

# Western Livestock Journal®

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## INSIDE WLJ

**SPRING PROPERTIES** — This week's *WLJ* issue contains the spring edition of the *Properties Ranch and Farm* magazine. If your paper is missing the magazine, please call 720-370-8275.

**BRAND BILL** — A new Nebraska brand bill was presented in front of the Agriculture Committee and faced strong opposition. Page 3

### A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

Leadership shakeups and disputes over disease testing aren't new to the livestock industry. Let's take a look back at this March 29, 2004, *WLJ* cover story: "USDA lost its second agency chief within a month's time last week after Bobby Acord abruptly resigned his position as administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. While he cited family concerns behind his decision, sources close to the situation said Acord was upset with top-level USDA officials over a dispute concerning ramped up BSE testing."

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## Lawmakers discuss ESA reforms, recovery goals

### — Science, states and incentives debated

The Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife recently discussed the challenges and opportunities in implementing the Endangered Species Act (ESA), with lawmakers and witnesses largely agreeing that recovery should be the law's main goal.

Throughout the hearing, several common themes emerged: the need for greater transparency, improved use of state-collected data, stronger incentives for recovery, and adequate resources for agencies to carry out the law.

Subcommittee Chairman Sen. Pete Ricketts (R-NE) opened the hearing by highlighting concerns about the ESA's performance over its 50-year history, noting that only a small percentage of listed species have been delisted due to recovery.

"The ultimate goal of the law is to recover species to the point that federal protections are no longer needed," he said, adding that current outcomes raise questions about whether that goal is consistently being achieved.

Ranking Member Sen. Adam Schiff (D-CA) countered that the ESA has been highly effective at preventing extinction, pointing to the survival of 99% of listed species. Schiff also acknowledged that there is bipartisan interest in improving recovery rates and updating how the law is carried out, including working more closely with states and cutting through some of the regulatory red tape.

### Recovery vs. regulation

Much of the hearing centered on whether the ESA's structure limits its effectiveness in driving recovery.

Brian Yablonski, CEO of the Property and Environment Research Center, described the ESA as a "tale of two cities," saying it has been successful at preventing extinction but has fallen short when it comes to recovering most species. He emphasized that incentives for private landowners, who manage habitat for about two-thirds of at-risk species, are essential.

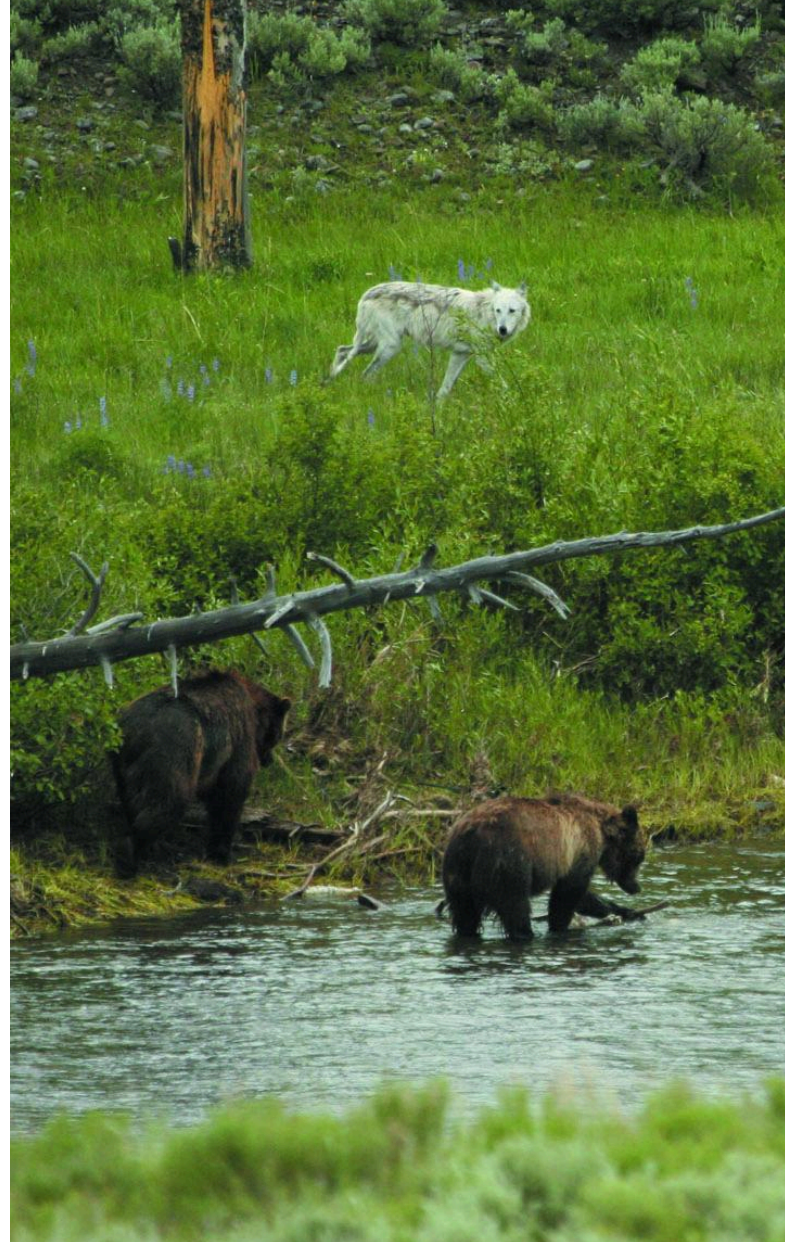
"When people benefit from stewardship, they will do more of it," Yablonski said, calling for policies that reward incremental recovery

progress.

Jake Li, vice president of Conservation Policy at Defenders of Wildlife, agreed that flexibility tools already exist within the ESA, such as

Section 7 consultations and habitat conservation plans, but said they are underutilized. He emphasized

**See ESA HEARING on page 6**



Jim Peaco/National Park Service

A recent Senate subcommittee hearing discussed the challenges of implementing the Endangered Species Act. Pictured here, two grizzly bears and a wolf near a bison carcass by the Lamar River in Yellowstone National Park.

## Farmer dollar share shrinks as ag powers the economy

Food and agriculture remain one of the largest drivers of the U.S. economy, generating \$10.4 trillion in total output and supporting nearly 49 million jobs, according to the 2026 Feeding the Economy report highlighted by Daniel Munch, American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) economist. Yet even as the sector accounts for

roughly 20% of all economic activity, the share of the value returned to farmers continues to shrink.

Data from the USDA Economic Research Service, disseminated by AFBF economist Faith Parum, show farmers and ranchers received just 5.8 cents of every food dollar in 2024, down from 5.9 cents the year prior. Crop producers saw

their share fall from 2.9 cents to 2.5 cents, while livestock producers' share increased slightly, rising from 3 cents to 3.3 cents.

"While farmers and ranchers are the foundation of food production, most of the economic value is created after products leave the farm,"

**See FOOD DOLLAR on page 7**

## USDA promotes voluntary 'Product of USA' labeling

### — Launches public awareness campaign

On National Agriculture Day, USDA announced it was promoting a public awareness campaign about the new, voluntary "Product of USA" labeling standards that

went into effect earlier this year. Agency officials say the campaign is intended to improve consumer transparency and confidence.

The standards enforce stricter criteria for when a "Product of USA" or "Made in USA" label may be used on

meat, poultry and egg products. Products may bear the label only if they were derived from animals born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the U.S. The rule was finalized in March 2024 during the Biden administration and took effect on Jan. 1.

"This new standard policy ensures producers who invest in a fully American supply chain can compete fairly, and it gives consumers the confidence they deserve about the food they bring home," said USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins on March 24.

The labeling claim is voluntary, but companies must meet verification requirements in order to use it.

"This ends the prior practice which allowed imported products to carry the claim after minimal processing and strengthens

consumer confidence by aligning with what Americans expect and demand," USDA said.

The department released a website dedicated to the voluntary label as part of its

**See USA LABEL on page 5**

## Boxed beef prices see sharp decline

*(Editor's note: This market report covers information available as of Wednesday afternoon, due to an earlier WLJ press time.)*

Boxed beef prices dropped sharply over the week, just two weeks away from Easter.

Live cattle futures traded mostly sideways over the week. The April contract gained about a dollar to close at \$234.42, and the June contract gained about \$2 to close at \$233.85.

"The real headline of the day for the live cattle complex was the break in boxed beef prices as Choice cuts ended the day \$3.80 lower than Select cuts," wrote ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, in her Wednesday midday comments. "This is due to two main reasons: retailers are pushing back on these high beef prices, and the market is drastically short supplied of thin, grinding type products and has a surplus of Choice cuts."

Cash trade through Wednesday afternoon was light, with only about 1,000 head sold. No market trend was noted for live cattle, but dressed cattle traded for \$372.

Stewart projected cash trade through the rest of the week

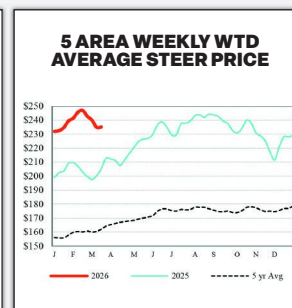
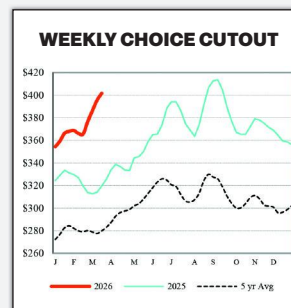
to trade steady to lower as a result of lower boxed beef prices.

Cash trade for the week ending March 22 totaled 53,715 head. Live steers sold from \$232-238, and dressed steers sold from \$372-380.

Slaughter through Wednesday totaled about 315,000 head, compared to 308,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for a week earlier is estimated at 508,000 head. Actual slaughter for two weeks earlier was not available as of press time.

Boxed beef prices closed lower over the week, down about \$9 to \$391.69 on the Choice cutout and down

**See MARKETS on page 9**



LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
\$236.00	N/A	\$361.59
WEEK ENDING: 3-25-26		

PERIODICAL: Time Sensitive Priority Handling

# COMMENTS

## Labeling concerns

Recently, on National Agriculture Day, Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins and Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr. announced a public awareness campaign promoting the “Product of USA” voluntary labeling program for meat, poultry and egg products derived from animals exclusively born, raised, harvested and processed in the U.S.



IPSEN

Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA (R-CALF) CEO Bill Bullard has worked on this particular topic for years. “When consumers see the ‘Product of USA’ label, they can be assured the beef is entirely a USA product produced by domestic farmers, ranchers, and packers,” Bullard said. United States Cattlemen’s Association (USCA) President Justin Tupper said, “This campaign is about rebuilding trust. When consumers can quickly identify products truly made here at home, everybody wins—families, rural communities, and the U.S. cattle industry.” As of this writing, NCBA hadn’t made a public comment. Both R-CALF and USCA support the rollout but still seek a mandatory program. Keep in mind the USDA already has a voluntary country-of-origin labeling (COOL) program. While the two programs are closely aligned, this new label campaign that launched in January comes with a new marketing effort and more producer input. This label carries an agenda-driven aura from multiple angles. First, it aligns with the Trump administration’s “America First” campaign goals. USDA and Health and Human Services have worked together to promote healthy foods supporting beef production and consumption—think food pyramid updates, the Farmer and Rancher Freedom Framework, and efforts to reduce bureaucratic burdens. It’s also important to note that Rollins has made herself widely available to the public. This show of transparency and willingness to work for producers has earned her a lot of favor across our industry’s platforms. Overall, her tenure is hard to fault, though at times it seems she may be listening to certain sectors more than others. That being said, this label puts me more on the fence than before when it comes to labeling of beef products. For the record, I don’t like imported beef any more than most of you. However, I also understand that global economics, politics and issues far out of our control are at play and recognize that our industry cannot achieve 99% carcass utilization without an export market. Having an export market, in return, means we have an import market.

On the USDA website, this announcement uses a commercial advertisement to promote the program and features four 2025 Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association world champions, including bareback rider Roker Steiner. It also included social media influencer Granny Bibbins. The commercial starts with a group of dairy cows walking at daylight before immediately jumping to a bucking bull coming out of a chute. The 53-second commercial left me confused. While there is an obvious connection between rodeo and ranching, there is also a gap in the marketing of this label. Ranchers are consistently told to tell our story: the picturesque ranch setting and effort of raising wholesome, humanely raised livestock. We are constantly told the consumer wants to know HOW the animals were raised. This is the entire scope surrounding the idea that the consumer wants American-raised products and are willing to pay a premium for it. I’m as big of a rodeo fan as the next guy, but I feel the campaign for this new label missed the mark for beef production. I was under the impression that generational family ranchers told our story, not a bareback rider with a rap sheet.

To the bigger issue—beef labeling. I have no issue with mandatory COOL; let USDA require it. What isn’t often discussed is what happens next. If the endpoint of the chain has labeling requirements, at what point will they require the starting point to also have a label? According to USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), which oversees this label, comments submitted voiced concerns over proprietary information of producers, burdensome regulations, input costs and requirements of unnecessary third-party verification programs, to name a few. Regarding traceability and confidentiality, the FSIS says several domestic trade associations have concerns about the feasibility of maintaining records that provide full traceability back to originating farms and producers. Some concerned parties also expressed issue with the potential threat of recordkeeping requirements compromising confidentiality of business operations information. FSIS disputed those concerns, but the fact remains that this is one of the biggest obstacles, aside from the logistics of putting EID tags in all cattle leaving the ranch of origin. There’s a lot of unanswered questions, but if an added cost is going to be put on the feeder and packer level, that expense will come from somewhere. The consumer is already being squeezed. The packer has been consistently losing for nearly two years. If this were to become mandatory, would the cow-calf guy incur the costs at both ends? It’s hard to fault the administration for prioritizing American agriculture, though there are signs the cart may be ahead of the horse because this campaign feels rushed. I would rather have seen this include more collaboration and better dialed-in messaging, with visual aids on point, and delivered in a way that both the consumer and the producer could agree this was truly America First. If this isn’t done right the first time, it’ll be harder to fix down the road, and if they rush this issue, would they rush an ID program as well? — **LOGAN IPSEN**

# UNITED WE STAND

with Fadra Glaser

This monthly column highlights the common ground in the livestock industry, uniting us around the issues that impact us all.

For many livestock owners, finding transportation for animals still works much the same way it did decades ago. Ask around. Call a neighbor. Dig through a list of phone numbers passed along at a sale barn or livestock show. And hope the hauler you’re trying to reach is available—and calls back.

Through years of involvement in livestock and youth agricultural programs like 4-H and FFA, I’ve seen firsthand how often families scramble to find a trailer and a driver when animals need to move across the state—or sometimes across the country. At the same time, the challenge exists on the other side as well. In a recent conversation with an independent livestock transporter, he described how much of his time is spent scrolling through social media groups, making cold calls and sending direct messages just trying to find available loads. Many experienced transporters rely on scattered online posts or word-of-mouth referrals to locate work that fits their travel routes. The result is an inefficient system for both sides. Livestock owners struggle to find reliable transport when they need it,

while transporters may drive long distances with empty space still available in their trailers simply because there is no centralized place to connect with potential customers.

Beyond simply locating a transporter, livestock owners also want confidence that the person hauling their animals will communicate clearly, keep their schedule and provide updates along the way. In an industry built on trust and reputation, having a transparent way for livestock owners to review and recommend experienced transporters could help strengthen those connections. While agriculture has embraced technology in many areas, livestock transportation remains one part of the industry that still relies heavily on word-of-mouth networks and scattered communication.

Anyone who has raised livestock understands the situation. A family needs to transport a show steer to a new owner across the state. A breeder sells registered sheep to a buyer several states away. A rancher needs cattle moved between seasonal pastures. In each case, the challenge is often the same: finding a reliable transporter with the right equipment who is headed in the right direction. Many livestock owners begin by asking neighbors, calling friends in the industry or searching social media groups. Sometimes that process works quickly. Other times it turns into a frustrating series of calls and messages trying to locate someone with space available in a trailer. The issue isn’t limited to livestock

owners. Independent livestock transporters often rely on repeat clients and referrals to keep their trailers full. Many experienced haulers operate small businesses and depend heavily on industry relationships to find loads that match their travel routes. However, without a centralized place to connect with livestock owners, drivers often spend time searching multiple platforms and groups for opportunities. It is not uncommon for a transporter to drive hundreds or even thousands of miles with empty space still available in the trailer simply because there was no easy way to connect with additional customers along that route. In an industry where efficiency matters, that disconnect represents lost opportunity for both sides.

The scale of the livestock industry makes transportation an essential part of agriculture.

According to the USDA, millions of cattle, sheep, goats and horses are transported across state lines each year for breeding, production and sale purposes. Much of this movement depends on independent livestock transporters who operate specialized trailers and understand the care required when hauling animals. These drivers play an important role in maintaining animal welfare and ensuring livestock reach their destinations safely. Despite the importance of this work, the system used to connect livestock owners and transporters has changed very little over time.

The goal isn’t to replace the trusted relationships that have

long defined the livestock industry. Instead, the opportunity lies in strengthening those relationships by making it easier for livestock owners and experienced transporters to find one another when needed. Better communication and improved visibility could allow transporters to locate loads that match their routes more easily, while livestock owners could find reliable transportation options with greater confidence. In an industry built on reputation, having a centralized place where livestock owners can share their experiences and recommend dependable transporters could help reinforce the trust that agriculture has always relied upon. Agriculture continues to evolve as producers adopt new tools and technologies that improve efficiency and communication.

Livestock transportation will likely follow the same path as the industry looks for ways to better connect those who need animals moved with the professionals who provide that service. For livestock owners and transporters alike, improving these connections isn’t just about convenience. It supports the people who work every day to move animals safely across ranches, farms, livestock shows, breeding programs and markets throughout the country. In a business built on trust and relationships, expanding those connections may be one of the most valuable steps forward for the livestock transportation industry. — **FADRA GLASER, Colorado, founder of Hitch-N-Ride.com**

## GUEST OPINION

“And on the 8th day, God looked down on his planned paradise and said, ‘I need a caretaker.’ So God made a farmer.”

Throughout Paul Harvey’s well-known “So God Made a Farmer” speech, he talks about the resiliency and grit of the farmer—characteristics I’ve always connected to the farmer and rancher. Currently in much of cattle country, it is calving season. On our farm, that means checks 24 hours per day regardless of the weather. When Mother Nature isn’t cooperating, it can be even more trying.

We choose to calve when it can be very cold or blizzard-like conditions, although those kinds of conditions can occur from November to April in Iowa. This winter and spring have been very up and down when it comes to weather. We had snowstorms in December, 70 F in January, thunderstorms in February and another snowstorm recently. We just have to be prepared for anything.

But even the best preparation can’t always help when dealing with bad weather or other catastrophes like tornadoes or wildfires. I have close friends in Kansas who in the past couple years have seen their entire ranches destroyed by wildfires, an unimaginable disaster.

At the time of this writing, four different fires were still blazing in Nebraska. The weather conditions did not help slow them down, but it did seem containment was closer. Since it is calving season, most Nebraska cows are not out on that rangeland yet and hopefully that will keep animal loss to a minimum; but those cattle still need summer grass. These people still need feed for the animals, new fences, rain and mostly, our prayers.

Yes, livestock folks are resilient and have grit, but we still need to be checked on. Farming is a high stress job. Weather, natural disaster, health concerns and finances can cause the type of anxiety that even resilience and strength cannot prevent.

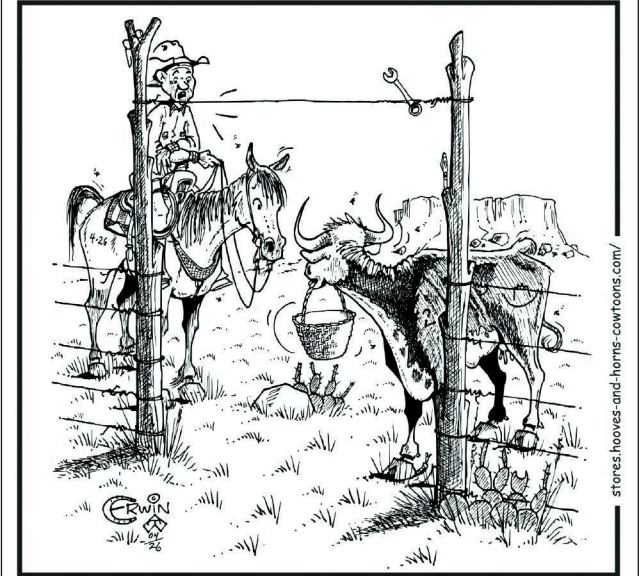
The part of Paul Harvey’s well-known piece that really hits me the hardest is when he said, “God said, I need somebody to sit up all night with a newborn colt and watch it die, then dry his eyes

## MORE THAN RESILIENCE IS NEEDED

and say maybe next year.” It may be calves here, or lambs, or piglets, or in fact, colts on other farms. When things don’t go as planned, even when we’ve tried everything, we continue to say maybe next year.

Say a prayer for our farmers and ranchers. It’s a tough profession and it’s a noble one. — **JENNIFER CARRICO, DTN senior livestock editor**

## HOOVES & HORNS BY A.W. ERWIN



“Easter awready?? Yew do realize I can’t afford those high-dollar cow snacks every year!”

<p><b>Letters to the editor:</b> Letters for publication must be no longer than 675 words and must include the writer’s name, location and phone number. Phone numbers will not be published. Letters may be shortened for space requirements. Obituaries must be no longer than 700 words. Send a letter to the editor or obituary by emailing <a href="mailto:editorial@wlj.net">editorial@wlj.net</a> or mailing to Western Livestock Journal, Attn: Editorial Dept., 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.</p> <p><b>The national livestock weekly • Since 1922 • Western Livestock Journal LLC • 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111</b></p> <p><b>www.wlj.net • 303-722-7600 • Fax 303-722-0155</b></p>			
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# A new NE brand bill gets heard, faces sharp opposition

While Nebraska state lawmakers are trying to balance the budget, Niobrara State Sen. Barry DeKay (R) held an Agriculture Committee hearing on an amendment to his Legislative Bill (LB) 1187 that would change the makeup of the state's Brand Committee.

The Brand Committee investigates cattle theft and verifies ownership through brand inspection when cattle are bought, sold or moved within or beyond the branding zone or area set in state law. Nebraska's brand law applies mandatory inspections to cattle owners in the western two-thirds of the state.

DeKay's bill is a competing proposal to one introduced by State Sen. Ben Hansen (R) of Blair, which would make brand inspection voluntary statewide and eliminate the Brand

Committee. Hansen's proposal has faced staunch opposition from the Nebraska Republican Party and others.

The latest amendment from DeKay, AM 2503, would replace all of his original bill, LB 1187. The earlier version focused on increasing certain brand inspection fees to fund the Brand Committee, a measure many attendees of a hearing earlier this session supported.

Most testifiers opposed the amendment, as rural areas in the state deal with wildfires. No one showed up to support the change.

"The people have given up that you have ears ... you're not listening," said Trent Loos, a Sherman County resident, former candidate for public office and rural political podcaster, in his testimony to the Ag

Committee.

If the amendment is approved, it would keep the adjustments to the inspection fees for the brand committee, but it would increase the number of people on the Brand Committee from five to seven members. It also would change the makeup of the committee to make sure it includes three people active in the cattle industry, one from each Brand Committee district.

And also, "two owners or operators of a cattle feeding operation ... one owner or operator of a livestock auc-

tion market that primarily sells cattle," plus one "purebred cattle breeder."

Many testifiers opposed the changes because some felt they might give the governor too much power over the committee by letting him remove members and that it could make the brand system more "bureaucratic." Others opposed the fee increases.

State Sen. Jared Storm (R) of David City pushed back on Loos' comments saying, "I absolutely think this amendment and this bill is the best thing for the cattle

industry."

"I'm not bought by anybody ... That's why I put up with this for two years," Storm said.

Loos alluded to lawmakers trying to serve their "donors," comments that drew pushback from some lawmakers at the hearing. He has focused much of his criticism on members of the Ag Committee.

Currently, the governor appoints members to the state Brand Committee. The amendment would make the governor and the legislature sign off on the Brand

Committee's choice for its executive director. Also, it would allow the governor to remove a member for "inefficiency, neglect of duty, failure to maintain the qualifications for the position for which appointed, or misconduct in office."

During an earlier hearing, DeKay's original bill received a lot of support from people who opposed a competing proposal from Hansen. The Ag Committee took no immediate action on DeKay's bill. — **Juan Salinas II, Nebraska Examiner**

## Idaho's ag economic impact hits \$44.5B

Agriculture has an enormous impact on Idaho's economy, responsible for a record \$44.5 billion in annual sales and 17.2% of the state's total economic output, according to a recent University of Idaho (U of I) report based on 2024 data.

The study, "Economic Contribution of Idaho Agribusiness 2025," by Philip Watson, a professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, also found agriculture employs 137,900 Idaho workers—about one in every nine jobs in the state.

The study places Idaho among the nation's top five states for agricultural sales as a percentage of the overall economy. The calculations factor in all dollars brought into the state because of agriculture, as well as the ripple effects those dollars have on the economy. For example, purchases such as fertilizer and chemicals used to grow crops, as well as farmers' living expenses, are part of the estimate.

Watson updates the report about every three years to document agriculture's growth and its importance to the state's economic vitality. He uses data from the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, along with analysis from IMPLAN, which is a private economic impact modeling company, regarding agriculture's linkages with other economic sectors.

"Our College of Agricultural and Life Sciences likes to take these reports to Boise when the Legislature is in session to make sure people understand the scope of agriculture in Idaho," Watson said. "Agriculture is growing, and this is the largest contribution of agriculture into the Idaho economy in history."

Watson's latest estimates of agricultural sales in the state, published in February 2026, rose from \$37.5 billion

in 2022, when agriculture was responsible for 126,800 jobs in Idaho. However, agriculture's percentage of the state's total economic output has remained relatively flat—increasing by only 0.2% over the past three years—demonstrating that many other sectors of Idaho's economy are also strong and growing.

Watson's report ranks Idaho among the top eight states in the production of 22 crop and livestock commodities—including No. 1 in potatoes, barley, alfalfa, trout and peppermint oil; No. 2 in hops; and No. 3 in sugar beets, cheese, milk and milk cows.

"Agriculture is a very large part of the Idaho economy, and it's connected to so many other parts of the Idaho economy," Watson said. "It's not just cows and plows and farms and potato chip companies. It's woven into the economy in very deep ways."

The report estimates the annual value of agricultural sales alone—excluding linkages to other economic sectors—at \$32.7 billion, supporting 79,000 Idaho jobs.

Idaho agricultural exports to foreign countries remained steady from 2022 at about \$2.8 billion. A primary reason for the lack of export growth is that Idaho's food processing capacity has grown significantly in recent years, and a larger share of Idaho's food commodities is now processed within the state.

"Idaho's farm sector used to be much larger than the processing sector, and that has changed within the past five years, which is a really good thing for Idaho," Watson said. "Rather than shipping out our raw milk and our raw potatoes, we are now capturing more of that added value in the state by processing them here. I think it's showing a maturing agricultural industry."

— **U of I Extension**

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## THE VIEWPOINT

with Shelby Shaw

*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.*

Shelby Shaw's connection to the NILE began long before her current role as the Livestock Department manager and director of Youth Education, which includes overseeing the renowned Merit Heifer Program.

Although her childhood was spent around the Montana racetrack circuit, she quickly found her love for cattle through her local 4-H program. After exhibiting her first heifer at the Northern International Livestock Exposition (NILE) as a young girl, Shelby went on to become a NILE Merit Heifer Program recipient herself. She remained deeply involved over the years through scholarships, internships and ultimately, built a career with the organization.

In addition to overseeing the Merit Heifer Program, Shelby also manages the NILE livestock shows and sales, along with the internship and scholarship programs, and acts as the staff liaison to the NILE Foundation.

Today, she continues to stay involved in her family cow herd while working with youth across the country, helping provide opportunities similar to the ones that helped shape her own path in the cattle industry.

### A hand into the industry

The NILE is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the livestock industry and Western way of life in Billings, MT. The NILE will be celebrating its 59th annual stock show this year in October and will feature a multitude of cattle shows and sales. In addition to the stock show, the NILE also features horse events and sales, a ranch rodeo, a trade



Shelby Shaw

Courtesy photo

show, youth contests and more.

The NILE Merit Heifer Program was developed in 2000 as an opportunity for youth to get a start in the beef cattle business. For the first few years, there were five heifers available annually for Montana youth, but interest grew quickly.

"The demand was so high for kids that were looking to get into the beef industry that our committee got together and really worked hard to

find more donors that would be willing to work with youth interested in the beef project," Shelby told WLJ.

The program expanded rapidly, growing from just five head in 2005 to 25 head in 2006. Today, the NILE Merit Heifer Program typically awards between 20 and 25 heifers each year through a competitive application process. Since its inception, more than 500 heifers have been placed with youth across the nation, reaching

recipients in 23 states and supported by donors in 24 states. The 2026 program also marks a milestone, as it includes the first-ever recipient from Canada.

### Program eligibility

Anyone can donate a heifer to the program, although Shelby emphasized the mentorship commitment.

"We are looking for donors who are willing to work with the youth," she said. The heifer is co-owned between the recipient and NILE until the program is completed, and throughout the program, the donor serves as a mentor to the recipient.

"They can be as involved as they want, or are able to be, as long as the recipient can still get in touch with the donor to get some answers for their reports," Shelby said. "That's all we ask."

Throughout the program, recipients are expected to take proper care of the heifer while staying actively engaged by completing monthly reports on specific industry topics. In total, participants complete 10 reports for NILE, in addition to taking part in monthly Zoom meetings, submitting a record book and participating in an exit interview. Full ownership of the heifer is contingent on successfully completing the required materials. The main goal is for the recipient to have a bred female that will go on to be a productive cow for many years.

There are no breed restrictions for donated heifers, which results in a wide array of breeds available in the program. Past placements have included a variety of breeds, from Angus to Wagyu, Shelby said.

Applicants may indicate their breed preferences during the application process, and the committee does its best to match recipients with their preferred breed and a local donor.

"It is not guaranteed, but we do try to get them the breed that they are most interested in, or at least their secondary breed," Shelby said. "And from there we pair them with a donor that is somewhat geographically close to them."

Donated heifers are required to be weaned and current on vaccinations at the time of placement. From that point forward, NILE helps oversee the ownership process while encouraging continued mentorship between donors and recipients. Donors can provide breeding recommendations, or recipients can take advantage of semen donated by a program sponsor to AI their heifer.

After graduating from the program, recipients have the opportunity to return to NILE to exhibit in the Progeny Pen Parade with the original female alongside her progeny, highlighting the progress they have made in building their own herd.

### Application process details

Although the application process may appear daunting upon first glance, Shelby encourages applicants that

the payoff is well worth it.

Any 4-H or FFA member between the ages of 12 and 16 years old as of June 30 is eligible to apply for the NILE Merit Heifer Program. Applicants are not required to reside in Montana, and prior experience or cattle ownership is not necessary.

The application process includes several components. It begins with a general questionnaire where applicants can describe their backgrounds and industry involvement. Applicants also submit a one-page personal essay explaining why they are deserving of a heifer and how receiving a heifer would fit into their future goals. In addition, six references are required, including three letters of recommendation and three additional contacts.

Finally, applicants must submit a 3-to-5-minute YouTube video. This portion of the application process gives applicants an opportunity to set themselves apart from the others. The video should include a personal introduction, a tour of their facilities, an overview of current 4-H and FFA projects, and a discussion of their goals and objectives.

"Through a video, the committee is able to get to know the applicant in a way that they may not be able to get to know somebody else," Shelby said. "I encourage applicants to take a little extra time and figure out ways that they can be unique yet still be themselves."

That opportunity to showcase individuality is just one piece of Shelby's broader advice to prospective applicants. She also encourages applicants to begin their application early to avoid being overwhelmed.

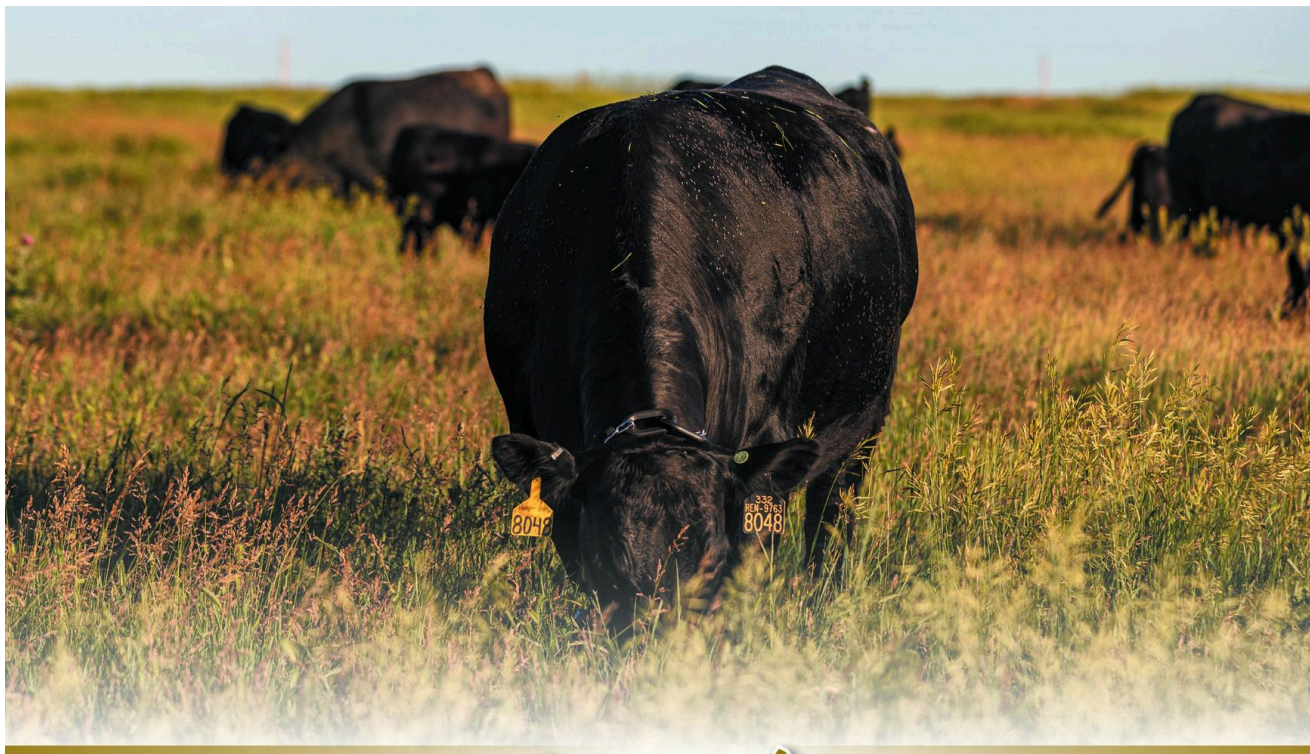
"If they start early getting those recommendation letters, working on the application itself and then doing a couple different takes of their video and practice what they're going to say, the process will be a lot smoother for them," Shelby advised.

Applications for the 2027 NILE Merit Heifer Program should be submitted no later than June 30 at the online portal found at [tinyurl.com/yfwuu68y](http://tinyurl.com/yfwuu68y).

Selected recipients are typically notified around Labor Day. While those chosen for the upcoming cycle are not required to be present at the 2026 NILE, they are expected to attend the 2027 NILE the following October with their bred heifer.

Any questions can be directed to Shelby at 406-256-2499 or [shelby@thenile.org](mailto:shelby@thenile.org). Those interested in donating a heifer for the 2027 NILE Merit Heifer Program may also reach out to Shelby for more details.

Supporters are also encouraged to mark their calendars for May 1 for the 2026 NILE Foundation's Stetsons & Stiletto's scholarship fundraiser event. The night features live and silent auctions, live music and dancing at the Swift River Ranch. All proceeds will benefit the Foundation and support youth education and scholarships. More information can be found at [nile.org](http://nile.org). — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**



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# Vigilance in monitoring calf health following exposure to wildfire smoke

Wildfires in western and central Nebraska mirror a broader trend of increasing wildfire frequency and magnitude across the western U.S. While the immediate impacts of wildfire are devastating to beef production and rural communities, the effects of wildfire smoke may also pose risks to both human and animal health. In the weeks and months following a wildfire event, producers should remain vigilant and monitor calves for signs of respiratory disease or illness.

Combustion of biomass during wildfires produces carbon dioxide and water vapor but also generates ash, a mixture of inorganic compounds. Of particular concern is ultrafine particulate matter (less than 2.5 µm), which can travel deep into the lung alveoli and enter the bloodstream. In humans, these particles have been associated with inflammation and oxidative stress.

Limited research has examined wildfire smoke exposure in cattle. However, research of a small group of Simmental-Jersey calves reported increased concentrations of cortisol, an indicator of stress, following exposure to smoke from a wildfire approximately 10 miles away from the study site.

In the same study, concentrations of ceruloplasmin, a marker of systemic inflammation, were elevated following the wildfire event. Antibodies including immunoglobulin and immunoglobu-

lin A were also increased, suggesting activation of the immune system.

Physiological stress and inflammation can negatively affect cattle performance and immune function. When immune defenses are compromised, calves may become more susceptible to respiratory pathogens.

In the development of bovine respiratory disease, opportunistic bacterial pathogens—including Mannheimia haemolytica, Pasteurella multocida, Histophilus somni and Mycoplasma bovis—are normally present at low levels in healthy calves. However, when viral infection or physiological stress suppresses immune function, these bacteria can proliferate in the respiratory tract, leading to morbidity, reduced performance and potentially death.

Because stressors such as wildfire smoke may increase disease susceptibility, monitoring calves closely for early signs of illness is important. One practical approach is the D.A.R.T. method, which helps producers identify calves that may require further evaluation.

#### D: Depression

Observe calf posture and behavior. Droopy ears or head carriage, lethargy, increased time spent lying down, and separation from pasture mates may indicate illness. Because cattle are prey animals and tend to hide sickness, subtle behavioral differences may only become

apparent after calves become accustomed to your presence.

#### A: Appetite

Reduced appetite—whether at the feed bunk or during nursing—can indicate a health challenge. On pasture, reduced gut fill relative to herd mates may also signal

decreased intake.

#### R: Respiration

Healthy cattle typically take 10-30 breaths per minute. Increased respiratory rate, shallow breathing or abnormal sounds such as coughing or raspy breathing may indicate respiratory disease. Nasal discharge or ex-

cessive eye secretions may also accompany illness.

#### T: Temperature

Rectal temperatures of approximately 103.5-104 F or greater are indicative of fever and warrant further attention.

Early detection and treatment of sick calves improves

the likelihood of recovery and helps reduce performance losses associated with respiratory disease. Extra vigilance and responsiveness may mitigate negative health outcomes in the weeks and months following wildfire smoke exposure. — Brock Ortner, Nebraska Extension

## Producer resources for label use found at new site

### USA LABEL (from page 1)

public awareness campaign, which can be found at productofusa.gov. The website's landing page boasts "Tastes Like Freedom" at the top, and includes resources for American producers looking to label their products with the voluntary label.

USDA also planned to launch a social media toolkit with customizable posts, graphics and guidance on use of the mark. Producers are encouraged to create social media posts that explain the meaning of the label and highlight the people and practices behind it.

"American consumers want to support America by buying American and this label will strengthen our food supply chain through transparency, fairness, and trust," Rollins said.

### Label use requirements

U.S. origin claims are ge-

nerically approved by the Food and Safety Inspection Service and may be used without prior USDA approval. However, the department emphasized that establishments must maintain written documentation to substantiate their claims. This could include descriptions of controls for animal origin and processing steps, traceability records and signed statements asserting that claims are truthful.

The American flag may be displayed on a product label only if all requirements are met for "Product of USA" or if accompanied by a description of the preparation and processing steps that occurred in the U.S., or in the specific state, territory or locality.

USDA noted that state- or territory-specific origin claims are permitted only if the products meet the same "Product of USA" claims, but with the state or territory replacing the U.S. For example, a beef product can use the label "Product of Idaho" if the product is de-

rived from an animal born, raised, slaughtered and then processed in Idaho. However, beef slaughtered in Mexico but cooked and sliced in Idaho could not bear the "Product of USA" label, but could use a "Beef cooked and sliced in Idaho" label.

### Industry support

Cattle groups welcomed the public awareness campaign.

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA) said that it has championed truthful origin labeling for years to ensure labels meet consumer expectations and U.S. cattle producers are recognized for their product.

"The updated 'Product of USA' label finally means what folks always assumed other inspection labels meant—that the animal was born, raised, harvested, and processed here at home," said USCA President Justin Tupper.

Tupper added that the voluntary label will help restore trust in labeling while the

group continues to push for mandatory country-of-origin labeling (MCOOL).

USCA encouraged industry stakeholders to review the label criteria, maintain proper documentation, use USDA's messaging to ensure clarity for consumers, and share original content on social media.

"This campaign is about rebuilding and earning trust," Tupper said. "When consumers can quickly identify products that are truly made here at home, everybody wins—families, rural communities, and the entire U.S. cattle industry."

Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA (R-CALF) applauded the campaign, but said Congress must act further by passing MCOOL legislation.

"This is a positive step in advancing our goal of empowering consumers to support America's beef supply chain through their purchasing decisions," said R-CALF CEO Bill Bullard. — Anna Miller Forto, WLJ managing editor



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Tues, April 7

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Tues, April 14

Burgers at the Barn and Special Recreational Cattle Sale  
Tues., April 28

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# Wolf, grizzly recovery fuels ESA debate

## ESA HEARING (from page 1)

that recovery could be accelerated with better funding and staffing at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

"The service absolutely needs the capacity to do this work," Li said, noting recent staffing losses have stretched the agency thin. Li previously served as assistant director of USFWS' Ecological Services program, overseeing ESA work.

Witnesses also emphasized the importance of using localized, state-generated data in ESA decision-making.

Thomas Riley of Riley Consulting LLC pointed to instances in which federal agencies relied on generalized or non-local data rather than site-specific science, leading to flawed outcomes. In one example, he said a federal biological opinion disregarded local data on river temperatures, resulting in unintended ecological harm.

"There needs to be transparency and trust that local science is used in the decision-making process and not dismissed," Riley said.

That concern aligns with newly introduced legislation from Sen. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), the Local Data for Better Conservation Act. The bill would require federal agencies to use data gathered by state wildlife agencies when making ESA listing and delisting decisions, reinforcing the idea that the "best available science" should include on-the-ground expertise from the states.

## Wolves, grizzlies show tensions

High-profile species such as gray wolves and grizzly bears illustrated the broader tensions between recovery, management and regulatory certainty.

Lawmakers described growing wolf populations and increasing conflicts with live-

stock producers, while witnesses cited successful recovery metrics. Yablonski noted that wolf populations have grown from roughly 1,000 animals to about 6,000 nationwide, and called the species a "recovery success story."

Grizzly bears drew similar debate, as populations have recovered in places like the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Still, delisting keeps getting delayed, often by lawsuits. Yablonski warned that shifting criteria as bears expand can erode trust.

"We were told if this distinct population segment reached recovery, it could be delisted," he said. "Now the rules are changing."

Lummis echoed those frustrations, describing grizzlies as a "zombie listing" that remains on the ESA despite exceeding recovery targets.

Witnesses also touched on the difficulty of balancing ESA protections with infrastructure and land use. Riley said man-

aging the law in western water systems often comes down to juggling flood control, agriculture and habitat needs at the same time. He added that conservation efforts must fit within today's working landscapes, rather than attempt to recreate conditions that no longer exist.

Similarly, Li pointed to emerging tools such as conservation banking and digital platforms like USFWS' IPaC system, which streamlines project reviews and could be expanded using artificial intelligence.

Beyond Lummis' bill, broader ESA reform efforts are gaining traction, including Rep. Bruce Westerman's (R-AR-04) ESA Amendments Act of 2025, which would shift more authority to state, local and tribal governments while curbing litigation from environmental groups. He argued that current red tape hinders land management, infrastructure and economic balance. — Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor

## LEGAL LEDGER

### Court upholds FL's lab-grown meat ban

A federal appeals court ruled on March 23 that Florida's ban on lab-grown meat may remain in effect. A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit reviewed whether the ban could remain in effect after California cultivated meat company Upside Foods sued the state of Florida in 2024. "Because Florida's ban on lab-grown meat does not regulate Upside's ingredients, premises, facilities, or operations, federal law does not preempt SB 1084," wrote Circuit Judge Andrew Basher. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) signed Senate Bill (SB) 1084 into effect in the spring of 2024, which prohibited the sale of lab-grown meat in the state. A federal judge in the Northern District of Florida previously denied Upside Foods' request for a preliminary injunction to stop the ban. The 11th Circuit heard oral arguments about the appeal in November.

### BLM to delay WY checkerboard horse gather

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is delaying the gather of more than 3,000 feral horses from Wyoming's "checkerboard lands" for at least another six months. In a joint motion filed with the U.S. District Court for Wyoming, federal attorneys asked for a delay in legal proceedings until mid-May, raising concerns with funding, staffing and legality. The request was granted by U.S. District Judge Kelly Rankin. The BLM's plans to remove the horses on the checkerboard areas where public and private lands meet were originally approved, but then appealed, delayed and declared illegal by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. BLM planned to move forward with its plans anyway but was faced with litigation from wild horse advocacy groups. Now, the gather is unlikely to happen until the end of the fiscal year in September.

### Meat processing workers to receive settlement

Settlements have been reached in a lawsuit that claims some beef and pork companies colluded in price-fixing measures to keep wages low for their beef and pork processing plant workers. The settlements total \$202.7 million, according to a news release by the firms Hagens Berman Sobol Shapiro LLP, Handley Farah & Anderson PLLC and Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll PLLC. Nearly two dozen companies are named in the lawsuit. Individuals who worked at the defendants' beef or pork processing plants between 2000 and 2024 are eligible for payment from nine defendants that total \$191.45 million. Individuals who worked at the processing plants between 2014 and 2024 are eligible for payments from settlements with two additional defendants that total \$11.25 million. The lawsuit continues against Agri States Inc., Greater Omaha Packing Company, Smithfield Foods Inc. and Smithfield Packaged Meats Corporation.

### CO ag, hunting groups form coalition

A coalition of Colorado's wildlife conservation, hunting, agricultural and county organizations is uniting to call for science-based wildlife management in the state. The coalition issued a statement following the early March meetings of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Commission, where commissioners voted to advance a citizen petition to prohibit the commercial sale of wildlife fur in Colorado. "Farmers and ranchers manage the lands that provide habitat for roughly 80% of Colorado's winter range, and the success of Colorado's wildlife depends on sound, science-based management of these critical lands," said Erin Spaur, executive vice president of Colorado Cattlemen's Association, a group in the coalition. "The Commission's decision to override CPW staff threatens that balance, and is an insult to the people of Colorado." The coalition called on CPW to respect agency science and professional expertise in making wildlife management decisions.

### USDA delays poultry industry rule

USDA is delaying implementation of the Poultry Grower Payment Systems and Capital Improvement Systems rule until the end of 2027. The Agricultural Marketing Service said it is proposing to delay the final rule to "allow time for further consideration of possible actions that may be taken regarding the disposition of the rule." Under the rule, poultry companies would not be able to dock a grower's pay under a tournament system, but companies could give bonuses. Companies would also be limited to where the variability of performance payments would be capped at 25% of a contract's gross annual pay. The Campaign for Contract Agriculture Reform (CCAR), a coalition of groups that includes Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund USA, urged USDA to implement the rule in July. "The Poultry Grower Payment Systems and Capital Improvements Systems rule finally took meaningful steps to right the wrongs of the payment system," said Steve Etko, CCAR policy director.

### UNL to donate game proceeds to wildfire relief

Nebraska Athletics announced in mid-March that it planned to donate all ticket proceeds from University of Nebraska-Lincoln's (UNL) Spring Football Game to aid Nebraska wildfire relief efforts. "Nebraskans always step up in times of need, and we want to do our part to help our fellow Nebraskans affected by these wildfires," said Troy Dannen, Nebraska athletic director. Donations will help support Nebraska volunteer firefighters. The intrasquad scrimmage was set for kickoff on March 28.



## VIDEO AUCTION

**March 19, Hudson Oaks, TX**  
Superior Livestock Auction hosted their video auction live on March 19 from the Superior Livestock Studio in Hudson Oaks, TX. Cattle producers sold 20,997 head of calves, yearlings and bred stock total-

ing 163 lots from 17 states for this offering. Strong buyer participation from several bidders throughout the auction resulted in 71 different successful buyers. Cattle were sold on contract to deliver immediately through August. Regions 3/4/5/6 feeder

steers started with strong demand until buyers' confidence was tested because of outside pressures, ultimately leading to \$5-10 lower than the last test. Feeder heifers from the same regions were also \$10-15 lower. Feeder steers and heifers from Regions 1/2 were

again only lightly tested and were steady to \$5 lower. Regions 3/4/5/6 weaned calves and calves on cows saw decent demand at \$3-8 lower. A strong bred stock offering was met with increased buyer participation and demand showing optimism in the market.

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# California leads ag economic output in the US

## FOOD DOLLAR (from page 1)

Parum noted, pointing to the growing role of processing, transportation, packaging and retail.

Parum said the shift is evident in the "marketing bill," which accounted for 88.2 cents of every dollar spent on U.S.-produced food in 2024. Farmers' share fell to 11.8

cents, highlighting how much of that dollar goes to processing, transportation and retail after products leave the farm.

While the farm share remains small overall, it varies widely by product. Minimally processed goods return a larger portion of the dollar to producers. Fresh eggs returned 69.1 cents per dollar to farmers in 2024, while beef reached 52.2 cents and milk

50.8 cents. Pork rose to 23.7 cents, with poultry and fish also posting modest gains. By contrast, heavily processed foods returned far less. Bakery products dropped to 4.8 cents per dollar, snack foods to 9.7 cents and soft drinks to just 1.3 cents.

Despite the small share retained by producers, agriculture's broader economic footprint is immense. Munch

emphasized that food and agriculture support about 30% of total U.S. employment, or roughly one in three jobs, even though on-farm employment accounts for less than 2%.

"The economic reach of food and agriculture is especially evident in the jobs and income it supports across the broader economy," Munch said, noting that food manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing alone account for more than 24 million jobs. Another 24 million jobs are supported through supplier industries and household spending tied to the sector.

Altogether, the system generates more than \$3 trillion in wages and salaries and contributes over \$1.3 trillion in tax revenue at the local, state and federal levels, according to Munch.

The role of food and agriculture varies widely by state, Munch said, citing the 2026 Feeding the Economy report. In total dollars, the largest ag

economies tend to be those with both strong production and large consumer markets. California leads with more than \$1.2 trillion in food and agriculture output, followed by Texas at \$964 billion, Florida at \$560 billion and New York at \$494 billion. Munch noted that in these states, the sector's impact stretches well beyond the farm, supported by extensive food manufacturing, transportation and retail networks.

But when measured as a share of a state's total economy, a different picture emerges. Munch points out that in states like Iowa and Nebraska, food and agriculture account for about 44% of all economic activity, followed by South Dakota at 41%, Idaho at 35% and Kansas at 32%. In these regions, shifts in commodity markets or input costs can have a more direct effect on jobs, tax revenue and local businesses.

Even in more diversified

states, however, the 2026 report shows that agriculture still accounts for at least 12% of economic activity, underscoring how deeply the sector is woven into the broader U.S. economy.

Munch noted that keeping production in the U.S. helps support jobs, wages and supply chains at home. At the same time, declines in areas like fruits and vegetables raise the risk of more economic activity moving overseas.

"The economic contribution of food and agriculture, and critically its domestic presence within the United States, is essential to food security and economic stability," Munch said. "At its core, this is not just about food. It is about whether the economic engine tied to feeding, fueling and clothing a nation remains rooted at home or gradually shifts beyond U.S. borders." — Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor

## Selection pressure is a precious commodity

Selection and mating decisions in cow-calf herds need to be made with a clear objective in mind. There are more trait-specific EPDs and bio-economic indices available to cattle breeders than ever before. These are powerful tools which can be used to improve calving ease, growth rates and carcass quality.

Perhaps of even greater long-term impact, genetic values can be used to improve the next generation of cows regarding milk production, mature size, fertility, foot soundness, environmental fit and longevity. With this in mind, why is it more important than ever to be intentional when making selection and mating decisions? Because selection pressure is a precious commodity. It should not be squandered.

As you make decisions this spring in preparation for breeding season, answer the following questions to determine where selection pressure should be applied:

• Will your bulls be terminal sires, or will daughters be retained as your next generation of cows?

• Do you intend to use the bulls on virgin heifers or mature cows?

• What is your intended marketing endpoint of the calves sired? Weaning, yearlings or as fed cattle?

• What do your past production records indicate with regards to mature cow size, percent calf crop weaned, weaning weights, yearling weights and carcass merit?

It can be challenging to sort through each and every genetic value available to consider in bull selection. That being said, answering the questions above will help you identify the trait (or traits) of primary economic importance to your operation on which selection pressure should be prioritized.

Selection pressure applied to improving the genetic potential of a few prioritized traits can improve the profit

potential of your next calf crop and will optimize your return on investment in bulls purchased. — Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist



## SALE CALENDAR

Sale Calendar is a service to our advertisers. There is a minimum advertising requirement to be eligible to be listed in the Sale Calendar. Contact your fieldman for more information or to have your date added to the Sale Calendar. We will only run auction sale dates or private treaty start dates.

### ANGUS

**Mar. 30** – Silver Bit Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, May, ID  
**Apr. 1** – Nissen Angus, Bull Sale, Chinook, MT  
**Apr. 2** – Arntzen Angus, Bull Sale, Hilger, MT  
**Apr. 2** – Midland Bull Test, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT  
**Apr. 4** – Botts Angus, Bull Sale, Huntley, MT  
**Apr. 4** – Brooks Chalky Butte, Bull Sale, Bowman, ND  
**Apr. 6** – Brent Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Maywood, NE  
**Apr. 6** – FBA Ranch, Bull Sale, Havre, MT

### BALANCER

**Apr. 2** – Midland Bull Test, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT

### CHAROLAIS

**Apr. 2** – Midland Bull Test, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT  
**Apr. 3** – Brevig Charolais,

Bull Sale, Lewiston, MT

### HEREFORD

**Apr. 6** – Stuber Ranch, Bull Sale, Bowman, ND

### LIMOUSIN

**Apr. 2** – XYZ Ranch & TL Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Delta, CO

### LIM-FLEX

**Apr. 2** – XYZ Ranch & TL Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Delta, CO

### OPTIMIZER

**Apr. 2** – Midland Bull Test, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT

### RED ANGUS

**Mar. 30** – Axtell Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Sterling, CO  
**Apr. 2** – Midland Bull Test, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT  
**Apr. 2** – Northern Lites Red Angus, Production Sale, Glasgow, MT

### SALERS

**Apr. 2** – Midland Bull Test, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT

### SIMANGUS

**Apr. 4** – Big Country Genetics, Bull Sale, Cody, WY

### SIMMENTAL

**Apr. 4** – Big Country Genetics, Bull Sale, Cody, WY



# AMERICAN MADE

## BULL & FEMALE SALE

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8TH, 2026

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# MARKET NEWS

## MARKET SITUATION REPORT

WLJ compiles its market reports, ODJ stories and statistics from USDA and independent marketing organizations.

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 3/25/2026	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	236.00 ▲	N/A	211.83
CME Feeder Index	361.59 ▲	358.32	286.90
Boxed Beef Average	N/A ▲	400.30	335.72
Average Dressed Steers	N/A ▲	N/A	330.92
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,473 ▲	1,469	1,431
Weekly Slaughter**	508,000 ▼	525,000	560,000
Weekly Beef Production***	455.3 ▼	469.4	486.7
Hide/Offal Value	12.34 ▲	12.25	11.58
Corn Price	4.69 ▼	4.70	4.53

\*Average weight for previous week. \*\*Total slaughter for previous week. \*\*\*Estimated year-to-date figure in million pounds for previous week.

BEEF REPORT: Weekly Composite Boxed Beef												
WEEK ENDING	COMPREHENSIVE Loads/Price		PRIME Loads/Price		BRANDED Loads/Price		CHOICE Loads/Price		SELECT Loads/Price		UNGRADED Loads/Price	
March 20	6,058	398.80	295	408.19	1,158	404.14	1,789	394.89	471	388.30	2,346	374.54
March 13	6,258	390.66	269	399.99	1,208	393.95	1,969	388.16	450	381.30	2,361	368.81
March 6	6,463	381.17	274	391.98	1,133	385.13	1,927	379.00	561	371.21	2,569	358.47
February 27	6,133	373.86	316	385.27	1,188	376.42	1,864	371.62	488	364.17	2,277	351.53

CUTOUTS						FED BOXED BEEF					
DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT		50% LEAN	90% LEAN					
March 26	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A					
March 25	391.69	395.49	345.50		193.94	441.74					
March 24	399.91	394.50	343.03		193.04	438.78					
March 23	399.13	393.83	345.00		192.89	447.39					
March 20	400.11	392.94	343.94		192.39	N/A					

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle							
	3/20	3/23	3/24	3/25	3/26	High*	Low*
Apr.	23405	23550	23538	23598	N/A	24775	16853
Jun.	23343	23505	23460	23588	N/A	24830	16668
Aug.	23083	23210	23210	23340	N/A	25018	17005
Oct.	22830	22928	22975	23075	N/A	25093	18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle							
	3/20	3/23	3/24	3/25	3/26	High*	Low*
Mar.	35775	35955	36030	36208	N/A	38103	21920
Apr.	35118	35395	35445	35660	N/A	38280	22268
May	34638	34988	35070	35328	N/A	38020	22460
Aug.	34613	34925	35023	35253	N/A	37860	24118

\*High and low figures are for the life of the contract.

FED CATTLE TRADE	Head Count	Avg. Weight	Avg. Price
<b>WEEKLY WEIGHTED AVERAGES</b>			
Live FOB Steer	96	1,575	236.00
Live FOB Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK</b>			
Live FOB Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Live FOB Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR</b>			
Live FOB Steer	2,212	1,520	211.83
Live FOB Heifer	631	1,377	213.00
Dressed Del Steer	637	962	330.92
Dressed Del Heifer	594	824	334.00

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: MARCH 22, 2026		
	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	29,241	2,480
Formula	220,859	415
Negotiated Cash	65,859	119
Negotiated Grid	26,193	1,360
Packer Owned	10,562	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>352,714</b>	<b>4,374</b>

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS			FORWARD BEEF SALES		
Delivery Month		Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,489		
Mar. '26	146,644	Neg. Sales 21+ days	665		
Apr. '26	184,936	Formula sales	3,821		
May '26	86,748	Forward contract sales	83		
Jun. '26	101,218	Domestic sales	5,542		
Jul. '26	68,288	NAFTA Exports	103		

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		236.33	+1.40
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		233.35	+0.04
Ontario Auctions			
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		N/A	N/A
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		N/A	N/A
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs		150.28	+7.92

\*Price comparison from one week ago.

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, March 24, 2026			
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	519.71	511.67	448.09
601-700 lbs	460.22	455.26	435.36
701-800 lbs	403.61	401.00	379.58
801-900 lbs	367.19	371.31	369.97
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	509.09	509.37	393.95
501-600 lbs	457.28	461.91	378.73
601-700 lbs	423.36	412.61	370.52
701-800 lbs	372.06	383.85	327.66

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
Feeders	3/16/2026	3/9/2026	0	230,638

IMPORTS SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE			
March 26, 2026			
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary			
Receipts EST: N/A	Week Ago EST: N/A	Year Ago Act: 3,950	
THIS REPORT WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED AFTER MAY 12TH 2025. THE BORDER WILL BE CLOSED FOR LIVESTOCK IMPORTS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.			

Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	N/A
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	N/A
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	N/A
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	N/A
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	N/A
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	N/A

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

Selected Auctions										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	PAIRS	
										SLAUGHTER BULLS	REPLACEMENTS
<b>NORTHWEST</b>											
No report available Blackfoot, ID											
March 19	Burley, ID	428	607-624	503	408-515	418-419	388	297-317	140-182		
No report available Emmett, ID											
March 21	Eugene, OR	813	485-540*	430-517*	360-460*	320-385*	300-340*		150-170	1,500-1,950	
March 23	Madras, OR	1,012	390-470*	380-467*	355-472*	320-425*	260-345*		171-184	1,400-3,000	
March 18	Vale, OR	1,420	625-690	540-605	500-570	430-460	386-410	345-361	145-180		
No report available Davenport, WA											
March 19	Toppenish, WA	1,110	600-660	505-567	455-525	400-425	350-371		175-200	2,300-3,000	
No report available March 19, 2026											
March 19	Orland, CA	929	535-610	445-530	405-452	360-421	315-350		176-195		
No report available Escalon, CA											
No report available Famoso, CA											
March 25	Galt, CA	723	510-562	460-524	440-520	400-500	335-410		100-184		
March 24	Turlock, CA	1,135	500-577.50	490-570	440-492.50	380-444.50	365-380	320-350	140-177	3,300-4,600	
No report available Salina, UT											
<b>FARWEST</b>											
March 19	Orland, CA	929	450-630	400-573	350-450	325-420	300-355		150-180	2,500-5,000	
No report available Escalon, CA											
No report available Famoso, CA											
March 25	Galt, CA	723	500-577.50	490-570	440-492.50	380-444.50	365-380	320-350	140-177	2,700-3,800	
No report available Salina, UT											
<b>NORTH CENTRAL</b>											
March 23	Iowa	4,954	695	565-675	484-620	407.50-534	395-466	369-415	321-382.25	134-270	
March 24	Miles City, MT	412		492.50-549	428-531	405-490	365-429.50	336-380	265-337	145-280	
No report available Bassett, NE											
No report available Ericson, NE											
No report available Imperial, NE											
March 18	Kearney, NE	4,400	540-570	480-529	476-520	409-455	368-429	302.50-373.50	165-189		
March 20	Lexington, NE	971	502.50-517.50	422-471	422-471	364-431	335-360	309.50-344	200-249		
No report available Ogallala, NE											
No report available Valentine, NE											
March 20	Herreid, SD	3,150	620	523-600	470-531	426-445	369-414	323-367	311		
March 25	Torrington, WY	3,912	631	551-610	499-553	420-486	370-391.50	332-383	334-355		
<b>SOUTH CENTRAL</b>											
March 19	Wilcox, AZ	934	473-550	505-595	520-565	428-530	372-402.50		145-205	3,580-3,800	
March 23	Colorado	1,483	495-505	449-483	426-492.50	363-395	320-342.50		181-210	3,675-3,750	
March 18	La Junta, CO	958	555-602.50	532.50-552.50	436-503	420-450	357.50-380	303-353	136-174	2,600-4,800	
March 23	Loma, CO	736	567.50	462.50-518	388-462.50	362.50-410	332	327.50	173-209	1,825-4,000	
March 25	Dodge City, KS	3,345	505-660	430-545	390-455	375-412.50	317.50-382.50	158-183.50			
March 19	Pratt, KS	3,877	442.50-467.40	375-455	335-405	332.50-351	302.50-320	191-220			
March 26	Clovis, NM	1,596	575-650	525-590	440-525	385-460	350-405	260-360	170-193	3,600-4,000	
March 25	El Reno, OK	7,046	545-620	465-590	425-465	360-425	320-360	250-340	185-210	2,800-4,000	
March 24	McAlester, OK	869	535-570	462.50-500	400.75-450	359-380.50	311-364	154-191	133-161	2,300-4,550	
March 24	Oklahoma City, OK	5,370	540-622.50	437.50-555	407-479	363-390	330-383	297.25-326	183-227	1,975-3,650	
March 20	Cuero, TX	1,172	530-540	465-490	403-465	356-399	301-397	160-183.50		2,450-4,700	
March 19	Dalhart, TX	2,809	540-557.50	455-523	404-435	359-421	331-357	276-337.50	179-224	2,750-3,050	
March 19	San Angelo, TX	597	600-675	500-615	455-560	421-485	374-420	316-358			
March 19	Tulia, TX	940	525-560	440-505	409-440	365-413	322-360	304.50-351			
March 26	Clovis, NM	1,596	650-702	565-680	480-610	425-570	340-417	343-382	282-351	160.75-200	2,500-4,550
March 25	El Reno, OK	7,046	720	590-710	550-620	480-590	395-470	364-402	297.50-372	100-200.50	1,550-2,900
March 24	McAlester, OK	869	610-640	520-580	450-540	370-460	335-415	332.50-362.50	262.50-335.50		
March 24	Oklahoma City, OK	5,370	490-710	445-580	460-545	375-515	350-383	260-3			

# An update on beef imports

Beef imports increased 18% year over year in 2025 and are up 61.4% since 2022, the year of record U.S. beef production and when the current market run began. Total beef production in 2025 was down 3.6% year over year and is down 8.1% since 2022. More importantly, relative to beef imports, production of nonfed beef (from cull cows and bulls) was down 8% last year and is down 24.8% since 2022. In fact, nonfed beef production in 2025 was the smallest total since 2005.

Increased beef imports are the market response to declining lean beef supplies due to decreased nonfed beef production, since most beef imports are lean processing beef. Higher prices of lean beef in the U.S. prompts increased imports from any of several potential beef import sources. The amount of beef imports from various sources depends on several factors, including:

the country's ability to produce and export, other export markets for the country, and relative price competitiveness of the country (which depends on exchange rates and tariffs the country faces).

Since 2022, Australia has been the largest source of beef imports (up 251.1% since 2022), Canada is No. 2 (up 4.3%), Brazil is No. 3 (up 99.9%), Mexico is No. 4 (down 4%), New Zealand is No. 5 (up 37.2%) and Uruguay is No. 6 (up 158.8%). Several smaller sources contributed another 9% to total beef imports in 2025, up 79.3% since 2022, (Figure 1).

Record-high U.S. ground beef prices continue to be the focus of political discussion along with the possibility of increased beef imports to address unprecedented lean beef prices. It is important to remember that beef imports are limited only by market forces that determine the total

quantity and the mix of sources supplying beef to the U.S. market. The latest data for January show some interesting changes in beef imports. Total January beef imports were up 7.7% year over year and up 86% compared to January 2022 (Figure 2).

Most noticeable in Figure 2 is the jump in the "other country" category, up 119% from one year ago. The biggest part of these other sources is Paraguay, a new player in the beef import market. January beef imports from Paraguay were up 147.4% year over year and accounted for 61.1% of the other category and 10.8% of total monthly beef imports. Paraguay has only been exporting to the U.S. since 2024.

For January, Paraguay was able to capture a significant portion of the other country quota that Brazil has dominated the past four years. January beef imports from Brazil were down 15.1% year over year. Combined January imports from Brazil and Paraguay were up 5.3% year over year. This illustrates that markets are determining the total level of imports and also the distribution of sources of beef imports.

Argentina has been the focus of much of the political discussion about beef imports. Argentina represented 26.1% of the other category and 2.3% of total beef imports in 2025 (Figure 1). Argentina was granted an expanded tariff rate quota in 2026. Total beef imports from Argentina in 2025 were more than double the

Figure 1. U.S. Beef Imports, 2019-2025  
Million Pounds, Carcass Weight

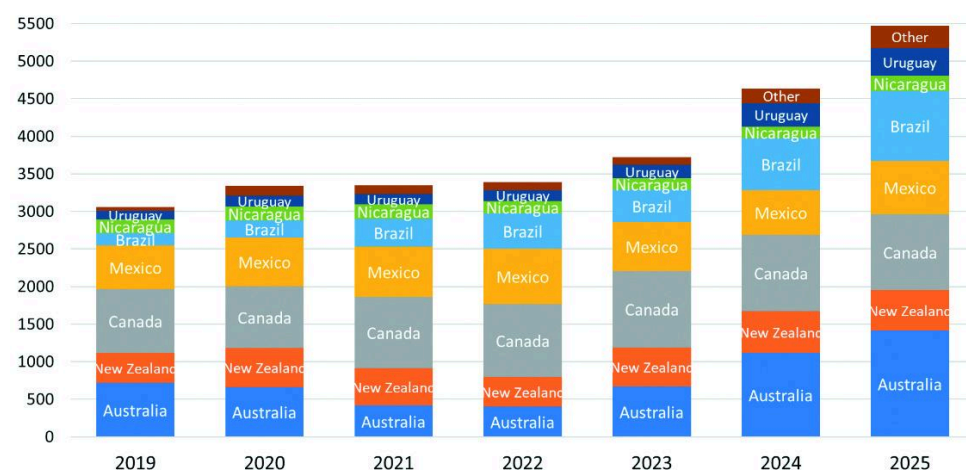
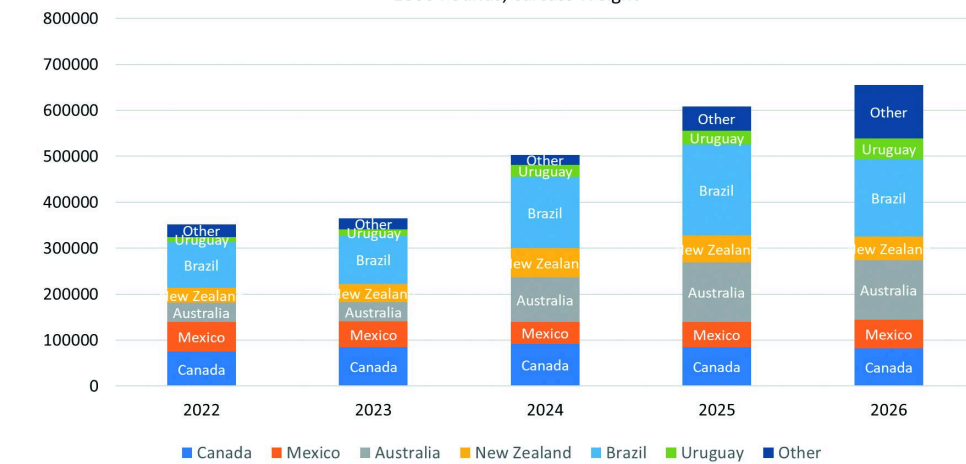


Figure 2. Beef Imports, January  
1000 Pounds, Carcass Weight



## Feeder placements 4% higher in February

### MARKETS (from page 1)

about \$3 to \$395.49 on the Select cutout.

"Poor wholesale beef demand pre-Easter is no surprise but many weren't that concerned because the weekly production schedule has been historically small all quarter, especially in recent weeks," wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, in The Beef on Wednesday. "Expectations of a larger slaughter this week evaporated in the face of a building, unsold boxed beef inventory."

USDA released its latest Cattle on Feed report on March 20. The report showed cattle and calves on feed as of March 1 at 11.5 million head, slightly below the same time last year. Placements were 4% higher at 1.61 million head. Marketings were 7% lower, and other disappearance was 17% lower.

### Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures closed higher over the week. The March contract gained more than \$6 to close at \$361.87, and the April contract gained more than \$5 to close at \$353.35.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index gained a couple of dollars to close at \$361.59.

Corn futures traded steady

to lower, down 2 cents on the May contract to \$4.67 and down 3 cents on the July contract to \$4.77.

**Missouri:** Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 6,500 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, at the open, feeder steers sold \$5-15 lower and feeder heifers sold steady to \$5 lower. A group of benchmark steers averaging 729 lbs. sold from \$340-372, averaging \$358.55.

**Oklahoma:** Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 5,500 head on Monday. Compared to the last sale, at the mid-session, feeder steers sold mostly steady and steer calves sold \$5-15 higher. Feeder heifers and heifer calves sold steady to \$5 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 782 lbs. sold from \$350-380.50, averaging \$365.10.

**South Dakota:** Sioux Falls Regional in Worthing sold 3,577 head on Monday. Compared to the previous auction, sales were too lightly tested a week earlier for an accurate comparison, with the exception of 900-950 lbs. heifers, which sold steady to \$1 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 721 lbs. sold between \$392-420, averaging \$406.62. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**

previous quota and were limited by market conditions rather than the quota.

In January, imports of Argentine beef were up 122.5% year over year but still represented just 16.1% of other country imports and 2.8% of total January imports (Figure 2). It's not clear whether Ar-

gentina will be able to fill the additional quota this year. The increase would be at the expense of domestic consumption and/or other export markets in Argentina. Moreover, the previous discussion highlights the fact the any increase in beef imports from Argentina would likely displace some

imports from other sources.

Expected growth in beef imports in 2026 will continue to be determined by market forces and may include some relative increase in imports from Argentina. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

## VISALIA LIVESTOCK MARKET

# ANNUAL BRED COW & PAIR SALE

# SATURDAY, APRIL 18

700+ Head offered

LUNCH 12PM • SALE 12:30PM

### FEATURED OFFERING:

#### 300 FANCY FRONT-END FEMALES

- FALL-CALVING, FIRST CALF COMING 3-YEAR-OLDS
- ANGUS, ANGUSX, RED ANGUS
- ULTRASOUND CONFIRMED TO CALVE SEPT. 10-OCT.20
- HAND-SELECTED FROM THE TOP END OF 1,400 REPLACEMENTS
- FROM REPUTATION RANCHES
- FOOTHILL & ANAPLAS VACCINATED
- COMPLETE MODIFIED-LIVE VACCINATION AND MINERAL PROGRAM
- RUNNING THE IN THE SIERRA FOOTHILLS FOR TWO SEASONS

### COMPLETE HERD DISPERSAL

#### 85 FALL-CALVING RUNNING AGE COWS

- FOOTHILL & ANAPLAS VACCINATED
- COMPLETE YEARLY VACCINATION & MINERAL PROGRAM
- BULLS FROM LUDVIGSON STOCK FARM & IRON LORENZEN RED ANGUS

### OTHER FEATURED OFFERING:

#### 40 HEAD - ONE IRON FALL-CALVING, 1ST

#### CALF HEIFERS

- ANGUS/ANGUS X
- BRED TO LOW BIRTH LINZ ANGUS BULLS
- CALVING SEPT./OCT.
- ON A COMPLETE YEARLY MODIFIED-LIVE VACCINATION PROGRAM

#### 40 HEAD - FRONT END FALL-CALVING COWS

- 4-5 YEARS OLD
- COMPLETE YEARLY VACCINATION PROGRAM
- BRED TO HIGH-END ANGUS BULLS
- CALVING SEPT./OCT.

#### 120 HEAD - FALL-CALVING YOUNG COWS

- 3-4 YEARS OLD, ANGUS/ANGUS X
- CA NATIVE COWS
- FOOTHILL VACCINATED
- COMPLETE YEARLY VACCINATION PROGRAM
- BRED TO ANGUS BULLS
- CALVING SEPT./OCT.

**PLUS SEVERAL SMALLER CONSIGNMENTS OF YOUNG FALL-CALVING COWS AND HEIFERS, AS WELL AS SOME SMALLER GROUPS OF SPRING PAIRS AND CLOSE-UP COWS.**

## VISALIA LIVESTOCK MARKET

733 N. BEN MADDOX WAY VISALIA, CA 93279  
 OFFICE 559.625.9615 • WWW.VISALIALLIVESTOCK.COM  
 RANDY BAXLEY  
 559.906.9760



### COMING EVENTS

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

**April 21-22** – Registration is now open for the Public Lands Council 2026 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. Details: tinyurl.com/5cwkhaj7.

**April 21-23** – The U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef will host its 2026 General Assembly meeting in Tampa, FL. Details: tinyurl.com/3x6axz7j.

### 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.)

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

**April 16** – Purina Animal Nutrition, along with the Land O'Lakes Foundation, has opened its scholarship program designed to assist students with experience in agriculture and livestock production in pursuing their passions and furthering their education. Details: purinamills.com/scholarship.

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- 18 ..... Livestock Supplies
- 19 ..... Ranch/Livestock Services
- 20 ..... Real Estate Opportunities
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- 21 ..... Real Estate Wanted
- 22 ..... Real Estate Rent/Lease/Trade
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- 24 ..... Pasture Wanted
- 25 ..... Mineral Rights
- 26 ..... Hay/Feed/Seed
- 27 ..... Irrigation
- 28 ..... Ag/Industrial Supplies
- 29 ..... Fencing/Corrals
- 30 ..... Equipment For Sale
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# SALE REPORTS

**WHISTLING WINDS ANGUS BULL SALE**  
**March 16, Hingham, MT**  
**58 Angus yearling bulls ..... \$11,707**  
**50 Commercial spring open heifers. .... 3,350**  
**Auctioneer: Kyle Shobe**  
**TOPS:** WW Bardolier 5103, 2/5/2025 by GDAR Bardolier 2363; to Stepler Ranch, Culbertson, MT, \$20,000. WW Bardolier 5643, 2/7/2025 by GDAR Bardolier 2363; to Miller Ranch, Lewistown, MT, \$18,500. WW Bardolier 5109, 2/18/2025 by GDAR Bardolier 2363; to Richard McCay, Lewistown, MT, \$18,000. WW Confederate 5375, 2/18/2025 by Shipwheel Confederate 1507; to C Bar Angus, Malta, MT, \$16,500. WW Gratitude 5952, 2/4/2025 by MAR Gratitude 26; to Miller Ranch, Lewistown, MT, \$15,500. — **KEVIN MURNIN**

**BAR STAR CATTLE BULL SALE**  
**March 19, Musselshell, MT**  
**53 Hereford bulls ..... \$10,585**  
**118 Commercial spring open heifers. .... 3,046**  
**Auctioneer: Greg Goggins**  
**TOPS:** Bar Star Enterprise 5001, 3/1/2025 by TH 10H 0225 Venture 104L; to Boyd Meyer, Winsor, CO, \$36,000. Bar Star Wildcat Mav 5549 ET, 1/10/2025 by PCC 7009 173D Maverick 0183 ET; to Gary Romey, Hot Springs, SD, \$26,000. Bar Star Downpour 5042, 3/10/2025 by Churchill Red Cloud 0376H ET; to Cook Angus, Colstrip, MT, and Russell Voigt, Mandan, ND, \$16,000. Bar Star 2130 Rebellion 5068, 3/24/2025 by Bar Star Rebellion 013 ET; to Tyler Moose, Edwall, WA, \$18,000. Bar Star Vengeance 5052 ET, 3/12/2025 by Loewen Genesis G16 ET; to Forder Land and Cattle, Highwood, MT, \$15,000. Bar Star 2244 Divergent 4203, 8/28/2024 by CRR 824 Divergent 170; to Douglas Jolly, Hugo, CO, \$15,000. Bar Star 419 Nemesis 4236, 12/1/2024 by Bar Star Nemesis 1213 ET; to Douglas Jolly, Hugo, CO, \$15,000. — **KEVIN MURNIN**

**SOUTH MONTANA ANGUS ASSOC. BULL SALE**  
**March 21, Ramsay, MT**  
**62 Angus yearling bulls ..... \$7,354**  
**Auctioneer: Joe Goggins**  
**Sale Manager: Ron Frye Marketing**  
**TOPS:** EAR Cow Boss N10, 3/1/2025 by GDAR All In 024; to Forcella Angus Ranch, Whitehall, MT, \$15,500. 39, 1/8/2025 by GAR Sunbeam; to Buckingham Ranch, White Sulphur Springs, MT, \$13,000. EAR Riverside N8, 2/4/2025 by Vermillion Riverside; to Bodell Ranch, White Sulphur Springs, MT, \$12,500. EAR Chunks of Gold N34, 2/17/2025 by EAR Right Answer L34; to Rick Johnston, White Sulphur Springs, MT, \$12,500. EAR Starstruck N16, 1/26/2025 by GDAR All In 024; to Richard Eberline, Sheridan, MT, \$12,000. Westra Remington N11, 1/12/2025 by Poss Remington; to Morgan Ranch, Belgrade, MT, \$12,000. — **KEVIN MURNIN**

**OPEN GATE RANCH BULL SALE**  
**March 24, Fairfield, MT**  
**73 SimAngus yearling bulls ..... \$9,062**  
**19 Commercial fall open heifers ..... 3,532**  
**23 Commercial spring open heifers. .... 3,126**  
**Auctioneer: Roger Jacobs**  
**TOPS—Fall yearling bull:**

MC182, 9/30/2024 by JB651; to M&K Cattle Company, Grass Range, MT, \$14,000. **Yearling bulls:** NK827, 1/19/2025 by Deer Valley Growth Fund; to M&K Cattle Company, Grass Range, MT, \$22,000. NJ630, 1/12/2025 by Hook's Eagle 6E; to Butterfield Beef, Atkinson, NE, \$20,000. NL180, 1/15/2025 by Hook's Eagle 6E; to M&K Cattle Company, Grass Range, MT, \$20,000. NH454, 2/5/2025 by Clemson Elite 41J; to Roger Donsbach, Miles City, MT, \$16,000. — **KEVIN MURNIN**

**BARTELS ANGUS BULL SALE**  
**March 17, Riverton, NE**  
**84 Angus bulls. . . . \$10,279**  
**6 Angus open heifers ..... 12,166**  
**Auctioneer: Charly Cummings**  
**TOPS—Angus bulls:** Bartels Eclipse 5205, 2/13/2025 by Connealy Eclipse 254R; to Reverse Rocking RRanch, Maxwell, NM, Triple H Cattle Co., Rock Creek Cattle Co., Plano, IL, and Heim Cattle Co., St. Charles, MN, \$35,000. Bartels Barricade 5206, 2/13/2025 by Sitz Barricade 632F; to Sitz 36 Angus, Taylor, NE, \$28,000. Bartels Ranahan 5046, 2/1/2025 by M Diamond Ranahan 111; to Panther Creek Ranch, Bowen, IL, \$27,000. Bartels Prosper 5064, 2/2/2025 by Ellingson Prosper; to Wagonhammer Ranches, Albion, NE, \$20,000. **Open heifer:** Bartels Black Ceylea 5005, 1/27/2025 by Ellingson Progressive; to Markota Angus Ranch, Youngstown, OH, \$21,000. — **TY GROSHANS**

**TD ANGUS BULL SALE**  
**March 20, North Platte, NE**  
**365 Angus bulls ..... \$12,183**  
**40 Commercial pairs ..... 5,600**  
**625 Commercial open heifers ..... 3,273**  
**Auctioneers: Ty Thompson & Jace Thompson**  
**TOPS:** T/D Man In Black M241, 9/2/2024 by LAR Man In Black; to Grimmus Cattle Co., Hanford, CA, \$75,000. T/D Step Up M263, 8/29/2024 by EZAR Step Up 9178; to Nebraska Wildfire Donation Group, NE, \$70,000. T/D Congress N126, 12/27/2024 by Crouch Congress; to Abernathy Ranches, Lander, WY, and Fischer Cattle Co., Lander, WY, \$42,500. T/D Doubt Me Now 4851, 9/23/2024 by T/D Doubt Me Now 0171; to Commercial Bull Buyer, NE, \$41,500. — **TY GROSHANS**

**RIVERBEND RANCH BULL SALE**  
**March 14, Idaho Falls, ID**  
**528 Angus bulls ..... \$12,393**  
**Auctioneers: Trent Stewart & Rick Machado**  
**Sale Managers: Cotton & Assoc.**  
**TOPS:** Riverbend Gettysburg M1875, 10/21/2024 by EZAR Gettysburg 1061; to Grimmus Cattle Co., Hanford, CA, \$110,000. Riverbend Bougie M1806, 8/24/2024 by BNWZ Bougie 1588; to Pollard Farms, Waukomis, OK, \$42,000. Riverbend Jameson M2791, 10/18/2024 by Basin Jameson 1076; to Stan Smith, Lehi, UT, \$40,000. Riverbend Black Label M1826, 10/13/2024 by Riverbend Black Label J1810; to Krebs Ranch, Gordon, NE, \$40,000. Riverbend Jameson M2254, 6/26/2024 by Basin Jameson 1076; to Stan Smith, Lehi, UT, \$36,000. Riverbend True Balance M1653, 9/11/2024

by RSA True Balance 1311; to Nowatzke Cattle, Michigan City, IN, and Maple Lane Angus, Shipshewana, IL, \$35,000. Riv-

erbend Saluda M2197, 6/18/2024 by Yon Saluda; to TWG Ranch, Mt. Carroll, IL, \$34,000. Riverbend Bougie

N706, 12/20/2024 by BNWZ Bougie 1588; to Dixie Farms, Gloster, LA, \$31,000. Riverbend Validity M1859, 11/16/2024 by

BNWZ Validity 2491; to San Benito Cattle, Hollister, CA, \$30,000. — **JARED PATTERSON**

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 Feeder Cattle.....12pm

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**260** Red & Black Angus, SimAngus and Char x Red Angus Bulls

All Sale Bulls Feed Efficiency Tested | WideBody Scored | PAP Tested

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**150+** Open Yearling Red Angus Commercial Replacement Heifers

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- 100% Prime & Choice (18% Prime & 64% Upper 2/3 choice)
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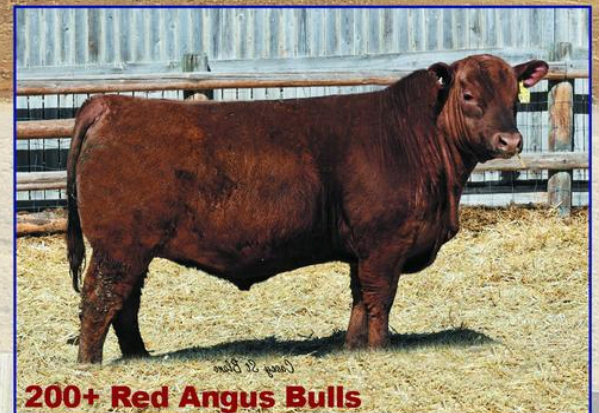
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