

INSIDE WLJ

EDGE WINS — Alberta auctioneer Dean Edge claims 2025 World Livestock Auctioneer Championship title. Page 4

IMPORTS SURGE — Beef exports are down, imports are up, and global market shifts are stirring uncertainty across the board. Page 9

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY
“It would be foolish not to recognize that we are in a downward trend in prices... prices of just about every commodity, including livestock. But we aren't headed for the sort of a depression that we experienced in the early thirties, or the one following the first World War,” wrote Nelson Crow in his June 1949 “Observations by the Publisher.”

INDEX

Opinion	P-2
Markets	P-8
Classifieds.....	P-10
Sale Calendar.....	P-11
Sale Report.....	P-11

Greens sue USFWS over desert tortoise protections

—Allege science was ignored

A coalition of wildlife advocates filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) over its 2022 decision to deny Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections for the Sonoran Desert tortoise, arguing that the agency ignored science and violated federal law.

The Desert Tortoise Council, Tucson Herpetological Society, Western Watersheds Project and WildEarth Guardians—represented by the Western Environmental Law Center—filed the federal lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona, claiming the agency disregarded the best available science, used flawed habitat and population models, and reversed earlier findings from 2010 to 2014 that supported listing the tortoise as a threatened species.

The coalition argues the agency ignored evidence of population declines and mounting threats. The lawsuit also claims that the agency dismissed cumulative threats, such as habitat loss, inva-

sive species and grazing, and relied too heavily on non-binding conservation measures from a 2015 agreement with Arizona without thoroughly assessing the species’ status across its range.

“The Fish and Wildlife Service’s decision to deny protections to the

imperiled Sonoran Desert tortoise was flawed from the start because it was based on a purely speculative and overly optimistic population estimate,” said David Woodsmall, attorney with the Western Environmental Law Center representing the groups.

“The agency also severely downplayed likely future effects to the tortoise from increased drought frequency and severity,” Woodsmall said. “We are disappointed to have to bring this case, but the agency

See TORTOISE SUIT on page 5



Arizona Game and Fish Department
Environmentalists are suing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for its decision to deny Endangered Species Act protections for the Sonoran Desert tortoise.

EPA releases final Insecticide Strategy

—Provides consideration guidelines

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized its long-awaited Insecticide Strategy in late April, identifying protections for endangered species while aiming to ease burdens on American farmers using pesticides. The final plan’s release came just one day before a court-mandated deadline, and follows a controversial draft strategy released last July.

The final strategy, published April 29, identifies protections for endangered and threatened species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) from the use of insecticides. The plan evaluates mitigation plans to protect more than 900 species listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that EPA considers when registering a new insecticide or re-evaluating an existing one.

“We have found common sense ways to keep endangered species safe that won’t place unneeded burden on the growers who rely on these tools for their livelihood, and which are necessary to ensure a safe and plentiful food supply,” said EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin in a news release.

The plan builds on Zeldin’s “Powering the Great American Comeback Initiative,” which intends to protect human health and the environment while still energizing the American economy. The Insecticide Strategy specifically builds on the third pillar of his initiative, which includes permitting reform, cooperative federalism and cross-agency partnership.

The final plan was developed following a settlement with the

See INSECTICIDE on page 6

Global beef markets face rising prices, uncertainty

—Tight supplies, trade turbulence

The global beef industry is navigating a turbulent 2025, as rising prices, shrinking cattle supplies and geopolitical developments introduce mounting uncertainty. According to the RaboBank RaboResearch division’s Q2 2025 Global Beef Quarterly report, all major cattle markets have seen prices trend higher in the first half of the year. However, the resurgence of protectionist trade policies—particularly in the U.S.—threatens to reshape beef trade flows and increase volatil-

ity across key markets. “With beef as one of the largest agricultural commodities traded by the United States, any change to U.S. trading arrangements has the potential to affect the beef market at a national and, in turn, a global level,” said Angus Gidley-Baird, senior analyst for animal protein at RaboResearch.

While much of the recent media coverage has focused on tariffs, Gidley-Baird emphasized this may just be the start of broader structural changes.

“Tariffs have grabbed headlines, but the real story is the shifting landscape of global trade

agreements,” he said. “In just a few months, more trade negotiations have been initiated than we’ve seen in decades.”

Despite the turmoil, RaboResearch maintains a cautiously optimistic stance for the remainder of 2025. “The fundamentals of supply and demand suggest that trade flows will persist,” Gidley-Baird said. “But should the U.S.-China relationship deteriorate further—or if Europe enters the fray—the global beef market could look very different by the end of the year.”

See BEEF OUTLOOK on page 12

Tight supplies send cattle market higher

Boxed beef prices soared to new highs this past week amid tighter supplies and reduced slaughter output.

Live cattle futures continued their ascent higher on the nearby contract, up more than \$5 on the June contract to \$228.20, but steady on the August contract at \$216.95.

“It’s another calm trading session for CME cattle futures as the market continues to consolidate after recent gains,” wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, in The Beef on Thursday. “Only spot June live cattle, supported by its \$10/cwt discount to cash, is making new contract highs daily with ease.”

Cash trade through Thursday totaled about 20,000 head. Live steers sold from \$233-242, and dressed steers sold from \$380-382.

“At least right now, it appears the average cash prices this week will beat last week by about \$1, another all-time high,” Fish said.

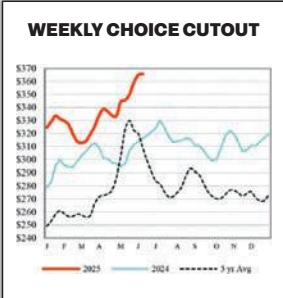
Cash trade for the week ending June 8 totaled 78,808 head. Live steers averaged \$237.19, and dressed steers averaged \$380.40.

Slaughter through Thursday totaled about 456,000 head,

compared to 477,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for a week earlier is projected at 582,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending May 31 was 487,605 head. The average steer dressed weight was 940 lbs., 2lbs. above the prior week.

“As the packing industry fights red ink exacerbated by the monster rise in cattle costs last week, expectations are for an extremely small slaughter this week at sub-570k head,” Fish said.

Boxed beef prices climbed higher over the week, up more than \$10 on the Choice cutout to \$366.85 and up about \$7 to \$363.07 on the Select cutout.



See MARKETS on page 9

LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
\$237.09	\$382.00	\$314.62
WEEK ENDING: 6-12-25		

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PERIODICAL :

COMMENTS

Selective diversity

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) recently announced a new “strike team” in partnership with federal and local agencies to combat livestock depredations by gray wolves in three of California’s northern counties: Siskiyou, Sierra and Plumas counties.

The statement went on to say the task force will be led by CDFW’s law enforcement and scientific staff and will increase CDFW presence in communities to effectively implement these measures. The program began June 9 and is anticipated to run through the summer. The program is working to create a county agricultural protection position that will support depredation investigations and capture and collar methods, as well as develop carcass removal programs to mitigate wolf attraction to ranch properties.

CDFW Director Charlton H. Bonham said in the statement, “Today’s announcement showcases the power of collaboration in effectively and safely managing California’s growing gray wolf population ... This strike force allows CDFW to work more closely with our key partners and impacted ranchers and provide new tools to protect cattle and other livestock from harm. Together, we are doing everything we can to keep both livestock and wolves safe. Thank you to our partners in this effort for making this strike team possible.”

The statement explains three areas the strike team aims to help. First, in-person, on-the-ground support from CDFW staff will be working 24/7. They plan to use radio communication and real-time sources to locate wolves. Second, the strike team aims to develop conflict risk management plans for participating ranchers. They claim they will help develop unique plans for individual ranches to help mitigate future conflict through nonlethal methods. And third, the strike team will plan outreach, education and training to educate producers with techniques and strategies that ranchers can take to reduce wolf-livestock conflicts.

In an article published by the Sacramento Bee, they claim there about 70 wolves in California in at least 10 packs who have killed dozens of calves and cattle.

Supporting the move is Senior Wolf Advocate for the Center of Biological Diversity Amaroq Weiss, who said to the Bee, “I think that it’s very smart ... I hope that the ranchers in the area also do the right thing and accept this offer of assistance and participate in these opportunities.”

The Center for Biological Diversity is also the group who filed the 1990 lawsuit to reintroduce the Mexican gray wolf into the U.S. and, according to the group’s website, “... filed a long list of lawsuits to retain or regain wolf protections and won an agreement pushing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a national gray wolf recovery plan.”

The group touts their Carnivore Conservation Program that is backed by a large staff. It would take hours to read through the bios of these highly educated, experienced, litigious and well-funded individuals.

Unfortunately, the need for livestock in today’s world does not meet their standards. While school educated, they don’t seem to realize the well-documented benefits from cattle production. They must not understand the list of byproducts produced from livestock, the direct protein source they provide and their ability to feed the world on fewer and fewer acres each year, or the positive environmental impacts livestock have across nearly every single ecosystem. Livestock have the ability to contribute to the betterment of nearly every person in this nation, but instead, groups like this are more concerned with knowing wolves are living in the wild and won’t stop until their agenda is complete. It’s the business side of conservation.

It’s laughable that some people out there think there are only 70 wolves in the state. Furthermore, it’s deplorable that CDFW authorities don’t always have the courage to recognize obvious wolf kills or adequately reimburse the subsequent losses. At what point does this nation realize that we aren’t working with supply and demand issues and that we are facing a crisis? If everything coming out of D.C. is touting the need for national food security, how is it that we aren’t recognizing the benefit livestock add to our nation?

I have not been able to find where the wolf provides a protein source for the general population. I have not been able to find where the wolf contributes to society through their byproducts. I have not been able to find where the wolf contributes to a healthier ecosystem when they kill for fun, have depleted deer and elk herds, and have been allowed to roam freely recognizing that humans do not pose a threat to them.

There is not much “diversity” when only certain species are protected and litigated for. Ranchers’ livelihoods are not being protected. Why is a wolf’s life more important than a cow’s? While this strike team is a nice gesture, it isn’t enough. Cattlemen should be able to defend their livelihoods, their livestock and their families. When both sides of the aisle recognize this, then we have made some progress. — **LOGAN IPSEN**



IPSEN



DITTMER’S TAKE

The strength of the economy is always important to an industry like ours that depends directly on everyday people.

When the prices of our product are setting records even most cattlemen didn’t expect to see this year, that strength is even more important.

So, the reconciliation bill that passed the House and is being debated in the Senate is critically important to the beef production chain. There has never been a bill so big and far reaching. Keeping the current tax rates, adding new deductions, increasing the small business deduction, granting 100% expensing for equipment and facilities from Jan. 20, and higher standard deduction are growth drivers. That growth could yield \$8,000 to \$13,000 per household, (per White House’s Stephen Miran), the most for middle incomes.

Only mandatory (entitlement) spending can be in the reconciliation bill. Much of the cost cutting in the bill from welfare, nutrition and Medicaid programs is from tightening up eligibility requirements that have been ignored, fraudulently circumvented or expanded by past administrations and Congress. Despite the howls of protest, Congress is planning to just slow the rate of growth for these programs, not slash benefits. Making the 40% of the able-bodied Medicaid recipients work, study or volunteer 20 hours a week is hardly cruel.

Despite some folks’ fear of increasing deficits, growing GDP and cutting spending should actually cut trillions from the deficit. Plus, the White House has begun sending over rescission bills to Congress. These bills will end certain programs and expenditures and require only a simple majority from both Houses.

Once the reconciliation bill gets through, maybe by July 4, the congressional Republicans plan bills to put into legislation fixes for the ridiculous and wasteful gems Elon Musk’s DOGE has uncovered so far.

The biggest fights in the Senate will be over state and local tax deduction limits (SALT) and how much of the Green New Deal environmental spending to retract from the budget as passed with the Inflation Reduction Act. There are Republican senators who want to raise the \$40,000 SALT deduction and others who want to keep Green New Deal dollars flowing to their particular states.

There is a lot already done, and more remaining, in reducing the regulatory drag on the economy from the Environmental Protection Agency and Interior departments, which often restrict agriculture’s ability to operate.

BIG MONTH FOR EVERYONE

There are critical things yet to be deal with, especially for the cattle business, like tariffs and market access. Like all things political, most countries will delay accepting new rules until deadline. Our key overseas export markets like Japan, South Korea and China have not finalized deals quickly, although there is reason to believe President Donald Trump’s team will secure lower tariffs and better access. Just as some businesses have said getting rid of environmental problems is as important, or more important, than tax reform, getting access to markets always closed to our beef could be important. It will be challenging for U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer to gain access to the United Kingdom market, in negotiating that deal’s details. Getting them to accept normally produced American beef has been impossible. He knows that.

There are two other things that could gum things up. The screwworm problem moving out of southern Mexico and the necessity for closing the border to Mexican feeder cattle is a problem. It not only hampers feedyards that depend on a supply of those feeder cattle but it further crimps an already tight supply of cattle nationally. We hope that the Trump team’s fast recognition and action habit carries over to this problem. It is not an easy problem to deal with, given that the best methods of preventing migration have been indirect.

But just when southern ranchers in Texas, New Mexico and California have gotten much relief from illegal and cartel traffic through their ranches, now they have to watch for any evidence of insects invading any wound or orifice.

The other blip on the radar to watch is Robert F. Kennedy Junior’s campaign to change the American food supply. We were disturbed by media reports that cheeseburgers were on the “ultra processed” food list, not because of the burger or cheese, but because of the bun. This department bears watching.

The second half of 2025 could well exceed everyone’s wishes for America and the beef industry but much remains to be seen. The last two thoughts are sobering, but an economy beginning a great run from lower taxes, less regulation and continuing great demand would be a nice horse to ride. We just need more rain, more cattle. — **Steve Dittmer, WLJ columnist**

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

OBITUARY



Harry Little Bettis; 1934-2025

On June 4, Harry Little Bettis died at home on the Aikman Ranch of old age. Harry was an outdoor man, who, despite a Stanford education and notable Idaho ancestry, preferred a life wearing Levis and a Pendleton shirt, packing a shovel, and riding a tall horse followed by a cow dog. Harry was, first and foremost, a rancher.

Harry was born on Oct. 21, 1934, to Agnes Little Bettis, daughter of Andrew Little, the nation’s biggest sheepman in the 1920s and 30s, and to Laurence Moore Bettis, grandson of C.W. Moore, co-founder of the Idaho First National Bank. Harry was named after his paternal grandfather, Dr. Harry Sylvester Bettis, one of Boise’s first dentists.

Harry lived on his family’s ranch near Bellevue on the Wood River where he attended school until the fall when he turned 12. He attended the California Preparatory School in

the Ojai Valley, followed by Fountain Valley School in Colorado, where he graduated from high school in 1952. Math was easy for Harry, who hated writing papers, so he majored in accounting at Stanford University, where he graduated in 1956. He said his best economic lessons were learned in the big red barn where he lived and worked on campus, and he chose his classes based on the finals schedule so he could get home days earlier and help with haying. Harry could do math in his head quicker than most people could write it down, a skill that served him well when weighing cattle and calculating cattle prices. Harry served with the U. S. Army Reserve in Fort Benning, GA. Upon returning home from college, Harry worked on the family ranch on the Wood River, which he got control over at age 24.

Harry, who enjoyed the company of women, was married three times, and had many lady friends whom he remembered fondly in later years. But, he would probably agree that his longest successful relationship was with his sourdough starter, which brought a lot of joy to his friends and family in the form of biscuits, bread, and most famously, pancakes.

In 1965, Harry married Ann Devereaux, a photographer living in Sun Valley. Ann and Harry lived on the ranch at Bellevue with Ann’s daughter, Farleigh, who enjoyed spending time with Harry, the horses and the dogs. After their divorce,

Harry bought United Oil Company based in Twin Falls, which he operated for several years, while living in the Rogerson Hotel above the hardware store. In 1969, he bought Grove Miller’s Ranch on Big Willow Creek near Emmett. Shortly after moving to his new ranch, Harry met Carol MacGregor, who was teaching at Emmett High School and living with his Aunt Myrn. The couple married in 1970. Carol’s son, J.G., was two when they moved to Big Willow to Harry’s ranch. Harry and Carol had three daughters together, Laura, Catherine and Janelle. Harry married Sheila Sayles in 1987. She recounted their first date once, saying he picked her up in his ranch truck, and her pink dress was soon dusty rose. After his 1991 divorce, Harry never remarried, but enjoyed the company of accomplished, attractive and goodhearted women.

Harry served as a director of the Idaho First National Bank and its successors for most of his adult life. His intelligence served the bank well. He saw it through its evolution from Idaho First National Bank to Moore Financial Group to West One Bank to U. S. Bancorp. Harry was a director of the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation from 1968 to 2024, serving longer than any other family member. When he started, he expanded its reach by making contacts in lots of smaller rural communities and finding out what they needed. Harry also served on the boards of the College of Idaho and

The Peregrine Fund. He was a strong advocate and supporter of Maurice Hornocker’s big cat research at the University of Idaho and other institutions. Harry loved horse racing, and had horses at Les Bois Park, in New Mexico, and California during different eras of his life. Horses that didn’t make it on the track were repurposed to cow horses, which made for some wild rides. Harry was really sad to see horse racing leave the Treasure Valley, but he continued to have and breed horses and enjoyed watching the horse racing channel. Harry was the most long-standing member of the Arid Club at the time of his death. He was a member of the Bohemian Club and Rancheros Visitadores, both in California.

In 2007, he moved to his Aikman Ranch south of Emmett. As he convalesced over the past year and a half, Harry had a nice view of his red corral, barnyard and horses out his window. He so appreciated the visits of friends and family during this time, and became fast friends with his caregivers.

Preceding Harry in death are his parents, Laurence and Agnes Bettis. He is survived by his three daughters, Laura Bettis, Catherine Bettis and Janelle (Tyson) Wise; his stepson, J.G. Schwarz; and six grandchildren, Clyde and Alice Rydaldh, and Elliott, Harrison, Martin and Cosette Wise. Donations may be made in Harry’s memory to the College of Idaho or the University of Idaho Taylor Ranch Endowment.

WLJ

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Analyzing the cow-calf sector of beef production

Cattle production is the most important U.S. agricultural industry, consistently accounting for the largest share of total cash receipts for agricultural commodities. In 2024, U.S. cattle production represented about 22% of the \$515 billion in total cash receipts for agricultural commodities. With rich agricultural land resources, the U.S. has developed a beef industry that is largely separate from its dairy sector.

The U.S. beef industry is unique when compared with other countries. In addition to having the world's largest cattle finishing industry, the U.S. is also the world's largest total consumer of beef. Primarily high-quality, grain-fed beef. The U.S. beef cattle industry is segmented and has a long production cycle.

The cow-calf sector serves as the source of calves that will eventually become beef, the product. This sector maintains a herd of beef cows for raising calves. Most calves are born in spring and weaned at three to seven months. Following the weaning stage, calves can move through the production chain in several different ways. Select heifer and bull calves may be retained and developed as breeding stock.

If additional pasture forage is available at weaning (typical of Oklahoma winter wheat grazing), calves may be retained for further grazing and growth until the following spring, then sold as

yearlings. Yearlings then move into the finishing segment and are typically fed to finish to a compositional endpoint offering the best trade-off between quality grade and red meat yield.

Throughout the U.S., cow-calf operations are located on land that is not typically suited or needed for crop production. These operations depend on range and pasture forage conditions, which vary significantly across the U.S. based on the area's rainfall and temperature. Beef cows graze on forage from grasslands to maintain themselves and raise a calf with very little, if any, grain input. The cow is maintained on pasture year-round, as is the calf until the calf is weaned.

According to the USDA's 2022 Census of Agriculture data, the average beef cow herd size is 47 head. Operations with 50 or fewer head likely coexist alongside other income streams, or the operations provide supplemental income to off-farm employment. Operations with 100 or more beef cows compose 10.5% of all beef operations and 60.5% of the beef cow inventory.

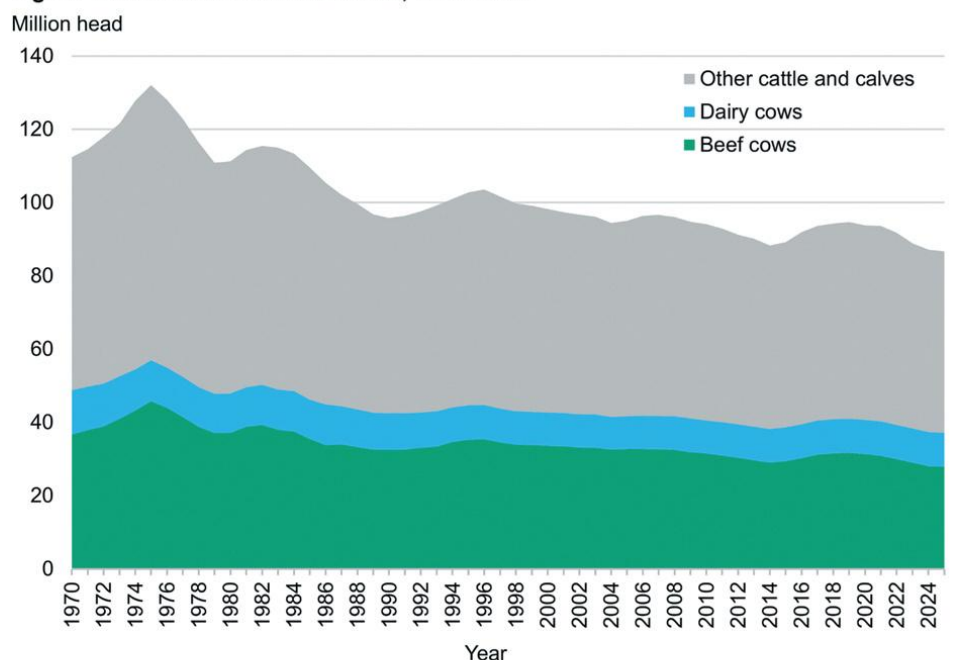
As shown in Figure 1, the current U.S. cow inventory is historically low. This, coupled with robust consumer demand for high-quality beef, results in historically high value for beef and all classes of live beef cattle. In terms of tonnage, consumer

demand is currently being supplied through finishing cattle to historically heavier carcass weights than ever seen during the modern feedlot era.

The biological time lag of beef production is such that if we selected a high percentage of our current heifer calves to develop as replacements, that next spring (2026), those properly developed replacement heifers would be ready to breed by 14-15 months of age. The following spring, those heifers would calve at two years of age (spring 2027). Those calves would be ready to market at weaning in the fall. Those calves would become yearlings in 2028 and eventually become marketed as finished "A maturity" finished cattle or beef carcasses six to eight months after entering the feedyard.

Bottom line: When we begin to retain heifers (on a large scale), we are a couple of years away from increasing the cow inventory, and at least 30 months away from increasing the supply of weaned calves, and so on, regarding yearlings and fed cattle. That being said, the fundamental principles of supply and demand favor strong prices for all categories of cattle until cow inventory begins to increase, which will take some time. — **Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**

Figure 1. Cattle and cow inventories, 1970–2025



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service calculations using USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Cattle report.

USFWS continues to deny tortoise ESA protections

TORTOISE SUIT (from page 1)

simply refuses to follow the best available science as required by law."

Background

In 2008, environmental groups petitioned the USFWS to list the Sonoran Desert tortoise as a threatened or endangered species under the ESA. The following year, the agency issued a positive 90-day finding, determining the petition contained substantial information warranting further review.

In 2010, after conducting a full status assessment, the agency concluded that listing the tortoise as threatened was warranted due to a range of serious and compounding threats. These included habitat loss and fragmentation due to development, grazing and harvesting, as well as increased wildfire risk from invasive plant species. USFWS found that many of these threats act synergistically and are expected to worsen, projecting that 98% of the species' habitat in Mexico and nearly half in Arizona could be lost or degraded in the foreseeable future, threatening the tortoise's long-term survival.

In subsequent reviews from 2011 to 2014, the USFWS found that listing the tortoise as threatened under the ESA was warranted.

In 2015, the agency released a candidate conservation agreement with state and federal agencies to address threats to the Sonoran Desert tortoise. Although the agreement acknowledged the species still qualified for ESA protection, its goal was to reduce threats in Arizona to avoid a formal listing. Court documents note that the agreement lacked binding commitments or regulatory enforcement, and any party could withdraw with notice.

That same year, the agency issued a revised species status assessment, estimating a quasi-extinction risk of 11-32% over a 200-year period. Environmental groups argue this assessment led to the agency's flawed "not warranted" finding.

Environmental groups challenged the finding in 2019 and filed a lawsuit, asserting that the USFWS had ignored the best available science. The lawsuit led to a settlement approved by the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona, which required the USFWS to revisit its finding. In 2021, USFWS released a revised species status assessment, but court

documents show the agency continued to rely on limited data from just 17 long-term monitoring sites in Arizona and a habitat model it described as "very coarse."

According to court documents, despite scientific projections forecasting a median decline of nearly 87% in Arizona tortoise populations under a high climate change scenario, USFWS again issued a "not warranted" finding in February 2022.

The agency based its decision on the same limited data and models, assuming stable population trends and adequate juvenile recruitment, while omitting projected declines expected between 80 and 125 years from now. The lawsuit argued this approach violates the ESA by failing to use the best available science.

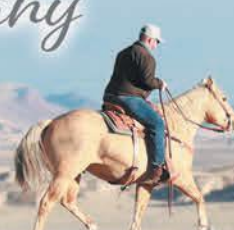
The coalition asked the court to declare that USFWS violated, and continues to violate, federal law in its decision-making regarding the Sonoran Desert tortoise. They are also seeking to set aside and vacate the agency's 2022 "not warranted" finding. Finally, the coalition requests the court remands the matter with instructions to comply with the ESA and the Administrative Procedure Act. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

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New strategy intends to reduce legal liability

INSECTICIDE (from page 1)

Pesticide Action Network and the Center for Biological Diversity, which claimed EPA was violating the ESA by not evaluating how each pesticide was impacting endangered species.

EPA said it will continue to work with stakeholders to modify and update the plan as additional information becomes available.

Details and background

The finalized strategy does not impose any new requirements on insecticide users but rather provides guidelines that EPA will consider. The Insecticide Strategy covers conventional insecticides, insect growth regulators, nematocides and miticides, all of which are commonly used in agriculture.

“The Insecticide Strategy would provide early protec-

tions for the listed species most impacted by insecticides even before effects determinations are made or consultations are completed,” the strategy read.

This would then speed up EPA’s ability to meet its ESA obligations, reducing the legal liability associated with EPA’s pesticide decisions and ensuring the continued availability of pesticides, the agency said.

The draft Insecticide Strategy was released last July and received more than 26,000 comments during a 60-day comment period. Following public input, EPA said it made several updates to the strategy to provide more flexibility for the agricultural community. Some of the updates include:

- Reducing buffer distances across all application methods.
- Providing credit for any reduction in the proportion of a treated field for ground applications.
- Qualifying conservation

programs that will give growers more credit for being part of a conservation program.

- Qualifying external parties that would assess a grower’s farm and determine the existing mitigation points that could be achieved by practices a grower already has in place.

- Updating key data sources and identification of invertebrate species that may be on agricultural fields.

- Adding a Pesticide Use Limitation Area group for generalist species that reside in wetlands to reduce mitigations applied outside of wetland habitats.

Agriculture stakeholders largely responded positively to the finalized strategy.

“This strategy provides much needed improvements that will undoubtedly better protect U.S. home-grown crops from pests and diseases,” said USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins.

National Association of State Departments of Agri-

culture CEO Ted McKinney said pragmatic improvements to the draft plan will make it easier for applicators to implement the strategy while protecting threatened and endangered species.

“We are grateful EPA has crafted this strategy by listening to, among others, constructive feedback from state agriculture departments, as they are the lead agency tasked with implementing and enforcing pesticide regulations in 43 states as well as the territory of Puerto Rico,” McKinney said.

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) said frequent updates to the pesticide strategies are important to ensure the health and safety of Americans. “EPA understands there cannot be an effective conservation strategy as a nation without a meaningful partnership with farmers and ranchers,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**

LEGAL LEDGER

MO investigates false screwworm claims

The Missouri State Highway Patrol’s Rural Crimes Investigative Unit and the Livestock and Farm Protection Task Force are investigating the false report of New World screwworm found in Missouri. On May 27, a false press release was sent to a local radio station, inciting a panic of animal health concerns and market scares. Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey and the two investigation groups are investigating whether the false press release was sent with malicious intent to cause panic in agricultural markets. Anyone with information is urged to contact the Missouri State Highway Patrol’s Division of Drug and Crime Control at 573-526-6122. In early June, Congresswoman Monica De La Cruz (TX-15) introduced the New World Screwworm Preparedness Act to direct the USDA to conduct a study and report strategies to protect against screwworm outbreaks.

England to mandate cattle EID

England is mandating the use of electronic identification (EID) over the next two years in an effort to strengthen the United Kingdom’s (UK) ability to prevent, detect and respond to animal disease outbreaks. Beginning in 2027, all newborn calves will be required to have EID using low frequency technology. “Following the wide-reaching sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) deal recently agreed at the UK-EU summit, this decision will further benefit livestock businesses in England by reducing trade friction and boosting their ability to export agri-food products abroad,” the government said.

Bill would use grazing to reduce wildfires

The Strategic Grazing to Reduce the Risk of Wildfire Act, introduced by Sens. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) and John Curtis (R-UT), would direct federal agencies to use targeted grazing to reduce wildfire risks. The legislation would require the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service to work with grazing allotment holders, states, Tribes and local fire departments to implement grazing strategies. “This bill takes a wildfire prevention and mitigation strategy that’s been proven to work and puts it in place at the federal level,” Cortez Masto said.

USFWS seeks ESA conservation input

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is seeking public input on its Endangered Species Act Section 10(a) program. The agency said it is dedicated to more effectively supporting conservation efforts while addressing the needs of landowners, industry and local communities. Section 10(a) (1)(A) encourages voluntary conservation of listed and at-risk species on non-federal lands. Section 10(a)(1)(B) allows incidental take permits and associated habitat conservation plans. Comments may be submitted by July 9 at regulations.gov by searching for docket ID FWS-HQ-ES-2025-0049.

CDFW launches wolf conflict pilot program

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) launched a summer strike team on June 9 in an effort to combat wolf livestock depredations in Siskiyou County and the Sierra Valley. The task force will provide round-the-clock staff support seven days a week for livestock producers experiencing frequent wolf conflicts, CDFW said. “This program is still in its early stages, so there will be a need to learn by doing together,” said Plumas County Supervisor Dwight Ceresola. “More details will be shared as it progresses. But this is a good start, and I appreciate that.” Siskiyou County and Plumas and Sierra counties in the Sierra Valley have experienced higher-than-normal livestock depredations compared to other counties.

CO fencing bill mandates local review

In late May, Colorado Gov. Jared Polis (D) signed House Bill 25-1023 into law, which will mandate government review for certain fencing projects in the Sangre de Cristo land grant lands. The area spans more than 1 million acres in the San Luis Valley and Sangre de Cristo Mountains in southern Colorado. The bill goes into effect July 1 and requires a person to submit an application to the local government to install or fix fence of a certain size. “This important law ensures fencing projects are better evaluated for environmental responsibility and to ensure continued historic access to these lands,” Polis wrote in a Facebook post.

USDA, EPA officials confirmed

In early June, Stephen Vaden was confirmed as deputy secretary of the USDA and David Fotouhi was confirmed as deputy administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). “Mr. Vaden has spent his career immersed in trade issues and fighting for farmers and ranchers,” said National Cattlemen’s Beef Association Senior Vice President of Government Affairs Ethan Lane. “Mr. Fotouhi has a wealth of experience in environmental law and will be a key leader for ensuring the EPA returns to its core mission of protecting natural resources rather than obstructing family farmers and ranchers.”

Bill could save farms from ‘death tax’

Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS) introduced the Helping Ensure Rural Inheritance Transfers Are Generationally Enduring Act (HERITAGE) Act in early June in an effort to help preserve family-owned farms. The bill would adjust the Internal Revenue Code to allow special-use valuation of farmland to reduce the estate tax value of farming operations. “It’s time to modernize the Internal Revenue Code to give heirs a fighting chance to carry on the proud American tradition of passing down family farms through generations,” Hyde-Smith said.

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STORY SHORTS

Angus releases three maternal EPDs

In May, the American Angus Association introduced three new maternal EPDs to enhance female selection. These include Functional Longevity (FL), Teat Size (Teat) and Udder Suspension (UDDR), developed by Angus Genetics Inc. These traits aim to improve udder quality and herd productivity over time. The new EPDs have been incorporated into the Maternal Weaned Calf Value Index (\$M) and the Combined Value Index (\$C), refining maternal function within these indices. While \$M has been updated to include these traits, its core structure remains intact with correlations above 0.90, allowing for refined selection without overhauling the model. The \$C index shows an even greater correlation at 0.98. Producers can access further research on these updates at angus.org.

Cargill investing \$90M in CO plant

Cargill is investing nearly \$90 million in automation and new technologies at its Fort Morgan, CO, beef plant as part of its Factory of the Future initiative. One key innovation is CarVe, a patent-pending computer vision technology that measures red meat yield in real-time, helping managers improve their cutting techniques. These upgrades aim to boost operational efficiencies, increase yields and enhance employee safety. Additionally, Cargill is addressing the region’s housing shortage by supporting a \$40 million project that includes 27 townhomes and an 81-unit apartment complex, set to open in the fall.

FMD outbreak reported in South Africa

Farmers and agriculture groups are deeply concerned about the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in South Africa, according to The Citizen. A case was confirmed at Karan Beef’s feedlot near Heidelberg in Gauteng on June 2, with 120,000 cattle at the facility. Senior feedlot veterinarian Dirk Verwoerd reported that approximately 2% of the herd is infected, and a controlled slaughter will follow vaccinations. Southern African Agri Initiative president Theo de Jager has been in discussions with the Department of Agriculture since December 2024, warning that uncontrolled livestock movement could threaten meat and dairy production.

Processing begins at Sustainable Beef plant

Nebraska’s newest meat processing facility, Sustainable Beef LLC in North Platte, began processing cattle on May 28, according to local news outlet KNOP. CEO David Briggs shared, “Today, we are doing two loads of 80 head. We should be doing that for about three weeks, then ramp up from there, eventually processing 1,500 head per day and employing 850 individuals.” The facility, which currently employs 200 people, aims to reach full capacity by Christmas. The project is the brainchild of McPherson County rancher Rusty Kemp, who expressed excitement, saying, “From where this started to where we are now is amazing ... This facility is going to make every calf, yearling, and feeder in the state worth more.” Despite the success, Briggs emphasized that the real work begins now as they implement plans to benefit the cattlemen and the North Platte community.

Meat plant opens in IA, closes in IL

JBS announced that it is investing \$135 million in a new plant in Perry, IA, which is set to produce 130 million pounds of sausage annually. This move comes as U.S. meat companies face challenges from retaliatory tariffs, particularly from markets like China, which have made it harder to rely on overseas sales. JBS U.S. CEO Wesley Batista Filho said, “This is a plant that increases our footprint in the domestic market.” Construction is set to begin this fall, with the plant expected to be operational by next year. Meanwhile, Johnsonville LLC is closing its Momence, IL, meat facility, resulting in the layoff of 274 employees. The company announced that production will be shifted to other facilities in Wisconsin and Kansas, where approximately 100 new jobs are expected to be created by the end of the third quarter.

Eggs recalled for possible salmonella

August Egg Co. of Hilmar, CA, is recalling 1.7 million dozen brown cage-free and brown certified-organic eggs due to potential contamination with salmonella, linked to an ongoing outbreak. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 79 infections across seven states as of June 5, with 21 hospitalizations. The recalled eggs have plant codes P-6562 or CA5330 and Julian Dates between 32 and 126. These eggs were distributed from Feb. 3 to May 15 in California and Nevada at retail locations, including Save Mart, FoodMaxx, Lucky, Smart & Final, Safeway, Raley’s, Food 4 Less and Ralphs. Products produced from Feb. 3 to May 6 were also recalled from Walmart stores in Arizona, California, Illinois, Indiana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, Washington and Wyoming. Consumers are advised to discard or return affected products. A complete list of labels can be found at tinyurl.com/mv6pt2nw.

Estrous synch with natural service offers benefits

Cattle producers often associate estrous synchronization with artificial insemination (AI). Many do not associate the practices and economic benefits of synchronization with natural service breeding programs.

“There are many production and economic advantages to utilizing synchronization in the cow herd,” said Lisa Pederson, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension livestock specialist at the Central Grasslands Research Extension Center. “Mainly, it creates a more uniform calf crop.”

Synchronization protocols, whether used with AI or natural service, synchronize the estrous cycles of females into a tighter period. This allows the majority of the cow herd two opportunities to become pregnant within the first 30 days of the breeding season. Therefore, synchronization improves uniformity of the calf crop by increasing the percentage of calves born within a shorter timeframe.

With more calves born in a shorter timeframe, producers can sell larger groups of calves at a similar weight, said Pederson. Studies show a significant price advantage when marketing larger drafts, or groups, of calves of a uniform weight. Additionally, calves born earlier are heavier at weaning. For example, calves born on the first day of the calving season will weigh approximately 50 pounds more than calves born on day 21, 100 lbs. more than calves born on day 42 and 150 lbs. more than calves born on day 63.

“There are true economic

and long-term production advantages to calving more of the herd earlier in the calving season,” said Pederson. “Calves will be more uniform at weaning, and heifers retained as replacements will be more productive.”

Because synchronization protocols used with natural service were developed so several females would come into heat over a short time period, it is important to choose the proper bull-to-cow ratio, said Pederson. Research in this area indicates an optimal bull-to-cow ratio to range from 1:16 to 1:25; however, ranchers should take pasture size, distance to water, topography and the protocol used into consideration.

All sires should undergo a breeding soundness exam regardless of the breeding strategy, and it is also recommended that sires used in synchronized herds be at least two years old and be observed when introduced to the cow herd to ensure adequate libido.

There are four synchronization protocols approved and designed for use with natural service (NS) breeding programs: 1 shot Prostaglandin (PG) and NS; seven-day controlled internal drug release (CIDR) and NS; 14-day CIDR and NS; and 14-day melengestrol acetate (MGA) and NS (for heifers only).

When deciding which protocol to use, Lacey Quail, NDSU Extension livestock management specialist at the North Central Research Extension Center, advises ranchers to consider several factors.

Labor demands are the

most common reason for not utilizing synchronization. Thus, the time required to pen, sort and/or handle cattle through working facilities should be seriously considered. Natural service synchronization protocols vary in their labor requirements from zero (14-day MGA and NS) to one (1 shot PG and NS) or two (CIDR and NS) handling events.

While the 14-day MGA and NS protocol for heifers does not require handling through working facilities, it does require diligent feed and bunk management. Because MGA is an oral synthetic progestin, it is delivered as a feed additive.

“It is critical that heifers receive the same amount of MGA each day to properly control their estrous cycle and maximize pregnancy success,” said Quail.

Therefore, operations already feeding a total mixed ration to heifers often incorporate the 14-day MGA and NS protocol. It is not recommended that MGA be used when the amount consumed by each heifer cannot be controlled well. If heifers consume too little or too much MGA, they may show heat earlier or much later, respectively, than planned.

Both scenarios result in heifers that are not synchronized with the rest of the group (which is what a producer paid and planned for) and can result in decreased pregnancy rates. If bunk space is limited or feed timing is inconsistent, a different synchronization protocol may be a better fit.

While synchronization pro-

ocols using a CIDR insert are more expensive and require more handling, they can be used in both cows and heifers, and the efficacy of a CIDR is not dependent on feed activity or bunk management. On the other hand, the 1-shot PG and NS protocol is simple and inexpensive; however, it is only effective in cows and heifers that are already cycling. If many heifers have not reached puberty or cows have not started cycling again after calving, protocols including MGA (heifers only) or a CIDR (heifers and cows) are the best option, as they have been proven to induce cyclicity. Research shows that females not cycling by the start of the breeding season are less likely to become pregnant and calve early, impacting profitability.

Synchronization protocols used with natural service breeding programs vary from five to 28 days from start to finish, so they require diligent planning to be successful. For example, if a producer plans to turn bulls in on June 1 for March calves and would like to use the 14-day CIDR and NS protocol, they need to start the protocol on May 4, (nearly a month ahead of time).

Last-minute planning can be very detrimental to breeding success. Planning ahead and precisely following the protocol as it is written are critical to successfully implementing synchronization into any management system.

Contact your county Extension agent, state livestock specialist or herd veterinarian to ask questions. — **NDSU Extension**



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WEDNESDAY WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Butcher Cows.....	8:30am
Cow-Calf Pairs/Bred Cows.....	11:30am
Feeder Cattle.....	12pm

MARKET NEWS

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

MARKET SITUATION REPORT

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 6/12/2025	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	237.09	▲	227.83
CME Feeder Index	314.62	▲	304.86
Boxed Beef Average	376.72	▲	366.85
Average Dressed Steers	382.00	▲	375.00
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,425	▲	1,396
Weekly Slaughter**	582,000	▲	477,000
Weekly Beef Production***	506.3	▲	414.8
Hide/Offal Value	11.25	▲	11.18
Corn Price	4.42	▼	4.51
*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
June 6	6,832	360.88	266	381.66	1,302	367.68	2,128	358.65	677	352.06	2,460
May 30	6,106	360.32	285	379.16	1,181	365.79	1,746	359.89	574	348.26	2,320
May 23	6,858	353.17	325	371.97	1,392	358.35	1,983	351.24	729	339.89	2,429
May 16	6,857	345.64	276	366.88	1,280	351.75	2,086	344.91	693	333.66	2,522
Cutouts											
FED BOXED BEEF											
DATE	CHOICE		SELECT		COW BEEF CUTOUT		50% LEAN		90% LEAN		
June 12	376.72		363.07		302.98		150.43		389.96		
June 11	374.76		360.75		302.51		143.98		389.57		
June 10	371.76		359.84		300.83		140.61		385.15		
June 9	367.25		358.93		301.25		139.76		N/A		
June 6	365.08		356.73		300.77		141.50		386.32		

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle							
	6/6	6/9	6/10	6/11	6/12	High*	Low*
Jun.	22630	22700	22750	22835	22913	22913	16853
Aug.	21888	21925	21933	21885	21878	21933	16668
Oct.	21553	21588	21600	21580	21558	21600	17005
Dec.	21495	21540	21583	21565	21530	21583	18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle							
	6/6	6/9	6/10	6/11	6/12	High*	Low*
Aug.	31015	31165	31055	31293	31180	31293	21920
Sep.	30913	31070	30960	31250	31155	31250	22268
Oct.	30690	30838	30735	31028	30958	31028	22460
Nov.	30430	30570	30478	30745	30688	30745	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	2,767	1,455	237.09
Live FOB Heifer	2,198	1,320	236.02
Dressed Del Steer	180	979	382.00
Dressed Del Heifer	40	826	370.00
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK			
Live FOB Steer	4,655	1,432	227.83
Live FOB Heifer	3,255	1,272	226.61
Dressed Del Steer	135	882	375.00
Dressed Del Heifer	84	756	375.00
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	1,560	1,345	186.93
Live FOB Heifer	2,047	1,278	187.42
Dressed Del Steer	80	945	303.00
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: JUNE 8, 2025		
	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	28,277	1,263
Formula	255,846	2,267
Negotiated Cash	92,885	323
Negotiated Grid	37,605	1,478
Packer Owned	10,682	N/A
Total	425,295	5,331

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month		Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,842
Jun. '25	151,657	Neg. Sales 21+ days	978
Jul. '25	124,367	Formula sales	3,965
Aug. '25	141,698	Forward contract sales	48
Sep. '25	103,085	Domestic sales	6,144
Oct. '25	162,431	NAFTA Exports	180

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	216.95	+0.88
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs	214.55	+1.05
Ontario Auctions		
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs	217.90	+2.16
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs	216.21	+2.26
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs	144.95	+2.80
*Price comparison from one week ago.		

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, June 10, 2025			
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	395.30	410.65	416.58
601-700 lbs	372.05	361.74	379.80
701-800 lbs	337.38	N/A	350.15
801-900 lbs	296.54	304.25	324.84
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	385.41	N/A	391.03
501-600 lbs	360.98	N/A	363.69
601-700 lbs	334.93	341.72	352.03
701-800 lbs	307.00	309.32	301.93

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
	6/2/2025	5/26/2025		
Feeders	0	0	225,952	640,101

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE	
May 12, 2025	
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary	
Receipts EST: N/A	Week Ago EST: N/A
Year Ago Act: 7,550	
THIS REPORT WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED AFTER MAY 12TH. 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
600-700 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
600-700 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 Week Ending June 12, 2025								
Feeder prices for steers & heifers reflect medium and large 1 cattle, unless otherwise noted; * Indicates medium and large 1-2								
DATE MARKET	200-300 lb.	300-400 lb.	400-500 lb.	500-600 lb.	600-700 lb.	700-800 lb.	800 lb. -up	SLAUGHTER COWS SLAUGHTER BULLS
PAIRS REPLACEMENTS								
Noreport available Blackfoot, ID								
June 5 Burley, ID	175	460 417	454 392	291	318-323 204.50-314	224	219-270 170-188	115-186 161-188
Noreport available Emmett, ID								
June 7 Eugene, OR	1,147	285-381* 255-348*	265-364* 240-345*	260-336* 260-304*	240-305* 230-280*	224-294* 216-261*	220-260* 218-247*	140-159 156-180
June 9 Madras, OR	315		370-380	330-355 325-345	299-311			142-187 170-180
June 4 Vale, OR	536		340-385 315-352	330-349 312-334	295-336 280-310			145-167 165-188
Noreport available Davenport, WA								
June 5 Toppenish, WA	1,190			345* 325-331*	302*			153-164 164-188.50

June 5 Orland, CA	3,363		280-410 260-370	260-388 240-365	240-344 220-315	220-311 200-291	190-289 170-277	130-160 130-199	2,200-3,600 1,800-3,225
Noreport available Escalon, CA									
June 9 Famoso, CA	802	350-400 340-387	350-375 330-375	325-350 300-318	295-335 280-309	265-300	250-290 250-273	80-200 120-165	
June 9 Galt, CA	4,133		340-445 200-300	340-392 200-300	300-370 200-300	260-340 180-240	240-301 150-240	95-165 140-187	2,600-3,650 2,700-3,400
June 10 Turlock, CA	1,806	380-467 320-385	375-431 310-385	348-376 300-330	320-337 295-320	295-323 275-288	260-288 240-261	127-166 150-194.50	
June 10 Salina, UT	953	445-520 400-440	340-420.50 285-395	301-382.50 245-350	285-345 210-297.50	255-310 200.50-280	227.50-300 182.50-270	129.50-164.25 170-275	1,400-2,600

June 9 Iowa	12,204	509 410-502.50	385-500 370-467	360-448 335-413	326.50-400 294-375	301-356.50 277.75-336	247.75-332 240-294	120-241.50 126-211	
June 10 Miles City, MT	1,341	397.50		445.75 365	325-331	287.50-315	272.50-290	126-168.50 150-209	3,100-3,575
Noreport available Bassett, NE									
June 7 Ericson, NE	1,730	482.50	480-483 403-437.50	420-425 357.50-400	367-385 305-359.50	338 292-310	306-338 284		
Noreport available Imperial, NE									
June 4 Kearney, NE	2,400		437.50-446	384-423 362-375	342.50-381 332-351	314.50-333 299-309.50	279-317.50 284.25-310.35	154-168 170-203	
Noreport available Lexington, NE									
Noreport available Ogallala, NE									
June 5 Valentine, NE	2,056	495	457.50-480 415	400-445.50 369-401	369-421 316-359	330-354.50 324-343	316.50-323 289-297.50		
Noreport available Herreid, SD									
Noreport available Torrington, WY									

June 5 Willcox, AZ	1,287	486-500 429.50-480	416.50-480 399-432.50	385-425 362-410	349.50-402.50 346-390	322-352.50 306.50-330			115-163 147-185	3,200-3,400 2,150-2,650
June 9 Colorado	2,147								127-207 154-213	
June 4 La Junta, CO	627		435-465 370-440	427.50-435 337.50-405	347.50-385 307.50-340	302.50-345 280-302.50	247.50-270	252.50-280 242.50-262.50	145-162 179-211	2,025-2,575
No report available Loma, CO										
June 11 Dodge City, KS	1,067				397.50-428 348.50-355	392 304.50-327	318-342.50 290-308	274-317 283	131-181 155-215	3,725-3,850 2,325-3,000
June 5 Pratt, KS	3,297			402.50-405 362.50-382.50	393-420 340-342	350 299-341	295-338 294-319.50	288-329.50 269-300.75	144-170.50 170-208	2,950 2,250-2,400
No report available Salina, KS										
June 12 Clovis, NM	1,520	520 450-472	455-508 417	400-462 374-440	340-402 310-366	332-358 264-330	300-350 237-281	144-285 230-270	136-153 109.50-191.50	1,725-3,300 1,325-2,700
June 11 El Reno, OK	5,597	540 490-510	470-490 390-480	360-460 350-410	360-390 315-360	310-370 295-340	300-343 283-306	287-321 262-289.50		
June 10 McAlester, OK	665		410-453 390-417	373-420 341-397	320-365 218-342	302-336 286-308	266-301 223-280	215-247 171-250	143-169 175-205	2,175-3,025 1,675-3,600
June 9 Oklahoma City, OK	4,293		477 407.50-457	390-478 355-415	346-417 321-363	323.50-369 303-344	308-338 260-312	270-308.50 267.50-284.50		
June 6 Cuero, TX	1,540	517-560 465-560	452-545 406-485	385-455 347-418	346-418 312-390	315-356 297-320	294-319 274-303		130-180 174-195	2,600-3,700 2,050-3,050
June 5 Dalhart, TX	1,344		500	402.50 382.50-420	377.50-390 320-340	324-340 235-320	302-327.50 280-290	260-303.50 248-271	124-157 191-219	2,600-2,900
No report available San Angelo, TX										
June 5 Tulia, TX	1,475		535 425	427.50-452.50 358	350-366 331-361	314-354 281.50-312	294-315 282-288	283.10-300.50 262.75-281.75	140-152 170-180	2,800-3,300 2,125

SOUTH CENTRAL

Cattle and beef trade continues with uncertainty

The latest beef trade data shows a continuation of recent trends—decreased exports and increased imports. Beef exports in April were down 8.6% year over year and are

down 4.2% for the January to April period. Beef imports were up 44.9% year over year in April and up 28.4% for the year to date.

In April, beef exports to

South Korea were up 15.3% from last year and are up 3.1% so far this year. South Korea was the largest beef export market in April and is the largest for the year to date. Beef

exports to Japan were up 8.1% year over year in April but are down 0.9% thus far in 2025. Mexico jumped to the No. 3 spot in April despite a drop in beef exports of 9.5% for the month compared to last year. Mexico is down 9.9% for the January to April period year over year in the No. 4 spot.

The most noticeable early impacts of the tariffs are the 67.7% decrease in beef exports to China in April. However, beef exports to Hong Kong were up 86.6% in April due to differences in tariffs between Hong Kong and mainland China. The two markets are usually considered as a single market, so combined April beef exports were down 52.2% year over year and are down 13.8% thus far in the year. China/Hong Kong was the fourth-largest beef export

market in April but remains the third-largest for the year-to-date.

Beef exports to No. 5 market, Canada, were down 14% in April and are down 0.5% year over year for the first four months of the year. Taiwan's exports were down 18.8% in April compared to the same period last year and are down 7.4% thus far in 2025.

Beef imports from Brazil jumped 308.5% in April, making Brazil the largest source of beef imports thus far in 2025. Australia is No. 2, with April imports from the country up 33.1% year over year and up 32.3% for the year to date.

Beef imports from third-ranked Canada were down 14.4% in April and are down 9.6% year over year for the first four months of the year. Beef imports from No. 4, New Zea-

land, were up 49.2% from last year and are up 17.5% through April. Beef imports from Mexico were down 0.7% year over year in April and are up 10.4% compared to the January to April period last year. Mexico is the fifth-largest source of beef imports. Uruguay is the sixth-largest beef import source, up 15.7% year over year in April and up 36.1% in the first four months of the year.

The complex trade situation will continue to evolve in the coming months with continued policy uncertainty and global market disruptions. Trade relationships are shifting rapidly, and market volatility is expected to continue going forward. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

Livestock Marketeers selects 2025 Hall of Fame inductees

The Livestock Marketeers hosted their 60th annual Hall of Fame Banquet on May 29. This year's event was held at the American-International Charolais Association in Kansas City, MO. The 2025 inductees were Jack Hedrick, Signal Mountain, TN; and Greg Clifton, North Richland Hills, TX.

Jack grew up on two notable Hereford Ranches, Circle M Ranch, Senatobia, MS, and Col. E. Brooke Lee's Silver Springs Farms, Damascus, MD, and Columbus, MS. While in Columbus, Jack met his wife of 44 years, Mary Helen Hedrick. From 1975-1978, Jack worked with Bill Maerli from Cuba, MO, fitting sale and show cattle nationwide. In the fall of 1978, Jack joined

National Cattle Services, Elgin, OK.

In the fall of 1988, Jack started his own company, JDH Marketing Services LLC, providing sale management, consulting and ring service across North America. Jack and Mary Helen have one son, Dustin, and his wife, Carleigh, and two grandsons, Thom and Monte.

Greg Clifton was born in Clarence, MO, and graduated from the University of Missouri in 1980. Soon after graduation, Greg went to work for the American Yorkshire Club through 1985. From 1985 until 1989, Greg served as a fieldman for the Weekly Livestock Reporter based in Fort Worth, TX.

In 1989, he began his career

as a purebred livestock auctioneer and sale manager, a career that he is still passionate about to this day. Greg has provided professional auctioneer services for elite operations across the nation. Greg and his wife, Tina, are blessed with three children and two grandchildren.

The Livestock Marketeers is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to the history and advancement of the livestock marketing profession. The Livestock Marketeers Banquet is held each summer in conjunction with the Marketeers Classic Golf Tournament. The group established a scholarship in 2024 and has given four awards since its inception. — **Livestock Marketeers**

Feeders continue steady trading

MARKETS (from page 1)

"With less product available, end users are forced to compete over limited supplies resulting in all-time highs being etched daily this week," Fish said.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures closed higher over the week. The August contract gained about \$2 to close at \$311.25, and the September contract also gained about \$2 to close at \$310.55.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index gained about \$10 to close at \$314.62.

Corn futures traded sideways, down a penny on the July contract to \$4.38 and down 6 cents on the September contract to \$4.26.

"Seasoned veterans noted a change in the appetite for calves for grazing in the auction barns across the country," the Cattle Report said on Thursday. "Interest was turning to heifers and cows and bred heifers due to simple economics."

Iowa: Russell Livestock in Russell sold 2,830 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction two weeks earlier, steers sold \$4-27 higher. Heifers under 650 lbs. sold \$2-22 higher, while heifers over 650 lbs. mostly sold \$4-8 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 705 lbs. sold for \$336-368.25, averaging \$364.68.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 7,000 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers and heifers sold steady to \$5 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 722 lbs. sold for \$322-338, averaging \$330.08.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 4,500 head on Mon-

day. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers and heifers sold \$5-10 higher. Steer and heifer calves were lightly tested and sold mostly steady. Bench-

mark steers averaging 726 lbs. sold from \$317-336.50, averaging \$323.02. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing 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.)

June 30 — Applications for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's three internship

programs—communications, policy and events—for the fall 2025 semester are now open. Details: ncba.org.

June 30 — Applications are now being accepted for the 2025-26 NILE Merit Heifer program. Recipients receive a heifer calf to help them get a start in the beef cattle business and gain knowledge about the beef industry. Details: tinyurl.com/27ds27ep.



COMING EVENTS

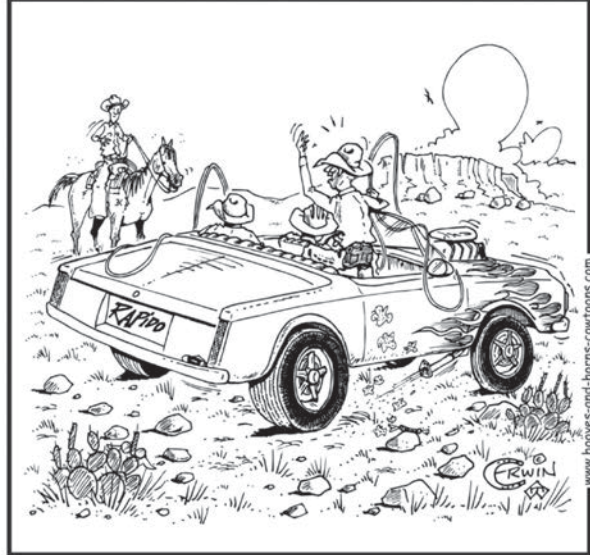
(Send calendar of events information to editorial@wlj.net.)

June 17-19 — R-CALF USA will host its 2025 National

Convention and Trade Show at The Lodge at Deadwood, SD. Details: RCALFconvention.com.

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BY A.W. ERWIN



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| 6..... Auctions | 24..... Pasture Wanted |
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| 19..... Ranch/Livestock Services | 37..... Insurance |
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| 20B..... Intermountain Real Estate For Sale | 40..... Miscellaneous |
| 20C..... Mountain Real Estate For Sale | 41..... Lost/Found |
| 20D..... Southwest Real Estate For Sale | 42..... Personal |
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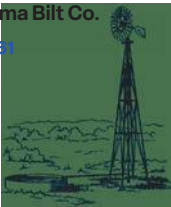
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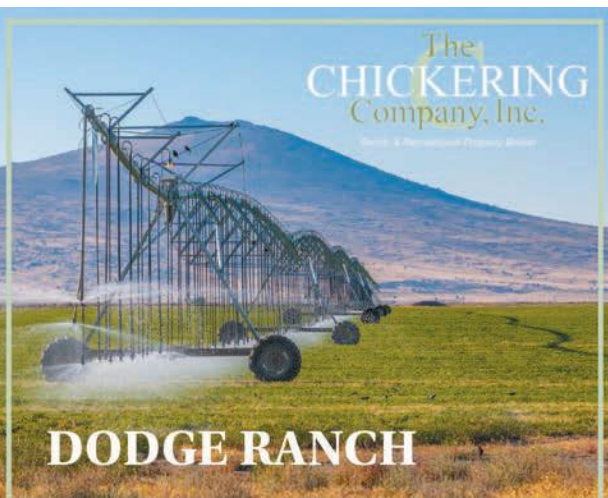
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ALL BREEDS

Jun. 21 – Visalia Livestock Market, Female Sale, Visalia, CA
Aug. 2 – Turlock Livestock, Female Sale, Turlock, CA
Aug. 9 – Cattlemen's Livestock Market, Female Sale, Galt, CA
Aug. 23 – Mobile Cattle Marketing, Bred Cow & Pair Sale, Petaluma, CA
Sep. 14 – Visalia Livestock Market, Bull Sale, Visalia, CA
Oct. 5 – Cal Poly Bull Test Sale, San Luis Obispo, CA

ANGUS

Jun. 28 – Baldridge Performance Angus, Female Sale, North Platte, NE
Jul. 24 – Stelplflug Cattle

Company, Female Sale, Guernsey, WY
Sep. 4 – Vintage Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, La Grange, CA
Sep. 5 – Byrd Cattle Co., Bull & Female Sale, Los Molinos, CA
Sep. 6 – Rhoades Angus, Bull & Ranch Horse Sale, Cambria, CA
Sep. 6 – Parnell's Dunipace Angus w/ Bar KJ Angus, Bull Sale, Farmington, CA
Sep. 7 – Heritage Bull Sale, Wilton, CA
Sep. 9 – O'Neal Ranch, Bull Sale, Madera, CA
Sep. 10 – Teixeira Cattle, Bull Sale, Pismo Beach, CA
Sep. 11 – Donati Ranch Bull Sale, Oroville, CA
Sep. 12 – Tehama Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Gerber, CA
Sep. 13 – Arellano Bravo Angus, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 16 – Thomas Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 17 – Bullseye Breeders, Bull Sale, Modesto, CA
Sep. 18 – Rancho Casino & Dal Porto Livestock, Bull Sale, Denair, CA

Sep. 19 – Dixie Valley Angus w/ O'Connell Ranch, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 20 – Ward Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Gardnerville, NV
Sep. 25 – Beef Solutions, Bull Sale, Ione, CA
Sep. 28 – Traynham-Cox LLC, Production Sale, Fort Klamath, OR
Oct. 3 – Elwood Ranch, Bull Sale, Red Bluff, CA
Oct. 4 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID

Oct. 11 – Vintage Angus Ranch, Female Sale, Modesto, CA
Oct. 12 – Arellano Bravo Angus, Female Sale, Walnut Grove, CA
Oct. 14 – 9 Peaks Ranch, Bull Sale, Fort Rock, OR
Oct. 16 – Thomas Angus Ranch, Production Sale, Baker City, OR

HEREFORD

Jul. 24 – Stelplflug Cattle Company, Female Sale, Guernsey, WY

Sep. 8 – Genoa Livestock, Bull Sale, Minden, NV
Oct. 4 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID

RED ANGUS

Sep. 21 – Stegall Cattle Co., Bull & Female Sale, Colusa, CA
Sep. 27 – McPhee Red Angus, Production Sale, Lodi, CA

SIMANGUS

Sep. 24 – Eagle Pass Ranch, Bull Sale, Dos Palos, CA

Sep. 28 – Traynham-Cox LLC, Production Sale, Fort Klamath, OR

HORSE

Jun. 28 – Fort Ranch, Foal Sale, Promontory, UT
Jul. 12 – High Desert Quarter Horse Sale, Redmond, OR
Sep. 6 – Rhoades Angus, Bull & Ranch Horse Sale, Cambria, CA
Sep. 13 – Reno Snaffle Bit Futurity, Horse Sale, Reno, NV
Oct. 12 – Will Gill & Sons, Horse Sale, Madera, CA



VIDEO AUCTION

June 5, Hudson Oaks, TX
Superior Livestock Auction hosted their video auction live on June 5 from the Superior Livestock Auction Studio in Hudson Oaks, TX. Cattle producers sold 21,637 head of calves, yearlings and bred stock totaling 167 lots from 13 states for this offering. Strong

buyer participation from several bidders throughout the auction resulted in 68 different successful buyers. Cattle were sold on contract to be delivered immediately through January 2026. Regions 3/4/5/6 feeder steers opened the auction and witnessed buyers being selective of genetics and delivery. Steers

coming off the Flint Hills and Osage grass late June through July received advances of \$15-25 higher than the last auction. Feeder heifers from the same regions were \$10-15 higher. Regions 1/2 feeders were only lightly tested but also on a higher trend. Beef-on-dairy saw new levels, \$20-30 higher, to a very receptive buyer base.

Region 5 weaned calves and calves on cows set new highs, with an increase of \$20-40 over the previous auctions. Region 3/4/6 weaned calves and calves on cows were also met with strong demand at \$10-20 higher on limited supply. A light test of bred heifers and cows for fall-calving was well received.



SALE REPORT

RANCHERS HORSE SALE
June 7, Juntura, OR
28 Ranch geldings \$31,500
Auctioneer: Jake Parnell
Sale Managers: RHS Team & Bentz Family
TOPS: Ikes Express, 1/1/2013 by Driftin Ike Chex; to Buyer #955, \$100,000. Steeles Blue Dually, 1/1/2016

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Court rules in favor of USDA swampbuster rule

A U.S. District Judge in Iowa has upheld the 40-year-old conservation compliance provision known as “swampbuster” in a ruling handed down May 29, but lawyers for the Iowa landowner in the case have vowed to appeal the decision.

U.S. District Judge C.J. Williams, chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Iowa, rejected a case brought by an Iowa landowner who was challenging USDA’s wetland determinations over nine acres of ground. The landowner and attorneys from private-property rights organizations maintain that USDA’s conservation compliance rule amounts to taking of property without compensation.

The case is a victory for USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the conservation compliance provisions in the 1985 Farm Bill. The Iowa Farmers Union, Iowa Environmental Council, Food & Water Watch, and Dakota Rural Action were also intervenors in the case, asking the court to uphold the swampbuster provisions and arguing there would be broad environmental impacts if farmers no longer had to comply with wetland protections.

Aaron Lehman, president of the Iowa Farmers Union,

praised the ruling, saying it is important to have a farm program that supports farmers but conserves the land as well. Iowa Farmers Union had argued that eliminating the swampbuster provision would harm perceptions of farm programs in the minds of the public. Lehman said it was a significant step for Iowa Farmers Union to intervene in the lawsuit.

“Our policy was pretty clear on this so our members, when we asked about it, they were thinking that it is our responsibility to step into it,” Lehman said.

James Conlan is the landowner who had purchased a 71.85-acre tract in Delaware County, IA, in 2022 under his business, CTM Holdings. Conlan owns about 1,000 acres of farmland in Iowa.

Conlan was represented by the Pacific Legal Foundation and the Liberty Justice Center. His attorneys had filed a motion asking for a summary judgment while USDA and intervenors in the case opposed it.

Responding to the ruling, the Liberty Justice Center stated the group is disappointed in the ruling and will appeal the decision to the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals.

“Swampbuster unconstitutionally takes farmers’ land by requiring them to keep wetlands in a perpetual conservation easement without paying compensation, and it

unconstitutionally conditions USDA benefits on the relinquishment of the constitutional right to compensation. We’re confident the appellate court will ultimately rule that this federal law is unconstitutional. This law has been taking land from farmers for years, and we look forward to continuing to fight this unconstitutional law,” the Liberty Justice Center posted on X.

Lehman noted it wasn’t surprising that the case is being fought over a nine-acre tract as groups are looking for cases to bring against conservation rules.

“They’re trying to make a larger point and that’s unfortunate. We’re always going to have questions about individual farms and what represents a wetlands and what doesn’t and the best way to protect them,” Lehman said, “and balancing all of those things, those questions have to be answered at the local level as much as we can. But making a broad statement out of a local question is not the route to go.”

Swampbuster rules

Written into the 1985 Farm Bill, the purpose of the “Swampbuster Act” is to preserve wetlands by halting their conversion into cropland. NRCS created regulations around the certification of wetlands and how land-

owners could request a review of that certification, but only if a natural event changes the topography or hydrology of the land to the extent that the conditions on the property have changed.

As the ruling noted, “Swampbuster, at its base, is a condition upon federal farm benefits.”

If a producer converts a wetland into cropland, they are disqualified from receiving federal farm benefits, which include commodity and conservation programs, and crop insurance premium subsidies.

Details of case

In 2010, USDA had determined that nine acres of the Delaware County property were a wetland. In 2022, when buying the ground, Conlan had planned to clear 21 acres of forestry through logging. While he was under contract to buy the property, Conlan asked USDA to issue a redetermination on the ground.

USDA responded that logging or widespread tree removal could potentially create a wetland violation. The court cited each side agreed that cutting down trees in a wetland doesn’t necessarily create a violation, but removing the stumps of trees

would generally lead to a wetlands violation.

As the ruling detailed, Conlan and staff from the NRCS went back and forth in late 2022 over a USDA AD-1026 Form, which declares compliance with highly erodible land conservation and wetland certification.

Conlan had maintained he wanted a redetermination of whether the nine acres was a wetland. NRCS informed him in a letter that the time period to request an appeal on a wetland determination had expired. Conlan argued the nine acres that have been determined to be a wetland are indistinguishable from the rest of the forested ground on the property. Conlan sued USDA over the wetlands issue last April.

In his ruling, Williams detailed that Conlan didn’t exhaust all of his administrative options with USDA and remedies before bringing the case. Williams’ ruling also addressed last year’s Supreme Court ruling known as *Loper Bright*, which reduced agency discretion in interpreting laws handed down from Congress. Williams noted NRCS has more experience in making wetland determinations than the court’s expertise. Thus, NRCS’s swampbuster rule is

in line with the text of the 1985 Farm Bill provision.

Beyond the arguments from both sides about the wetlands determination, Conlan also argued the swampbuster provision creates an unconstitutional condition on benefits and amounts to “taking” of property. In addressing that argument, the judge stated, “The issue here is whether swampbuster is an unconstitutional exercise of Congress’s authority under the Commerce Clause.”

The court noted the Supreme Court has held Congress has the power to further broad policy objectives by conditioning the receipt of federal funds with compliance requirements.

“Swampbuster is an exercise of Congress’s spending power,” the ruling stated, adding, “Swampbuster is a condition on federal benefits. Congress has chosen to provide certain benefits to farmers conditioned upon compliance with swampbuster provisions.”

A similar case is being adjudicated in the U.S. District Court of South Dakota in what has been a long-standing battle over a wetlands determination on a 0.8-acre tract. — **Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor**

Potential biosecurity threats challenge US cattle sector

BEEF OUTLOOK (from page 1)

U.S. market

The U.S. cattle sector is facing challenges from trade disruptions, biosecurity threats and declining herd numbers. Following the U.S. imposition of tariffs on several beef-exporting nations in April, retaliatory measures and shifting trade flows followed. Compounding the challenge, the outbreak of New World screwworm in Mexico prompted a U.S. border closure on live cattle imports, further reducing supply.

According to Rabobank, cattle slaughter from January to April fell 5% year over year, led by a 14% drop in cow slaughter and a 2% decline in steer and heifer slaughter. Despite record-high carcass weights—steers averaged 949 pounds—total beef production dipped 1% to 8.8 billion lbs.

The report said strong consumer demand is helping offset supply concerns. The USDA Choice-Select cutout climbed to nearly \$3.50/lb. this spring, over 50 cents above 2024, fueled by strong rib and loin sales. Retail beef prices are projected to average \$8.45/lb. this year—the highest since 1986.

Producer sentiment is also rebounding, with prices reaching new records across all classes. Since February, 500-lb. steer prices rose 15% to \$401/cwt, while fed steers

hit \$225/cwt. Rabobank expects prices to remain strong in the long term, despite possible seasonal fluctuations.

North America

According to Rabobank, Mexico’s cattle sector is under serious strain in 2025 due to the continued spread of New World screwworm and historically tight cattle inventories. Since the closure of the U.S. border, exports have plunged to around 200,000 head year to date, less than half of last year’s volume.

Feedlot operations are running at 20-35% below capacity amid feeder shortages, and national beef production declined by 1% in the first quarter. Rabobank noted that beef and cattle prices are climbing weekly, with carcass values up more than 20% year over year.

Canada, by contrast, has so far avoided the disease-related turmoil affecting its southern neighbor, but production remains under pressure. Rabobank reports that Canadian beef output in the first quarter was the lowest since 2019, down 9% from the previous year. Slaughter volumes fell by 8%, driven largely by fewer steer and heifer placements from the previous summer.

China looks elsewhere

China has so far avoided retaliatory tariffs in the current U.S. trade standoff.

“Reports are emerging that Chinese buyers are already shifting their attention to Australia, New Zealand, and South American suppliers as U.S. beef becomes more expensive,” the report said.

Australia’s beef sector is seeing strong growth in 2025, supported by favorable weather, herd recovery and steady trade relationships. Exports rose 15% in the first four months to 438,000 metric tons, with the U.S. leading as the top market—taking 30% of total exports and posting a 36% increase in volume.

China has moved into second place, overtaking Japan with 18% of total exports, up 28% year over year. Stable trade agreements and a favorable exchange rate have further boosted Australia’s position in key Asian markets.

New Zealand, by contrast, is expecting a 4% drop in beef production this year, largely due to limited domestic supply. However, strong U.S. demand is helping offset the decline. Conversely, exports to China have declined 31% year over year.

Brazil continues to deliver record-setting beef exports in 2025. From January to April, export volumes reached 941,000 metric tons and revenue hit \$4.5 billion—up 13% and 23% year over year, respectively. China remains the top buyer, while U.S. purchases surged 161%, making it Brazil’s second-largest market. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**



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