Journal. For more details, visit www.wljtours.com or contact Devin Murnin at 406-696-1502.

May 24-26 – The California Cattlemen's Association Feeder Council and Arizona Cattle Feeders Association Meeting will be held in San Diego, CA, at the Marriott Marquis. Registration: calcattlemen.org/event/2023-feeder-meeting.

July 5-8 – The Wolf Point Wild Horse Stampede will celebrate its 100th year in Wolf Point, MT. Tickets are available after June 21 by calling 406-653-1770.

Jan. 21-Feb. 2, 2024 – Mark your calendars for the 2024 Cattle Industry Convention & National Cattlemen's Beef Association Trade Show, which is heading to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL. Additional information will be available soon at convention.ncba.org.

MT introduces resolution to stop reintroduction

BISON
(from page 1)

conservation partners to increase quarantine capacity for bison in Yellowstone National Park to undergo disease testing for transfer of bison to Tribes.

The order also directs the Bureau of Indian Affairs to create a Bison Management Apprenticeship program for training and knowledge sharing for Tribes with bison on their lands. The apprenticeship program will include opportunities for Tribal youth to work at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service refuges and national parks and learn a variety of bison management practices.

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland from the Laguna Pueblo said in a statement, "American bison is inextricably intertwined with Indigenous culture, grassland ecology and American history.

"Significant work remains to not only ensure that bison will remain a viable species but also to restore grassland ecosystems, strengthen rural economies dependent on grassland health and provide for the return of bison to Tribally owned and ancestral lands," Haaland said.

According to the DOI, American bison once numbered 60 million in North America and were driven to near extinction in the 19th century through hunting. In the 20th century, conservation and restoration efforts led by former President Theodore Roosevelt's support increased bison numbers from 500 to 15,000 head. DOI currently manages 11,000 bison in herds across 4.6 million acres of U.S. public lands in 12 states. The Yellowstone National Park herd is the largest, with approximately 4,800 animals.

Jim Magagna, executive vice president of Wyoming Stock Growers Association, told *WLJ* the organization is opposed and concerned about the announced expansion. Magagna raised concerns about whether the bison would be allowed to roam on public lands and potentially onto private lands. Magagna also posed the question of whether grazing allotments would be canceled or reduced in areas where the bison are introduced and whether ranchers would be compensated for injured livestock. He also expressed concern about testing protocols to ensure bison are free from brucellosis, as well as other transmissible diseases.

Sigrid Johannes, director of the Public Lands Council and director of government affairs for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, told *WLJ* the announcement is an opportunity for DOI to build on the work ranchers are doing to restore the prairie grassland ecosystem, but stopping the work ranchers are doing "won't serve anyone's goals for the land."

"Thousands of the rural economies that Haaland referenced depend on cattle grazing for their livelihood, and those livelihoods are actively threatened by brucellosis and other bison-borne diseases," Johannes said. "We recommend that the Bison Working Group consult the science and acknowledge that cattle and sheep fill the same vital ecological role today that bison herds played before their decline more than a century ago. Cattle alone provide more than $24 billion in ecosystem services nationwide."

The Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT)—an inter-tribal organization representing the interests of the more than 50 Indian Tribes—applauded the announcement.

COLT Chairman Marvin Weatherwax said the order "shows wonderful leadership in prioritizing and funding bison restoration for tribal herds and giving Tribes a seat at the table" for a species "central to Native American culture and our Nation's history."

Weatherwax continued the funding starts to correct the "historical inequity" of a lack of bison funding and puts it on par with funding with "the well-funded fisheries of the Pacific Northwest and Great Lakes."

Funding will be provided with $25 million from the Inflation Reduction Act for bison restoration.

COLT Executive Director O.J. Semans said the Tribes are ready to work with agencies and others "on environmental and agriculture issues to implement Interior's important Inflation Reduction Act investment in our Prairie Grassland ecosystems."

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers President and CEO Land Tawney commended the announcement, noting that most U.S. grasslands have already been eliminated and that grasslands and sagebrush landscapes are critical to a range of wildlife species, including mule deer, pronghorn and upland birds, as well as bison.

"We applaud their commitment and look forward to helping advance the work that will anchor our public lands conservation both immediately and in the longer term," Tawney said in a statement. "In particular, we are excited to work with Tribes, governmental agencies, conservation partners and hunters to restore robust populations of bison on our nation's lands."

The plan to reintroduce bison conflicts with a resolution in Montana opposing bison introduction in the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge in northern Montana. Senate Joint Resolution 14 states Montana has control over wildlife management in its jurisdiction, and placing bison in the refuge would jeopardize livestock grazing and increase disease transmission. The resolution passed in the Montana Senate and moved onto the House.

American Prairie's long-term goal is to piece together a roughly 3.2 million-acre expanse, including the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, and have thousands of bison and other wildlife.

A draft plan from BWG should be completed by Dec. 31. — **Charles Wallace, *WLJ* editor**

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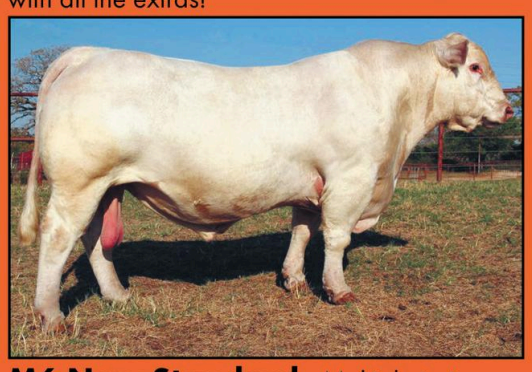

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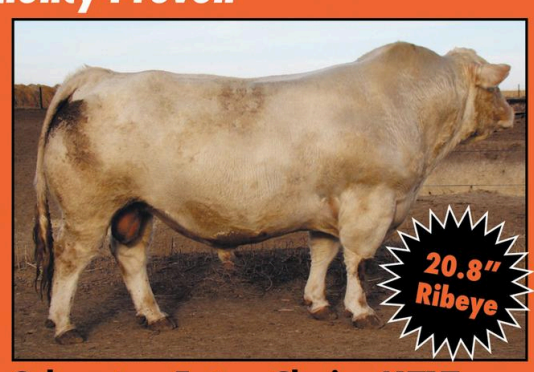

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CA declares six aquifer plans as out of compliance

California water officials delivered a mixed report card in early March on local plans to curb overpumping of groundwater to protect the state's aquifers in critical overdraft.

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) recommended six San Joaquin Valley groundwater sustainability plans for approval but rejected six others as inadequate.

Under the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), local agencies must implement groundwater plans that demonstrate how they intend to balance the state's challenged groundwater supplies within a 20-year timeframe.

DWR said six plans were missing information that the state needs to determine compliance. The department said plans must show a roadmap for how groundwater basins will achieve long-term sustainability by limiting overdraft, land subsidence and impacts to drinking water.

In its technical review, the agency found that sufficient action has not been taken to address one or more deficiencies in the following subbasins: Chowchilla subbasin, Delta-Mendota subbasin, Kaweah subbasin, Kern County subbasin, Tulare Lake subbasin and Tule subbasin.

The inadequate determination triggers the state intervention process, which authorizes the California State Water Resources Control Board to step in to manage the basin.

"All the basins that resubmitted did an extensive amount of work attempting to address the deficiencies," said Paul Gosselin, deputy director of the DWR Sustainable Groundwater Management Office. "It is a complicated act to implement, but we did take an objective look at what they resubmitted.

"Whether plans are approved or inadequate and under state board intervention," he added, "we are looking to have the basins continue with implementation."

Calling passage of SGMA "a seismic shift in California water," California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson said, "It was never going to be easy to transition on a timeline of just 20 years to eliminate an estimated 2.5 million acre-feet of overdraft a year in our most impacted areas of the state.

"This action will trigger a process before the water board that will afford local agencies additional opportunities to address identified problems, regain control of their basins and, hopefully, avoid formal probationary status or the imposition of eventual state interim plans," Johansson said.

Local groundwater sustainability plans, or GSAs, must implement near-term actions, such as expanding monitoring programs, reporting annually on groundwater conditions, implementing aquifer recharge projects and designing allocation programs. Once plans are implemented locally, measures must continue even if basins are under state intervention.

Michael Hagman, executive director of the East Kaweah GSA, one of three GSAs in the Kaweah subbasin, said the local agency accepts the DWR's finding. "The department's decision makes sense, and we are already working on resolution," he said.

"While we fix these issues, we are trying to figure out how we move out of this condition and away from probation or failure (which could lead to a takeover of the GSA)," said Hagman, general manager of Lindmore Irrigation District, a federal water contractor in the Friant Division.

If deficiencies are not remedied within a year, the board, after a subsequent notice and hearing, may develop and adopt an interim plan to manage the basin's groundwater use. An interim plan is a temporary measure to protect groundwater resources in the basin until GSAs are able to manage the basin sustainably.

"There are a number of board decisions that need to be made about how this process will move forward and when," said Natalie Stork, state water board supervising engineering geologist of the groundwater management program. "If the board puts the basin on probation, then it will focus on collecting the information it needs to develop and implement its own plan to manage the basin. During this time, the board will collect data and fees while local agencies work to fix their plans."

DWR recommended the following six basins for approval: Cuyama basin, Eastern San Joaquin subbasin, Kings subbasin, Merced subbasin, Paso Robles subbasin and the Westside subbasin in Fresno and Kings counties. These basins will work with DWR and report on progress in implementing plans and completing any corrective actions.

In response to DWR's recommendation of approval for the plan for the Westside subbasin, Jeff Fortune, president of the Westlands Water District board of directors, said, "This result reflects a great deal of time and dedication from Westlands' staff and board of directors who worked diligently and collaboratively with DWR to build a groundwater sustainability plan that will achieve the Westside Subbasin's sustainability goals."

DWR said the agencies whose plans were recommended for approval conducted critical analysis of groundwater levels, water quality and inter-connected surface waters to develop and refine sustainable groundwater management criteria.

Plans are to be updated over time as new data and information become available and as conditions change in groundwater basins. DWR will review annual reports from local agencies and assess plans every five years to determine whether they are on track to meet sustainability goals.

The California Farm Bureau, Johansson said, will work with state and local agencies, county Farm Bureaus and agricultural groundwater users "on workable solutions to sustain healthy aquifers.

"Our groundwater supplies are critical for California farmers, including vegetable, fruit, nut and dairy producers who account for much of America's food supply," Johansson said. "It is important that California carefully considers solutions that protect both our aquifers and our food production."

Of a total 94 groundwater basins required to submit plans under SGMA, state water officials provided determinations for 24 basins and is reviewing an additional 61 plans from 59 of California's high- and medium-priority basins submitted to DWR in January 2022. DWR said it anticipates issuing determinations for the remaining basins throughout 2023. Critically overdrafted basins each received $7.6 million in grant funding to aid in plan implementation. DWR's LandFlex program, state drought assistance programs and the California Department of Conservation's Multibenefit Land Repurposing program are trying to help critically overdrafted basins reduce their dependence on groundwater.

— Christine Souza, assistant editor of Ag Alert, California Farm Bureau Federation

Environmental stewards to be honored in April

The Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP) will hold a reception and awards ceremony on April 25 in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's (NCBA) annual Spring Legislative Conference. The evening will feature the announcement of the 2022 ESAP national winner from the group of seven regional winners that were recognized during the Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show in New Orleans, LA, in February.

ESAP annually recognizes the outstanding stewardship practices and conservation achievements of U.S. cattle producers from across the nation. Cattlemen and women work every day to protect the environment, improve wildlife habitats and adopt the latest technologies while operating sustainable businesses that support rural communities. As a result of ranchers' commitment to continuous improvement and scientific advancements in beef cattle genetics, nutrition, production practices and biotechnologies, the U.S. is a global leader in sustainable beef production.

"Announcing the national winner at a special ceremony in Washington, D.C., is new to the program. We believe sharing the cattle industry's great stewardship story with thought leaders in our nation's capital helps underscore the serious commitment cattlemen and women have to conserving natural resources and caring for livestock," said NCBA President Todd Wilkinson. "We're proud of the regional winners we recognized during our convention and look forward to celebrating the national winner. These farms and ranches undertake stewardship efforts unique to their environment, landscape and resources. Their desire is to leave the land in better shape for future generations while also inspiring the next generation of land stewards."

The 2022 regional winners are Lamb Farms, Inc., Oakfield, NY; Carter Cattle Company, LLC, Pintlala, AL; Huth Polled Herefords and S&H Livestock Enterprises, LLC, Oakfield, WI; Parks Ranch, Goliad County, TX; Mannix Brothers Ranch, Helmville, MT; Fulstone Ranches, Smith, NV; and Jorgensen Land & Cattle Partnership, Ideal, SD.

Sponsors for the ESAP reception and awards ceremony include Corteva Agriscience, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, McDonalds and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A ticket to the ESAP reception is included with the NCBA Legislative Conference. Registration is now open at ncba.org.

— NCBA

Gift will grow next generation of beef industry leaders

Ron Krutsinger's life was defined by his passion for Nebraska's cattle business. He embraced the freedom of wide open spaces growing up on his family's southwest Nebraska ranch and built a career in the industry by raising, buying and selling cattle.

So when Ron passed away in 2020, his wife, Carol, of Norfolk, NE, decided to honor his legacy by helping to ensure the future of Nebraska's beef industry.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Carol Krutsinger's gift to help develop the next generation of beef industry leaders was made possible by the December sale of her and her late husband's 15,500-acre ranch in Dundy County, NE.

Carol made a $1 million gift to the University of Nebraska Foundation to benefit the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA). The gift to help develop the next generation of beef industry leaders was made possible by the sale in December of the couple's 15,500-acre ranch in Dundy County in southwest Nebraska.

The gift will support three priorities:

- $700,000 to create a permanent endowment to support the Nebraska Beef Industry Scholars Program at UNL, which prepares students to be leaders of the beef industry through an academic minor. The program will be renamed the Krutsinger Beef Industry Scholars Program in honor of Ron and Carol Krutsinger.
- $250,000 to award scholarships to students in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Preference will be given to students who are graduates of high schools from the southwest Nebraska counties of Dundy, Hitchcock, Red Willow, Frontier, Hayes, Chase and Perkins.
- $50,000 to award scholarships to NCTA students. The Krutsinger gift will be matched by other funds to create a $100,000 scholarship fund. NCTA, a two-year technical college in Curtis, prepares students for careers in livestock industry management, animal science, veterinary technology systems and other agriculture-related industries.

"Scholarships are critical for our students to be able to complete their education and prepare for the agricultural workforce," said Larry Gossen, NCTA dean. "Without generous donors and sponsors like Carol Krutsinger, many of our students may not be able to attend college."

A strong work ethic

Ron was born in Benkelman on Aug. 22, 1939, graduating from high school there and learning the strong work ethic of living and working on a family ranch. He moved to Norfolk in 1966 to work for Production Credit Association, an agriculture lender. He fed cattle on the side before purchasing and operating the Fore-Quarters Feedlot from 1972 until 2005.

Carol said her husband of 46 years loved his work with cattle and ranching. Carol, a retired kindergarten teacher in Norfolk, recalled how she met Ron at a party hosted at his home, having been invited by mutual friends. Ron was late arriving because he was out feeding cattle.

"He was a worker and always up for a challenge," she said. "I supported that because I knew he was happy. He told me once that he would never retire."

Ron's longtime bookkeeper, Sheila Dreismeier, described him as someone who did business on a handshake.

"He was a gentle giant," she said. "He was compassionate. He got along with everybody. All the cattlemen respected him and his opinion, and he guided a lot of young people."

Ron died Nov. 15, 2020, at a Norfolk hospital after contracting COVID-19 during the first year of the pandemic.

Carol said that after the unexpected loss of her husband, she decided to sell the Krutsinger family ranch, which had grown from 160 acres to 15,500 acres through land purchases by Ron's late father, Bus, and later by Ron and his late brother, Garry.

Stretching nine miles from north to south, the family had spent many Thanksgiving holidays at the ranch, and Ron enjoyed trout fishing and duck hunting there.

With no children, Carol knew the sprawling ranch was more than she could manage.

Ron attended Colorado State University for one year, then went back home to work on the family ranch. He always wished he had been able to get his degree, Carol said.

"I knew that this was what I wanted to do for Ron," she said.

The Krutsinger Beef Industry Scholars Program is housed in the Department of Animal Science. The program develops students to be leaders of the beef industry through academic coursework, tours of Nebraska cattle operations and the building of relationships with ranchers, cattle feeders, processors and industry leaders.

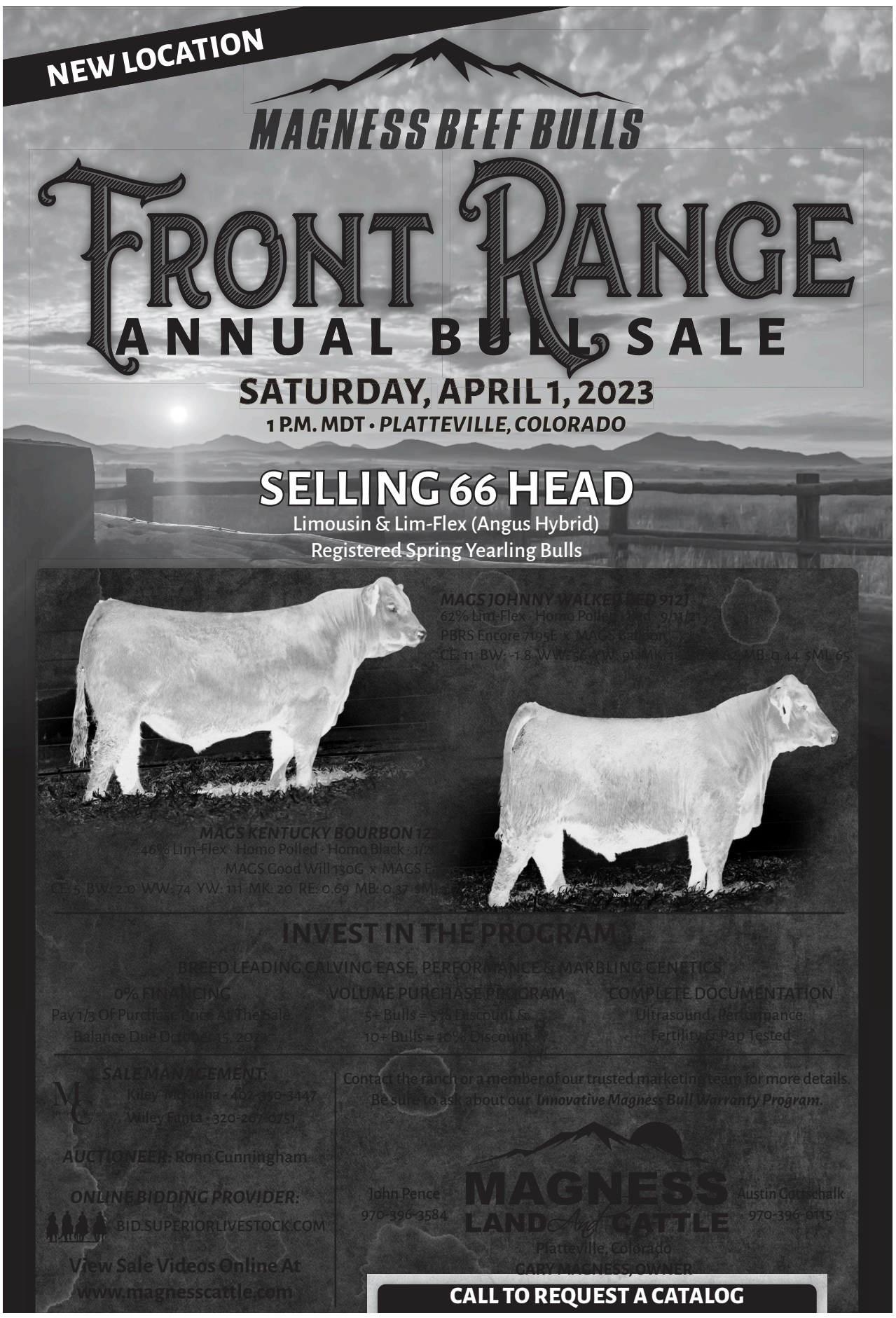
"I cannot express enough gratitude for the gift that Carol Krutsinger has provided in support of our Nebraska Beef Industry Scholars Program," said Thomas E. Burkey, interim head of the department. "Since 2006, this program has leveraged our strengths in beef systems education to provide students with unique opportunities to apply knowledge gained to address current and emerging issues in the beef industry. This generous gift will help us to solidify our commitment to providing opportunities to develop the next generation of beef industry leaders."

Agriculture is the No. 1 industry in Nebraska, and cattle production represents the largest segment of the industry, according to the Nebraska Beef Council.

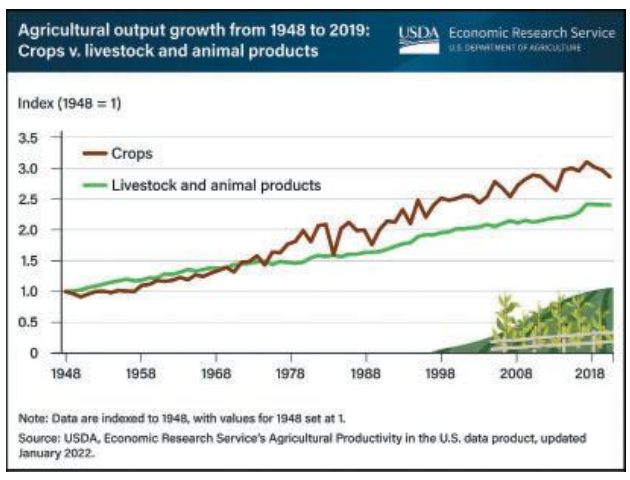
Tyler Perrin is a senior animal science major at Nebraska and a Beef Industry Scholar. Having grown up on his family's farm near Ogallala, NE, he said he wants to work in the beef industry after he graduates in May and eventually own a cow herd. He said his experiences in the program have given him a better understanding of the consumer impacts of cattle production and allowed him to meet people in Nebraska's beef industry.

"It's very beneficial," Perrin said. "I've made a lot of connections through the university, through classes and guest speakers. So later when you go into business with them, you know them and can relate to them on a personal level."

Carol Krutsinger's gift in support of agriculture students is part of "Only in Nebraska: A Campaign for Our University's Future." Announced last fall, the campaign has a goal to raise $3 billion from 150,000 benefactors to support the University of Nebraska. The campaign's biggest priority is students, with more than half the funds dedicated to ensuring a high-quality, affordable education for Nebraska students. For more information, visit onlyinnebraska.org. — **UNL Extension**



Crop production grew faster than livestock production



Between 1948-2019, the volume of crops produced in the U.S. grew 186%, and livestock production grew 140%. USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) researchers classify crop output into six subcategories: food grains, feed crops, oil crops, vegetables and melons, fruits and nuts, and other crops. Of those, production of oil crops increased the most, by more than seven times.

Growth in fruits and nuts ranked second, with production more than doubling. Food grains grew the least, at 78%. Among three categories of livestock and products, poultry and egg production increased the most, by more than seven times. Dairy products grew 132%, and meat animal production grew 92%.

The varying growth rates reflect changes over the past 70 years in consumer demand and preferences, international market demand and technological advancements among products. Overall, crop production is more volatile than livestock production because of weather changes. — **USDA ERS**

Cattle groups mixed on label support

USA PRODUCT
(from page 1)

believing products bearing the label came from animals born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the U.S., USDA said.

Upon USDA's announcement, Canada's federal officials said the country would oppose any propositions from the U.S. to renew a mandatory country-of-origin labeling system for pork and beef. The country said it was concerned about any measures that could disrupt the North American livestock supply chains.

"Canada will work with the U.S. to ensure that new definitions and rules allow farmers, processors and consumers in both countries to continue to benefit from efficient, stable and competitive markets," Canada Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Marie-Claude Bibeau; and Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development Mary Ng said in a statement.

There were mixed reactions from groups within the industry.

"Simply adding born, raised and harvested requirements to an already broken label will fail to deliver additional value to cattle producers and it will undercut true voluntary, market-driven labels that benefit cattle producers," said National Cattlemen's Beef Association Executive Director of Government Affairs Kent Bacus. "We cannot afford to replace one flawed government label with another flawed government label."

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA) said the proposed rule would close the loophole that packers use to "purposefully mask the identity" of commingled beef products.

"In our 2019 petition for rulemaking to FSIS, USCA called out the practice of applying 'Product of the USA' and 'Made in the USA' labeling claims on beef products that the food safety agency itself admitted could have come from other countries," said Justin Tupper, USCA president, in a statement.

He continued that a label reading "Made in the USA" should be from cattle that have only ever been on U.S. soil. "Consumers have the right to know where their food comes from, full stop," Tupper said.

Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF USA) said the group supports the proposed reforms but thinks more can be done.

"It is important to understand that the "Product of USA" label is simply a clarification of a voluntary label," said R-CALF USA President Brett Kenzy. "I fear that it will be used at the convenience of global meatpackers and importers."

Kenzy said the voluntary label will continue the need for purchase of American beef by consumers to be a research project. The group stands firm that legislation must be passed by Congress to "restore the entire truth" to beef consumers.

In 2015, mandatory country-of-origin label rules were repealed to avoid tariffs by Canada and Mexico, which was authorized by the World Trade Organization.

Once the rule is published in the Federal Register, a public commenting period will be open for 60 days. To submit comments, visit regulations.gov and search for docket ID FSIS-2022-0015. Comments may also be mailed to Docket Clerk, USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mailstop 3758, Washington, DC 20250-3700. — **Anna Miller, *WLJ* managing editor**

US seeks GMO corn meeting with Mexico

The U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) is seeking consultation with Mexican authorities on the country's plans to ban genetically engineered corn from human consumption, USTR announced on March 6.

The USTR made the request with the Mexican government under the sanitary and phytosanitary measures chapter of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

"The United States has repeatedly conveyed our serious concerns with Mexico's biotechnology policies and the importance of adopting a science-based approach that complies with its USMCA commitments," Ambassador Katherine Tai said in a news release.

"Mexico's policies threaten to disrupt billions of dollars in agricultural trade and they will stifle the innovation that is necessary to tackle the climate crisis and food security challenges if left unaddressed. We hope these consultations will be productive as we continue to work with Mexico to address these issues."

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's original decree called on the country to phase out the use and importation of genetically engineered corn and other products by Jan. 31, 2024. Mexico then eliminated the ban on imports of corn on livestock feed but proposed to ban biotech corn for human consumption in products such as tortillas and chips.

In a decree issued in February, Mexico repealed Lopez Obrador's original decree from December 2020. Yet, the Mexican government noted, "Mexico is the center of origin of more than 55 races of maize. The food security policy of the Government of Mexico consists of preserving this biocultural heritage. Likewise, the preservation of the agroecological practices of our peasant communities, the milpa and the gastronomic wealth are promoted."

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack said in a statement the U.S. remains "committed to maintaining and strengthening" economic and trade ties with Mexico.

"While we appreciate the sustained, active engagement with our Mexican counterparts at all levels of government, we remain firm in our view that Mexico's current biotechnology trajectory is not grounded in science, which is the foundation of USMCA," he said.

The USMCA allows countries to initiate technical consultations to discuss matters that arise, such as the dispute on genetically modified corn.

The U.S. sent a formal written request for the meeting back in January. According to USTR, Mexico provided a written response on Feb. 14.

"USTR and USDA urge all of the United States' trading partners to follow a science-based approach to biotech products, which help American farmers respond to pressing climate and food security challenges," USTR said in a news release.

"Mexico is a valued trading partner and the United States is committed to working with it to resolve these biotech issues and avoid any disruption in trade in corn or other agricultural products. If these issues are not resolved, we will consider all options, including taking formal steps to enforce U.S. rights under the USMCA."

U.S. Grains Council President and CEO Ryan LeGrand said a consultation is important because Mexico's plans to ban genetically engineered corn from human consumption "undermines" U.S. farmers' access to the Mexican market.

"We have had a long and productive relationship with Mexico," he said in a statement.

"It is our No. 1 market for U.S. corn and we support this action because it will likely be the most expedient way to ensure that positive relationship continues."

Sen. John Boozman (R-AR), ranking member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, said trade agreements are "meaningless" if U.S. trading partners do not abide by them.

"Mexico's attempts to ban U.S. biotech corn is a clear-cut example of a partner going back on its word," Boozman said in a statement.

"We have an obligation to ensure American producers are given the fair access to markets they were promised. Ambassador Katherine Tai and her team ought to be commended for standing up for American farmers and taking the necessary actions to hold Mexico to the agreement they signed."

— Todd Neeley, DTN staff reporter

LEGAL LEDGER

Mexico allows Brazilian beef imports

Mexico announced on March 6 that it would begin allowing Brazilian beef imports into the country for the first time. The country will allow fresh, chilled or frozen bone-in beef imports from Santa Catarina, and aged and boneless cuts from 14 other states. The decision came as Mexico's inflation rate surpasses 8%, and the country looks to "diversify" its food chain. "The importation of meat from Brazil is part of the measures taken to facilitate international food trade and thus diversify the sources of meat supply, thereby contributing to strengthening the Mexican government's policy against inflation and the high cost of basic basket products, in favour of the Mexican population," the Mexican government said in a press release.

Rabbit proposed to be listed under ESA

A group of conservation organizations submitted a petition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently to ask for protection of the pygmy rabbit under the Endangered Species Act. The groups say the rabbit's habitat in Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Nevada, Montana, Colorado, California and Oregon is threatened by fire, livestock grazing, conversion and energy development. The rabbit is the world's smallest, weighing in at about 1 pound, and they live in intact sagebrush with deep soil. The groups claim the rabbit's population has declined by 69% in Wyoming, and the occupancy rates in Utah, Nevada and Idaho are "alarmingly low." Vera Smith, senior federal lands policy analyst with Defenders of Wildlife, said, "We lose more than one million acres of sagebrush every year—habitat that the pygmy rabbit depends on for survival. The Endangered Species Act was made for moments like this; to help focus federal restoration and conservation efforts in the Sagebrush Sea and to give this little rabbit a fighting chance."

Red wolf recovery plan delayed

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is delaying its publication of the final revised red wolf recovery plan. The agency said doing so will ensure it has adequate time to use the results of a forthcoming population viability analysis for informing the final revised recovery plan. The publication date will be moved back to Sept. 29 from Feb. 28. The agency plans to receive the population viability analysis in June and will analyze the results before including additional information into the recovery plan. "The plan will prioritize collaborative conservation by engaging stakeholders in management to mitigate threats to the species on the basis of shared understanding and expectations for the species' recovery," the agency said in a press release. As of February 2023, there were an estimated 19 head of wild red wolves in the range of eastern North Carolina.

Proposal to list smelt found in West Coast

The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service is reopening a public comment period on its October 2022 proposal to list the San Francisco Bay-Delta longfin smelt. The fish species is found along the Pacific Coast, reaching from Northern California to Alaska. In October 2022, the agency found the species warranted listing under the Endangered Species Act due to habitat loss from the long-term reduction and alteration of freshwater flows into the San Francisco Bay Estuary. "Longfin smelt are currently listed as a threatened species under California's Endangered Species Act (ESA), which prohibits unpermitted possession, purchase, sale or take of listed species," the agency said. "However, the state's definition of take does not include harm, which under the federal ESA can include destruction of habitat." The comment period will remain open until March 29. Comments may be submitted at regulations.gov by searching for docket ID FWS-R8-ES-2022-0082.

Conservation funding boost encouraged

Over 100 conservation groups are urging Congress to increase the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's budget for endangered species conservation from $331 million to $841 million. The groups claim the agency currently receives less than half of the funding required to fully implement the Endangered Species Act's mandate to recover listed species. "With time running out, we need our leaders to make bold investments in saving life on earth," said Stephanie Kurose, senior endangered species policy specialist at the Center for Biological Diversity. "There's no better way to honor this landmark law and its five decades of success than by fully funding it." The groups also request $66.3 million for the agency's listing program, three-fold the current allocation. The organizations claim nearly 50 species have been declared exciting while waiting for protections because of funding shortfalls.

SALE REPORTS

SPLIT DIAMOND RANCH ANNUAL ANGUS BULL SALE
March 2, Dillon, MT
100 Older bulls..... $6,138
Auctioneer: Joe Goggins

TOPS: SD Dually 2112, 1/21/22 by DL Dually; to McFarland Livestock, Lemhi, ID, $12,500. SD Ashland 2047, 1/16/22 by G A R Ashland; to LBS Angus, Fortuna, ND, $11,500. SD Ashland 2033, 1/15/22 by G A R Ashland; to Nelson's Spring Creek, Livingston, MT, $10,000. SD Dually 2107, 1/21/22 by DL Dually; to Nelson's Spring Creek, Livingston, MT, $10,000. SD Dually 3188-2193, 2/3/22 by DL Dually; to McFarland Livestock, Lemhi, ID, $9,500. SD Ashland 513-2546, 3/10/22 by G A R Ashland; to McFarland Livestock, Lemhi, ID, $9,500. SD Ashland 513-2528, 3/8/22 by G A R Ashland; to Sentena Ranch, Lima, MT, $9,500. **— DEVIN MURNIN**

3C CATTLE 12TH ANNUAL BULL SALE
March 4, Stevensville, MT
46 Yearling bulls $4,222
45 Commercial open heifers 1,591
Auctioneer: Collin Gibbs

TOPS: 3C Patriarch 2011, 1/21/22 by Tehama Patriarch F028; to McFadgen Angus, Stevensville, MT, $8,500. GC 3C Rawhide 2276, 2/6/22 by Poss Rawhide; to Trevor Motichka, FF Ranch, Polson, MT, $8,500. 3C 406 Stellar 2049, 2/3/22 by Sitz Stellar 726D; to Richard Jackson, Hot Springs, MT, $6,500. 3C National 2093, 2/10/22 by Connealy National 390C; to WTM Inc., Stevensville, MT, $6,250. **— DEVIN MURNIN**

LUCKY 7 ANGUS ANNUAL BULL SALE
March 4, Riverton, WY
257 Older bulls..... $6,895
39 Fall yearling bulls 6,016
52 Bull calves..... 8,802
348 Total registered bulls 7,082
Auctioneers: Lander Nicodemus and Colby Hales

TOPS: Lucky 7 Special Focus 251, 1/27/22 by Lucky 7 Special Focus 448; to Harding Ranch, Meriden, WY, $17,500. Lucky 7 Confidence Plus 1197, 4/25/21 by Sterling Confidence Plus 804; to Harding Ranch, Meriden, WY, $12,500. Lucky 7 Esquire 1078, 4/13/21 by Lucky 7 Esquire 900; to Harding Ranch, Meriden, WY, $12,000. Lucky 7 Special Focus 1091, 3/31/21 by Lucky 7 Special Focus 448; to Tom Porter, Glen Elder, KS, $12,000. Lucky 7 Confidence Plus 244, 2/16/22 by Sterling Confidence Plus 804; to Estill Ranches, Reno, NV, $12,000. **— PETE CROW for DEVIN MURNIN**

REDLAND RED ANGUS ANNUAL BULL SALE
March 4, Hysham, MT
62 Bulls $5,440
5 Registered open heifers 2,400
50 Commercial open heifers 1,700
Auctioneer: Kyle Shobe

TOPS—Bulls: Red Firecracker 276, 2/2/22 by MLK CRK Firecracker 9262; to Beery's Land & Livestock, Vida, MT, $14,000. Red Merlin 232, 1/28/22 by WFL Merlin 018A; to Greenleaf Land & Livestock, Forsyth, MT, $9,750. Red Stockmarket 2074, 2/10/22 by Bieber CL Stockmarket E119; to Gibbs Red Angus, Jordan, MT, $9,500. Red Redemption 254, 1/30/22 by Brown JYJ Redemption Y1334; to Sutherlin Farms Red Angus, Stevensville, MT, $8,750. Red Stockmarket 2095, 2/13/22 by Bieber CL Stockmarket E119; to Greenleaf Land & Livestock, Forsyth, MT, $8,750. Red Studly 221, 1/27/22 by Bieber CL Stockmarket E119; to Sutherlin Farms Red Angus, Stevensville, MT, $8,500. Red 2179, 3/1/22 by DKK Brute 931; to Broken Chain Ranch, Sumatra, MT, $8,250. **Open heifer:** Red Jelly 2190, 3/5/22 by Laubach Jumbo 0012; to Blom Red Angus, Vida, MT, $4,000. **— DEVIN MURNIN**

SUTHERLIN FARMS RED ANGUS ANNUAL PRODUCTION SALE
March 3, Stevensville, MT
76 Yearling bulls $4,457
170 Commercial open heifers 1,549
Auctioneer: Joe Goggins

TOPS: SUTH Free Style 33K, 2/13/22 by SUTH Free Style 38G; to Fischer Red Angus, Harlowton, MT, $9,750. 3C Game Changer 2057, 2/4/22 by GMRA Game Changer 8270F; to Redland Red Angus, Hysham, MT, $8,500. 3C Free Style 2078, 2/7/22 by SUTH Free Style 38G; to Tash Livestock, Polaris, MT, $7,500. SUTH Enterprise K99, 2/24/22 by 9 Mile Enterprise 8180; to Jim and Julie Jorgenson, Broadview, MT, $7,250. 3C Marksman K28, 2/6/22 by Leland Marksman 6629; to Tash Livestock, Polaris, MT, $7,000. **— DEVIN MURNIN**

MCCANN RED ANGUS 3RD ANNUAL BULL SALE
March 6, Billings, MT
72 Yearling bulls $4,222
Auctioneer: Bill Cook

TOPS: McCann Blue Collar 2163, 1/15/22 by Red U2 Blue Collar 295E; to JD Folsom, Rexburg, ID, $10,500. McCann Propulsion 2109, 1/17/22 by BB Propulsion 9096; to Dustin Evans, Whitman, NE, $9,500. McCann Propulsion 2177, 2/10/22 by BB Propulsion 9096; to Bieber Red Angus, Leola, SD, $9,000. McCann Innovation 0103-2053, 1/17/22 by Crump Innovation 0103; to Dustin Evans, Whitman, NE, $8,000. McCann Freightliner 2161, 1/14/22 by NIO Freightliner 0068; to Dustin Evans, Whitman, NE, $7,500. **— DEVIN MURNIN**

APEX ANGUS ANNUAL PRODUCTION SALE
March 7, Valier, MT
107 Yearling bulls $5,929
160 Commercial open heifers 1,583
40 Commercial 10-year-old pairs 2,251
Auctioneer: Roger Jacobs

TOPS: Apex Pacific 442, 1/12/22 by Sterling Pacific 904; to Heuchert's Willow Creek, Hensel, ND, and Wheeler Mountain Angus, Whitehall, MT, $20,000. Apex Gold Rush 922, 1/19/22 by EZAR Gold Rush 6001; to Jay Vasboe, Cut Bank, MT, $15,500. Apex Safe Deposit 12, 1/9/22 by Basin Safe Deposit 9324; to Bobcat Angus, Galata, MT, $11,000. Apex 316 Exclusive 182, 1/10/22 by Musgrave 316 Exclusive; to Math Farms, Whitewater, MT, $10,500. **— DEVIN MURNIN**

SANDHILL RED ANGUS ANNUAL PRODUCTION SALE
March 7, Sidney, MT
74 Bulls $5,091
102 Commercial 3-year-old cows..... 2,739
107 Registered bred heifers 2,294
Auctioneer: Joe Goggins

TOPS: SRJJ Kick-Start 2189, 4/13/22 by DVO Right of First Refusal; to Dvorak Brothers Ranches, Atkinson, NE, $25,000. SRJJ High Time 2121, 4/1/22 by SRJJ High Time 0024; to Clear Bent Bars Inc., Leiter, WY, $15,000. SRJJ High Time 2199, 4/16/22 by SRJJ High Time 0024; to Clear Bent Bars Inc., Leiter, WY, $11,250. SRJJ First Fuel 2041, 3/22/22 by DVO Right of First Refusal; to Howe Red Angus, Moose Jaw, Saskatachwen, CA, $10,000. SRJJ King 2016, 3/16/22 by Red U2 Blue Collar 295E; to Crump Land & Livestock LL, Gillete, WY, $8,500. **— DEVIN MURNIN**

SITZ ANGUS RANCH
March 8, Dillon, MT
241 Yearling bulls $9,317
233 Commercial open heifers 1,803
Auctioneer: Joe Goggins and Greg Goggins

TOPS: Sitz JLS Resilient 747K, 1/10/22 by Sitz Resilient 10208; to T-Bone Angus, Brunswick, NE, $35,000. Sitz JLS Logo 616K, 1/28/22 by Sitz Logo 8148; to Riverbend Ranch, Idaho Falls, ID, $30,000. Sitz Resilient 680K, 1/24/22 by Sitz Resilient 10208; to Harrell Ranch, Baker City, OR, $25,000. Sitz Insurance 692K, 1/22/22 by Hoffman Thedford; to Smith Angus, Mason City, IA, $25,000. Sitz Empower 748K, 1/5/22 by Sitz Intuition; to Riverbend Ranch, Idaho Falls, ID, $22,000. Sitz Resilient 551K, 2/4/24 by Sitz Resilient 10208; to Doug Booth Family Angus, Torrington, WY, $20,000. Sitz Confirmed 396K, 2/20/22 by Spring Cove Crossfire 26H; to Mohnen Angus, White Lake, SD, $19,000. Sitz Envision 741K, 1/14/22 by Sitz Intuition; to SHB Angus, Reardon, WA, $18,000. Sitz TLS Surpass 706K, 1/21/22 by BJ Surpass; to Alta Genetics, Watertown, WI, $18,000. Sitz Intuition 618K, 1/27/22 by Sitz Intuition; to Lund Angus, Gunnison, UT, $17,500. Sitz JLS No Doubt 717K, 1/20/22 by Hoover No Doubt; to Hinman Angus, Malta, MT, $16,000. Sitz Accomplishment 728K, 1/19/22 by Sitz Accomplishment 720F; to Hilltop Angus, Denton, MT, $16,000. **— DEVIN MURNIN**

KEARNS CATTLE CO. 34TH ANNUAL BULL SALE
March 2, Rushville, NE
64 Yearling bulls $8,242
55 Commercial yearling heifers 1,445
Auctioneer: Jered Shipman
Sale Manager: Innovation AgMarketing, LLC

TOPS: KCC1 Right Time 2755K, 2/22/22 by ES Right Time FA110-4; to Hadden Enterprises, Inc., Castana, IA, $28,000. KCC1 Hard Right 2313K, 3/10/22 by OMF Hard Right H21; to Alton Century Farm, Lucknow, Ontario, CA, $20,000. KCC1 Countertime 2089K, 2/18/22 by KCC1 Countertime 872H; to Todd Adamson, Cody, NE, $16,000. KCC1 Unanimous 2336K, 3/13/22 by May-Way United E109; to MM Cattle Co., Mt. Vernon, MO, $14,500. KCC1 Double Up 2094K, 2/28/22 by WHF/JS/CCS Double Up G365; to M & E Cattle Co., LaMoure, ND, $14,500. KCC1 Countertime 2905K, 2/26/22 by KCC1 Countertime 872H; to Raml Cattle Co., Goodwin, SD, $13,500. **— JIM GIES**

TEIXEIRA CATTLE BULL SALE
Feb. 2, Terrebonne, OR
149 Bulls $7,137
Auctioneer: Trent Stewart

TOPS: TEX Pacemaker 1415, 8/5/21 by HPCA Vercingetorix; to TEX Pacemaker 1415 Associates, WY, $20,000. TEX Vercingetorix 1901, 8/4/21 by HPCA Vercingetorix; to True Ranches, Wheatland, WY, $11,000. TEX Playbook 1602, 10/15/21 by TEX Playbook 5437; to OR Buyer, $11,000. TEX Vercingetorix 1431, 8/8/21 by HPCA Vercingetorix; to OR Buyer, $10,000. TEX Vercingetorix 1924, 10/19/21 by HPCA Vercingetorix; to ID Buyer, Grandview, ID, $10,000. **— JARED PATTERSON**

KESSLER ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 21, Milton-Freewater, OR
116 Total registered bulls $6,735
2 Registered females 19,500
Auctioneer: Butch Booker

TOPS—Bulls: Kesslers Freewater K171, 1/29/22 by Sterling Pacific 904; to Krebs Ranch, Gordon, NE, $26,000. Kesslers Umapine K022, 12/30/21 by Heiken Broadview; to MR Angus, Wheatland, WY, $25,000. Kesslers Pacific K070, 1/3/22 by Sterling Pacific 904; to Camas Prairie Angus & Miles Hatter, Grangeville, ID, $15,000. Kesslers Pacific K188, 2/2/22 by Sterling Pacific 904; to Smelser Ranch, Hermiston, OR, $14,000. Kesslers Patriarch K078, 1/4/22 by Tehama Patriarch F028; to MR Angus, Wheatland, WY, $12,500. Kesslers Patriarch K025, 12/30/21 by Tehama Patriarch F028; to MR Angus, Wheatland, WY, $12,000. **Female:** Kesslers Rainbow K089, 1/6/22 by Sterling Pacific 904, 1/2 embryo interest; to Stokrose Farms, Warden, WA, $19,000. **— JARED PATTERSON**

PRICE CATTLE CO. BULL & FEMALE SALE
Feb. 22, Stanfield, OR
41 Angus bulls $6,024
9 Angus open heifers 2,117
57 Composite bulls 5,636
15 Red Angus bulls 5,240
17 Com. heifers 1,725
Auctioneer: Rick Machado
Sale Manager: M3 Marketing

TOPS: MTM Franchise 251, 1/24/22 by 9 Mile Franchise; to Jessup Farms, Wilbur, WA, $10,500. TPC Mr Tahoe C253 2198, 2/3/22 by Tehama Tahoe B767; to OR Buyer, $9,000. PCC Mr Tahoe 0042 2173, 1/27/22 by Tehama Tahoe B767; to Shattuck Ranches, Roosevelt, WA, $8,500. PCC Mr Enhance 0088 2010, 1/8/22 by SydGen Enhance; to Dan L Forsea & Sons Inc., Richland, OR; $8,500. **— JARED PATTERSON**

COWMAN'S KIND BAR 6 CHAROLAIS BULL SALE
Feb. 24, Madras, OR
Auctioneer: Dennis Metzger
99 Charolais bulls..... $4,391

TOPS: Mr Bar Six J069, 8/29/21 by Bar Six G040; to Cardinal Charolais, CO, $10,000. Mr Bar Six J104, 9/25/21 by WCR Leading Prime 0303 Polled; to Kerley Ranches, OR, $7,250. Mr Bar Six J031, 8/5/21 by WCR Ledger Bingo 6139; to Wallace Ranches, Ellensburg, WA, $7,000. Mr Bar Six J115, 8/15/21 by VVCR New Gridmaker 5109; to Kerley Ranches, OR, $7,000. **— JARED PATTERSON**

BAKER ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 25, Vale, OR
124 Angus bulls $6,224
14 SimAngus bulls 5,268
25 Open Angus heifers 1,767
Auctioneer: Rick Machado
Sale Manager: M3 Marketing

TOPS: MCC 6833 Enforcer, 9/16/21 by S S Enforcer E812; to Ashley Robertson, Vale, OR, $13,000. Baker Niagara 437 6795, 9/4/21 by D R Niagara E437; to Wyatt Ranch, OR, $10,250. Baker Enhance 7075, 9/23/21 by SydGen Enhance; to Gary Bloomer, OR, $9,250. MCC 6917 Enhance, 9/7/21 by SydGen Enhance; to Canyon Cattle Co., White Bird, ID, $9,250. Baker Legend 6861, 9/24/21 by Stokrose Legendary G564; to Canyon Cattle Co., White Bird, ID, $9,250. **— JARED PATTERSON**

BUCHANAN ANGUS BULL SALE
Feb. 26, Klamath Falls, OR
55 Bulls $7,011
6 Open heifers..... 4,292
Auctioneer: Butch Booker
Sale Manager: M3 Marketing

TOPS—Bulls: Algoma Gold Masterpiece B578, 12/22/21 by Poss Rawhide; to Camas Prairie Angus, Grangeville, ID, $11,000. Algoma Golden Idol B576, 12/22/21 by DB Iconic G95; to Grand View Angus, Klamath Falls, OR, $10,500. Algoma Premium Gold B615, 12/27/21 by DB Iconic G95; to Rick & Linda Anderson, Eagle Point, OR, $9,750. Algoma Goldstone B555, 12/17/21 by Tehama Tahoe B767; to Nor Cal Land & Cattle, CA, $9,000. **Open heifer:** Algoma Onyx Queen B642, 1/12/22 by Tehama Tahoe B767; to Cannon Angus, Preston, ID, $8,000. **— JARED PATTERSON**

(Editor's note: The March 6 issue of WLJ sale reports incorrectly reported the name for Ox Bow Ranch Angus.) We apologize and regret the error.)

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- Feb. 9, 2022 RAAA Newsletter, Tom Brink, CEO RAAA

	ProS	HB	STAY
EPD	150	113	25
Top%	2	1	1

FERTILITY: AVERAGE SEMEN SCORES 2022 SALE BULLS
MOTILITY - 86.8%
MORPHOLOGY - 87.4%

SALE BULL SAMPLING = NATURAL GROWTH

SIRE #	BULL #	DOB	BW	205 AWW	STAY	DAM MPPA
KRP MAKE A MILL 2054 #1546984	#4525905	4/24/21	80	744	26	100
KRP OLY T'S ANSWER 8689 #3984648	#4526189	4/18/21	75	813	22	105
KRP KANYON MAKER 3853 #1622622	#4525957	4/21/21	76	744	23	99
KRP EPIC WANDER 6407 # 3564494	#4526019	4/16/21	78	717	20	101
KRP HOLY PAY DAY 8221 #3984374	#4525997	4/18/21	75	701	24	100
KRP OLY'S WANDER 7500 #3783603	#4525853	4/29/21	81	746	23	101
BUF CRK THE RIGHT KIND U199 #1260155	#4526235	4/05/21	72	712	18	100
RED U2 MALBEC 195D #3721545	#4526251	3/29/21	75	713	19	100
BUF CRK FINAL ANSWER W004 #1329487	#4526233	3/30/21	74	710	25	101
KRP EPIC KAN ANSWER 9689 #4172818	#4526093	4/15/21	72	733	23	103
KRP DOK KANYON BRITE 7359 #3783459	#4526095	4/28/21	69	768	24	103

US beef industry showcased to Japanese trade delegation

The Colorado Beef Council (CBC) recently helped engage a Japanese trade delegation representing Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) on the U.S. beef industry's approach to beef marketing, preparation and trade. The two-day program, hosted by Colorado State University's (CSU) Center for Trade Excellence, highlighted Colorado as a focal point for international marketing of U.S. beef.

"This was a great opportunity to share the beef industry's story with representatives and decision makers of one of the top U.S. export markets," explained CBC Chair John Scanga, Ph.D.

CBC collaborated with state and national partners to help share that story with Japanese delegates. During informational sessions, Todd Inglee, CBC executive director, explained the role of the Beef Checkoff and its use in beef promotion both domestically and internationally. Inglee highlighted Colorado-specific projects that have made an impact for the state's beef consumers.

"I appreciated the opportunity to share how the U.S. beef industry markets its product domestically, and highlight some of the effective programs the Colorado Beef Council has conducted to consumers throughout the state," said Inglee. "The Japanese delegates communicated the value of an industry-led promotion program like the Beef Checkoff, and they admire the results we've shown over the last 35 years."

Beyond Colorado-specific initiatives, Cattlemen's Beef Board CEO Greg Hanes expanded Checkoff conversations, discussing international beef marketing programs. To conclude the event, Chef Jason Morse of 5280 Culinary, demonstrated merchandising and beef preparation in the Terra test kitchen on the CSU SPUR campus in Denver, CO.

Colorado served as an exceptional model for showcasing American beef. While learning about U.S. beef production, domestic and international marketing programs, as well as American beef cooking techniques, the Japanese delegates not only visited CSU's SPUR campus but also toured CSU's Global Food Innovation Center, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (as a contractor to the national Beef Checkoff) and Colorado Premium, all located along Colorado's Front Range.

As CBC continues to work for Colorado's beef industry to increase demand and consumer confidence, collaboration on events that influence both domestic and international beef marketing is key to continually improving the Beef Checkoff's return on investment. The ability to keep Colorado front and center for the Japan MAFF delegation was an important step toward achieving that mission.

"These delegates represent very sophisticated marketing programs in Japan," Scanga said. "It's important that we take advantage of these types of opportunities to communicate the value U.S. beef brings to the table." — **CBC**

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Mixing alfalfa and grass mixtures

Interseeding cool-season perennial grasses into older alfalfa stands has been a good option to increase the productivity of that field. If planning a new alfalfa seeding this year, using a grass and alfalfa mixture can also have some advantages.

If you regularly feed more than 5 or 6 pounds of alfalfa per day to stock cows during winter, they probably are getting way more than enough protein, but maybe not enough total digestible nutrients (TDN), or energy. Mixing grass with alfalfa usually lowers the protein, but slightly increases the TDN content of hay. So, your cows actually could receive a more balanced diet. Also, if you sometimes graze your hay fields, grass will reduce the risk of bloat.

In the field, grass can grow in areas where alfalfa is not well-adapted or fill in spots as alfalfa dies out. This is better than having weeds invade bare areas. Grass-alfalfa mixtures often dry out more rapidly after cutting than pure alfalfa so you might get more hay made without rain damage. And if it does rain, grass sheds rain well so the mixture usually suffers less injury, both in the windrow and in the bale.

Yield-wise, protein yield may be less with the mix, but total tonnage usually is about the same or higher than pure stands. Most of the grass yield will come at first cut, so regrowth will be mostly alfalfa. Selling a mixture can be more difficult, though, because dairies prefer pure alfalfa, and grass is more difficult to grind.

Orchardgrass is a top choice for seeding with alfalfa, but other grasses like smooth brome, meadow brome, festulolium or wheatgrasses will work as well. The seeding rate of the grasses will vary depending on the species that is used and what proportion of grass and alfalfa is desired. — **Jerry Volesky, Nebraska Extension educator**

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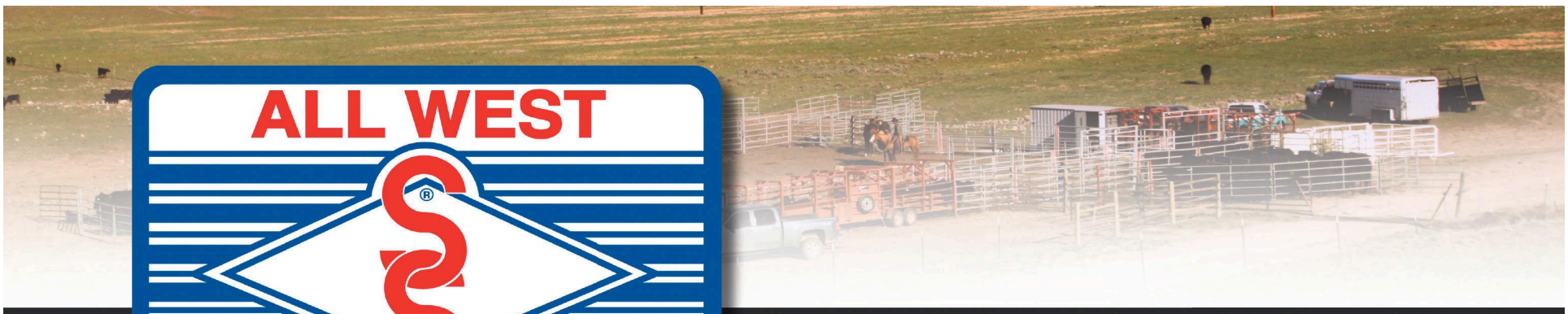

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AI and Genetics special feature

Causes of retained placentas in beef cattle

Retention of fetal membranes, or a retained placenta, in cows is usually defined as failure to expel fetal membranes within 24 hours after parturition. Normally the expulsion occurs within eight hours after delivery of the calf. The placenta is retained when the cotyledons on the placenta do not detach from the caruncles on the uterus during parturition. Although retained placenta is rare in most cow herds, this year more producers are seeing a higher incidence of this problem.

Retained placenta creates the potential for problems. It hangs from the vulva, which permits manure and microorganisms from the manure into the uterus. When the cow lays down in dirt or mud, which is loaded with bacteria, it permits bacteria to cause infection in the uterus and can have serious negative consequences. Infection in the uterus can cause the cow to become ill (fever, weight loss, etc.).

In severe cases of infection, the cow can actually die. When the uterus becomes infected and inflamed, it takes longer for the cow to clean and be ready for the next breeding season. Retained placentas can result in delayed rebreeding or cows coming up open at the end of breeding season. Bottomline: Retained placentas jeopardize reproductive efficiency and can rob operations of profit potential.

What follows is a list of the typical causes of retained placenta.

• Dystocia, as a result of too large of a calf, twins or abnormal presentation of the fetus.

• Poor nutrition. Inadequate consumption of energy or protein during pregnancy can result in thin cows. Dietary deficiency of vitamin A, selenium, iodine or vitamin E have been linked to retained placenta. Retained placenta is most often associated with nutrition, in particular, low levels of vitamin A or the mineral selenium.

• Stress, obesity and genetics can play a role.

• Infectious diseases like brucellosis, leptospirosis, infectious bovine rhinotracheitis or bovine viral diarrhea.

What are the best management practices to prevent retained placenta? Over time, proper nutrition, herd health and mineral supplementation should solve most of the problems. If not, consult your veterinarian.

Why are we potentially seeing more retained placentas this year? Many operations have been feeding "non-traditional" hays over the past several months, which may not be very green or leafy. Typically the best source of vitamin A for cattle is green, leafy forage. A good quality, free-choice mineral supplement containing selenium is advised. Cows and heifers in body condition scores of 5-6 at calving time is advised. If you are dealing with sick cows as a result of retained placentas, consult your veterinarian for best treatment options. — **Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**

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CATTLE: From 1-2 years ..... 1 mL/per 150 lbs. bodyweight
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PRECAUTION:
Selenium and copper are toxic if administered in excess.
Always follow recommended label dose. Do not overdose.
It is recommended that accurate body weight is determined prior to treatment.
Do not use concurrently with other injectable selenium and copper products.
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Do not use in emaciated cattle with a BCS of 1 in dairy or 1-3 in beef.
Consult your veterinarian.

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Slight local reaction may occur for about 30 seconds after injection. A slight swelling may be observed at injection site for a few days after administration. Use standard aseptic procedures during administration of injections to reduce the risk of injection site abscesses or lesions.

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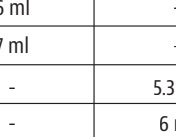

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SUPPLEMENTATION PROGRAM	
BULLS	3 times per year
BEEF COWS	4 weeks before breeding 4 weeks before calving
DAIRY COWS	4 weeks before calving 4 weeks before insemination at dry-off
CALVES	at birth at 3 months and/or weaning
HEIFERS	every 3 months – especially 4 weeks before breeding
(program gives planned dates that can be varied to suit management programs)	

DOSAGE TABLE

ANIMAL WEIGHT (lbs)	CALVES UP TO 1 YEAR 1 ml/100 lb BW	CATTLE 1 - 2 YEARS 1 ml/150 lb BW	CATTLE > 2 YEARS 1 ml/200 lb BW
50	0.5 ml	-	-
100	1 ml	-	-
150	1.5 ml	-	-
200	2 ml	-	-
300	3 ml	-	-
400	4 ml	-	-
500	5 ml	-	-
600	6 ml	-	-
700	7 ml	-	-
800	-	5.3 ml	-
900	-	6 ml	-
1000	-	6.6 ml	5 ml
1100	-	-	5.5 ml
1200	-	-	6 ml
1300	-	-	6.5 ml
1400	-	-	7 ml

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AI and Genetics special feature

Schedule early BSEs for bulls due to extreme winter conditions

Much of the Great Plains has experienced above-normal snowfall coupled with extremely cold temperatures and high winds resulting in -20 to -60 F wind chills this winter. Extreme cold can result in frostbite to extremities in cattle including the testicles, which in turn can have a negative impact on spermatogenesis.

Routinely having a veterinarian perform a breeding soundness exam (BSE) 4-6 weeks prior to the breeding season on all bulls scheduled to be turned out with cows is a good idea. In light of weather events this winter, producers may want to schedule the exams earlier than normal so any bulls the veterinarian deems below acceptable could be scheduled for a re-test, and plans could still be made to replace any bulls that do not pass and are not expected to pass a re-test, prior to the breeding season.

Infertile bulls or bulls with poor-quality semen can cause producers to have an increased number of open cows and/or a reduction in the number of calves born early in the calving season.

Spermatogenesis (sperm production) takes 61 days to complete. Conditions during that time such as extreme temperatures, illness, body condition, or poor nutrition can all impact the quality of the semen produced. Therefore, if the bull still has the capacity to produce sperm, improved conditions later in the spring may subsequently improve bull fertility. If irreparable damage was done during the winter weather, the bull will need to be replaced.

The NebGuide G2332 Breeding Bull Management (unl.edu) has helpful information on managing bulls year-round. In the winter, providing a windbreak, hay or crop residue bales for bedding, and a balanced diet can help prevent loss of fertility. The aforementioned NebGuide has example diets for bull maintenance, however, producers can also contact University of Nebraska-Lincoln beef Extension personnel for assistance with ration balancing.

Consider opportunities to test bulls earlier than normal by coupling this with scheduled visits the vet already plans to make such as pregnancy diagnosis of fall cows or routine brucellosis vaccinations for replacement heifers. Knowing how the bulls test well ahead of the breeding season will give producers more options for improving semen quality or making replacement decisions. — **Karla H. Wilke, UNL cow-calf systems and stocker management; and Hannah Smith, Nebraska Extension beef systems Extension educator**

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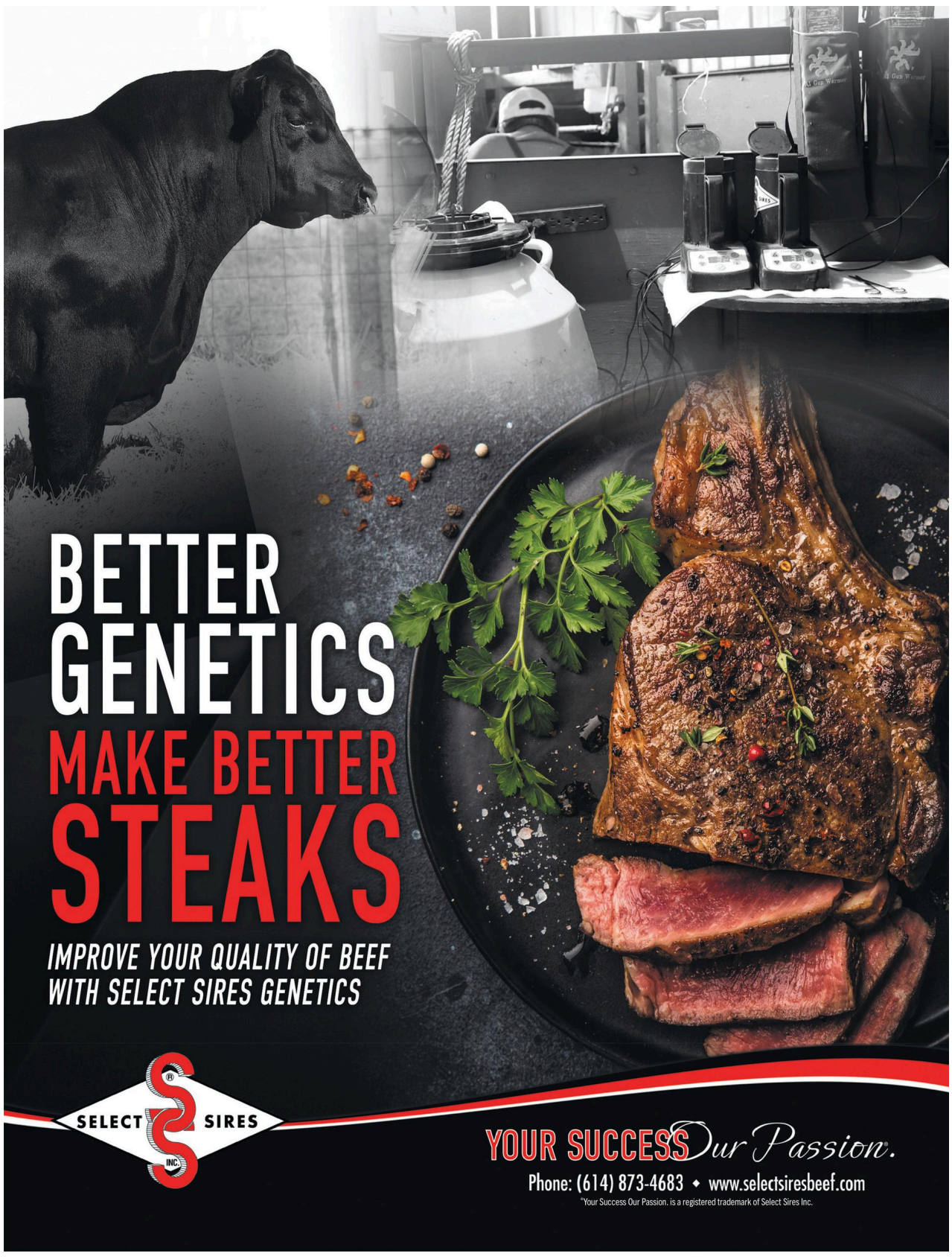

AI and Genetics special feature

The use of AI in a commercial breeding herd

AI has been a standard breeding practice in purebred cattle herds for many years. There are also viable reasons to use AI in a commercial herd as well. Some of these reasons include: the use of genetics is not usually available on a local basis; the production of replacement heifers with superior genetics; coupled with estrus synchronization, consolidation of the calving season; the need for fewer bulls in the breeding season; higher growth performance and calf value; and the production of calves for specialty markets such as club calves.

Bull studs have a wide variety of bulls available for AI use. Most breeding and herd improvement objectives can be matched with bulls that are available. This can include traits ranging from weaning weight, milk production, carcass traits, docility and others. These bulls can also provide outcross or crossbred genetics that may not be available locally.

A major reason to use AI in the commercial herd is the production of replacement heifers. Generally, a within-herd selection program for replacements will be relegated to the progeny of just a few cows in order to make any maternal improvement in the herd. Heifers selected from across the herd will retain little more than average performance. With AI use, sires can be selected specifically for maternal traits such as milk production, calving ease, birth weight, docility and others to provide maternal improvement. The use of EPDs and other selection tools also provides the advantage of simultaneously improving growth, carcass traits and other factors with careful sire selection.

Crossbreeding programs can utilize AI to capture additional heterosis or in the production of replacement females in a terminal sire program. For example, two breeding herds would normally be needed for a crossbreeding program with a two-breed crossbred cow (one herd to produce these replacements) and a second herd bred to terminal sires. The use of an AI program could eliminate the herd used to produce replacements. Reciprocally, the use of AI for a terminal sire would replace this breeding herd, while replacements could be generated by live matings. Traits of economic and herd importance could then be more effectively targeted.

Numerous estrus synchronization (ES) protocols are now available. These programs have been refined and provide the potential for being highly successful to reduce the labor of estrus detection and consolidation of AI activity. An advantage for the commercial herd is that the calving season may be more concentrated, reduce observation at calving time and provide a more uniformly-aged calf crop to assist in weaning and marketing management. However, the use of AI and ES is not without additional cost.

Recall there is variability in the rate of estrus and the pregnancy rate across farms. Nutrition, health, general management, semen management and technician proficiency will significantly affect the results of an AI program. In general, it will cost about $100 in many cases to produce an AI calf. Simply from a production standpoint, about 50-60 pounds of additional weaning weight for steer calves or as little as 10 extra lbs. of weaning weight per year for the life of a replacement heifer from the AI sire will cover the cost. Any additional advantages from crossbreeding heterosis, calving ease or milk production are also captured.

Estrous synchronization itself can also enable you to potentially have higher returns on your investment. Not only is there a performance advantage found in AI-sired offspring, but more calves being older at weaning will also allow for more revenue at marketing. This allows you to capture the double benefit of incorporating AI and ES programs in your operation. In addition, calves should be more uniform in weight allowing for marketing advantage. It is well documented that larger groups at auction bring additional premiums. A larger number of older calves that have a performance advantage will have group marketing power.

Timed AI (TAI) is a procedure when synchronization is coupled with breeding with no observation of the cattle for signs of estrus. Cattle are simply run through the chute at the appointed time and bred. The refinement of ES protocols has made this process available. With the Pennsylvania Heifer Development program over two years, we could consistently achieve 66% pregnancy rates to TAI. Other reports have shown there is normal variability across farms (40-80% pregnancy rates). Provided the ES protocol has been administered correctly, an advantage for TAI is getting some cows and heifers bred than show no signs of estrus from observation.

Any cows or heifers that get bred by AI do not require a bull. Bulls are generally one of the cheapest and best investments in a commercial cow herd, but an effective AI program can easily reduce bull needs in half offsetting the investment of AI.

Sexed semen is now widely available for AI programs. This technology provides a significant advantage for the production of replacement heifers or for production of club calves. However, sexed semen is more costly, so the expertise and effective administration of AI and ES programs are magnified. In addition, research reported several studies with use of sexed semen in beef heifers and cows indicated pregnancy rates are 10-20% lower with sexed semen compared to conventional semen. In general, the research indicated the major AI studs report a 10-15% reduction in pregnancy rates to sexed semen compared to conventional semen. The high cost of sorting the semen by sex, the loss of 50% of an ejaculate when sorting, and a significantly lower number of viable sperm in a straw of semen result in higher cost and lower returns. — **Pennsylvania State University**

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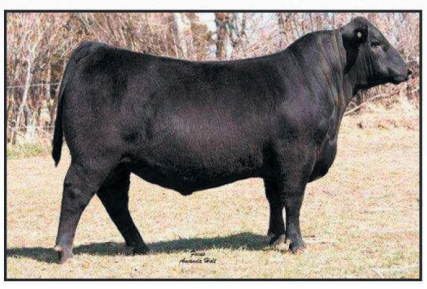

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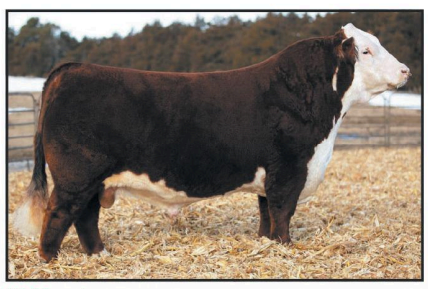

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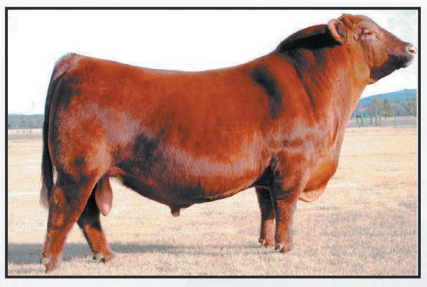

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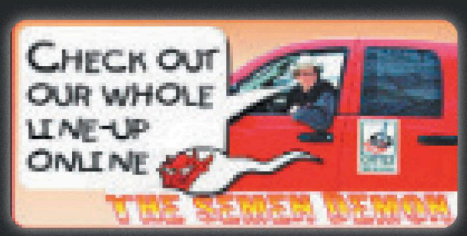

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AI and Genetics
special feature

Prepare for the AI breeding season

According to a National Animal Health Monitoring System survey, 84.85% of operations utilize natural service only and 10.3% utilize AI and exposure to bulls. The implementation of estrous synchronization has the potential to shorten your calving window, concentrate labor, allow for more uniform management of cows and create a more uniform calf crop. AI allows producers to advance the genetic merit of their herd, reduce the number of bulls used during the breeding season, increase weaning weights and when combined with estrous synchronization, shorten the calving season.

There are a few things we need to be thinking about to prepare our cows for the breeding season and to have successful AI rates. These management options would include cows being in a positive plane of nutrition, a good yearlong mineral program to meet any deficiencies, cows in 5 to 6 body condition score and taking inventory of your supplies. Furthermore, have conversations with your veterinarian to ensure you have appropriately timed your pre-breeding vaccination program (at least 30 days prior to breeding for successful conception), and it is also a good time to get any synchronization products you may need.

Other things to consider are making sure your working facilities are in good working condition, and that you have accurate records to identify females and record breeding information. In addition, a successful AI program depends on understanding what protocol you are using and following it exactly as it is recommended.

Keep in mind that moving to pasture or transporting cows should be done shortly after breeding (1 to 4 days post AI) or waiting after 35 days. This will help reduce the incidence of early fetal loss, since maternal recognition of pregnancy is established around day 16. When you are transporting or moving a large group of animals, make sure you keep stress, heat and working stress to a minimum.

For those summer calving and breeding herds, it is important to remember that forage may be declining during this critical time.

The goal of estrous synchronization is to bring cows into heat at the same time. If producers decide to use synchronization, understanding how different protocols can fit their operation, goals and facilities will all be important to consider. Perhaps you are wanting to start with a smaller group of animals; synchronization of heifers before the cow herd can be an option to start implementing these reproductive technologies.

Not every producer may know how to AI, so identifying AI technicians or working directly with bull stud/AI companies to help with that process will be important to secure prior to breeding. What supplies do you need to have for AI? Proper equipment and facilities should be used to ensure the safety of the animals and technicians; this includes good working chute(s) and facilities such as a breeding barn, low-stress animal handling, access to warm water, water bath to thaw semen, paper towels, OB sleeves and a person to keep records of cows being bred.

Perhaps you would like to capitalize on having more calves born earlier in the calving season but want to start simple and do not want to deal with the increase in labor, cost and facilities to implement a multiple-day synchronization and AI protocol. A simple, one shot, one time through the chute may be an option, and then use bulls for natural service during the breeding season.

Data from the University of Nebraska reported that heifers born during the first 20 days of the calving season compared to those born later were heavier at weaning, pre-breeding and calving. This, in turn, produced heifers that were more likely to be cycling by the start of the breeding season and more likely to get pregnant. The benefit of conceiving early results in heifers staying in the herd longer, thus increasing profitability.

For an effective breeding season to be successful with synchronization and AI, nutrition, estrous cycle control, female management, proper facilities, labor, and expertise will need to be considered. — **Steve Niemeyer, Nebraska Extension educator; and Kacie McCarthy, University of Nebraska-Lincoln cow-calf specialist**

AI and Genetics special feature

Use correct AI technique for higher success rates

Though AI is common in the cattle industry and often performed by farm managers or employees, it should not be assumed that AI is an easy technique or that all of those performing AI are proficient in the technique. Success rates differ, as can sometimes be evidenced by a difference in conception rates between technicians.

Breeding organizations often offer instruction in AI technique, but the overall quality, intensity of training and specific recommendations may vary considerably among instructional programs. Most agricultural colleges devote significant course time to the technique of AI.

In developing the manual skills needed for insemination, trainees should work with numerous reproductive tracts and receive considerable practice inseminating a variety of live cows. Developing the skill to thread the insemination rod through the cervix should not be the only objective. AI training programs should also emphasize the importance of sanitation and the perfection of skills to consistently identify the proper site of semen deposition and to accurately deposit the semen. In addition, trainees should obtain a good understanding of reproductive anatomy and appreciate the essentials of a sound reproductive management program.

While AI proficiency of professional technicians is monitored by nonreturn rates (calculated by the breeding organizations), the conception rates obtained by farm employees is not always monitored.

In the early days of AI, there was controversy among researchers about the optimum site for semen deposition. A study conducted in Canada provided evidence that fertility was highest when semen was deposited in the uterine body.

Failure to understand the anatomical and functional relationships among the various tissues and organs of the reproductive system may lead to consistent insemination errors. Most AI training schools use excised tracts to illustrate reproductive anatomy. Often the tracts are dissected to allow students to view the interior of the uterus. This is a useful exercise; however, dissection can distort the relationship between various regions. Radiography allows students to view the intact tract and simultaneously observe the interior of the uterine body and horns and, in many cases, the cervical canal.

While palpating the reproductive tract to find the landmarks for insemination, the inseminator usually obtains an idea of the overall size of the reproductive tract. Some inseminators may have the impression that the larger the cervix or the longer the reproductive tract, the larger the uterine body. This assumption is incorrect. Insemination errors can result from such misconceptions about size of the uterine body in relation to the overall size of the reproductive tract.

Here are some important points to remember.

- Ensure that the cow to be bred is truly in heat. Past research studies have indicated that as many as 20% of the cattle inseminated are not in heat.
- Restrain the cow first and then thaw the semen. The restraint area should be familiar to the cow and free of stressful conditions. Unnecessary excitement may interfere with physiological mechanisms important to achieving a good conception rate.
- Develop good sanitary procedures and insemination practices. It is easier to learn good habits than to break bad habits.
- Insemination supplies should be kept dry and clean at all times. Breeding sheaths should be stored in the original package until used.
- Once the insemination device is assembled it must be protected from contamination and cold shock temperatures.
- Materials used to lubricate the rectum should not come in contact with the vulva region. Lubricants are generally spermicidal. Avoid using products that are irritating.
- The vulva region must be thoroughly wiped clean with a paper towel. This is important in helping prevent the interior of the reproductive tract from becoming contaminated and possibly infected. A folded paper towel can be inserted into the lower portion of the vulva. The insemination rod can then be placed between the folds of the towel and inserted into the vagina without contacting the lips of the vulva.

Protective rods or sheaths are used in herds or for specific cows where vulvovaginal infection is a problem. When this system is used, the standard insemination rod and plastic sheath are inserted into the larger protective rod or sheath. This double rod combination is passed through the vagina to the external cervical opening. At the cervix, the tip of the protective device is punctured by the insemination rod, which is then threaded through the cervix.

To avoid the possibility of entering the urethral opening on the floor of the vagina, the insemination rod should be inserted into the vulva upward at a 30-40 degree angle.

The anterior portion of the vagina, termed the fornix vagina, tends to stretch rather easily when the insemination rod is pushed forward and beyond the cervix. This may give the false impression that the rod is advancing through the cervix, when indeed it is above, below, or to either side of the cervix. The inseminator should be able to feel the rod within the vaginal fold, but unable to feel the rod tip within the cervix.

Remember to place the cervix onto the insemination rod. Maintain slight forward pressure on the rod while manipulating the cervix slightly ahead of the rod.

Once the rod tip is aligned with the internal cervical os, deposit the semen. Semen deposition should take about five seconds. Slow delivery maximizes the amount of semen delivered from the straw and minimizes the unequal flow of semen into one uterine horn.

During the process of semen deposition, take care that the fingers of the palpating hand are not inadvertently blocking a uterine horn or misdirecting the flow of semen in some manner.

Be careful not to pull the insemination rod back through the cervix while the semen is being expelled.

If the cow has moved during semen deposition or you think the rod has moved, stop the semen deposition and correctly reposition the rod tip before continuing semen deposition.

Critically evaluating the accuracy of insemination has been difficult. For many years, the dye method was used to evaluate the proficiency of professional technicians. Excised reproductive tracts were inseminated with a biological dye in place of semen. In some cases, live cows were inseminated with dye and the tracts were examined immediately after slaughter. The location of the dye within the tract indicated the site of semen deposition.

The dye method has some limitations. The location of the insemination rod tip cannot be determined, and manipulation of the reproductive tract during slaughter or dissection can distort the distribution of the dye.

Researchers at Pennsylvania State University have used radiography to evaluate insemination technique accuracy. This method allows the interior of the tract to be viewed without dissection and the location of the insemination rod to be easily seen.

Farm managers should calculate the first-service conception rate for their herds during a 6-month interval. They should review breeding charts and consider only those cows that have been bred long enough to have been pregnancy checked. Strive for a goal of 45% first-service conception rate. In smaller herds, there may not be enough first services during a 6-month period to determine the conception rate accurately. In that case, inseminators should summarize first services over 12 months or calculate the percentage of cows pregnant after three breedings. In very large herds, calculate conception rate more often than every 6 months.

In any size herd, services per conception is another index of breeding performance related to the effectiveness of insemination technique. A reasonable goal is to maintain a rate of fewer than 1.8 services for pregnant cows. Livestock producers must realize that other factors in addition to AI technique can affect conception rate and services per conception.

If an evaluation of your records indicates that your insemination technique may be a problem area, then you should consider attending an AI retraining session. If the magnitude of improvement is 8% for professional technicians, it may be even greater for regular farm personnel. — **Andrew Sandeen, Pennsylvania State University Extension**

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: 3/9/2023		Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	164.81	▲	164.58	138.12
CME Feeder Index	188.72	▲	183.04	153.06
Boxed Beef Average	284.60	▼	288.50	253.94
Average Dressed Steers	262.64	▼	265.00	220.14
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,396	▲	1,380	1,400
Weekly Slaughter**	629,000	▲	618,000	658,000
Weekly Beef Production***	518.4	▲	509.8	553.1
Hide/Offal Value	13.1	▼	13.92	13.77
Corn Price	6.19	▼	6.38	7.58

*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	COMPREHENSIVE Price	PRIME Loads	PRIME Price	BRANDED Loads	BRANDED Price	CHOICE Loads	CHOICE Price	SELECT Loads	SELECT Price	UNGRADED Loads	UNGRADED Price
March 3	5,924	288.91	221	322.48	1,213	290.20	1,794	286.24	612	273.64	2,084	248.71
February 24	6,284	281.86	192	315.16	1,191	285.03	1,917	280.83	604	265.10	2,380	246.94
February 17	6,593	272.72	217	306.89	1,336	275.08	2,121	272.59	629	257.20	2,290	237.78
February 10	7,359	267.65	224	296.05	1,464	270.55	1,944	265.69	789	252.46	2,939	231.51

Cutouts — FED BOXED BEEF

DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT	50% LEAN	90% LEAN
Mar 9	284.60	276.05	N/A	123.64	266.00
Mar 8	284.78	278.12	209.40	130.25	266.06
Mar 7	287.93	277.49	209.05	N/A	263.83
Mar 6	290.20	276.47	207.50	125.74	262.33
Mar 3	289.32	276.86	208.68	122.71	265.32

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle

	3/3	3/6	3/7	3/8	3/9	High*	Low*
Feb.	16543	16610	16598	16545	16480	16750	13055
Apr.	16068	16100	16055	16065	15968	16548	14003
Jun.	15990	16048	16010	16018	15935	16245	15388
Aug.	16443	16500	16478	16495	16418	16025	15310

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle

	3/3	3/6	3/7	3/8	3/9	High*	Low*
Mar.	19000	19208	19213	19375	19308	18980	16958
Apr.	19603	19860	19868	20008	19915	19508	17595
May	20095	20325	20420	20615	20548	19963	18303
Aug.	21468	21680	21765	21970	21855	21270	18755

*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	1,480	1,472	164.81
Live FOB Heifer	112	1,327	164.71
Dressed Del Steer	179	971	262.64
Dressed Del Heifer	64	775	262.63
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK			
Live FOB Steer	2,690	1,507	164.58
Live FOB Heifer	1,912	1,399	164.86
Dressed Del Steer	213	924	263.75
Dressed Del Heifer	119	837	265.00
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	26,633	1,476	138.12
Live FOB Heifer	11,311	1,326	138.06
Dressed Del Steer	12,440	963	220.14
Dressed Del Heifer	5,642	844	219.99

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: FEBRUARY 26

	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	28,161	4,271
Formula	266,046	2,136
Negotiated Cash	85,938	187
Negotiated Grid	43,146	1,998
Packer Owned	12,949	N/A
Total	**436,240**	**8,592**

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month		Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,644
Feb. '23	152,050	Neg. Sales 21+ days	661
Mar. '23	152,653	Formula sales	3,516
Apr. '23	102,981	Forward contract sales	104
May. '23	78,981	Domestic sales	5,284
Jun. '23	52,815	NAFTA Exports	123

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	210.29	+0.32
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs	208.53	N/A
Ontario Auctions		
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs	214.05	+2.04
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs	212.32	N/A
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs	116.59	+2.32

*Price comparison from one week ago.

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Friday, February 17, 2023

Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	339.54	336.15	338.58
601-700 lbs	308.63	308.47	320.95
701-800 lbs	282.25	283.55	294.31
801-900 lbs	259.89	261.55	270.60
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	290.90	286.45	265.82
501-600 lbs	280.74	278.99	265.39
601-700 lbs	260.33	257.47	267.69
701-800 lbs	246.99	241.46	247.83

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
	3/4/23	**2/25/23**		
Feeders	28,548	23,049	209,253	161,592

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE

Friday, February 24, 2022

Mexico to TX. & NM. Weekly Feeder Cattle Import Summary

Receipts EST: 22,000 Week Ago Act: 16,830 Year Ago Act: 11,246

Compared to last week, steer calves and yearlings sold steady. Heifers steady. Trade moderate to active, demand moderate to good. The bulk of the supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 300-700 lbs.

Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2, 300-400 lbs 222.00-233.00; 400-500 lbs 202.00-213.00; 500-600 lbs 182.00-193.00; 600-700 lbs 167.00-178.00. Medium and large 2&3, 300-400 lbs 207.00-218.00; 400-500 lbs 187.00-198.00; 500-600 lbs 167.00-178.00.

Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2, 300-400 lbs 186.00-196.00, few 198.00; 400-500 lbs 176.00-186.00, few 188.00; 500-600 lbs 166.00-176.00, few 178.00; 600-700 lbs 156.00-166.00, few 168.00.

(slide 10 cents on steers and heifers basis 300 lbs. All sales fob port of entry.)

Selected Auction — Week Ending March 9, 2023

Feeder prices for steers & heifers reflect medium and large 1 cattle, unless otherwise noted; * Indicates medium and large 1-2

	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 / SLAUGHTER BULLS	PAIRS / REPLACEMENTS
NORTHWEST	March 3 Blackfoot, ID	N/A				180-229 167-220	175-224 165-188	167-189		84-107.50 103-118	
	March 2 Burley, ID	496		298-302.50 229-251	216-282.50 226-239	248-249 206-225	191.50-219.50 192		158	93-109 102-110	
	No report available Emmett, ID										
	No report available Eugene, OR										
	March 6 Madras, OR	235		225-250	235-255 225-245	215-240 225-240	185-220 180-200			90-105 95-125	
	March 1 Vale, OR	365			205-225	202-226 180-295	185-194	172-184		94-107 100-123	
	March 6 Davenport, WA	305		105-129 130-205	125-245 50-214	150-254 71-206	150-209.50 60-182	151-175 73-164	140-166.50 132-145.50	46-131 90-120	1,600-1,950 1,500-1,675
	March 2 Toppenish, WA	1,600				225*	169* 160*			82-105 92-114	
FARWEST	No report available Orland, CA										
	March 6 Escalon, CA	N/A		160-200 150-181		150-210 145-178		125-170 125-160	100-125 95-115	55-75 80-100	800-1,500 700-1,.300
	February 6 Famoso, CA	220		175-250 140-200	175-235 150-200	165-220 150-185	160-195 135-150	150-165	140-155 125-140	75-125 90-125	
	No report available Galt, CA										
	February 28 Turlock, CA	692		190-250	195-250 185-233	188-216 180-215				87-109.50 105-129	
	February 28 Salina, UT	759	180-214 165-200	170-202.50 160-186.50	165-207 159-183	158-197.50 148-180	150-185 140-178	150-170 136-174	141-168 99-160	81-123 97.50-150	
NORTH CENTRAL	March 6 Iowa	14,502		220-272 200-232	202-270 194-257	200-259 176-245	180-230.75 169.50-224.50	170-205.85 160-205	140-191.75 150-177.75	74-127 86-130.50	
	March 7 Miles City, MT	1,105			229-230	261 217-223	231			81.50-98 94-115	1,425-2,325
	March 8 Bassett, NE	2,105		236	242-250 213-221	229-238 200-214.50	210-223 187.50-225	197-211.50 177-193	178-193 164.50-180.50		
	March 4 Ericson, NE	3,580		225	239-258.50 209	226-255 199-224	197.50-242 183-209	187.50-218.25 176-199	180-188.50		
	No report available Imperial, NE										
	March 1 Kearney, NE	4,300			226.50-244 198-217.50	214-247.75 180.50-210	203-219 183.75-198.75	186-196.50 174.50-193	170-190 158-171.75	85-97 107-124	
	March 3 Lexington, NE	2,176		265-272.50 239-255	255.50-266 216-225	242-246 195-216	209-223.50 186.50-204	188-198 171-197	165-192.25 172-178.25		
	No report available Ogallala, NE										
	March 2 Valentine, NE	3,555			260 220-236.50	233.50-260 198-227.50	208.50-234.50 194-234	203.50-205.75 195-210	187.75-189		1,300-2,450
	March 3 Herreid, SD	3,410			257 213-224	220-254 197.50-225	203.75-235.50 178.50-204	186-206 158-185.50	178.50-194.50 166.25-179		
	March 1 Torrington, WY	4,087		180-284 246-260	252-264.50 230-254	238-255 207-226	206-234 199-217	182-212.50 173.50-184	163-192.50 164-169.50		
SOUTH CENTRAL	March 2 Willcox, AZ	1,155	242-245 196-216	223-258 186-220	210-236 195-220	203-225 179-198	177-200 156-180			70-120 90-120	1,150-1,725 1,060-1,200
	March 6 Colorado	6,481	241	267-300 217-243	235-255 208-223	210-241 185-229.50	183-233.50 177-207	180-202 162-178	137-185.50 129-174	61-105 81-115	1,425-1,950 1,025-1,975
	March 1 La Junta, CO	2,389		241-290 215-242	216-274 205-223	210-252 191-223	186-221 179-194.50	173-186 169-194	170.50-184 171-176		
	March 6 Loma, CO	213		240-264 223-240	228-253 218-241	212-234 205-229	185-214 185-207	177-189 165-177	148-182 144-167	94-110 100-116	
	March 8 Dodge City, KS	2,727		212.50-277 215-230	218-247 184-213	187.50-221 187-214	185-203 167-195	178-194.25 170-180.50	167-192 145-175	76-101 85-121	1,450 975-1,300
	March 9 Pratt, KS	2,000			241-244	225.50-243 192-209	193-215.25 180-198.25	186.50-211.50 168-179.50	175-194 166-176.75		
	March 2 Salina, KS	3,954		255-266 213-220	238-260 218-228	238-264 200-221.50	209-240.75 181-202.50	188-206 170-183.25	171-192 167-176		
	March 8 Clovis, NM	2,060	229 211	220-260 202-234	220-265 214-225	190-227 180-211	180.50-215 158-189	166-232 160-172	147-178 114.50-143	82-102 90-109.50	700-1,800 700-1,650
	March 7 El Reno, OK	2,500		260-282.50 224-255	240-275 210-240	219-252.50 191-218	200-217.50 183-210	189			
	March 8 McAlester, OK	1,380		241-287 215-234	233-279 200-222	226-247 174-207	189-233 160-181	165-186 131-164	146 153	89-108 101-116	1,050-1,675 800-1,525
	March 7 Oklahoma City, OK	10,685	225	234-293 212-233	230-273 200-218	215-249 193-222	197-225 179-201	187-199 173-183	160.75-187.50 140-172		
	March 3 Cuero, TX	1,502	145-258 182-235	209-253 188-242	194-254 180-219	192-246 173-214	168-214 157-185	143-192 140-165		85-109 90-130	
	March 2 Dalhart, TX	2,559	229	233-276 205-239	222-285 211-236	216-242 184-205	195-209.25 177-184.25	184-195.50 163-176.50	163.50-181.75	71-110 93-120	
	March 2 San Angelo, TX	1,006	222-224	232-267 206-220	229-246 194-212	210-218 180-188		158-163		89-109 90-125	1,025-1,600 900-1,375
	March 2 Tulia, TX	2,720		267 220	245-257 186-215	210-223.50 191-201	196-210 169-189	180.50-196.85 166-176.75	166-182.50 141-176.75	85	1,200-1,250
EAST	March 3 Alabama	7,663	244 295-234	222-267 180-228	210-245 170-212	188-230 160-191	180-204 147.50-173	155-187 137-165	177.50 147.50	73-109 89-123	750-1,425 610-1,500
	March 6 Lexington, KY	842	222.50-247* 205-230*	211-256* 182.50-240*	218-254* 171-235*	193-229* 175-197*	178-210* 161-186*	175-185* 151-167.50*	127-181* 126-155.50*	85-110 102-143	1,360 700-1,550
	March 6 Joplin, MO	8,192	282	247.50-265 223-245	240-270 209-235	230-256 200-222	204-234 185-201	193-208 175.25-186	173-185 170		
	March 6 Tennessee	6,457	202.50-280* 180-270*	208-270* 175-242.50*	195-255* 162-227.50*	155-242.50* 150-192.50*	165-214* 142.50-181*	160-192* 132-165.50*	126-174.50* 126-165.75*	68-114 80-138	1,000-2,200 700-1,500
	March 6 Virginia	3,401		216-230 160-195	196-235 164-185.50	88-216 165-185	183-207.50 149-180	154-199 149-169.50	144-176 119-161		
CANADA	March 8 Lethbridge, Alberta	2,382		320-359	315-354 270-312	305-332 270-309	285-330 266-282	262-294.75 230-258.50	236-272 222-242	106-137 140-167	

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Feeder contracts approach $200

MARKETS
(from page 1)

• Forward contract net purchases: $251.85.

• Negotiated grid net purchases: $259.79.

Slaughter through Thursday was 502,000 head, a thousand head more than a week prior. Projected total slaughter for a week earlier is 629,000 head.

Actual slaughter for the week ending Feb. 25 was 613,681 head. The average dressed steer weight was 902 lbs., down 4 lbs. from the previous week.

Boxed beef prices were lower over the week, with the Choice cutout down about $4 to $284.60 and the Select cutout down about $1.50 to $276.05.

"Boxed beef prices will be very strong seasonally in Q2 and may easily trade well over $300/cwt," Fish said. "Beef 50s printed at $130/cwt yesterday, a new high for 2023 and the highest since April 2022."

Beef net sales of 5,600 metric tons (mt) for 2023, a marketing-year low, were down 31% from the previous week and 67% from the prior four-week average, Stewart said. The three largest buyers were Japan (3,200 mt), Mexico (1,400 mt) and China (500 mt).

"Wednesday's (World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates) report shared exciting news for the cattle and beef markets. Production for 2023 was increased by 170 million pounds, which largely stems from more aggressive beef cow slaughter than originally assumed," Stewart said on Wednesday.

"The first three quarters of 2023 saw production increases to contribute to the 170 million additional pounds, but the fourth quarter remained unchanged. Quarterly price projections showed a bullish outlook for steer prices as all four quarters of 2023 saw a price increase."

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle contracts were several dollars higher over the week, reaching just under $200. The March contract gained nearly $5 to close at $193.07, and the April contract gained nearly $6 to close at $199.15.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index gained over $5 to close at $188.72.

Corn futures plummeted, with the March contract down 19 cents to $6.18 and the May contract down 22 cents to $6.11.

"The market's nearly unbelievable strength is stemming from two factors: deteriorating corn prices and phenomenal countryside demand," Stewart said.

Kansas: Winter Livestock in Dodge City sold 2,469 head on Wednesday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers 800-950 lbs. sold $2-4 higher, and steers 600-800 lbs. sold steady to $3 lower. Steer calves 400-600 lbs. sold $6-7 higher. Heifers 400-950 lbs. sold steady to $2 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 772 lbs. sold between $178-186, averaging $181.33.

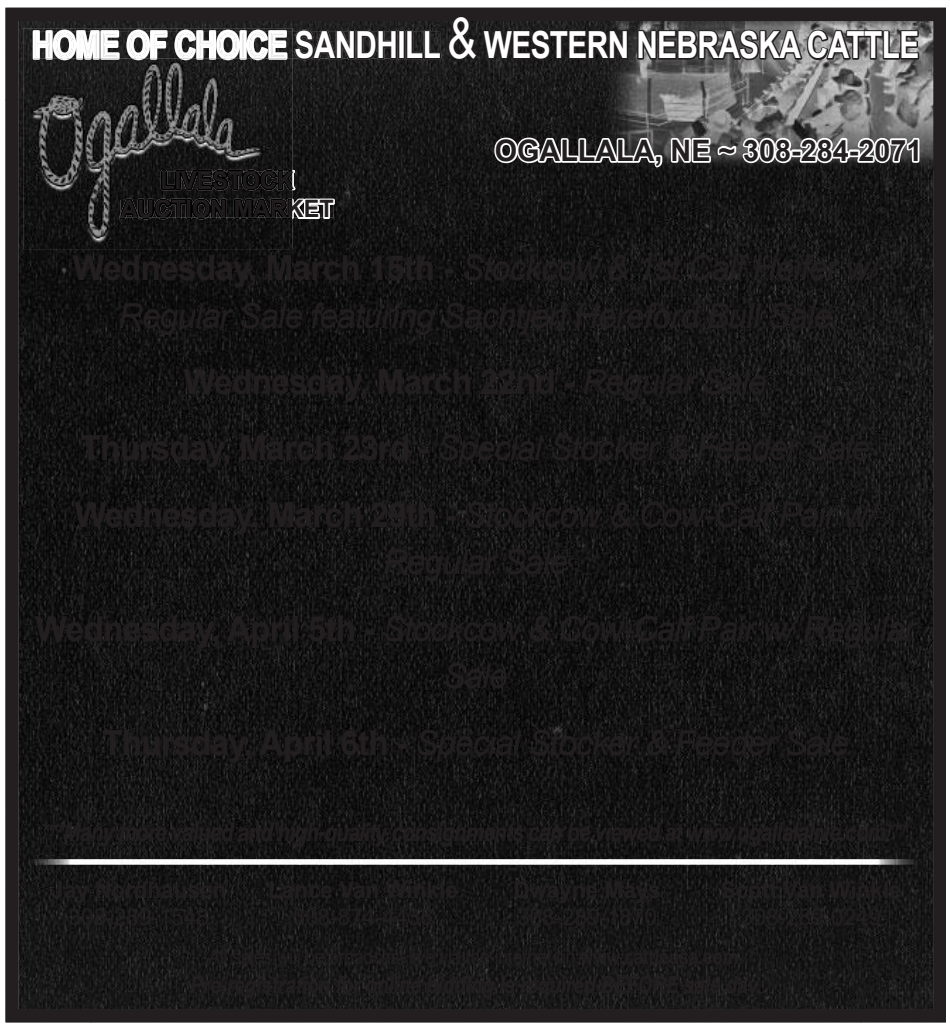
Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 9,000 head Monday. Compared to the previous auction, at the mid-session, feeder steers and heifers were steady. Benchmark steers averaging 724 lbs. sold between $187-203, averaging $193.92.

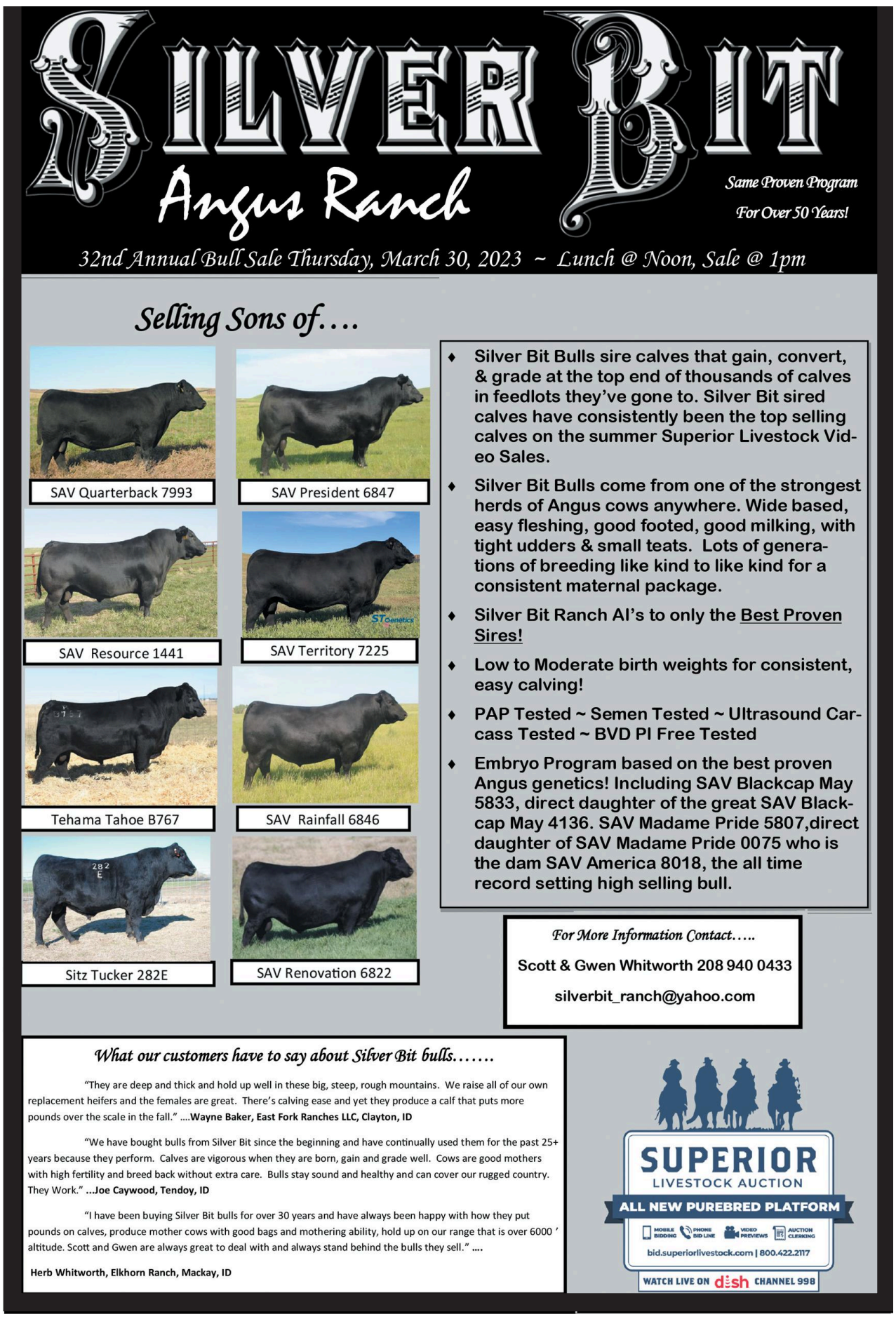
Nebraska: Tri-State Livestock in McCook sold 2,475 head Monday. Compared to the last auction, steers sold steady to $5 higher, and heifers were steady to $8 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 741 lbs. sold between $203.50-207, averaging $204.49.

New Mexico: Roswell Livestock in Roswell sold 1,458 head Tuesday. Compared to the previous auction, steer calves 350-400 lbs. sold $8 higher, 350-400 lbs. were steady and 500-550 lbs. traded $5-6 lower. Heifer calves 350-400 lbs. traded $4 higher, 400-500 lbs. were steady to $3 lower, 500-550 lbs. traded $7-9 higher and 550-600 lbs. sold $2-3 lower. Feeder steers and heifers had insufficient numbers a week earlier for a comparison. A group of steers averaging 769 lbs. sold between $161-170 and averaged $168.51.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 11,000 head Monday. Compared to the previous auction, at mid-session, feeder steers and heifers were not well tested in early rounds but a higher undertone was noted. Steer calves sold $1-5 higher, with an instance of $20 higher on 400-500 lbs. Heifer calves opened steady. Benchmark steers averaging 717 lbs. sold between $194.50-198.50 and averaged $196.27.

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Regional Cattle in Worthing sold 3,795 head Monday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers sold $2-5 higher, with an instance of $14 higher, except 400-450 lbs. were $2-3 lower. Feeder heifers sold $2-4 higher, with instances of $7 higher, except 500-600 lbs. and 900-950 lbs. were $2-4 lower. — **Anna Miller, *WLJ* managing editor**





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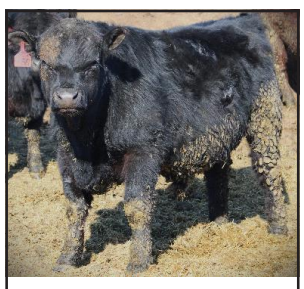

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Sale Calendar

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ALL BREEDS

Mar. 15 — Western Breeders Association, Bull Sale, Eltopia, WA
Mar. 18 — Utah Beef Improvement Association, Bull Sale, Salina, UT
Mar. 19 — Intermountain Genetic Alliance, Bull Sale, Baker, NV

ANGUS

Mar. 13 — Spring Cove Ranch, Bull Sale, Bliss, ID
Mar. 14 — Stevenson's Diamond Dot, Bull Sale, Hobson, MT
Mar. 14 — Veltkamp Angus, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT
Mar. 14 — Wagon Wheel Angus, Bull Sale, Yuma, CO
Mar. 15 — Lufkin Angus, Bull Sale, Leodore, ID
Mar. 15 — Stevenson Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Hobson, MT
Mar. 15 — Wagonhammer Ranches, Bull Sale, Albion, NE
Mar. 16 — Carter Cattle, Bull Sale, Pingree, ID
Mar. 16 — Vallad/Oft Angus, Bull Sale, Vale, OR
Mar. 17 — Leadore Angus, Bull Sale, Leodore, ID
Mar. 17 — Montana Performance Bull Coop, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT
Mar. 17 — TD Angus at Rishel Ranch, Production Sale, North Platte, NE
Mar. 17 — Weiss Bros. Angus, Production Sale, Red Cloud, NE
Mar. 18 — Nelson Angus Ranch, Production Sale, Salmon, ID
Mar. 18 — South Montana Angus Association, Bull Sale, Butte, MT
Mar. 18 — Ward Ranches, Bull Sale, Minden, NV
Mar. 20 — Angus in the Basin, Bull Sale, Duchesne, UT
Mar. 20 — Genetic Opportunity Angus Bull Sale, Purdum, NE
Mar. 20 — JR Ranch & Sackmann Cattle, Bull Sale, Othello, WA
Mar. 20 — Whistling Winds Angus, Bull Sale, Hingham, MT

CHAROLAIS

Mar. 14 — Romans Ranches, Production Sale, Westfall, OR
Mar. 15 — Wagonhammer Ranches, Bull Sale, Albion, NE

HEREFORD

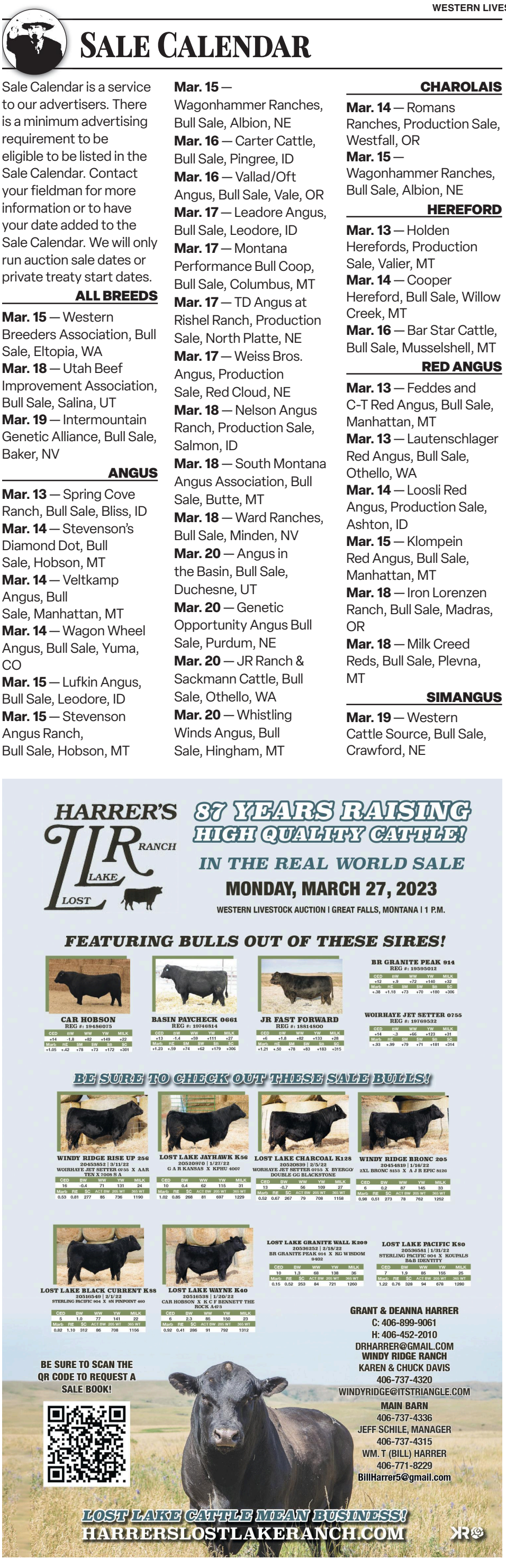
Mar. 13 — Holden Herefords, Production Sale, Valier, MT
Mar. 14 — Cooper Hereford, Bull Sale, Willow Creek, MT
Mar. 16 — Bar Star Cattle, Bull Sale, Musselshell, MT

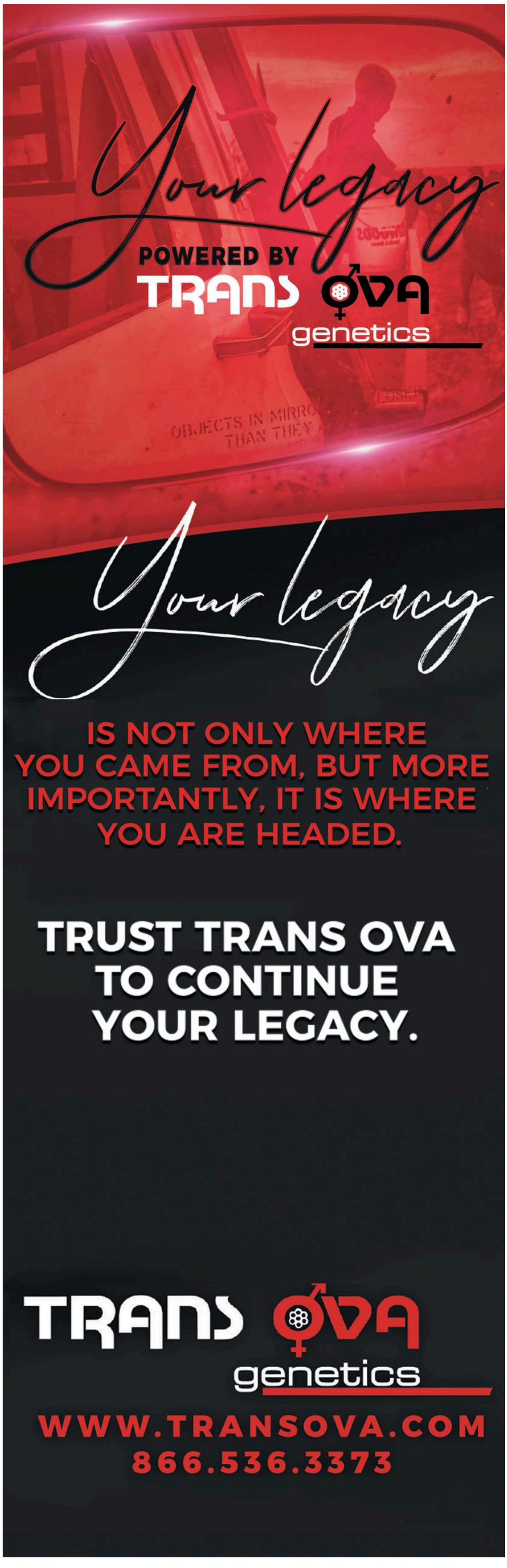
RED ANGUS

Mar. 13 — Feddes and C-T Red Angus, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT
Mar. 13 — Lautenschlager Red Angus, Bull Sale, Othello, WA
Mar. 14 — Loosli Red Angus, Production Sale, Ashton, ID
Mar. 15 — Klompein Red Angus, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT
Mar. 18 — Iron Lorenzen Ranch, Bull Sale, Madras, OR
Mar. 18 — Milk Creed Reds, Bull Sale, Plevna, MT

SIMANGUS

Mar. 19 — Western Cattle Source, Bull Sale, Crawford, NE





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