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EQUINE EXODUS – Federal plans to clear wild horses from Wyoming's checkerboard spark legal battles. **Page 3**

FEDERAL FIDELITY – Montana House declines to back Utah in federal land-transfer case. **Page 5**

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"A number of bills pertaining to the establishment of new horse slaughter facilities in several states saw action last week. Two of the three states with pending legislation took steps toward reopening a plant in the U.S. North Dakota's legislature approved \$50,000 to study the viability of building a horse processing plant in the state. The proposal is now headed for the state House of Representatives for consideration," read the April 6, 2009, WLJ cover story.

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Proposed OR lithium mine threatens nearby ranches

— Comment period quietly extended

A proposed lithium mine in the

Oregon portion of the McDermitt Caldera could prove to be fatal for nearby legacy ranching operations.

The Bureau of Land Management

(BLM) informed the public in 2023 of Australia-based HiTech Minerals Inc.'s plan to explore for lithium in Malheur County, OR, in the caldera

straddling Oregon and Nevada state lines. If approved, the company will have the ability to drill more than 260 exploration drill sites across 7,200 acres of public lands.

Although the plan has been in the works for several years, the BLM released its environmental assessment (EA) and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) at the end of March, outlining project implications in more detail—including effects on livestock grazing and species like sage grouse and Lahontan cutthroat trout. The public was given just five days to comment. BLM has since quietly extended the comment period until April 25, giving stakeholders 25 more days to submit their input. During the original five-day comment period ending March 31, BLM received more than 1,500 comments.

Plan pushback

The proposal has been rebuffed by ranchers, Native American Tribes and environmental organizations during public scoping periods held since the project's introduction.

See MINE on page 6



Chris Henry/Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology

A lithium mine proposed on the Oregon and Nevada border could have severe implications for nearby ranchers. Pictured here, the view from the southeast rim of McDermitt Caldera of the Thacker Pass area.

Federal judge strikes down lesser prairie chicken rule

— Will not split populations

A federal judge has ruled in favor of landowners and counties challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) 2022 decision to split the lesser prairie chicken into two distinct population segments (DPS) under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Judge David Counts of the U.S. District Court for the District of Western Texas ruled the agency did not follow the language and economic costs stated under the blanket Section 4(d) rule.

The ruling centers on how USFWS interpreted Section 4(d) of the ESA. The section states that when a species is listed as threatened, "the secretary shall issue such regulations as he deems necessary and advisable to provide for the conservation of such species," and may also "prohibit

with respect to any threatened species any act prohibited under [Section 9]."

USFWS has historically interpreted these as separate authorizations, allowing the agency to either impose prohibitions as long as they are deemed necessary and advisable, or to apply pre-approved prohibitions from Section 9 at its discretion.

However, the court, no longer bound by Chevron deference following the Supreme Court's ruling in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*, found no direct precedent supporting this interpretation. Instead, the court agreed with the plaintiffs, ruling that the two sentences must be read together—meaning every prohibition under a 4(d) rule must first meet the "necessary and advisable" standard before being enacted.

See PRAIRIE CHICKEN on page 7

Oregon water rights transfer bill sparks debate

— Ag groups oppose measure

Oregon Senate Bill (SB) 1153—a proposal to change water rights transfer—is drawing sharp debate as it moves through the legislature, with environmental groups and state officials backing it while agricultural organizations push back.

The bill requires state regulators to weigh the public interest when considering changes to water rights and grants Tribes a say in certain modification requests. The bill directs the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) to evaluate whether specific water right transfers could lead to the loss of in-stream habitat for sensitive, threatened or endangered aquatic species in unprotected stream reaches or worsen water quality in already impaired

streams. It also authorizes the department to impose transfer conditions, such as requiring water use measurement and reporting, water level monitoring or the installation of fish screens or bypass devices.

Chandra Ferrari, natural resources policy adviser for the Office of the Governor, said at a Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire hearing that SB 1153 is a necessary step to modernize water management.

"Our water management system was designed for another era," she said, emphasizing that existing laws were initially crafted to allocate water for consumptive use rather than considering ecological and Tribal interests.

Ferrari highlighted key concerns, including the over-allocation of surface water, declining groundwater supplies, climate

change and the increasing demand for water transfers.

She also acknowledged concerns from stakeholders and reiterated the state's willingness to engage in discussions to refine the bill.

"We maintain an open dialogue and continue to invite input on how this legislation can work better for everyone," she concluded.

Current water rights

In Oregon, all water—whether from lakes, streams, or groundwater—belongs to the public, and using it generally requires a permit from OWRD. The state operates under the principle of prior appropriation, meaning older water rights take priority during shortages. Once established, a water

See WATER TRANSFER on page 5

Market hesitates on news of trade tariffs

There were some slight shifts in the marketplace following the Trump administration's Wednesday announcement about imposing widespread tariffs.

"There remain multiple unknowns, including if and when any U.S. trading partners will announce any retaliatory tariffs of their own," wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, in *The Beef* on Thursday.

Live cattle futures traded steady over the week but closed slightly lower. The April contract lost about a dollar to close at \$208.05, and the June contract also lost about a dollar to close at \$204.70.

"When glancing at a chart, CME live cattle futures seem to be developing a sideways, or distribution pattern near their highs, this being the third week," Fish said. "This makes sense given the continued solid footing in cattle and beef fundamentals combined with plenty of outside market uncertainty. Sideways, for now, seems a safe bet."

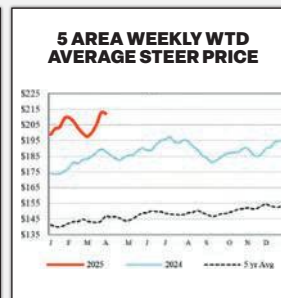
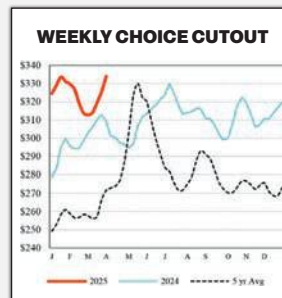
Cash trade through Thursday totaled about 12,000 head. Live steers sold from \$208-213, and dressed steers sold from \$335-345. "This is viewed as friendly in the face of lower futures," Fish said.

Cash trade through March 30 totaled 62,630 head. Live steers averaged \$212.21, and dressed steers averaged \$337.83.

Slaughter through Thursday totaled about 472,000 head compared to 485,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for a week earlier is projected at 609,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending March 22 was 557,527 head. The average steer dressed weight was 950 lbs., 3 lbs. above the prior week.

"This week was a win for processors who lowered production cost with the larger slaughter, held cash

See MARKETS on page 9



LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
\$210.00	\$341.25	\$291.27
WEEK ENDING: 4-3-25		

Time Sensitive
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COMMENTS

Tariffs and trade

Cattle markets have been amazing and are just now starting to gear up for grilling season. The Choice beef cutout peaked at \$340 recently and demand is proceeding on a normal seasonal track. Prices should go higher over the next few months.



CROW

Futures markets are showing all fed cattle contracts over \$200 and feeder cattle contracts at \$290. If you're prone to doing some risk management, now it would be a good time to check your options

Wednesday was Liberation Day, according to President Donald Trump. I see this as trade diplomacy and the tariffs won't be as dramatic as some in the news media want you to think. There has been plenty of protectionism around the world and free trade has suffered; everyone wants to sell into the U.S. market because we have the money.

It sounds like every import will pay 10% tariffs and then negotiate reciprocal tariffs with each country. But if you make that product in America, you will pay no tariffs and put Americans back to work.

It's kind of nice to have an administration that wants to fix as much as they can in a short amount of time. And it appears that we're all going to get some kind of haircut. We all know it has to happen with the country \$37 trillion in debt and deficit spending at \$2 trillion a year. We need more businessmen to run for office, not professional politicians.

How is all this tariff talk going to affect the beef and cattle industry? So far, it hasn't done much. I'm told that export markets contribute \$400 per head on fed cattle. It will be interesting to see how our trading partners respond. I don't think anyone will try and play hardball; many countries have already capitulated and lowered their tariffs.

China seems to want to shake the beef market and hasn't renewed export permits for beef plants, but they have renewed permits for pork and poultry exports. China became our third largest beef export destination since the last Trump administration. I would have to assume that the gray market will return and much of that beef will go through other Asian countries, as it did before.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) was supportive of Trump's tariff plan. Senior Vice President of Government Affairs Ethan Lane said in a press release, "For too long, America's family farmers and ranchers have been mistreated by certain trading partners around the world. President Trump is taking action to address numerous trade barriers that prevent consumers overseas from enjoying high-quality, wholesome American beef. NCBA will continue engaging with the White House to ensure fair treatment for America's cattle producers around the world and optimize opportunities for exports abroad.

"Some examples of beef tariff issues are:

- Australia has sold roughly \$29 billion of beef to American consumers. Meanwhile, we have not been able to sell \$1 of fresh U.S. beef in Australia due to non-scientific barriers.
- Vietnam places a 30% tariff on U.S. beef while Australian beef faces no such tariff.
- Thailand places a 50% tariff on U.S. beef.
- Brazil and Paraguay have a history of dangerous foot-and-mouth disease, but despite overwhelming evidence of their animal health risk, the Biden administration continued to allow U.S. market access to Brazil and Paraguay.
- The European Union places numerous non-scientific 'Green Deal' restrictions on American beef, limiting market opportunities."

However, panic seemed to hit all markets, and they are all down, which I'm sure is temporary. The U.S. economy is the strongest in the world and is resilient. In a few months, much of this tariff talk will be history and every trading partner will have recalibrated tariff rates, and I hope we can tear down non-tariff trade barriers.

Beef trade around the world has always been a challenge for all countries mostly due to disease issues, but also political issues, and clearly the world is changing and the status quo is changing.

It was also nice to see the Trump administration to give Trade Promotion Authority some wheels after the Biden trade blunder. I wouldn't worry about the beef markets, I would continue to pray for spring rain. — **PETE CROW**

KAY'S KORNER



Food and other agricultural imports into the U.S. appear to have partially avoided a new 10% tariff imposed by President Donald Trump on all imports. That's because goods that comply with the U.S.-Mexico-Canada

Agreement (USMCA) are expected to be exempt from the new tariffs. However, non-compliant goods will be subject to a 25% tariff, with exceptions for energy and potash from Canada. Trump imposes even higher tariffs on nations the White House considers bad actors. He imposes a 34% tariff on Chinese imports on top of the existing 20% and says he will impose a 20% tariff on imports from the European Union and a 24% tariff on Japanese imports. Beef and cattle from Canada and Mexico appear to be exempt from tariffs but the danger is whether countries will impose retaliatory tariffs on U.S. agricultural and other exports. Most of the tariffs took effect on April 5.

The impact of retaliatory could be huge, given the integrated nature of the North American meat and livestock industry. Regarding cattle, 780,000 head moved from Canada to the U.S. last year, with 80% of them fed or non-fed cattle for immediate slaughter. The U.S. represents 15% of Canadian fed cattle marketings. Any increase in price might have caused packers like Tyson Foods or JBS to procure fewer cattle for their Pasco, WA, and Souderton, PA, plants, respectively. Mexico in 2024 exported 1.24 million feeder cattle to the U.S. Most of these enter southern Plains and Southwest feedlots, which have long been dependent on Mexican cattle to fill their pens.

U.S. meat exports are at risk

On the beef side, one-quarter of all Canadian beef production goes to the U.S. Net exports to the U.S. after U.S. exports to Canada amount to 20% of Canada beef production. Imports last year totaled 1.013 billion pounds. Beef imports from Mexico last year totaled 597 million lbs. Any retaliatory tariffs would threaten U.S. meat exports to the two neighbors. The U.S. last year exported \$5.683 billion of beef and pork to the two countries, with \$1.35 billion of beef going to Mexico and \$877 million of beef going to Canada.

Australian beef, sheep meat and goat meat exports to the U.S. will be exposed to the 10% tariff. While the size of the tariff is at the upper end of the scale anticipated by Australian stakeholders, a long list of other countries exporting goods to the U.S. will be subjected to tariff impositions much higher than Australia's 10%, says Beef Central's Jon Condon. Major beef export competitor Brazil will also sit among the baseline

AG IMPORTS DODGE TARIFF BULLET

trade partner countries on 10%. But it remains unclear whether that will be stacked on top of Brazil's existing 26.5% tariff on beef exports to the U.S., having triggered its annual quota back in January. On lean beef trimmings used to make U.S. hamburgers, it is estimated that the tariff on Australian product will cost the U.S. consumer \$180 million per year, says Condon. He noted that Trump singled out Australian beef for mention in his White Houses announcement Wednesday. Australians are wonderful people "but they banned American beef—yet we imported \$3 billion worth of Australian beef last year alone," he said.

Response by major U.S. meat and livestock trade groups to the tariff announcement Wednesday was largely muted. The executive order issued by the White House definitely provides more clarity on the administration's approach to reciprocal tariffs, and the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) appreciates the White House bringing attention to the markets in which U.S. exports face significant trade barriers, said Dan Halstrom, USMEF president and CEO. USMEF also appreciates that the U.S. is maintaining zero duties on USMCA-compliant products. USMEF's main concern continues to be how trade partners will react. USMEF is hopeful they will focus on eliminating trade barriers rather than imposing restrictive countermeasures, he said.

The Meat Institute, which represents U.S. meat and poultry processors, confirmed it would work with the Trump administration on ways to increase market access for meat and poultry products. Over the coming days, it will work with its members to understand the impact to the industry as tariffs and retaliatory tariffs take effect, said president and CEO Julie Anna Potts. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) provided a strongly worded statement about trade barriers on U.S. beef. For too long, America's family farmers and ranchers have been mistreated by certain trading partners around the world, said NCBA's Ethan Lane. "President Trump is taking action to address numerous trade barriers that prevent consumers overseas from enjoying high-quality, wholesome American beef. NCBA will continue engaging with the White House to ensure fair treatment for America's cattle producers around the world and optimize opportunities for exports abroad," said Lane. — **Steve Kay, WLJ columnist**

(Steve Kay is editor/publisher of Cattle Buyers Weekly, an industry newsletter published at P.O. Box 2533, Petaluma, CA, 94953; 707-765-1725. Kay's Korner appears exclusively in WLJ.)



GUEST OPINION

Across the country this morning, men and women in every region and every state are rising to grow the food, fiber and renewable fuel Americans depend on. Most of them have been working for hours before sunup this morning, and many will be working still as the sun dips below the horizon this evening. The days are long on the farm, and the work is hard. Farmers and ranchers don't shy away from a hard day's work, though. We know our nation is counting on us, not only to keep our food supply secure but also to help fuel our economy.

The latest Feeding the Economy report highlights the critical role U.S. agriculture plays across our economy. While fewer than 2% of Americans are farmers, 100% of Americans need a farmer, every day. Farmers are the key to a long supply chain, from tractor manufacturers upstream to grocery stores downstream. Today, this supply chain directly makes up more than one-seventh of the U.S. economy.

In 2024, the direct and indirect economic impact of the agriculture supply chain totaled \$9.5 trillion, or one-third of the U.S. economy. To put that in terms of the global economy, if the U.S. agricultural supply chain were its own country, it would support the third largest economy in the world. Let that sink in for a minute. That is an American-grown success story.

Agriculture's economic value is fueling jobs too. In 2024, direct employment in the food and agriculture supply chain grew by more than 1 million jobs. Altogether, jobs directly in the food and agricultural supply chain make up 15% of employment in the U.S., for a total of more than 24 million jobs. When you add in all the jobs supported by agriculture, the yields nearly double. From scientists and researchers to engineers and truck drivers, farmers and ranchers and their supply chain support more than 47 million jobs in the U.S.

As farmers and ranchers know from hard, personal experi-

ence, yields are not guaranteed. One good season—or even one dozen good seasons—does not guarantee the next. We cannot take agriculture for granted. Most consumers got a glimpse of this truth with the empty grocery store shelves at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the egg shortage this year. But our memories can be short, and most folks do not understand the tremendous pressures farmers and ranchers are facing.

From inflation and rising labor costs to an outdated farm bill, many farmers are operating on razor thin margins, and some cannot hold on for a better season. Farm bankruptcies were up 55% from 2023 to 2024, and more than 141,000 farms went out of business from 2017 to 2022, according to USDA's Census of Agriculture. I give these reminders not to be despairing but to remind us of how important it is that we remain committed to strengthening American agriculture.

That's why Farm Bureau is actively engaging with lawmakers and leaders across Washington and across the country. From Capitol Hill to federal agencies, we are taking a seat at the table to address the challenges facing agriculture. We know Americans are counting on farmers, and farmers are counting on us.

Farmers and ranchers have been raising American-grown products for generations. And if we're going to keep agriculture strong to ensure a secure food supply and to help feed our economy, we need to ensure that farmers and ranchers have the tools they need. Farm Bureau is committed to being the leading Voice of Agriculture because we understand how high the stakes are for farmers, ranchers and rural communities. Our nation is stronger when farmers and ranchers have the resources, tools and freedom to do what we do best: feed our nation and our economy. — **Zippy Duvall, American Farm Bureau Federation president**

AGRICULTURE, THE BACKBONE OF OUR ECONOMY



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Trump launches reciprocal tariffs on most trading partners

President Donald Trump on April 2 announced reciprocal tariffs on U.S. trade partners as he seeks to reinvigorate manufacturing industries and press for more fairness globally in trade.

"April 2 will forever be remembered as the day American industry was reborn, the day American industry was reborn, the day America's destiny was reclaimed, and the day that we began to make America wealthy again," Trump said at a White House event.

Trump announced a minimum 10% tariff on at least 60 countries but laid out a range of different tariffs for countries and trading blocs, including 34% tariffs on China, 24% on Japan and 20% on the European Union (EU), for instance. Along with that, all imported automobiles would have a 25% tariff starting April 3.

Several major agricultural groups have expressed fear that countries will immediately retaliate against farm ex-

ports.

Trump said his tariff policies are "standing up for farmers and ranchers" who are "brutalized by nations." He pointed out countries with high tariffs or non-tariff barriers on agriculture will see reciprocal tariffs. He pointed out 250% to 300% tariffs on U.S. dairy products by Canada and suggested Canadian dairy policy should change. USDA reports the U.S. dairy industry last year exported \$1.14 billion in products to Canada while Canada's dairy industry exported \$550 million of products to the U.S.

"We don't like it, and it's not fair to our farmers and it's not fair to our country," Trump said on the Canadian dairy tariffs.

Trump pointed out the U.S. imports \$2.8 billion in beef from Australia, but the U.S. exports virtually zero beef to Australia.

"They don't want to take any of our beef. They don't want to take it because they don't want it to affect their farmers,"

Trump said.

Pointing to similar restrictions elsewhere, Trump said, "They have taken so much wealth from our country, and we're not going let that happen."

Trump said the tariffs would generate "trillions of dollars" to reduce taxes and pay down the national debt. He also touted the tax bill being worked on in Congress to extend Trump's 2017 tax cuts.

Trump pointed to a report released March 31 by the U.S. Trade Representative's Office highlighting trade barriers across nearly 50 countries and the EU.

"Frankly, it's very upsetting when you read it, when you see what people have been doing to us for 30 years," he said.

Trump highlighted tariffs on products such as motorcycles and automobiles. The U.S. has had a standard 2.4% tariff on motorcycles, while tariffs in some Asian countries are as high as 70%, he said.

Along with Cabinet officials and lawmakers, Trump was joined by autoworkers and other blue-collar workers at the event. An autoworker from Michigan praised the long-term impact of auto tariffs for reinvigorating now-shuttered plants.

"Donald Trump's policies are going to bring product back to those underutilized plants," said the worker, identified as Brian Pennebecker. "There's going to be new investment. There's going to be new plants built ... We support Donald Trump's policies on tariffs 100%."

Trump said, "There is no tariff if you build your plant, your product in America."

A range of responses are expected from trading partners in the coming days as eyes will be on both the stock market and commodities. Mark Carney, prime minister of Canada, posted on social platform X, "I spoke with Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum this morning. In a shifting global economy, strong and reliable partners matter. Canada and Mexico are focused on deepening our trade relations and building stronger economies, together."

That runs counter to Ontario Premier Doug Ford who called on both sides to back down on tariffs. Ford also suggested Canada negotiate a trade deal with the U.S. but leave out Mexico.

Reuters reported that Sheinbaum said she will announce

"a comprehensive program" to respond to tariffs on April 3. Sheinbaum suggested her government would look at ways to boost its domestic economy.

Agricultural groups have been concerned for months about the possibility of an all-out trade war. Major groups wrote a letter to Cabinet officials on April 1 looking for policies that would avoid punitive actions against U.S. agricultural exports.

Ohio farmer Chris Gibbs, president of Rural USA PAC, criticized the tariff announcement, pointing to not just the tariffs, but noting that Trump didn't talk about a desire to negotiate new trade deals, though Trump did press countries for market access in his talk.

"I believe the president believe the tariffs are going to help and that we're going to have more market access, but between now and then, it looks like a lot of pain, particularly in rural America," Gibbs said.

A critic of Trump's trade policies, Gibbs said Trump didn't say anything that gives businesses or farmers any stability or predictability moving ahead. Gibbs also raised concerns about reports that the Trump administration is already looking at potential aid payments to farmers.

"Farmers have a good rapport with taxpayers. Farmers are held in pretty high regard," Gibbs said. "For tax dollars to continue to have to come to farmers to keep them afloat,

that going to eventually take a toll on the goodwill that farmers have enjoyed from taxpayers."

National Cattlemen's Beef Association Senior Vice President of Government Affairs Ethan Lane said of the announcement: "For too long, America's family farmers and ranchers have been mistreated by certain trading partners around the world. President Trump is taking action to address numerous trade barriers that prevent consumers overseas from enjoying high-quality, wholesome American beef."

While Trump presses on tariffs, Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins is trumpeting new trade opportunities. Rollins on March 31 announced she will travel to six countries on trade missions in the coming months—Brazil, India, Japan, Peru, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

On April 2, USDA released the funding notice for the fiscal year 2026 Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program, which provides funding for commodity groups and businesses to promote products in export markets.

While championing what he believes will be an economic renaissance, Trump also suggested it might not come easy. "We're all going to have to go through a little tough love, maybe," the president said. — **Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor**

Feds plan to remove WY wild horses

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) contentious plans to remove all free-roaming horses from vast reaches of southwest Wyoming's "checkerboard" region could begin as soon as this summer, although a legal appeal to stop roundups remains in limbo.

On March 31, the federal agency released a 47-page environmental assessment outlining plans to gather and permanently remove several thousand wild horses from 2,105 square miles—an area nearly the size of Delaware—managed by BLM's Rock Springs and Rawlins field offices.

Horses would come off an additional 1,124 square miles of private land within the checkerboard. A public review period is underway with comments due by April 30. If the BLM greenlights the roundups, they could begin within the next three months and continue for a couple of years, possibly longer.

First to go would be the estimated 1,125 free-roaming horses in the Salt Wells Creek herd and 736 animals in the northwestern portion of Adobe Town, according to BLM Rock Springs Field Office Manager Kimberlee Foster. Then in 2026, horse-removal crews would move on to eliminating an estimated 894 horses in the Great Divide Basin herd.

Free-roaming horses, a nonnative species that faces scant predation, increase in population by about 20% annually. Reproduction, com-

bined with missed animals during surveys, make estimating precise herd numbers difficult. The expectation is that 3,371 wild horses would be removed, but the ultimate number could range from 2,500 up to 5,000, according to the BLM.

The push to rid southwest Wyoming's checkerboard region of free-roaming horses traces back 15 years. The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act directs the BLM to "to remove stray wild horses from private lands as soon as practicable upon receipt of a written request," the environmental assessment states.

In 2010, the cattle and sheep-centric Rock Springs Grazing Association, which owns and leases about 1.1 million acres of private land in the checkerboard, revoked consent to allow horses to roam on its property.

There's been a legal battle ever since. Lawsuits from both the Rock Springs Grazing Association and wild horse advocacy groups have targeted the BLM's planned actions, but U.S. District Court of Wyoming Judge Kelly Rankin, a Biden appointee, ruled in the federal government's favor in both lawsuits last August.

Soon thereafter, a coalition of pro-horse petitioners—the American Wild Horse Campaign, Animal Welfare Institute, Western Watersheds Project, Carol Walker, Kimberlee Curly and Chad Hanson—appealed.

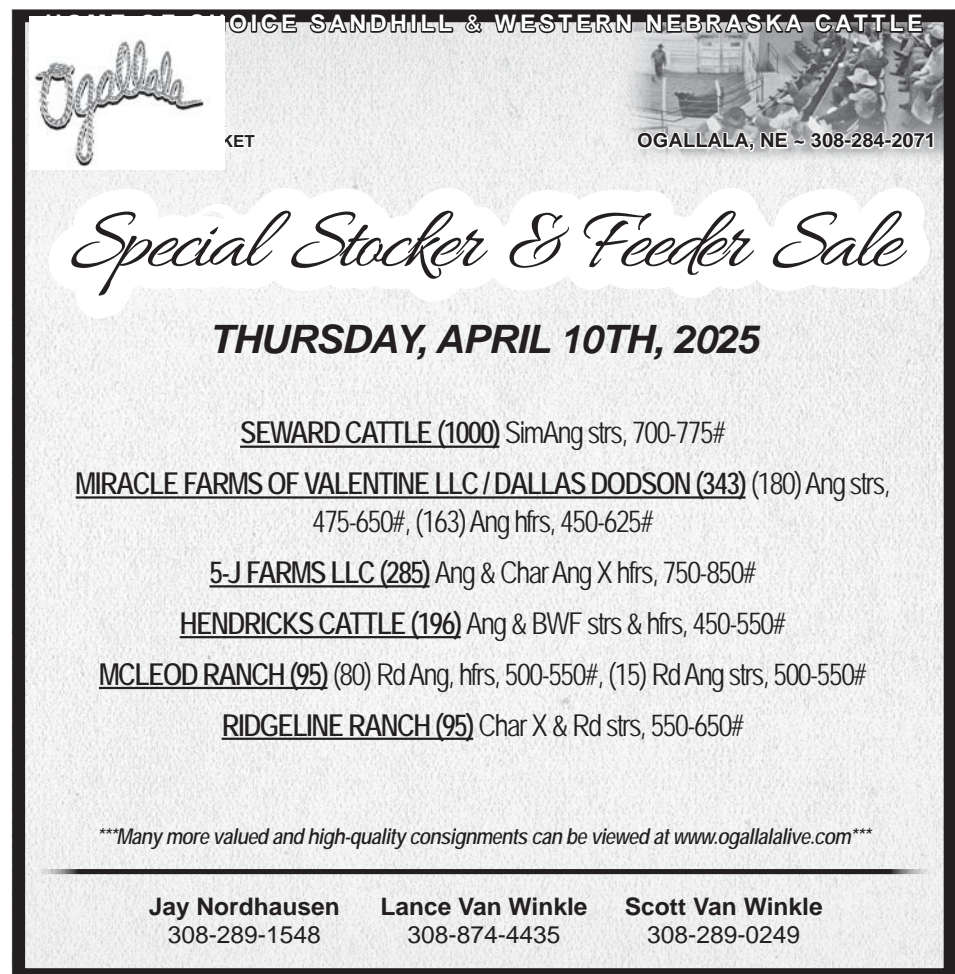
Attorneys for the federal government and horse advo-

cacy groups exchanged arguments before the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in March. A decision is pending, but horse advocates are optimistic about their chances.

The BLM has never before fully eliminated a herd of free-roaming horses without having demonstrated there are ecological reasons for doing so, American Wild Horse Executive Director Suzanne Roy contended.

"This would be the first time in the 54-year history of the Wild Horse and Burros Act that the BLM eliminated a herd management area and eradicated entire wild horse herds—two of them—when the agency itself concedes that the area has sufficient habitat for the horses," Roy said. "It has implications for wild horse protection across the West, because if private landowners that have land adjacent to or within herd management areas are allowed to dictate the presence of wild horses on the public land, that's a very dangerous precedent."

Meanwhile, the BLM is staging resources necessary to move forward with its plans. The Adobe Town/Salt Wells Creek herd roundup is the largest on the BLM's tentative wild horse and burro gather schedule for 2025. In regions of the Adobe Town herd area where horses are being allowed to persist, there are related plans to remove 2,179 free-roaming horses—numbers that exceed the "appropriate management level." — **Mike Koshmrl, WyoFile**



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Shortening the calving window for cattle herds

Timing is the key to a successful calving season, but beef cattle producers often wonder how they can narrow the calving window, or the timeframe in which cows will be giving birth.

Speaking on a recent "Cattle Chat" podcast, K-State beef cattle scientist Bob Larson said a wide calving window poses two main challenges for producers:

- Aligning calving with forage seasons, because forage must be adequate for the lactating cows.

- Calves born early in the season have higher weight and value, thus a tighter calving

season can produce more of these calves.

Larson said producers' goal should be reproductive efficiency and notes that it can be very difficult to move late calving cows to calve earlier in the season.

"I would probably focus on developing replacement heifers so that all of my replacement heifers calve early, and over time cull the late bred cows," Larson said.

When determining the length of the calving window, Larson suggests capping it at 70 days.

"Herds can have high reproductive efficiency within

65-70 days, which is the goal," he said. "By breeding heifers early, turning out fertile bulls and aligning with forage seasons over a couple of years, producers can narrow that window."

"In general, give yourself four or five years to move from that long window to a shorter calving window."

Larson and others also discussed whether synchronization efforts could assist in shortening the calving window. Larson said synchronization efforts would only work if the producer separated the herd into multiple calving groups.

"I don't recommend doing that because the marginal gain is relatively small; it's just a few cows each time I do that, that get moved forward," Larson said.

Larson suggests penciling out cost implications when deciding what actions to take. "Each situation is different as there is not a one-size fits all solution for calving windows," he said.

"You've added a lot of complexity and labor to cow management and (you need to determine if) that aligns with your other responsibilities," Larson said. — **K-State Research and Extension**

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Lot 4038 — 44567858

DAUGHTER OF SR DOMINATION 117K

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	REA	MB	BMI	CHB
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Second CA county declares wolf emergency

On April 1, the Sierra County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution declaring a local state of emergency due to gray wolves within the county. Sierra County is the second county in California to declare a state of emergency, following Modoc County last month. "The presence of gray wolves in and around Sierra County has been confirmed, with documented depredations of sheep and cattle occurring within five miles of the county line, signaling an imminent threat to local livestock and public safety as cattle return to pasture," the resolution read. The board requests the California Fish and Game Commission initiate regulatory changes to grant sheriffs the authority to investigate wolf incidents and declare a specific wolf a public safety threat, authorizing its removal. The board emphasizes that the resolution is not a call for widespread lethal control, but the establishment of tools to allow rural communities to respond to threats in a lawful manner.

USDA announces ag trade programs

USDA announced agricultural trade promotion programs for fiscal year 2026 and is now accepting applications for four export market development programs. The Foreign Agricultural Service opened funding for the Market Access Program, Foreign Market Development Program, Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program and Emerging Markets Program. USDA said the programs will help ag producers sell and promote their goods internationally. USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins also announced she will be going on trade trips in the next six months to promote ag exports in Vietnam, Japan, India, Peru, Brazil and the United Kingdom.

Tyson, others must face pork price-fixing suits

U.S. District Judge John Tunheim ruled in the District of Minnesota that Tyson and other pork producers and integrators must face lawsuits from buyers accusing them of price fixing. Three classes and dozens of direct action plaintiffs allege that Agri Stats, Clemens Food Group, JBS, Hormel Foods, Seaboard Foods, Smithfield Foods, Triumph Foods and Tyson Foods conspired to limit the supply of pork and fix prices. In a 232-page order, Tunheim dismissed Hormel as a defendant but found enough evidence for a jury to decide on antitrust claims against the other companies.

Bill introduced to release USDA funds

Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ) introduced the Honor Farmer Contracts Act to release withheld funding for all contracts and agreements USDA previously entered. "Farmers and the organizations that serve them operate on tight margins and cannot be left waiting for weeks and months without funding they rightfully planned for and need to keep operating," Booker said in a news release. USDA froze funding allocated under the Inflation Reduction Act for review, and has so far released \$20 million in contracts for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Previously obligated funding under the Rural Energy For America Program, Empowering Rural America and Powering Affordable Clean Energy programs was also released.

Greens claim livestock damage in AZ monument

The Center for Biological Diversity contends unauthorized cattle in Arizona's Agua Fria National Monument have damaged critical habitat for the Gila chub and western yellow-billed cuckoo. "Our new survey shows that federal officials are continuing to allow cattle herds to trash endangered species habitat in a national monument, breaking the law," said Chris Bugbee of the Center for Biological Diversity. An ongoing lawsuit led by the group last March seeks to remove livestock from the monument's protected areas.

Kroger files counterclaims against Albertsons

The Kroger Co. filed its answer and counterclaims to the complaint brought by Albertsons in the Delaware Court of Chancery regarding the previous merger agreement between the two companies. The merger was terminated in December. "While Kroger was working diligently to seek regulatory approval and close the merger, Albertsons was engaging in a secret and misguided campaign, together with C&S Wholesale Grocers, the divestiture buyer, to pursue its own regulatory strategy, which ultimately undermined Kroger's efforts," Kroger wrote in a news release. The company said that as a result of its misconduct, Albertsons is not entitled to the \$600 million termination fee, nor any other damages it seeks.

Enviros seek species protections

The Center for Biological Diversity has filed two more petitions and one lawsuit to protect four species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The organization filed a petition with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to protect the Oregon Ochoco lomatium flower, a petition with the California Fish and Game Commission to protect the Pacific pocket mouse under the state's ESA, and a lawsuit against USFWS to protect the Kern Canyon slender salamander and relic slender salamander in California.

MT lawmakers won't back UT in land-transfer lawsuit

The Montana House of Representatives has declined to back Utah in its legal bid to assume ownership of 18.5 million acres of federal land inside

that state's borders.

Lawmakers on April 1 rejected a proposal by Rep. Tom Millett (R-Marion) to support Utah's assertion that the "un-

appropriated" land administered by the federal Bureau of Land Management belongs under state control.

During floor debate on House Joint (HJ) Resolution 24, Millett underscored that his resolution is not about selling off federal lands. Instead, he characterized it as an attempt to answer a constitutional question affecting all western states. Earlier this year, Utah received notice that its desire to take that question straight to the U.S. Supreme Court didn't develop as planned. In January, the nation's highest court declined to take the matter up before a lower court issues a ruling.

"There are 18.5 million acres [of unappropriated land] in the state of Utah, and the federal government reaps \$187 million in royalties from that unappropriated land. Montana? We have 8 million acres that are unappropriated. They reap \$55 million," Millett said during debate. "How many roads can we build with \$55 million? How many schools can we fund with \$55 million?"

Millett argued that western states are "deprived of basic and fundamental sovereign powers" due to the inability to tax federal land and exercise eminent domain to direct infrastructure development on them.

Rep. Debo Powers, a freshman Democratic lawmaker from Whitefish, countered that Montanans have "overwhelmingly rejected transfer time and time again" and highlighted voters' appetite for considering their elected officials' record on conservation issues when they fill out their ballots.

"That's why so many political candidates in Montana—from every political party—pledged to keep public lands in public hands. Maybe you were one of those candidates," she said. "Now is your opportunity to show your constituents your commitment by voting against this resolution. And believe me: the voters are watching on this one."

Powers also argued that the financial calculation should work the other way, given the federal funding supporting

firefighting and trail and facility maintenance.

"These costs would put a tremendous pressure on the states to sell off these lands," she said. "You could be finding mega-mansions where you once enjoyed hunting and fishing on your public lands."

Rep. Paul Fielder (R-Thompson Falls) argued that the debate is less about keeping "public lands in public hands" and more about "keeping federal lands in federal hands."

"The states can manage the lands that are transferred as they choose," he said. "I kinda like managing the land within my property boundary, and I think the states should be able to manage land in their borders."

Two Republicans flipped their votes Tuesday, joining 22 of their GOP colleagues and all of the chamber's Democrats in voting the measure down.

Conservation organizations celebrated HJ 24's defeat, issuing emailed press releases shortly after the measure's floor vote.

Montana Conservation Voters' Executive Director Whitney Tawney described the development as a "major victory."

"We are proud of the lawmakers who stood up for our public lands and denied this misguided attempt to privatize our shared resources," she wrote. "Public lands are the cornerstone of what makes Montana special, and today, Montana's lawmakers listened to the people, not special interests."

Noah Marion, Wild Montana's political and state policy director, echoed that assessment.

"HJ 24 did one thing: lay the groundwork for privatizing our public lands. Utah's lawsuit isn't about answering a constitutional question; it's about opening a back door to transfer. By rejecting this resolution, lawmakers have aligned themselves with Montanans and made it clear that we will never allow our public lands to be sold off to the highest bidder."

— Amanda Eggert, Montana Free Press environmental reporter

Ag contends water bill could delay transfers

WATER TRANSFER (from page 1)

right is tied to the land and can only be transferred with department approval. To remain valid, water rights must be actively used; failure to do so for five or more years can result in forfeiture under the "use it or lose it" rule.

Water rights are granted for beneficial uses such as irrigation and domestic and industrial purposes. Since 1987, state agencies have also been able to apply for instream water rights to protect fish, water quality and recreation. During a governor-declared drought, water for human consumption and livestock takes priority over instream uses. Oregon law allows water rights holders to sell, lease or donate their rights for instream purposes through temporary or permanent transfers. When a transfer is requested, OWRD ensures it does not expand the right or harm other users, and if concerns arise, the department may impose conditions or deny the application.

Ag opposition

A coalition of agricultural and natural resource water users has voiced strong opposition to SB 1153, arguing that it would significantly slow water rights transfers and hinder water management flexibility.

"As we head into a future where new water rights are no longer available, the water right transfer process will provide crucial flexibility for water right holders," the group said.

They contend that SB 1153 would introduce two new evaluation standards that could delay transfers for farms, ranches and irrigation districts, making it harder to manage existing water rights efficiently. With surface water sources largely appropriated and new groundwater allocations increasingly restricted under recent OWRD rules, the group believes that now more than ever, administrative processes

should promote—rather than obstruct—responsible water management.

"OWRD is charged with water quantity allocation and does not have the authority or expertise to evaluate the impacts of water right transactions on aquatic species or water quality," they said.

Instead of adding new burdens, they urge lawmakers to focus on streamlining OWRD's existing processes to improve efficiency while still protecting water rights.

Support for bill

Oregon Water Partnership, a coalition of conservation groups advocating for balanced water policies, wrote a letter supporting SB 1153.

The organization said they have pushed for reforms to the state's water laws, and the bill prevents water rights transfers that could harm habitat and water quality—two critical public resources that have suffered under the current system. The letter argues that 97% of streams lack instream water rights and the state is an "outlier" in that it has not taken action to close the loophole.

"Our sister states have all managed to bring new water values into the process for changing old water rights," the organization said. "It's time for the Oregon Legislature to do right by the resource and the ecosystems, economies, and cultural connections it sustains."

The group has also backed SB 427, which takes a different approach to closing the state's transfer loophole by preventing applications that would reduce streamflow. While SB 427 keeps the review process within OWRD, SB 1153 provides additional protections for habitat and water quality.

The group urges lawmakers to pass long-overdue reforms and is committed to further discussions in the 2025 legislative session. — Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor



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 14 – Certified Angus Beef is awarding \$100,000 in scholarships through the 2025 Colvin Scholarship Fund to support students pursuing careers in food and agriculture. Details: tinyurl.com/pvwj9dpu.

April 15 – The Montana Farm Bureau Foundation and Women's Leadership Committee are once again offering more than \$7,000 in scholarships to students pursuing higher education. Details: mfbf.org/Foundation/Foundation-Scholarships.

April 15 – The Agricultural

Communicators Network is offering three scholarships to undergraduate students pursuing careers in agricultural communications. Details: agcommnetwork.com/scholarships.

April 15 – The Colorado CattleWomen's Heather Hays Stinnett Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a Colorado woman pursuing a graduate or undergraduate degree in agriculture or a related field. Details: tinyurl.com/bhvv53kw.

April 17 – Purina Animal Nutrition, along with the Land O'Lakes Foundation, has reopened its annual scholarship program. Undergraduate students and current high school seniors who have experience raising and caring for small or large livestock, equine and/or poultry are eligible to apply for a \$5,000 scholarship. Details: www.purinamills.com/scholarship.

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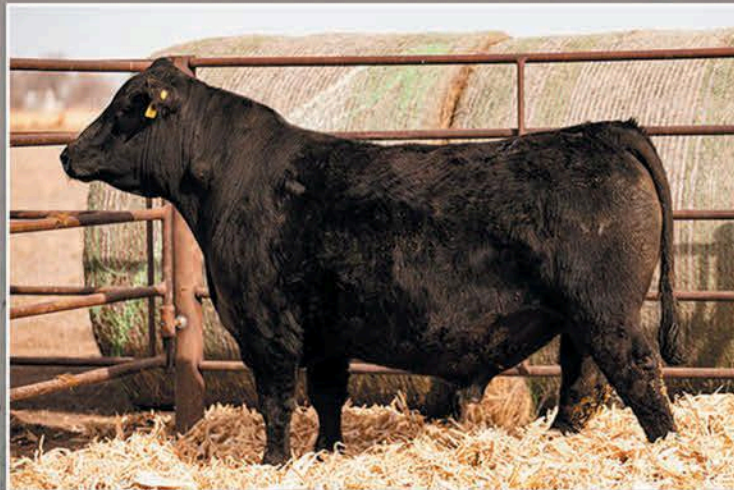
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Mine's operations plan could have devastating impacts

MINE (from page 1)

For rancher Nick Wilkinson, the proposed lithium mine hits closest to home—literally, because much of the ranch's grazing sprawls across the land in question.

The Wilkinson family is no stranger to working with the BLM, having to completely overhaul their operation in order to comply with new species conservation measures in the '90s.

In 1988, the BLM informed local ranchers of upcoming grazing changes, which affected many permittees and forced some out of business. By 1992, the agency implemented grazing restrictions to protect riparian areas, the Lahontan cutthroat trout and sage grouse. The ranch was forced to cut down its animal unit months (AUMs) from 16,500 to just 6,500.

"They didn't take the AUMs away, but they might as well have, because it limits my grazing," Wilkinson told *WLJ*. As a result, the ranch had to undergo a complete transformation, adapting to fish conservation measures and securing additional grazing land.

As the BLM was developing grazing restrictions, central Oregon ranchers Doc and Connie Hatfield brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, ranging from ranchers to environmentalists, to form the Trout Creek Moun-

tain Working Group to collaborate on developing a livestock grazing plan that everyone could support. While the group still exists today, Wilkinson noted that it no longer has the influence it once had to tackle the current challenge posed by the mining proposal.

Although the group helped shape grazing policies in the early '90s, regulatory enforcement remained strict. Shortly after the new restrictions were implemented, BLM went so far as to send an armed officer to the ranch after Wilkinson plugged a trough overflow with his t-shirt to store extra water for cattle. Wilkinson was threatened with arrest, the loss of his grazing permit and a ban on ever running cattle there again, in the name of Lahontan cutthroat trout conservation.

Now, decades later, he can't help but notice how the government can suddenly reverse course; while he once faced severe consequences for storing a little extra water, mining companies proposing massive disturbances seem to receive far less scrutiny.

"I've changed my operation from night and day from the way my dad ran it," Wilkinson said, "and it cost a lot of money to make it what it is today. And now that we've finally got on our feet and rolling to where it is a good operation, nobody cares about the fish or the sage grouse anymore."

Wilkinson has long adapted

to living alongside the species. "I've been protecting them for 30 years," he said. "Why wouldn't I enjoy them?"

While the ranch has been required to conduct an environmental impact statement for any improvement or plan that might disturb the fish or sage grouse, he noted that the same standard does not appear to apply to the mining company, which was only required to complete an EA and a FONSI. Wilkinson also questioned how BLM determined there would be no significant impact despite the hundreds of proposed drill sites.

"I wish the company would just say to me, 'Yeah, we're going to have a lot of impact and we're going to help you out however we need to so we

can coexist,'" Wilkinson said, acknowledging that the land is multiple use. "That, I could live with."

But, "I'm afraid that after being a fourth-generation rancher, my son being the fifth and his two little boys the sixth, we won't be here much longer," he said.

The project's plan of operations alone could devastate the family's ranching legacy, let alone if the lithium mine goes into full production, Wilkinson said.

"I realize they have a right to be out there," he said, "but they don't have the right to break a sixth-generation ranch just because."

And this project isn't the only one threatening the family's livelihood. Two other pro-

posed mining projects would directly impact the ranch's permits. While these additional projects aren't as far along in the planning process as HiTech Minerals' plan, Wilkinson believes their approval is inevitable if the HiTech Minerals' plan is able to move forward.

If drilling plans are approved, there will be no grazing land left for the cattle. The caldera, the ranch's primary grazing area, will be covered with drill sites, while the higher-elevation pastures remain restricted by fish conservation regulations.

Wilkinson emphasized the greater need for collaboration, noting that past challenges were overcome by open communication and compromise.

"I just want people to come to the table and have some sort of collaboration to figure this out," Wilkinson said. "That's the problem with this: the way it was done. There needed to be collaboration and people sitting at the table to meet each other in the middle."

He continued, "That I'm good with, because I've dealt with a lot of that for the fish and sage grouse and I'm still here. And it was always through collaboration that got it done; I never got anything done in my life by jamming it down somebody's throat."

With the future of his family's ranch at stake, he hopes a collaborative approach is still an option for the future of the mining proposal. — **Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor**

Pasture management for this spring

Much of Oklahoma finished the summer and fall of 2024 with drought stressed pastures. As we approach the season when soil temperature and photoperiod are priming warm season grasses to grow, it is important to assess damage to drought stressed pastures and manage accordingly. Following drought, stand damage is readily apparent even on well-managed pastures.

Keep the following in mind this spring to aid in recovery of drought stressed, warm season

grass pastures:

- Damaged stands of grass can recover with weed control, proper fertility and deferred grazing.

- The best post-drought management approach is to reduce competition and focus on moisture conservation and use. Aggressive weed control measures reduce competition for moisture and soil nutrients allowing desirable plants the best opportunity for successful growth and re-establishment. Herbicides are best applied

early!

- Fertilization will be most important for improved grasses (such as bermudagrass or Old World bluestem) in tandem with weed control.

- Permit the desirable grasses to stay ahead of grazing pressure. Manage as if it is a new stand of grass to give time for root systems to grow and re-establish.

- It may be necessary to sacrifice specific grazing paddocks or pastures in order to let the majority of pastures recover by

delaying grazing pressure.

- Make a plan now for warm season grass pastures and hay meadows with the health of desirable plant species in mind.

- Considering the potential for a continued lack of moisture make sure fertility, weed control and grazing pressure permit your desired plant species to capitalize on the moisture when it comes. — **Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**



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STORY SHORTS

Boost given for CA water deliveries

The California Department of Water Resources announced that March's wet and cold storms have led to an increased 2025 State Water Project allocation. The Bureau of Reclamation also raised Central Valley Project water supply allocations, providing farmers and contractors with greater certainty for the growing season. The agencies said the allocation has increased to 40% of requested water supplies, while municipal and industrial contractors remain at 75% of historical use. The recent rains have increased capacity at Lake Oroville and San Luis Reservoir, increasing allocation.

Layoffs affecting bird flu, food safety

Recent federal agency layoffs have significantly impacted the USDA's bird flu response and food safety advisory committees. The layoffs included staff at the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Veterinary Medicine, affecting leadership, policy, legal and communication teams, Reuters reports. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) says the layoffs hit areas crucial to public safety: bird flu response, food safety and animal health. Additionally, on March 6, the administration disbanded two USDA food safety advisory committees: the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) and the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI), according to Meat+Poultry. NACMCF provides food safety recommendations that affect the food supply to the secretaries of Agriculture and Health and Human Services. NACMPI advises the secretary of Agriculture on food safety and inspection policies, with members including processors, meat science academics and industry experts. The AVMA and Consumer Reports urge Congress to restore the positions to protect food safety and animal health.

Food contaminant levels tool launched

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has launched the Chemical Contaminants Transparency Tool, an online database that consolidates contaminant levels in human foods. To protect public health, the FDA sets tolerances, action levels and guidance levels to help assess food safety. The tool provides a searchable list of contaminants, commodities, level types, values and regulatory references. Users can also filter data by contaminant type, making it a valuable resource for food safety. "Ideally there would be no contaminants in our food supply, but chemical contaminants may occur in food when they are present in the growing, storage or processing environments," said acting FDA Commissioner Sara Brenner.

Thousands of pounds of beef stolen in TN

The Grainger County Sheriff's Office in Tennessee is investigating the disappearance of 80,000 pounds of beef stolen from a meat processing facility, Foodmarket reports. Two tractor-trailers picked up shipments from Southeastern Provision in Bean Station but never reached their destinations. Authorities suspect a fraudulent trucking company orchestrated the theft, valued at \$350,000. The beef was intended for Kentucky and Michigan customers who reported the missing deliveries. The stolen meat remained unaccounted for, leaving authorities searching for the beef and those responsible.

Avian flu found in UK sheep

On March 24, the United Kingdom's (UK) Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) confirmed the first case of avian influenza in sheep in Yorkshire. Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss announced that H5N1 was detected in the sheep through repeat milk testing, similar to U.S. protocols. The infected sheep was located on a farm previously affected by highly pathogenic avian influenza in birds. Strict biosecurity measures were implemented, and the animal was culled for further testing. DEFRA introduced livestock surveillance in response to H5N1 outbreaks in U.S. dairy cows. Authorities report a low risk to livestock and public health.

Egg Beaters recalled for cleaning solution

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service announced that Cargill Kitchen Solutions is recalling approximately 212,268 pounds of liquid egg products due to potential contamination with a cleaning solution containing sodium hypochlorite. The affected products, produced March 12-13, include 32-ounce cartons of Egg Beaters original liquid egg substitute, Egg Beaters cage-free original liquid egg substitute, Egg Beaters cage-free original frozen egg substitute, Egg Beaters no enjauladas original sustituto de huevo congelado, and Bob Evans Better'n Eggs Made with Real Egg Whites. The recalled products bear establishment number "G1804" and were distributed for foodservice in multiple states, with possible nationwide distribution. Consumers and foodservice providers should discard or return these items.

IA man charged with illegal slaughter

An Elgin, IA, man is charged after admitting to operating an unlicensed meat and poultry slaughter business in Fayette County for 20 years, local news outlet KRCG reported. The Fayette County Sheriff's Office arrested Ethan Guyer on charges of second-degree theft, first-degree fraudulent practice, and meat and poultry license violation. Two customers reported hiring Guyer to process steers, but he never delivered the meat. Authorities say Guyer's operation generated \$189,560 from slaughtering 150 beef and 500 swine without inspections. He was taken to the Fayette County Jail and later released. The investigation is ongoing, with the potential for additional charges.

Second prairie chicken suit pending before court

PRAIRIE CHICKEN (from page 1)

"By acknowledging that the Endangered Species Act requires the government to balance conservation efforts with their economic impact, the court restored the ability of these ranching families to earn a living," said Charles Yates, an attorney at Pacific Legal Foundation, in reaction to the decision. "Unburdened by the shackles of Chevron deference, the court made clear that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service failed to follow the law when it issued the rule, and accordingly overturned it."

Additionally, the court ruled that USFWS failed to consider economic costs when issuing the 4(d) rule. While economic factors cannot be considered when deciding whether to list a species as threatened, the court found they must be factored into a 4(d) rule.

"Such a determination requires consideration of costs," Counts wrote. "Because Fish and Wildlife failed to account for costs, to include cost of compliance, it failed to consider the 'all relevant factors' and ignored 'important

aspect[s] of the problem' before it."

Because USFWS did not conduct this analysis, the judge granted summary judgment in favor of the plaintiffs and denied USFWS' cross-motion.

Background

In November 2022, USFWS split the lesser prairie chicken into two distinct populations under the ESA. The Northern DPS, found in the Texas Panhandle, Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado, was designated as threatened, while the Southern DPS, located in west Texas and New Mexico, was classified as endangered.

A 4(d) rule was implemented for the Northern DPS to tailor protections while allowing certain agricultural activities. Land cultivated within the past five years could continue to be used for farming, and grazing was permitted, provided that USFWS and a third-party certifier approved a site-specific grazing plan. Under the ESA, taking birds from the Southern DPS was strictly prohibited.

According to USFWS, the bird has lost 90% of its habitat

due to fragmentation and habitat loss, despite ongoing voluntary conservation efforts. Aerial surveys estimated the five-year average population across the five states at 27,384 birds.

In July 2023, the Kansas Natural Resource Coalition and several farmers and ranchers filed suit against USFWS, asserting the 4(d) listing of the lesser prairie chicken severely restricted land use and alleged the agency failed to consider the economic impact of the rule and its impact on small businesses in violation of the ESA and other statutes.

Separately, several cattle groups, along with the states of Texas, Kansas and Oklahoma, and an oil industry group, filed

suit in March 2023 over the listing of the prairie chicken. They argue the agency failed to consider existing conservation measures and the economic impact on ranchers and the oil industry. The suit also said USFWS improperly divided the bird into two distinct populations, violating its own policy for evaluating population segments. Additionally, the suit challenged the 4(d) rule, stating that the ESA does not permit USFWS to delegate enforcement authority to third parties.

That case is still pending before the court with motions for summary judgment due on April 30. Counts is also presiding over the case. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

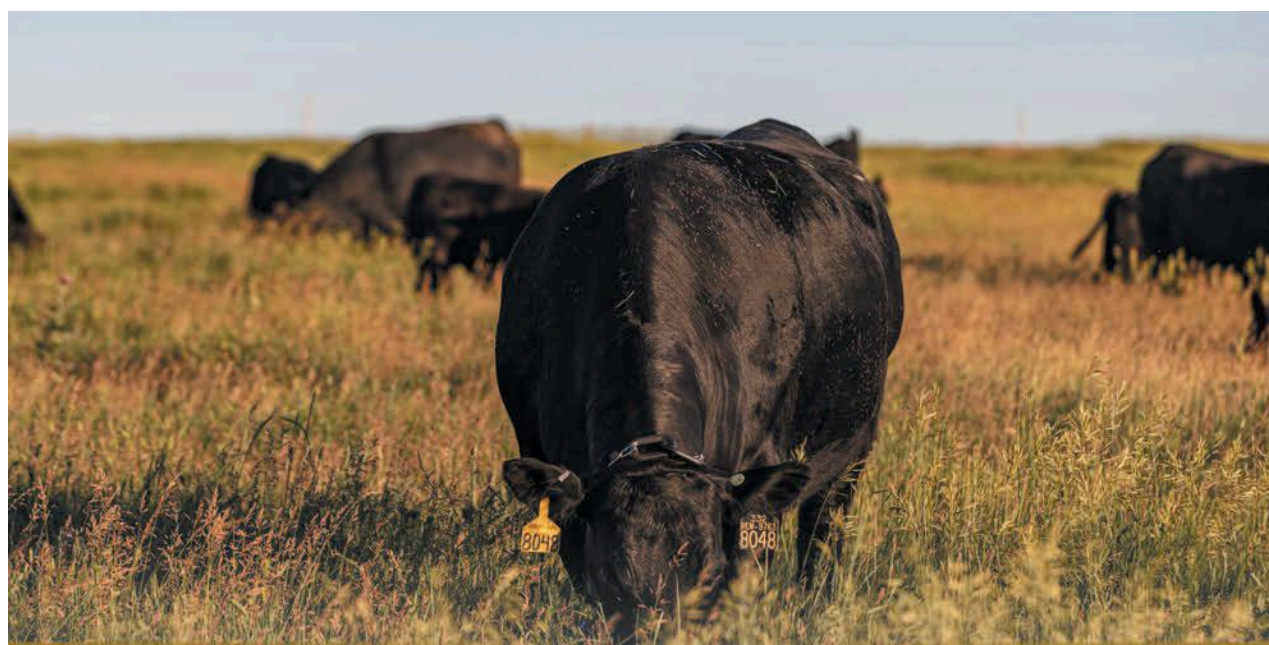


COMING EVENTS

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

April 11-13 – Registration is open for the 2025 Cattle Raisers Convention & Expo taking place in downtown Fort Worth, TX. Details: cattleraisersconvention.com.

July 9 – Tyson Ventures has announced the call for applications for the fourth annual Tyson Demo Day. Interested startups and entrepreneurs are encouraged to apply online by May 2 at tinyurl.com/yvtzsmxs.



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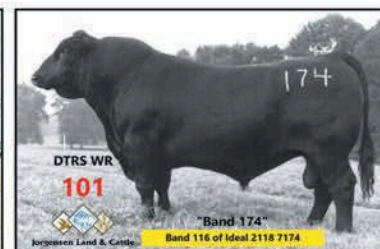
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MARKET NEWS

MARKET SITUATION REPORT

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

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 4/3/2025	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	210.00 ▼	211.83	186.99
CME Feeder Index	291.27 ▲	286.90	249.90
Boxed Beef Average	338.37 ▲	335.72	297.15
Average Dressed Steers	341.25 ▲	330.92	296.84
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,430 ▼	1,431	1,392
Weekly Slaughter**	609,000 ▲	560,000	586,000
Weekly Beef Production***	528.6 ▲	486.7	493.0
Hide/Offal Value	11.79 ▲	11.58	11.67
Corn Price	4.62 ▲	4.53	4.35

*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 31	6,860	330.77	264	362.15	1,446	334.69	1,985	329.90	694	313.37	2,473	295.71
March 24	6,955	326.88	215	357.69	1,300	329.48	1,934	324.65	600	309.07	2,905	293.37
March 17	6,681	321.67	248	357.61	1,373	325.12	1,883	318.06	683	304.71	2,494	292.94
March 10	6,733	317.34	225	358.06	1,337	320.88	2,183	314.91	617	302.96	2,372	289.21

Cutouts						FED BOXED BEEF				
DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT		50% LEAN	90% LEAN				
Apr. 3	338.37	317.84	296.65		124.97	381.66				
Apr. 2	339.90	318.83	295.47		119.68	378.87				
Apr. 1	342.22	322.07	298.25		135.99	384.35				
Mar.31	335.26	320.01	297.39		125.46	382.70				
Mar. 28	332.82	318.68	297.50		116.90	N/A				

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle							
	3/28	3/31	4/1	4/2	4/3	High*	Low*
Apr.	20883	20780	20913	21090	20955	21090	16853
Jun.	20485	20365	20543	20773	20630	20773	16668
Aug.	20100	20003	20233	20405	20273	20405	17005
Oct.	19973	19878	20138	20253	20108	20253	18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle							
	3/28	3/31	4/1	4/2	4/3	High*	Low*
Mar.	28676	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	29220	21920
Apr.	28693	28645	28828	28945	28763	28945	22268
May	28518	28450	28715	28840	28605	28840	22460
Aug.	28968	28950	29240	29398	29178	29398	24118

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

FED CATTLE TRADE	Head Count	Avg. Weight	Avg. Price
WEEKLY WEIGHTED AVERAGES			
Live FOB Steer	266	1,500	210.00
Live FOB Heifer	131	1,350	210.00
Dressed Del Steer	144	953	341.25
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK			
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
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	5,941	1,571	186.99
Live FOB Heifer	1,909	1,391	186.60
Dressed Del Steer	7,408	944	296.84
Dressed Del Heifer	3,825	863	296.38

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: MARCH 30, 2025		
	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	33,147	9,123
Formula	266,459	4,650
Negotiated Cash	83,137	441
Negotiated Grid	41,354	2,559
Packer Owned	6,687	N/A
Total	430,784	16,773

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month	Neg. Sales 0-21 days	Neg. Sales 21+ days	Formula sales
Mar. '25	157,632	916	3,845
Apr. '25	211,964	51	5
May '25	119,957	Domestic sales	5,883
Jun. '25	133,340	NAFTA Exports	68
Jul. '25	100,908		

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		188.77	+0.75
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		186.88	+0.75
Ontario Auctions			
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		187.62	+0.76
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		186.06	+0.75
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs		120.27	+0.48

*Price comparison from one week ago.

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, April 1, 2025			
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	369.96	N/A	343.93
601-700 lbs	310.95	310.00	320.87
701-800 lbs	287.28	276.23	271.96
801-900 lbs	264.91	246.92	249.88
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	337.81	333.46	276.64
501-600 lbs	308.58	310.79	266.93
601-700 lbs	287.00	281.19	257.19
701-800 lbs	265.90	256.92	252.30

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	22,335	18,960	100,844	327,741

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE			
April 2, 2025			
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary			
Receipts EST: 2,900	Week Ago EST: 3,950	Year Ago Act: 7,550	
Santa Teresa, NM -		Douglas, AZ -	
Compared to Tuesday, steer calves and yearlings sold steady. Heifers traded steady. Trade active, demand good. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 500-800 lbs.		Compared to Tuesday, steer calves and yearlings sold steady. Heifers traded steady. Trade active, demand good. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 500-800 lbs..	
Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	285-295	500-600 lbs	275-285
600-700 lbs	265-275	600-700 lbs	255-265
700-800 lbs	245-255	700-800 lbs	235-245
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	323-333	500-600 lbs	310-320
600-700 lbs	293-303	600-700 lbs	280-290
700-800 lbs	263-273	700-800 lbs	250-260

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

Selected Auctions									
Week Ending April 3, 2025									
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
Feeder prices for steers & heifers reflect medium and large 1 cattle, unless otherwise noted; * Indicates medium and large 1-2									
NORTHWEST									
No report available									
Blackfoot, ID									
March 27	526	408-477.50	390-409	339-367.50	253-335	266-314	245	95-149	2,400-3,050
Burley, ID		344-412	352.50-379	306-312			220	165-192	
No report available									
Emmett, ID									
March 29	720	270-362*	310-378*	280-305*	270-325*	280-298*		130-161	
Eugene, OR		280-337*	260-332*	260-296*	220-290*			145-173	975-2,700
March 31	337	385-405	380-390	335-370	340-365	290-311	275-290	120-148	2,500-2,800
Madras, OR		320-335	315-330	310-327	270-302	245-265		140-175	
April 2	470			335-371				125-153	
Vale, OR				313-342.50	280-309	259-273		162-184	
March 31	256	380	340-370	340-385	280-342.50	210-323	170-262.50	50-197.50	3,150
Davenport, WA		300-400	300-350	262.50-345	237.50-316	212.50-297.50	132-212.50	139-222.50	2,625
March 27	1,260			356*	290-351*			148-152.50	
Toppenish, WA			361*	316-337.50*	276*			155-176	

March 27	1,261	250-485	250-475	240-393	230-340	230-318	210-255	135-159	
Orland, CA		230-430	230-418	220-342	210-316	210-285		151-183	
No report available									
Escalon, CA									
March 31	345	280-350	280-350	275-350	250-300	225-250	200-240	110-175	
Famoso, CA		250-320	250-320	250-300	225-265		210-240	120-160	
No report available									
Galt, CA									
April 1	1,382	400-450	380-420	340-375	290-333	275-321		118-154	
Turlock, CA		390-440	390-425	300-366	279-308	254-284	200-229	147-180	
April 1	1,075	430-490	290-445	275-400	250-345	235-305	220-270	136-145	
Salina, UT		280-450	270-425	250-375	235-305	220-277.50	195-245	166-177	

March 31	9,688	425-495	377-450	340-412	252-377	263-327.50	257-300	121.50-221	
Iowa		375-452.50	340-400	300-369	245-341	236-300.50	235-292	132-195.50	
April 1	876	530	382.50-437.50		321-352	301.50-308		131-158	
Miles City, MT		380-447.50	350-410	330.50-375	322	275-310.50	269	134.50-182.50	2,300-2,800
April 2	4,816	427-470	412.50-467.50	373-427	334-372.50	310-337.50	262.50-301.50		
Bassett, NE		330-412.50	301-364	289-330.50	268-312	231-303			
March 29	5,040	455-480	390-460	364.50-416	323-365	298-329	275-294		
Ericson, NE		402.50-450	349-425	322-349	285-334	275-331	265-271		
No report available									
Imperial, NE									
No report available									
Kearney, NE									
March 28	1,951	430-475	420-441	371-400	326-363	292-314	262-286		
Lexington, NE		417	403-434	315-363	293-317	266-288.25			
March 27	4,578	466-478	437.50-445	375-431	325-373	306-328	280.50-300		
Ogallala, NE		445-465	370-427.50	337-371	298-336	275.50-296.50	256-286		
No report available									
Valentine, NE									
March 28	4,371		347.50-375	353.50-412.50	321-371	301.50-339	267.75-304.50		
Herreid, SD			322-350	329-324	277.50-300	282.50-294			
April 2	1,637	349	397-459	367-410	340-376.50	300-319	279-295.50		
Torrington, WY		417.50	375-397.50	337-374	305-337.50	292-303	243-278.50		

March 27	1,183	479-500	425-487.50	406.50-500	293.50-380	298-345
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Feeder cattle markets for March across the past four years

As March wraps up, it is interesting to look back at feeder cattle markets over the past four years. Figure 1 shows Oklahoma combined auction prices by weight for M/L, No. 1 steers in March since 2022. Not only have feeder cattle prices risen dramatically, but the relationship between light and heavy weight feeder cattle has changed significantly. The change in relative prices across weight groups reflects market signals about how resources should be used for cattle production.

As an example, Table 1 summarizes the prices and relationships between calf prices and feeder cattle for 475-pound and 775-lb. steers. These prices are highlighted in Figure 1. In total, prices for calves increased by 94.6% from 2022 to 2025 while prices for 775-lb. steers increased by 85.2%. Prices for the feeder

steers increased faster initially in 2023 before the calf prices increased sharply in 2024 and 2025. In 2023, the March feeder prices were 75.3% of the calf price level but by 2025, the feeder price was 71.3% of calf price.

The price relationships between calves and feeder cattle determine the value of adding additional to calves as stockers. Table 1 includes the value of 300 lbs. of gain between the 475-lb. calves and 775-lb. feeders. In 2022, the value of gain was \$0.72/lb. and increased to \$1.03/lb. by 2025. Over the four years, the value of gain increased by 43.1%.

The increase in calf prices means that cow-calf revenue has increased dramatically in the past four years. Based on the March prices in Table 1, calf revenue has increased from \$975.37/head in 2022 to \$1,897.86/head, an increase

of \$922.49/head. In contrast, gross revenue for 300 lbs. of stocker gain have increased from \$216/head in 2022 to \$309/head in 2025. If we assume that it would be possible to stock two head of stockers per cow, the total stocker revenue increase would be \$186 on a per cow equivalent. In other words, cow-calf revenue has increased 424% more than stocker revenue from 2022 to 2025.

Current market conditions clearly favor calf production over stocker production. That is to say, grass has more value marketed as weaned calves compared to stocker-based gain. Cow-calf producers have increased incentives to maximize calf production compared to retaining calves for increased stocker gain.

Stocker producers face challenging margins and limited opportunities in the current market. The combination of increased calf production in-

centives and relatively cheap feedlot cost of gain means that stockers are squeezed into a limited role generally favoring lighter beginning weights and

faster turnover of stockers. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

Figure 1. Price-Weight Relationship
Medium/Large No. 1 Steers, Oklahoma

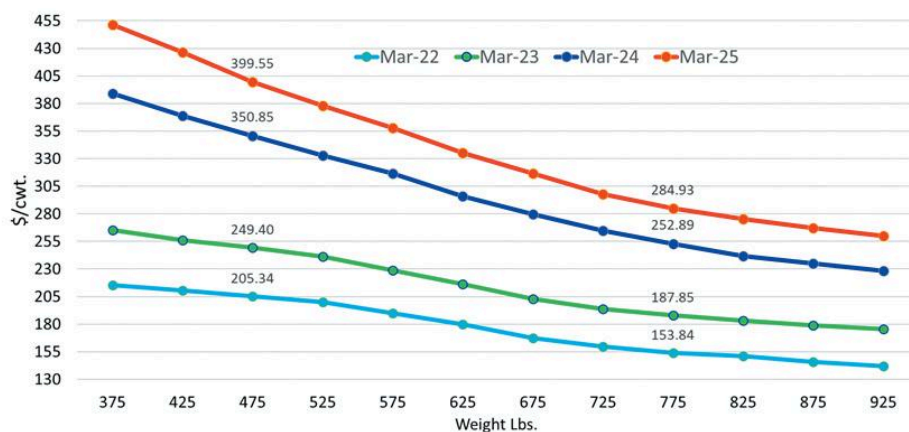


Table 1. March Prices and Value of Gain, M/L, No. 1 Steers, Oklahoma Combined Auctions

Weight	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Chg. 2022-2025
Lbs.	\$/Cwt.				
475	\$205.34	\$249.40	\$350.85	\$399.55	+94.6
	% Chg. YOY	+21.5	+40.7	+13.9	
775	\$153.84	\$187.85	\$252.89	\$284.93	+85.2
	% Chg. YOY	+22.1	+34.6	+12.7	
	775 as % of 475	74.9	75.3	72.1	71.3
VOG (\$/lb.)	\$0.72	\$0.90	\$0.98	\$1.03	+43.1
	% Chg. YOY	+25.0	+8.2	+5.8	
	% Chg. YOY	+25.0	+8.2	+5.8	

YOY = Year over year; VOG = Value of gain

Boxed beef prices close mixed

MARKETS (from page 1)

prices mostly steady, and enjoyed rising prices on box sales," the Cattle Report said on Thursday.

Boxed beef prices were mixed over the week, gaining about \$3 on the Choice cutout to \$338.37 and losing about \$2 on the Select cutout to \$317.84.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures also closed lower, down about \$2 on the April contract to \$285.40 and the May contract also down about \$2 to \$282.12.

"The market has additional concerns about how these newly instated tariffs will impact not only short-term trade and buying decisions, but also long-term market activity," read DTN's midday comments on Thursday.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index lost \$4.37 to close at \$291.27.

Corn futures closed higher, up 7 cents on the May contract to \$4.57 and up 7 cents on the July contract to \$4.65.

Colorado: Winter Live-

stock in La Junta sold 2,857 head on Tuesday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers sold \$5-7 higher, with instances of sharply higher across all weight classes. Feeder heifers sold \$5-9 higher, with instances of sharply higher across all weight classes. Benchmark steers averaging 729 lbs. sold for \$283-294, averaging \$289.80.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 10,000 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers under 800 lbs. sold steady to \$8 lower with heavier weights steady to \$2 higher. Feeder heifers sold steady to \$7 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 773 lbs. sold from \$284-307, averaging \$292.71.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 5,000 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers and steer calves sold steady to \$5 lower. Feeder heifers and heifer calves sold steady to \$5 higher except 500-700 lbs. sold \$1-5 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 785 lbs. sold from \$288-300, averaging \$291.22. — **Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor**

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"Sadly,.... This isn't th'first resignation I've ever gotten from a Bull."

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- 100 ANGUS/ANGUS CROSS FEMALES**
ORIGINATING FROM THE OTIS CREEK RANCH, DREWSEY, OR AND STEP TOE RANCH, MCGILL, NV. BRED TO LOW BIRTH/HIGH GROWTH ANGUS BULLS FROM 44 FARMS, KERN CATTLE AND JORGENSEN FARMS AND A FEW HIGH-END RED ANGUS BULLS FROM LUDVIGSON, IRON-LORENSEN AND STEGALL CATTLE CO.
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- 40 ANGUS/ANGUS CROSS COWS**
3-YEAR-OLDS ORIGINATING FROM ONE EASTERN OREGON RANCH. FOOTHILL VACCINATED AND ON A YEARLY MODIFIED-LIVE VACCINE PROGRAM. BRED TO 100% FRONT END JORGENSEN ANGUS BULLS TO CALVE SEPT & OCT.
- 60 ANGUS/ANGUS CROSS & RED ANGUS CROSS COWS**
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SALE REPORTS

GREEN MOUNTAIN RED ANGUS PRODUCTION SALE

March 18, Logan, MT
84 Red Angus

bulls\$6,985
Auctioneer: Trent Stewart

TOPS: GMRA Legionnaire M4223, 1/16/2024 by GMRA King James 0272H; to Price Ranch, Deer Trail, CO, \$18,500. GMRA Lottery M4294, 2/12/2024 by Bieber Foreman H165; to Cooksley Red Angus, Anselmo, NE, \$12,000. GMRA High Jump M4231, 1/18/2024 by Bieber Jumpstart J1037; to Cooksley Red Angus, Anselmo, NE, \$12,000. GMRA Maverick M4245, 1/22/2024 by Brown PRA Patriot G6291; to Kinchen Land & Livestock LLC, Kaycee, WY, \$11,500. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

GARTNER-DENOWH ANGUS RANCH BULL SALE

March 27, Sidney, MT
249 Angus

bulls\$7,276
250 Commercial open heifers 2,539

Auctioneers: Roger Jacobs and Kyle Shobe
TOPS: GDAR Justo 4368, 2/15/2024 by GDAR Justo

2711; to Jeff DeVries, Cavour, SD, \$14,000. GDAR Bardolier 4572, 3/4/2024 by GDAR Bardolier 2363; to Schieber Ranch, Sidney, MT, \$14,000. GDAR Bardolier 432, 1/29/2024 by GDAR Bordolier 2363; to Tom Opitz, Hartford, SD, \$14,000. GDAR Clipper 4506, 2/27/2024 by GDAR Clipper 225; to Dale Gosho, Beach, ND, \$13,500. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

VERMILION RANCH PRODUCTION SALE

March 27, Billings, MT
461 Angus

bulls\$10,450
29 Angus fall bred heifers 5,629

50 Commercial spring pairs 4,900
5867 Commercial open heifers 2,518

257 Angus embryos 1,001

Auctioneers: Joe Goggins, Roger Jacobs, Ty Thompson, Greg Goggins & Bill Cook

TOPS—Angus bulls: Vermillion Jameson M228, 2/19/2024 by Basin Jameson; to Vermillion Jameson Syndicate, \$75,000. Vermillion Jameson M285, 3/9/2024 by Basin Jameson 1076; to Wittkopp Angus,

Circle, MT, \$38,000. Vermillion Riverside M192, 2/12/2024 by Vermillion Riverside; to Miller Angus, Bruce, SD, \$37,500. Vermillion Long Teton M041, 1/31/2024 by Long Teton 107; to Bob Stoddard, New Castle, WY, \$26,500. Vermillion Resilient M261, 3/1/2024 by Heiken Resilient 2087; to Griffel Angus, Park City, MT, \$25,000. Vermillion Jameson M330, 2/22/2024 by Basin Jameson 1076; to Tim Rice, Mullen, NE, \$24,500. Vermillion Jameson M198, 2/24/2024 by Basin Jameson 1076; to KGRanch, Three Forks, MT, \$24,000. **Fall bred heifer:** Vermillion Blackbird 3780, 8/12/2023 by VAR Conclusion 0234; to Dustin Focht, Pratt, KS, \$9,000. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

DOUBET RANCH BULL SALE

April 1, Billings, MT
58 Salers bulls ... \$8,289

Auctioneer: Ty Thompson
TOPS: DR Gold Nugget 88M, 3/2/2024 by MJB Kruggerand 379K; to Rowell Cattle Co., Minnakah, OK, \$23,000. DR Patriot 3M, 1/28/2024 by MJB Patriot 342H; to Beery Land and Livestock, Vida, MT, \$16,000.

DR Patriot 84M, 2/23/2024 by MJB Patriot 342H; to Elm Creek Ranch, Hebron, ND, \$13,000. DR Black Gold 89M, 3/8/2024 by MJB Kruggerand 379K; to Thomas Ranch, Meeteetse, WY, \$12,000. DR Jasper 10M, 1/31/2024 by TSB Jasper 16J; to Wilson U Ranch, Kirby, WY, \$12,000. DR Juneau 98M, 3/13/2024 by ECR Juneau 352J; to Promise Land Cattle Co., Fishtail, MT, \$12,000. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

HINMAN ANGUS BULL SALE

April 1, Malta, MT
164 Angus bulls ... \$8,116

Auctioneer: Joe Goggins
Sale Manager: Ron Frye Marketing

TOPS: HA Man In Black 4425, 2/5/2024 by LAR Man In Black; to Lufkin Cattle Co., Leadore, ID, \$42,000. HA Man In Black 4218, 2/25/2024 by LAR Man In Black; to Math Farms, White-water, MT, \$24,000. HA Man In Black 4398, 2/10/2024 by LAR Man In Black; to VLS Angus, Dunn Center, ND, \$27,500. HA America 4107, 2/13/2024 by SAV America 8018; to Remmich Ranch, Hinsdale, MT, \$21,000. HA Badlands 4257, 3/1/2024 by

Ellingson Badlands 0285; to Big Dry Angus Ranch, Jordan, MT, \$20,500. HA Man In Black 4394, 2/10/2024 by LAR Man In Black; to KG Ranch, Three Forks, MT, \$20,000. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

NISSEN ANGUS BULL SALE

April 2, Chinook, MT
50 Angus bulls ... \$7,969

Auctioneer: Roger Jacobs

TOPS: NA Exclusive 421, 1/27/2024 by Musgrave 316 Exclusive; to Alan and Rachel Weaver, Big Sandy, MT, \$16,500. NA Duke 453, 2/6/2024 by Millard Duke 816; to Bruce Hould, Malta, MT, \$12,500. NA Duke 466, 2/8/2024 by Millard Duke 816; to Faber Ranch, Lloyd, MT, \$11,000. NA Tanker 429, 1/31/2024 by LVVF Tanker 14; to Powder River Angus, Arvada, WY, \$11,000. — **DEVIIN MURNIN**

DIAMOND PEAK CATTLE BULL SALE

March 29, Loma, CO
86 Angus & SimAngus

bulls\$7,811

Auctioneer: Trent Stewart

AXTELL CATTLE CO. PRODUCTION SALE

March 31, Sterling, CO
4 Angus bulls ... \$5,688

46 Red Angus

bulls 5,534

5 Red Angus/Charolais

bulls 2,900

10 Commercial

pairs 4,050

14 Red Angus open

heifers 2,929

27 Commercial open

heifers 2,700

Auctioneer: Jason Santamaso

TOPS: Axtell TKO 4552, 3/5/2024 by Axtell TKO 2418; to Orton Red Angus, Ainsworth, NE, \$11,250. Axtell Widescreen 4821, 3/11/2024 by Axtell Widescreen 2032; to K2 Red Angus, Wheatland, WY, \$10,000. Axtell Aromax 4833, 3/6/2024 by Red ARO 818F; to Carrizo Creek Red Angus, Kim, CO, \$9,750. — **TY GROSHANS**

GRAY'S ANGUS RANCH BULL SALE

March 31, Harrison, NE
40 Angus older

bulls\$6,506

49 Angus yearling

bulls 5,744

Auctioneer: Matt Lowery

TOPS—Older bull: Gray's

Out Front 7143, 4/23/2023

by Gray's Out Front 4170; to

Byron Burdick, Johnston, NE,

\$15,000. **Yearling bull:** Gray's

Accomplishment 84, 1/23/2024

by Sitz Accomplishment 720F;

to Kelby Kretschman, Arvada, WY,

\$17,000. — **TY GROSHANS**



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

- Apr. 7** – FBA Ranch, Bull Sale, Havre, MT
- Apr. 8** – Hilltop Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Denton, MT
- Apr. 9** – Jocko Valley Cattle, Columbus, MT
- Apr. 12** – Bar T Bar, Bull Sale, Winslow, AZ
- Apr. 12** – Fink Beef Genetics, Production Sale, Randolph, KS

- Apr. 15** – Treasure Bull Test, Great Falls, MT
- Apr. 16** – Milk River Genetics, Bull Sale, Chinook, MT
- Apr. 18** – Timber Line Ranch, Bull Sale, Manhattan, MT
- Apr. 18** – DeGrand Angus, Bull Sale, Baker, MT
- Apr. 19** – Lindskov's LT Ranch, Bull Sale, Isabel, SD
- Apr. 22** – Dunn Ranches, Bull Sale, Eaton, CO
- Apr. 29** – Currant Creek Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Miles City, MT
- May. 17** – Western Summit, Female Sale, Galt, CA
- May. 22** – Dixie Valley Angus, Female Sale, Online

BALANCER

- Apr. 12** – Bar T Bar, Bull Sale, Winslow, AZ

CHAROLAIS

- Apr. 12** – Fink Beef Genetics, Production Sale, Randolph, KS
- Apr. 12** – Hebbert Charolais, Bull Sale, Hyannis, NE
- Apr. 19** – Lindskov's LT Ranch, Bull Sale, Isabel, SD

HEREFORD

- Apr. 19** – Stuber Ranch, Bull Sale, Bowman, ND

RED ANGUS

- Apr. 8** – Beckton Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sheridan, WY
- Apr. 11** – 5L Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sheridan, MT
- Apr. 12** – Ludvigson Stock Farms, Bull Sale, Park City, MT
- May. 8** – Koenig Ranch Reds, Bull Sale, Glasgow, MT

STABILIZER

- Apr. 12** – Bar T Bar, Bull Sale, Winslow, AZ

COMMERCIAL

- Apr. 19** – Visalia Livestock, Bred Cow & Pair Sale, Visalia, CA

HORSE

- May. 17** – Feather River College, Horse Sale, Quincy, CA
- May. 24** – Full House Horse Sale, Newcastle, WY
- Jun. 7** – Ranchers Horse Sale, Juntura, OR
- Jun. 14** – Shelman Family Horse Sale, Burns, OR
- Jul. 12** – High Desert Quarter Horse Sale, Redmond, OR

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Meat quality is influenced by various factors that affect the consumer's eating experience, including tenderness, marbling and fat composition. While many factors contribute to the final product, beef producers play a key role in shaping meat quality through their management and nutritional decisions, even before an animal is born.

Production systems vary widely based on climate and economics, but management choices made before birth can significantly impact meat quality. Key decisions include breed selection and maternal nutrition.

Breed type affects meat quality. Bos taurus breeds, such as Angus and Hereford, tend to have higher marbling scores than Bos indicus

breeds. Crossbreeding beef and dairy genetics can optimize efficiency and carcass quality, with research ongoing to determine the best breed combinations for superior meat characteristics.

A dam's uterine capacity and diet during pregnancy directly impact the offspring's muscle development, fat composition and overall meat quality. Intrauterine growth restriction can limit muscle fiber development and reduce marbling. Proper maternal nutrition helps mitigate these effects. Studies show that protein supplementation during gestation improves marbling and meat tenderness, while both undernutrition and overnutrition of the beef cow during gestation can negatively impact carcass traits of their

calves.

Feeding antioxidant-rich diets to pregnant cattle can enhance the offspring's meat quality by improving shelflife and flavor stability. Research suggests that plant-based antioxidants, such as rosemary and thyme, can reduce fat oxidation, preserving meat tenderness and taste.

Beef producers have a significant influence on meat quality through breeding choices and nutrition management. Understanding these factors and implementing best practices from conception through finishing can lead to higher-quality beef, improving both consumer satisfaction and market value. — **Paul Beck, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service beef cattle nutrition specialist**

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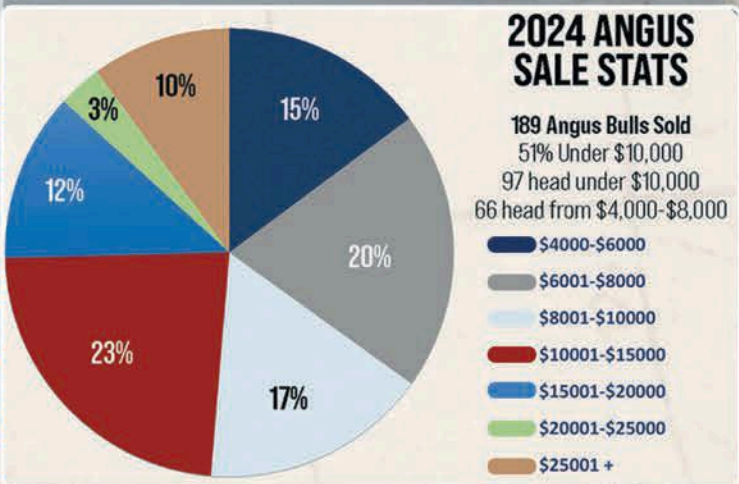
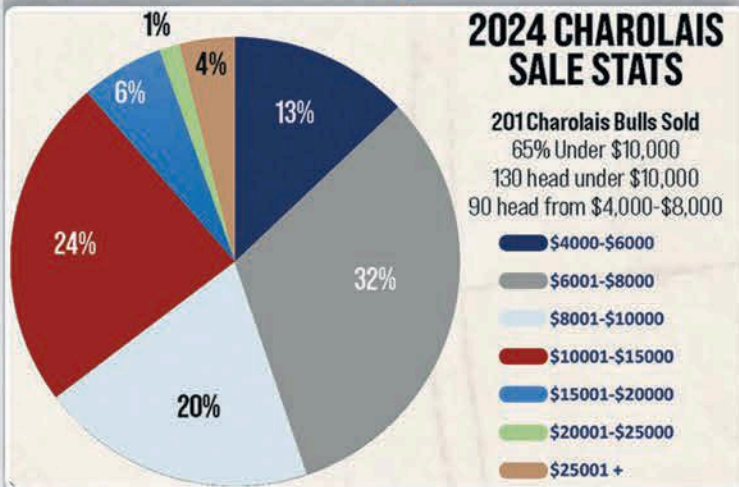
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