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INSIDE WLJ

WATER WARNING — Idaho forecasts a 75,300-acre-foot shortfall for senior water users on the Eastern Snake Plain. Page 3

BEEF GOALS — The new 2026–2030 Long Range Plan lays out six interconnected objectives to guide the U.S. beef industry forward. Page 7

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"Texas cattle are on the move again. Maybe not in the old-time trail-herd numbers but for the same reason. Northern grass! What's more they're riding the rails to lush native meadows in Colorado's North Park country. Colorado cattlemen and their Texas neighbors have discovered that renting pasture on a gain basis is profitable business," wrote John Cholis, WLJ Field Representative in the July 1952 issue.

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Nebraska sues Colorado over river water rights

— Alleges illegal diversions

Nebraska state leaders filed a

lawsuit against Colorado, asking the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold the state's rights under a century-old water compact and clear the path

for construction of the long-planned Perkins County Canal.

Nebraska Attorney General Mike Hilgers and Gov. Jim Pillen (R) an-

nounced the legal action, stating that Colorado violated the terms of the 1923 South Platte River Compact, which was ratified by Congress in 1926. According to Nebraska's complaint, Colorado's actions threaten the state's water security and harm key sectors, including agriculture and municipal supply.

"Water is the essential lifeblood of Nebraska's economy, and it's my goal to protect one of the state's most important assets," Hilgers said in a statement.

The lawsuit contends that Colorado has unlawfully diverted as much as 1.3 million acre-feet (an acre-foot is 325,851 gallons) of water that should have reached Nebraska, causing a shutdown of the Western Irrigation District's surface water operations due to insufficient flows from the South Platte River. The suit also claims Colorado has simultaneously blocked efforts to construct the Perkins County Canal—a project contemplated by the compact.

According to court documents, Nebraska's lawsuit presents complex legal questions that can only be resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court. Central to the case is a rare provision



Jeffrey Beall

Nebraska leaders filed suit against Colorado to uphold the state's water rights and allow for the construction of a canal. Pictured here, the South Platte River in Jefferson County, CO.

See NE SUIT on page 7

Agriculture provisions included in budget bill

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) was signed into law by President Donald Trump on July 4 and includes provisions for the agriculture industry and livestock producers.

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) reviewed the budget reconciliation bill in a Market Intel report and outlined how ranchers and farmers will be supported. The organization said the legislative package preserves provisions supported by AFBF, strengthens the farm safety net and offers longer-term certainty for farmers and ranchers dealing with rising input costs, volatile markets and weather uncertainty.

"Modernizing important farm safety net programs and making permanent critical tax provisions could be the difference between staying in business or shutting

down the family farm," said Zippy Duvall, AFBF president, upon hearing of the bill's passage.

Bill provisions

The bill boosts disaster assistance programs by improving payment levels and eligibility criteria. The Livestock Indemnity Program was revised to provide 100% of market value for animals lost to predation and 75% compensation for animals lost to adverse weather or disease. The bill also creates a new payment mechanism for unborn livestock losses occurring after Jan. 1, 2024.

The OBBBA also expanded the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, providing one month of assistance after four consecutive weeks of qualifying conditions, as opposed to the previous eight

See OBBBA on page 6

WY ranch owner petitions Supreme Court over corner-crossing rule

— Argues violation of property rights

Lawyers for Iron Bar Holdings LLC are urging the Supreme Court of the U.S. (SCOTUS) to overturn a recent ruling by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals that they say undermines private property rights across the American West.

In a petition for a writ of certiorari, lawyers argue the appellate court's decision "effected an uncompensated taking of unprecedented scale" by granting hunters what the court described as a "limited easement" across private lands to access public parcels in the checkerboard land pattern of the West.

Iron Bar's petition to SCOTUS frames the broader question as one of federalism and legal clarity. "This case presents an important and recurring federalism question that affects property rights in 150 mil-

lion acres of land in the Western United States," the petition states. The company warns that unless the high court intervenes, the appellate decision will upend long-held understandings of private land rights, sparking confusion and conflict across millions of acres of checkerboarded terrain.

Iron Bar Holdings, which owns roughly 22,000 acres of Elk Mountain Ranch in Wyoming, claims the decision violates its constitutional right to exclude others from its property—a principle the Supreme Court reaffirmed in its 2021 decision Cedar Point Nursery v. Hassid, calling it "one of the most treasured rights of property ownership."

Lawyers also argue whether the 1885 Unlawful Inclosures Act (UIA)—a federal statute that prohibits the fencing of public lands—implicitly nullifies state trespass laws in cases involving "corner-crossing," a practice in which a

person steps diagonally from one public land parcel to another at the shared corner point, passing through the airspace of two adjoining private parcels.

The 10th Circuit ruled in March that while the four hunters who crossed Iron Bar's land in Carbon County had indeed violated state trespass law, the UIA preempted that law and rendered the property owner's trespass claim legally invalid. The court held that enforcing state trespass law in such cases would fully enclose federal land and create a "virtual wall," in violation of the UIA's intent to ensure public access to public lands.

But attorneys for Iron Bar argue the appellate decision misinterprets both the UIA and Supreme Court precedent, particularly the court's 1979 decision in Leo Sheep Co. v. United States. That case,

See CROSSING on page 5

Cattle futures hold gains amid cash market uncertainty

Cattle futures remained higher on the week but traded on both sides amid record-high prices, overbought technical conditions and a volatile market. With the fed cash cattle trade still undeveloped, traders appear hesitant, waiting for confirmation that fundamentals will support the futures market's aggressive upward move.

"Following the major advancement in which the market has pushed earlier this week, traders are now (once again) seeming to sit on their hands waiting for developments to surface in the fed cash cattle market," ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, wrote in her midday comments on Thursday. "More than anything, traders are hopeful that the market will indeed trade higher to justify their technical advancement, but the cash market has yet to trade any cattle."

Live cattle futures were higher during the week, with the August contract up \$2.13 to \$225.80 and the October contract gaining \$1.83 to \$22.15.

Cash trade through Thursday totaled just 4,500 head. Live steers sold for \$236, and there were not enough dressed steers sold for a market trend.

"Bids in the North have been lower than last week's aver-

age and are being passed," wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, on Thursday in The Beef. "Packers are red and trying to save on cattle costs by buying cattle cheaper this week, which will likely prove very difficult."

Cash trade for the week ending July 20 totaled 60,389 head. Live steers averaged \$238.36, and dressed steers averaged \$379.46.

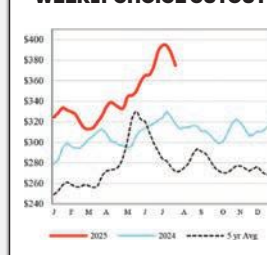
Slaughter through Thursday was estimated to be 448,000 head, compared to 458,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for the week prior was projected to be 563,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending

July 12 was 571,565 head. The average steer dressed weight was 934 lbs., 1 lb.

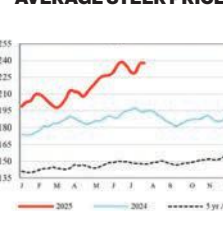
See MARKETS on page 9

Time Sensitive
Priority Handling
PERIODICAL:

WEEKLY CHOICE CUTOUT



5 AREA WEEKLY WTD AVERAGE STEER PRICE



LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
\$231.88	N/A	\$327.44
WEEK ENDING: 7-24-25		

COMMENTS

U.S. beef wins in the global market

The U.S. beef industry strengthened its global position with announcements last week as Australia's markets became open to U.S. beef, trade from Brazil is being leveled and the southern border is being shut down once again, creating an interesting situation right in the heart of the summer video sale season.



IPSEN

In my March 10 column, I mentioned how uncomfortable the tariff situation was for beef producers. In a world where tariffs were all the headlines and the trade world was completely uncertain, each industry was being used as pawns on the table to renegotiate trade deals. In very few times in history has this been so vocal and blatant. Retaliatory threats from our largest trading partners were on the daily. In fact, *Western Livestock Journal's* situation with print costs from the lumber industry was in complete turmoil. The result? No changes ever happened. Fast forward to today, the tariff situation has leveled out with many changes coming in the favor of the U.S. Not all, of course, but the majority.

Now, as of last week, two of the major beef importers to the U.S. were called on to renegotiate their positions. In a major win for the U.S. beef industry, Australia has reopened its doors to U.S. beef products, including both fresh and frozen. For more than two decades, Australia was closed to all beef products from the U.S.

In a statement released by NCBA, President Buck Wehrhein said, "For 20 years, U.S. beef was denied access to Australia while Australia exported \$29 billion of beef to U.S. consumers. The lack of two-way, science-based trade has been a sticking point for many years, and we are pleased that President Trump has successfully opened the Australian market to American beef. NCBA has spent decades working to correct this trade imbalance and we are proud to have a President who is willing to fight for American farmers and ranchers, expand export markets, and fix unfair trade agreements across the world."

The trade imbalance based on Australia's continual decision to drag its feet allowed the country to sell \$28,759,340,461 worth of its beef into the United States, according to the statement. In the same time frame, borders were closed to the U.S., resulting in \$0 total dollars of beef trade coming back to our producers. Today, that imbalance is being rectified.

Additionally, Brazil, Vietnam and Thailand have all placed tariffs on U.S. beef entering their countries while allowing other countries to trade tariff-free. For example, Vietnam has placed a 30% tariff on U.S. beef and has not charged Australia any tariff in the same time frame.

In the first half of 2025, Brazil has exported over \$41 billion in goods to the U.S., representing a 7.7% increase over 2024. In the first quarter of 2025, Brazil had already reached its levels of beef sales to the U.S., but after the initial 10% tariff increase restriction was placed in April, trade began to slow. To date, according to a *Folha De S. Paulo* magazine article, sales this month have plummeted by 80% since April, even before the 50% added tariff set to take effect August 1 of this year. In response to the immediate decrease, some of Brazil's largest beef processor suspended production at their processing plants. Articles from a year ago were claiming companies like JBS and Minerva were ramping up to double their processing capacity. Now, they are looking to shut down facilities in response. It's definitely a back-and-forth game right now.

Beef production in the U.S. last year rose by 2% even with a shrinking cow herd, according to multiple reports. This is mostly due to larger carcass weights and cattle with greater feed efficiency. The flexibility of the U.S. genetic base to respond to market conditions affords marketers and processors a major luxury. Our infrastructure and feeding system contain major efficiencies that help our industry stay ahead in competitive markets. What, in my own opinion, has been lacking is fair trade.

The biggest threat to our product is sitting on our own soil. Urban sprawl, climate change narratives and anti-animal agriculture agendas play a major role in how beef production is going to go forward. That being said, the landscape surrounding beef production over the foreseeable future has aligned in a way that sustained cow-calf profitability is imminent. With support from an administration that is ag friendly and trade aggressive, we should be able to withstand the corrections we will undoubtedly see from time to time. More availability to markets across the globe with an efficient, performance-driven product that can convert quickly will help the marketers of beef hit local, regional, national, and global markets as beef demand continues to soar.

— **LOGAN IPSEN**

GUEST OPINION

THE POWER OF OUR GRASSROOTS

One of the great honors of my role as American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) president is sharing the stories of farmers and ranchers from across this country with leaders who are making decisions that directly impact our work, our families, and our livelihoods. From lawmakers on Capitol Hill all the way to the White House, I am humbled to sit across from powerful leaders to help them understand how you grow the food, fiber, and renewable fuel our nation and the world depends on. And I have that seat because of you, because they want to hear your stories. Like all Americans, our nation's leaders, including the president of the U.S. want to understand where their food comes from.

Recently, I had the privilege of sitting down for a direct conversation with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office. We had a full discussion about the pressing issues impacting your families, your farms and the farm economy. He asked me a lot of questions about farming which gave me the opportunity to explain the science behind our farming practices and the tools that we use. Thanks to your grassroots efforts, our nation's leaders are seeing that what matters to agriculture should matter to all Americans. You, as farmers and ranchers, play a critical role in keeping our food supply secure, providing nutritious food for our families, and protecting our natural resources.

I expressed Farm Bureau's appreciation to Trump and his administration for the agriculture and tax provisions in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. I shared with the president how this year's crop is the most expensive we have ever put in the ground, and that this law is bringing much-needed relief with increases to outdated reference prices and funding for other risk management tools. But I also emphasized that it's time to finish the job with an updated farm bill to address other programs and policy improvements that are important to farmers and ranchers.

As you might have guessed, we also discussed trade and the importance of opening new markets for farmers and ranchers. I shared that farmers are eager to follow the success of the administration's new deal with the United Kingdom with even more trade deals to open up markets across the globe. America's farmers and ranchers are growing some of the best products in the world, safely and sustainably, as I shared with the president, and we're long overdue for a level playing field in countries that have thrown up non-scientific barriers to American-grown products. I also emphasized that we are eager to see trade disputes resolved swiftly and that our policy does not support tariffs. The president assured me that boosting U.S. agriculture would remain a priority in negotiating new deals.

The president and I discussed other challenges and concerns weighing on farm families right now. I emphasized that labor is the greatest limiting factor to U.S. agriculture, and without a stable, legal workforce, we cannot continue to grow

the healthy food that American families count on. If we want to boost American-grown products, we need to reform our H-2A guestworker program. I shared with him the personal stories that I have heard from farmers on these challenges: how you cannot afford the dramatic hikes in the H-2A wage rate and how farmers, despite extensive efforts, have been unsuccessful in recruiting domestic workers to fill these essential roles.

We also discussed the important role pesticides play on the farm, both in protecting our ability to produce a crop and in promoting regenerative practices on the farm. America's farmers rely on innovative researchers at land-grant universities and the safe regulatory process established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to get us the tools we need to grow safe and healthy food. What's more, I underscored to the president that most farmers live on the land where they use these products, so safety is of the utmost importance for our families and the families we're growing food for.

Words can't fully express what an honor this was to speak directly with the president and share stories from Farm Bureau members. I was also grateful to be joined by Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins and Secretary of Labor Lori Chavez-DeRemer. They have both been strong advocates for farmers and ranchers in their roles in the administration. Secretary Rollins also joined us the next day as the keynote speaker at the American Farm Bureau's Council of Presidents meeting.

Every summer we gather all Farm Bureau presidents from the 50 state and Puerto Rico Farm Bureaus, as well as our national committee chairs, to hear from leaders and lawmakers. This year, our policy team at AFBF worked directly with the White House to hold our meeting at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building's Indian Treaty Room. This was the largest gathering of our state presidents at the White House ever. We heard updates from cabinet members, including Secretary Rollins and EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin, other administration officials, and senior White House staff. Each speaker took questions from Farm Bureau leaders and expressed their appreciation for the hard work of America's farmers and ranchers.

Each meeting, every conversation reminds me of the power of our great federation. The American Farm Bureau, your American Farm Bureau, is the united Voice of Agriculture because of grassroots members who are committed to their farms, their families and their communities. We know that our nation is stronger when agriculture succeeds. And thanks to the tireless work across our federation—from volunteers at the local county Farm Bureau to our dedicated staff to our state and national leaders—your voice is being heard from the local chamber of commerce all the way to the White House. — **Zippy Duvall, AFBF president**

OBITUARY



Walter Lawrence Plaggemeyer; 1930-2025

Walter Lawrence Plaggemeyer was born Nov. 6, 1930, in Big Timber, MT, and went to meet his Heavenly Father on July 18, peacefully at home surrounded by family. He was born to Dick and Delia (Moss) Plaggemeyer. Walter liked to tell the story that his mother could not vote that year as she was delivering him. Also born to this union were three sisters and two brothers.

Walter attended Wheeler Butte school, riding his horse to school most days. He lost his father when he was 12, and Walter and his siblings took on many responsibilities at the ranch. It was there that he first learned to be resourceful and innovative, often making something from nothing. Walter completed eighth grade and then, like many of his siblings, he went to work at an early age. He worked custom-combining, night shift at the flour mill in Harlowton, and was always willing to lend a hand to neighbors and friends in need while helping to maintain the family ranch.

He married Ruth Hathaway on March 29, 1961. After the couple was married, Walter often helped his father-in-law, Vernie Hathaway, on the Hathaway Ranch. They welcomed Larry, Lori, Linda and Rick to complete their family. Walter dedicated his life to his family and the ranch. He never stopped making improvements and was always looking

for ways to enhance production on the ranch. When challenges arose, often he problem-solved while sleeping, waking up with a solution.

Walter had a deep Christian faith with a desire for his family and friends to invite Jesus into their lives. He had a kind, gentle, patient spirit and great appreciation for others. He loved his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren very much. It always brightened his day to have family and friends come to visit.

Walter was a fun-loving card player and enjoyed most the social time that came with it. He had a strong work ethic and a passion for all aspects of ranching. Cutting firewood was one of his favorite things. He enjoyed the many road trips he and Ruth took with Wanda and David Hathaway. Walter loved eating home-cooked meals, especially homemade pies, bread and cinnamon rolls.

Walter was a skilled woodworker and crafted many treat-

ures for his family including dressers and nightstands for his wife, children and each and every grandchild. His family cherishes the many wooden toys, gun cabinets, tool chests, frames, shelves and numerous other items he made with his large, loving hands.

Walter is preceded in death by his parents; sisters, Bertha (Clifford) Elliott, Helen (Russell) Elliott, Beulah (Jim) Howe; sister-in-law, Marilyn Plaggemeyer; brother, Tom Plaggemeyer; son-in-law, Richard Kinsey; and grandson-in-law, Master Sergeant Jon Dunbar.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth; children, Larry (Kim), Lori Kinsey, Linda (Joe) Melvin and Rick (Karen); brother, Richard Plaggemeyer; sister-in-law, Barb Plaggemeyer; 13 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren; and extended family.

Donations in memory of Walter can be sent to Montana on a Mission or your local fire department.

<p>WLJ Letters to the editor: Letters for publication must be no longer than 675 words and must include the writer's name, location and phone number. Phone numbers will not be published. Letters may be shortened for space requirements. Obituaries must be no longer than 700 words. Send a letter to the editor or obituary by emailing editorial@wlj.net or mailing to Western Livestock Journal, Attn: Editorial Dept., 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.</p> <p>The national livestock weekly • Since 1922 • Western Livestock Journal LLC • 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111 www.wlj.net • 303-722-7600 • Fax 303-722-0155</p>			
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Idaho forecasts water shortfall for Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer

The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) has determined the Twin Falls Canal Co. may face a water shortfall of 75,300 acre-feet during the 2025 irrigation season.

In an order signed July 10 by IDWR Director Mathew Weaver, the methodology order outlines the anticipated supply and demand conditions that could impact surface water users with senior water rights on the Snake River

Under Idaho's long-standing "first in time, first in right" water law, surface water users with senior rights—such as the Twin Falls Canal Co.—have legal priority over junior groundwater users. IDWR manages these water resources conjunctively, treating surface and groundwater as a connected system. The shortfall estimate, which increased from 63,000 acre-feet (an acre-foot is 325,851 gallons) in April, is based

on the latest hydrologic conditions, including warm spring temperatures and rapid snowmelt, as well as updated modeling data.

Weaver's order states, "On or before July 25, 2025, ground water users holding consumptive water rights bearing priority dates junior to October 11, 1900, within the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer area of common ground water supply shall establish, to the satisfaction of the Director, that they can mitigate for their proportionate share of the predicted IDS (injury determination shortfall) of 75,300 acre-feet in accordance with an approved mitigation plan."

If junior users cannot demonstrate they are mitigating their share of the shortfall, IDWR will issue an order curtailing their water use. However, most junior water users are unlikely to face curtailment

thanks to the 2024 Water Settlement, negotiated last year by farmers and irrigation leaders.

"Idaho law and the constitution remain clear about first in time, first in right," said IDWR Deputy Director Brian Patton. "However, regardless of these facts, most water users will not face curtailment thanks to the hard work farmers put in last summer to create the 2024

Water Settlement. Compromises like this, and investments in our water supply, will benefit Idaho water users into the future and I applaud their foresight."

All junior groundwater users currently participating in an approved mitigation plan, including the 2024 Water Settlement, will avoid curtailment, officials said. Those who are not yet part of such a plan have until July 25 to comply. Par-

ticipation in an approved plan is the only way for junior users to avoid having their water shut off to make up the shortfall owed to senior users.

While the Twin Falls Canal Co. may be impacted, the April Methodology Order did not find any shortfalls for the six other members of the Surface Water Coalition: A&B Irrigation District, Burley Irrigation District, Milner Irrigation

District, Minidoka Irrigation District, North Side Canal Company and American Falls Reservoir District No. 2.

As irrigation season approaches, IDWR officials continue to encourage junior users to join an approved mitigation plan to maintain access to water during what is expected to be another dry year. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

Data-driven decisions to improve herd performance

Understanding what data matters most can be overwhelming. That's why Kansas State (K-State) University's Beef Cattle Institute veterinarians Brad White and Bob Larson, along with agricultural economist Dustin Pendell—shared insights on setting data priorities for beef operations in a recent episode of "Cattle Chat."

Although every operation is different, there are a few core metrics that are universally important. "These include pregnancy percentage, weaning weights, death loss percentage and sickness rate," Larson said.

Tracking these numbers annually helps producers evaluate progress and catch potential issues early, he added.

"It's really important to monitor whether we're improving the herd, or if we're already doing well, in order to maintain that success, and look for areas where problems may be creeping in before we fully recognize them," Larson said.

White emphasized the connection between production data and rising input costs.

"Maintaining balance between expenses and performance is a challenge, especially as production costs continue to climb," White said. "You can't always target both decreasing expenses and increasing production."

The experts agreed that the producer's goals will influence what numbers matter most, but all producers need to be aware of the relationship between cost and return.

"You should always manage your expenses, but

you also have to pay attention to the market conditions," Pendell said. "Are they at record highs? What is the cost of putting on additional weight, and how does that compare to the price you'll receive?"

Once a cattle operation reaches a profitable level, making further improvements requires closer attention to detail, said Larson.

"At that point, you really have to sharpen your pencil and weigh the cost-benefit of every input," Larson said. "Some expenses don't offer much return, while others—like nutritional inputs—can make a significant difference in maintaining body condition."

Larson noted that if cows maintain consistent body condition year-round, additional feed may not be necessary. Tracking core data points—such as pregnancy rate, weaning weights, death loss and sickness—can help identify where changes are needed or confirm what's working.

"These numbers help you monitor progress and catch potential problems early," he said.

White added that as production stabilizes, cost-efficiency becomes harder to achieve—especially with today's higher input costs.

With rising input costs and more complex decisions at higher production levels, K-State veterinarians and economists alike point to data tracking and cost analysis as useful tools for evaluating herd performance and input value.

— **K-State Research and Extension**



GENETIC EDGE

FEMALE SALE

SATURDAY | AUGUST 23, 2025 | 11AM

IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO

WWW.RIVERBENDRANCH.COM

Lylester Rita 1489 +*20660978



LOT 6

CED +4; BW +3.4; WW +104; YW +173
MILK +27; PAP -.98; CW +90; MARB +1.30
RE +1.10; SAXH +218; SAXJ +220; SM +69
\$W +101; \$F +120; \$G +93; \$B +213; \$C +345

Rita 1489 is a powerful growth, carcass, \$W, \$B and \$C highlight produced by the \$57,500 headliner of the Edisto Pines Farm donor program, Ashland 2609, sired by the \$600,000 record-selling multi-trait feature, Jameson. Has a 1/27/25 heifer calf, Lot 6A, by Cherry Crk Blue Collar G275. Bred 5/18/25 to RSA True Balance 1311.

Riverbend Blackcap M275 +*20961221



LOT 22

CED +9; BW +9; WW +67; YW +123; MILK +34; PAP +5.09; CW +77
MARB +.90; RE +1.09; SAXH +211; SAXJ +208; SM +54; \$W +73
\$F +138; \$G +68; \$B +207; \$C +322
Blackcap M275 is a low-birth and RE daughter of the third-generation Riverbend Blackcap, Blackcap B371, sired by the \$165,000 multi-trait leader of the Riverbend Ranch and Spruce Mountain Ranch herd sire rosters, Bougie 1588. Due 1/26/26 to RSA True Balance 1311.

Riverbend Rita M161 +*20967241



LOT 24

CED +9; BW +.2; WW +77; YW +132; MILK +19; PAP -.83; CW +66
MARB +1.45; RE +.77; SAXH +219; SAXJ +193; SM +43; \$W +67
\$F +110; \$G +91; \$B +202; \$C +308
Rita M161 is a low-birth, PAP and Marbling prospect sired by the proven female sire, Pacific and produced by a seventh-generation Riverbend Rita, Rita J343. Due 1/26/26 to GAR Powercat.

Riverbend Blackcap M031 +*20986158



LOT 29

CED +8; BW +.3; WW +94; YW +171; MILK +26; PAP +1.32; CW +82
MARB +1.08; RE +.77; SAXH +190; SAXJ +189; SM +35; \$W +90
\$F +128; \$G +68; \$B +197; \$C +291
Blackcap M031 is a powerful low-birth and growth daughter of the outcross headliner of the Deer Valley Farm and Knoll Crest Farms rosters, Statesman and she stems from a first calf heifer by the proven female sire, Rawhide. Due 2/26/26 to Deer Valley Backdraft 31110.

Riverbend Isabel L1204 +*20721044



LOT 37

CED +11; BW +1.5; WW +85; YW +147; MILK +39; PAP -.21; CW +71
MARB +.69; RE +1.08; SAXH +186; SAXJ +191; SM +98; \$W +104
\$F +115; \$G +58; \$B +174; \$C +324
Isabel L1204 is a growth, PAP, RE and \$W first calf heifer produced by the \$40,000 selection of Riverbend Ranch as a highlighted donor of the first Baldridge Performance Angus sale, Isabel G797, sired by the popular female and phenotype Larson Angus sire, Man In Black. Has a 7/16/25 heifer calf, Lot 37A, by FF Rito Ambitious. Tattoo N2011.



2880 N 55 W • IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO 83402 • 208-528-6635

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Dale Meek | Purebred Operations Manager | 208-681-9840

Chris Howell | Director of Customer Service | 208-681-9821

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Research challenges threshold used to determine meat spoilage

Kansas State (K-State) University meat scientist Travis O'Quinn and his research team have uncovered surprising results that challenge consumer's long-held beliefs on what qualifies as "spoiled" ground beef.

Many people have sensory cues on what would cause them to throw a product away, including brown bananas, odor in milk and slimy deli meats.

"Within meat products, (spoilage) has been intimately

tied with bacterial growth, a belief that if we reach a magical level of bacterial growth that the product is spoiled," O'Quinn said. "When we look back at the literature, it is pretty shaky on where that idea of a certain bacteria level came

from."

With this information in mind, O'Quinn and his research team set out to learn more about what factors lead to considering ground beef to be spoiled.

In their study, retail ground

beef packages were stored in a display case for 14 days. Throughout the display time, researchers asked a consumer panel if they would purchase the sample and whether or not they considered the sample spoiled.

While visually the ground beef followed the spoilage pattern that researchers thought it would—that is, it turned brown after four to six days—other traits told a different story.

"The challenge was when we looked at the other traits (related to spoilage), we didn't really fail, ever," O'Quinn said. "You would think that the meat would start smelling bad or tasting bad, but even at the very end of the trial we had a low percentage of our samples that tasted bad to consumers."

In other words, O'Quinn said, the meat may look spoiled, but color is not a true determinant of a spoiled food product.

"Some of the key takeaways from this study is the idea that using microorganism growth or bacteria growth to reflect spoilage is not really as closely tied together as we have previously thought," he said.

The findings may have implications in grocery stores and other retail settings where consumers are making purchasing decisions based on such factors as appearance, color and discoloration traits. O'Quinn said that efforts to prevent spoilage in ground beef should focus on limiting and reducing color changes, since color changes in the first four to six days isn't a true indicator that the product is spoiled.

"There are obviously next steps for us to continue to investigate, but this idea that bacterial growth alone drives spoilage of ground beef is not what our study showed," O'Quinn said. — **K-State Research and Extension**

CA state vet calls for HPAI vaccine

The federal government should approve a vaccine against highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in dairy cattle, the California state veterinarian told a House Agriculture subcommittee hearing on the work of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) on July 15.

"I believe we need dairy vaccination in the toolbox yesterday, especially for regions currently free from disease," Annette Jones, the California state veterinarian and director of Animal Health and Food Safety Services at the California Department of Food and Agriculture, testified before the House Agriculture Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Subcommittee.

"If I were a poultry producer, beef producer, swine producer, or dairy producer, I would be banging my fist on the table to vaccinate dairy cattle way ahead of poultry," Jones added. "If USDA can successfully keep trade doors open when millions of dairy cows are actively infected with H5N1, I am confident

that they can get the job done if we use vaccine selectively to protect these girls."

In her submitted testimony, Jones also noted that "of the 17 states with known infected dairy cows, 12 have experienced poultry cases directly from these herds." She also noted that the current HPAI outbreak has cost USDA almost \$2 billion. "Without early disease detection and accurate test results to make rapid decisions, the expense and the toll on animals and people would be much higher," Jones said.

USDA's website shows 1,075 dairy herds in 17 states have been infected with HPAI since spring of 2024. Still, the number of recent cases is waning with just two infected herds—one in California and one in Arizona—over the last month.

In his opening statement, Rep. Tracey Mann (R-KS-01), said that the One Big Beautiful Bill Act had increased funding for the NAHLN network of more than 60 state and university laboratories around the country well as

funding for the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program and National Animal Vaccine and Veterinary Countermeasures Bank.

Mann said, "The One Big Beautiful Bill included \$233 million per year for the three-legged stool, with \$10 million per year directed towards the NAHLN laboratories, which is on top of existing discretionary funding. This funding will increase diagnostic capabilities, improve research, assist in disease surveillance, and strengthen our overall capacity as a nation to prevent, detect, and mitigate foreign animal diseases."

Mann also talked about the economic devastation that could come if New World screwworm were to show up in the U.S. Mann said if the screwworm were to arrive in the U.S. from Mexico, it could cost livestock producers billions in economic losses. USDA has estimated an outbreak in Texas alone would cost producers \$732 million per year, but expanding to the impact of cattle states it could

translate into \$10 billion a year in economic losses, Mann said.

Rep. Derrick Van Ordon (R-WI-03) later expressed similar concerns, saying even the dairy industry in his state would be negatively impacted if the screwworm were to make it to Texas.

In his opening statement, Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA-21), subcommittee ranking member, emphasized that the laboratory at the University of California, Davis, has played a critical role in combating HPAI. But Costa also noted that the Trump administration had fired a quarter of the employees in the laboratory central coordinating office.

"This occurred in the middle of the prolonged Hi-Path Avian Influenza outbreak, and I cannot imagine a worse time to decide to cut positions that coordinate disease response," Costa said. "Think about it. We've seen uninformed and short-sighted decisions such as this one made across the government by this administration. We have already started to see

how these decisions impact our ability to respond to disease, disaster, and other events that put communities in jeopardy."

The hearing also offered an opportunity for laboratory officials from Kansas, Iowa and Texas to talk about the work of their laboratories.

Jamie Retallick, director of the Kansas Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at Kansas State University, presented a map of the laboratories around the country. Retallick said that "weekly calls and annual meetings with NAHLN and the 64 state laboratories foster necessary communication and strong relationships across the network."

As part of the network there are two federal parent laboratories—the National Veterinary Service Laboratory in Ames, IA, and the Foreign Animal Diagnostic Disease Laboratory at Plum Island, NY—and the National Biodefense Agriculture Facility in Manhattan, KS, Retallick said. — **Jerry Hagstrom, DTN political correspondent**

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Yellowstone grizzly delisting proposal clears House committee

A proposal by a Wyoming Republican representative to remove Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections from Yellowstone grizzly bears narrowly cleared a key congressional vote July 15.

The U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources voted 20-19 to advance a bill that would reinstate a 2017 decision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to delist—or remove federal protections—from grizzly bears. Language in the bill also seeks to make the action immune to a court challenge.

U.S. Rep. Harriet Hageman, a Republican who represents Wyoming's statewide U.S. House district, is sponsoring the Grizzly Bear State Management Act of 2025. Montana congressmen Troy Downing and Ryan Zinke, both Republicans, are co-sponsors.

During committee debate

on the proposal, Hageman argued that Yellowstone grizzlies, which have been protected under the ESA for five decades, met the initial recovery target of 500 bears nearly 30 years ago.

"In my state, they are saturated, they far exceed recovery goals and it is time to delist them," she said.

Rep. Jared Huffman (D-CA-02), the ranking Democratic member of the committee, argued that some of the states that would assume management of the bears "have not demonstrated a credible commitment to continuing the conservation of the species."

"That's why the former Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sent me a letter to Montana legislators warning that state laws and regulations threaten both grizzly bear recovery and public

safety," Huffman said. "With these anti-predator laws in place, the grizzly could once again vanish from the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem."

Hageman said there are typically more than 200 conflicts with grizzly bears reported each year in Wyoming, and approximately 200 grizzlies are born in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE) annually—"so the hyperbolic claims that they're going to, poof, disappear [are] absolutely inaccurate."

Committee chair Bruce Westerman, a Republican from Arkansas, called grizzly bear recovery a success for the endangered species program. He argued that Hageman's proposal "accomplishes something that we should be doing more often—and that is celebrating listed species' recovery through delisting."

"Since Congress first en-

acted the Endangered Species Act in 1973, only 3% of listed species have ever been classified as recovered and delisted. We can clearly see the success of the grizzly in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, and now it is time to listen to local communities and delist the species, returning management to the state," Westerman continued.

Zinke, who represents Montana's western congressional district, issued the 2017 rule to delist grizzly bears that the bill seeks to revive while he was serving as the secretary of the Interior.

"Instead of moving the goal line, we should be celebrating the win—the Endangered [Species] Act worked for grizzly bears in the GYE," Zinke said in a February statement regarding his co-sponsorship of the bill. "As a Congressman, I am demanding the same

thing I did as Secretary—If we are managing based on science, there must be an of-framp for wildlife on the list once their goal is reached. Montana and Wyoming share more than a border, we share wildlife, ecosystems, and the shared responsibility to manage it properly."

In an emailed statement, Earthjustice attorney Jenny Harbine said policymakers shouldn't lose sight of the larger history at play.

"It's easy to forget that grizzly bears were almost entirely eliminated from the American West—it's only because of concerted conservation efforts under the Endangered Species Act that grizzlies still inhabit the Northern Rockies. We shouldn't squander that progress by turning grizzlies over to the same types of hostile state policies that were responsible for their near-eradication in the first place."

Chris Servheen, a biologist who led the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's grizzly bear recovery program for nearly 35 years, said in a written statement that President Donald Trump is jeopardizing much of the progress that his former employer made on grizzly recovery. The result, he said, will be "immediate declines in numbers and range."

"The current administration and Congress are working

to defund grizzly bear science and monitoring, dramatically reduce funding for federal land management agencies in grizzly range, increase timber harvest and road building in grizzly habitat, and weaken or eliminate the fundamental laws that grizzly recover depends on like the ESA, the National Environmental Policy Act and the United States Forest Service Roadless Rule," he said. "At the same time, recreation pressure on public lands and private land development are accelerating rapidly in grizzly habitat putting even more stress on grizzlies."

The committee's vote comes six months after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, then administered by Democratic President Joe Biden, rejected delisting petitions forwarded by Montana, Wyoming and Idaho.

Hageman's proposal narrowly passed the committee along party lines. All 19 of the committee's Democratic members present opposed H.R. 281. For several minutes, the Republican tally of no votes held steady at 19, but Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV-02) eventually reported to the committee to register his support for the bill. A vote before the full House hadn't been scheduled as of July 22. — **Amanda Eggert, Montana Free Press**

Petition warns appeals ruling threatens millions of acres

CROSSING
(from page 1)

which also arose in Carbon County, rejected the government's argument that the checkerboard land grants to railroads in the 19th century included an implicit federal easement allowing public access to otherwise landlocked public parcels. The court ruled then that Congress had not reserved such rights and that if access was desired, the government must use eminent domain and compensate the landowners.

Background

The legal dispute began in 2021, when four hunters used a ladder to cross from one public land parcel to another at a shared corner surrounded by Iron Bar Holdings' private land, despite the presence of posted "No Trespassing" signs. Although they were cited for criminal trespass, a Wyoming jury acquitted the hunters in 2022. Iron Bar then pursued a civil trespass case, which U.S. District Judge Scott W. Skavdahl dismissed, concluding that the company's claim to exclusive control over the airspace did not support a finding of trespass under federal law.

The 10th Circuit Court of

Appeals upheld Skavdahl's ruling, with Judge Timothy Tymkovich writing the opinion. The court leaned heavily on the UIA, stating that private landowners may not use physical or legal means to obstruct lawful public access to federal lands. Tymkovich framed the issue within a broader history of land use in the West and acknowledged the legal ambiguity surrounding corner-crossing, suggesting that ultimate clarity may have to come from Congress or the U.S. Supreme Court.

The case has drawn national attention from both public access advocates and private property rights groups. According to the petition, an estimated 9.5 million acres of public land are currently landlocked by private property, leaving landowners facing legal uncertainty across vast stretches of the

West. The 10th Circuit's ruling has already "sow(n) confusion among landowners and recreationists," with one recent Wyoming legislative hearing highlighting proposals to develop a ladder system for motorized corner-crossing.

The case also carries immediate consequences for millions of outdoor enthusiasts. The petition cites that of the 54 million Americans who hunted or fished in 2022, nearly 10 million were from checkerboard states, and the ruling now "leaves tens of millions of outdoor recreationists in limbo about how and where they may access public land." As the petition notes, the case presents a clean and timely opportunity for the Supreme Court to resolve these legal uncertainties, with Tymkovich expressly inviting the Court to "re-

consider the scope of Leo Sheep as it applies to this case." — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**



COMING EVENTS

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

Sept. 16-18 – The Public Lands Council 57th Annual Meeting will be held in Flagstaff, AZ, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Flagstaff. Details: publiclandscouncil.org.

Sept. 30-Oct. 5 – The National

Sheepdog Finals will be held in Alturas, CA, where top border collies from the U.S. and Canada compete for the prestigious title of National Sheepdog Champion. Details: sheepdogfinals.org or contact Geri Byrne at 541-891-7518 or geri@bcollies.com.



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Western Livestock Journal

OBBBA includes tax relief for family farms

OBBBA (from page 1)

weeks. A second month of assistance is authorized if drought extends to seven of the previous eight weeks.

The bill authorizes \$233 million per year to USDA on animal disease prevention and response, a seven-fold increase from previous levels. It also funds the Sheep Production and Marketing Grant Program through 2026 to support innovation and marketing efforts in the industry.

The OBBBA includes several tax provisions that will benefit farm and ranch families. The bill makes individual tax cuts from the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act permanent for farmers and ranchers, including expanded tax brackets with a lower maximum tax rate, increased standard deductions of \$15,750, child tax credits of \$2,200 and increased alternative minimum tax thresholds.

The bill also extends the 20% deduction for pass-through entities, with a minimum deduction of \$400 for small businesses earning over \$1,000, easing tax burdens on family operations. In addition, the estate tax exemption was made permanent at \$15 million per individual.

The OBBBA raises Section 179 small business expensing limits to \$2.5 million, with a higher phase-out threshold of \$4 million. In addition, the bill restores full bonus depreciation for capital investments. AFBF said this means farmers and ranchers can continue to write off the entire cost of new equipment and other essential capital upgrades in the year of purchase, rather than depreciating them over many years.

The budget package includes a broad reauthorization of the farm bill's nondiscretionary spending provisions, updating and funding core agriculture titles through 2031.

The bill extends commodity support programs, which includes marketing assistance loans, Agriculture Risk Coverage, Price Loss Coverage and Dairy Margin Coverage.

The bill modernizes how farm entities are treated under USDA program rules, AFBF said. Pass-through entities like partnerships, LLCs and S corporations are treated equitably when it comes to payment eligibility and attribution. The annual commodity payment limit was increased from \$125,000 to \$155,000 and will account for inflation in the future. In addition, those who earn at least 75% of their income from farming, ranching or related activities like agritourism could be exempt from income-based eligibility limits.

The OBBBA continues long-term funding for USDA's major conservation programs through 2031, including Environmental Quality Incentives Program

(EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). While the levels exceed those provided under the 2018 Farm Bill, AFBF said, they reflect the redirection of Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding into the permanent farm bill baseline rather than new program expansions.

The budget reconciliation bill establishes a new Agricultural Trade Promotion and Facilitation Program beginning in 2027, which will provide \$285 million in permanent mandatory funding each year. The bill also maintains support for key USDA research initiatives and provides funding to advance innovation. This includes \$175 million for specialty crops research, \$125 million annually for research facility upgrades, and expanded support for historically Black land-grant universities and farmers with disabilities. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**

STORY SHORTS

ID wolf population decreases

Idaho's wolf population stood at an estimated 1,235 wolves as of May 2024, reflecting a decline of nearly 100 from the previous year, the Idaho Capital Sun reported. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game recently changed both its methodology and reporting timeline, shifting from Aug. 1 to late May. The new system, known as the Approximate Bayesian Computation method, replaces the prior use of trail cameras with genetic and age data collected from teeth of harvested wolves. This approach allows officials to estimate both overall population and litter numbers more precisely. Because wolves typically give birth in spring, the May estimate represents the population's seasonal peak. According to the Idaho Capital Sun, updated modeling also retroactively revised past population figures, including a revised estimate of 1,150 wolves as of Aug. 1, 2023.

CPW provides update on wolf packs

On July 17, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) updated the Parks and Wildlife Commission on its wolf program and conflict minimization strategies. CPW's Eric Odell shared details on the reproduction, mortality and movement of wolves reintroduced in 2023 and 2025, reporting five wolf mortalities—two in Wyoming and three in Colorado. The agency also announced the formation of three new wolf packs: the One Ear Pack in Jackson County, King Mountain Pack in Routt County and Three Creeks Pack in Rio Blanco County. CPW officially recognizes packs only after confirmed reproduction. Although staff observed pups, counts remain unconfirmed due to the pups' small size and use of dense or underground cover. CPW also provided an update on its range riding program and ongoing wolf translocation efforts for the 2025-26 winter season.

TDA, USDA to use bait to combat NWS

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller has announced renewed efforts to combat the reemergence of the New World screwworm (NWS) near the U.S. border. In collaboration with the USDA, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is reintroducing Swormlure-5 bait—an improved synthetic attractant that targets adult screwworm flies. When paired with insecticides like Dichlorvos, Swormlure-5 may significantly aid eradication. The bait is species-specific, affecting only screwworm and blow flies while posing no threat to pollinators such as honeybees and monarchs. "We've beaten the NWS before, and we'll do it again," Miller said. He emphasized the need for unified action and called Swormlure-5 a potential gamechanger for repeating the successful eradication efforts of the 1970s.

Grizzly bear found shot in Wyoming

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Wyoming Game and Fish Department are seeking public help to investigate the fatal shooting of a grizzly bear found along Deep Lake Trail in Park County, WY, on May 30. A reward is offered for information leading to an arrest or charges, with payment amounts based on the value of the tip. Tips can be anonymous and are protected under federal law. Anyone with information is urged to call 307-527-7604 or 307-527-7125 to aid this active investigation.

SD ranchers guilty of animal mistreatment

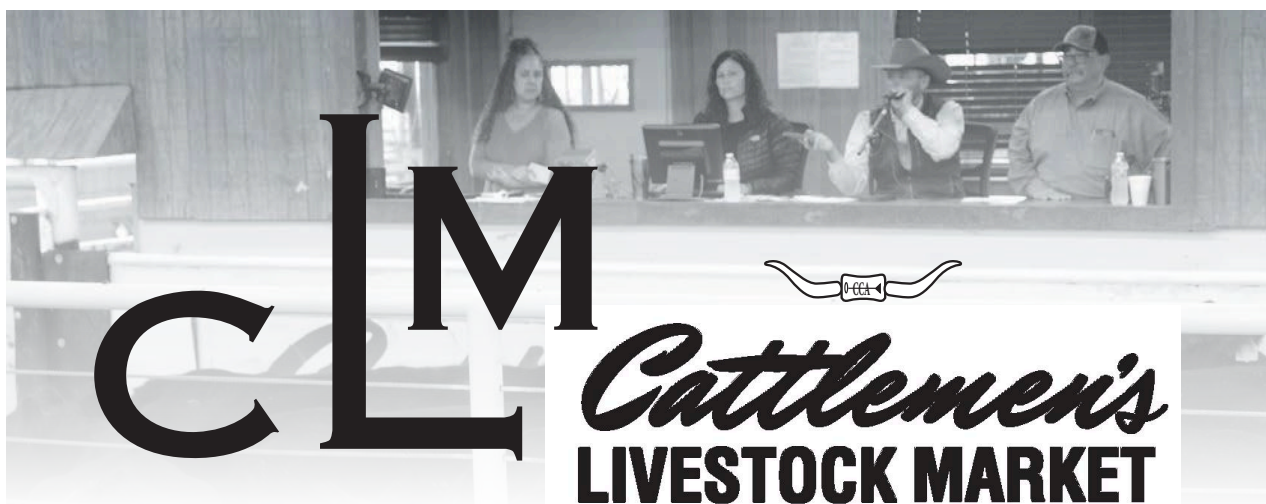
Two South Dakota ranchers were sentenced to jail after being convicted of mistreating cattle and attempting to sell animals they did not own, according to South Dakota News Watch. Leland Pauly and Lynda Frost were taken directly from the courtroom to begin serving 15-day jail terms following their conviction on livestock-related fraud and neglect charges in South Dakota and Nebraska. The case began when rancher Dan Schilling of Wessington, SD, discovered his cattle, entrusted to Pauly and Frost, in poor condition and filed a complaint in March 2024. Prosecutors linked the mistreatment to financial struggles, including the pair's bankruptcy. Bennett County State's Attorney Sarah E. Harris said the jail time should serve as a warning to others who mistreat animals or commit fraud.

NDSA reminds ranchers to update addresses

With the 2025 brand renewal period approaching, the North Dakota Stockmen's Association (NDSA) urges brand owners to ensure their correct mailing address is on file, as renewal notices will be sent to the address currently listed. State law requires all livestock brands to be renewed every five years, and brand owners will receive notices in early August. The deadline to renew is Dec. 31. To verify or update an address, contact 701-223-2522 or email renewal-questions@ndstockmen.org.

Jerky maker opens plant in NV

Jerky Junction, known for crafting small-batch jerky from premium U.S. beef and exotic meats, has opened its new headquarters in Carson City, NV, according to CarsonNow. Founded in 1992 by Andy Baird, the company is now led by his son, Kyle, and daughter-in-law, Sarah. Jerky Junction offers unique options, including Cajun alligator, python, snapping turtle and camel, alongside more familiar choices like yak, rabbit and U.S.-sourced beef, in flavors such as teriyaki, whiskey and honey habanero. Jerky Junction has a small retail outlet at 3880 Technology Way, and products can also be ordered online at jerkyjunction.com.



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SEPT. 16 - HAYTHORN RANCH, OGALLALA, NE
CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE: AUG. 28

Task force releases new beef industry long range plan

The Beef Industry Long Range Plan Task Force officially unveiled its new five-year plan for 2026-2030 at the Cattle Industry Summer Business Meeting in San Diego, CA. The mission of the Long Range Plan is to ensure the U.S. beef industry provides sustainable, high-quality beef that meets consumer demands worldwide.

"Since late 2024, our task force has taken a hard look at what's working in the beef industry and where we need to improve," said Joe Lowe, Long Range Plan Task Force

member and eighth-generation seedstock operator at Oak Hollow Angus in Smiths Grove, KY. "The result is a five-year plan that offers flexibility and local adaptation while keeping us all moving toward shared goals. By focusing on results and smart investments, we can keep the U.S. beef industry strong and competitive."

Long range plan

The Beef Industry Long Range Plan is a tool designed to help the beef industry es-

tablish a common set of objectives and priorities. It communicates the industry's strategic direction and provides insight on how the industry can serve its stakeholders by growing beef demand.

Since 1995, industry leaders representing key beef industry segments—cow-calf, seedstock, dairy, feeder, animal health, livestock auctions and more—have gathered to develop an aligned, comprehensive plan with the goal of increasing consumer demand for beef.

These leaders are brought together to study and compile major areas of opportunity facing beef over the next five years.

The 2026-2030 Long Range Plan identifies six interconnected goals that represent what the industry wants to achieve:

1. Policy and supply chain viability. The U.S. beef industry has a viable supply chain with the freedom to operate.

2. Sustainable industry outcomes. The U.S. beef industry produces environmentally sound, economi-

cally viable and socially acceptable products.

3. Public engagement and building confidence. The public trusts and demands high-quality, safe and nutrient-dense U.S. beef.

4. Innovation, science, research and continuous improvement. The U.S. beef industry continues to innovate and improve, making the industry resilient, credible and successful in the long term.

5. Stakeholder engagement. U.S. beef industry stakeholders align on production systems across segments to meet common consumer demands.

6. Animal health and food safety. U.S. cattle and the beef supply are healthy and safe.

Each goal is paired with a strategic initiative—a broad approach to achieving it—and a success definition. The goals are supported by actionable initiatives, organized to drive alignment and accountability across all segments of the beef supply chain.

"All six goals work together, so progress toward one goal helps move others forward," said Lowe. "For example, strong advocacy can lead to more research and innovation, which supports sustainability and builds trust. And by working together on animal health and other issues, we're better prepared for challenges like disease outbreaks or changing consum-

er demands."

The Long Range Plan Task Force encourages other beef industry businesses and organizations to utilize the plan as input for their own strategic decision-making processes.

For example, the Beef Checkoff, its committees, and contracting organizations, use pieces of the Long Range Plan as their guidebook. All funding decisions and focus areas of Checkoff projects and programs, by design, must follow the key areas outlined in the plan. Checkoff contractors take this direction and develop Checkoff-funded programs that fall within the scope of the Beef Promotion and Research Act and Order and support the plan's priorities.

"This Long Range Plan reflects the best of what our industry can do when we come together with a shared purpose," said Lowe. "It's built to be flexible, rooted in common-sense priorities and designed to help the industry stay strong no matter what challenges come our way. I'm proud of what we put together, and I'm looking forward to seeing how it can continue moving the beef industry forward in the years ahead."

To view the complete Beef Industry Long Range Plan, a plan summary or get more information, visit BeefLongRangePlan.com. — **Long Range Plan Task Force**

Perkins canal planning to continue amid litigation

NE SUIT (from page 1)

in the South Platte River Compact that grants Nebraska the authority to exercise eminent domain within Colorado. The case also raises questions about the appropriate legal forum for such an interstate eminent domain action, and how Nebraska can enforce its water rights against what it alleges is Colorado's overuse. Additionally, the Supreme Court is asked to determine whether Nebraska can construct the Perkins County Canal without obstruction from Colorado.

The lawsuit asserts efforts to negotiate key terms of the compact have reached a standstill, with both states unable to resolve their differences through diplomacy.

"Today's action comes only after we made every reasonable effort to resolve our differences with Colorado," Pillen said. "Ultimately, Nebraska must push forward to secure our water for future generations. Although we hoped to avoid a lawsuit, we are confident we remain on schedule to complete the Perkins County Canal by 2032."

In response to Nebraska's lawsuit, Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser criticized the move as politically motivated and counterproductive.

"It's unfortunate that Nebraska leaders decided to put politics above farming and ranching communities and the regional agricultural economy," Weiser said.

Weiser warned that Nebraska's legal action could trigger decades of costly litigation and ultimately harm both states. He urged Nebraska to reconsider and instead work toward "a durable and thoughtful solution" through collaboration, which he said would better support the long-term resiliency and prosperity of agricultural communities in both northeast Colorado and northwest Nebraska.

and Colorado to jointly operate an Interstate Station near Julesburg, CO, to measure the amount of water flowing from Colorado into Nebraska. The compact divides the year into an irrigation season (April 1 to Oct. 15) and a non-irrigation season (Oct. 15 to April 1). During the irrigation season, if water levels drop below 120 cubic feet per second, Article IV of the compact requires Colorado to halt diversions from the lower section of the river for water rights with priority dates after June 14, 1897.

Article VI of the compact allows Nebraska to construct a canal originating in Colorado to divert water during the non-irrigation season for use in Nebraska, although it does not specify design details. To carry out the canal project, Nebraska is authorized under Article VI of the compact to acquire land, easements and rights of way in Colorado through purchase, prescription or eminent domain. While Nebraska has tried to acquire land through voluntary agreements with Colorado landowners, it has had little success.

Nebraska now seeks to use eminent domain, but the compact does not identify a forum for such proceedings. Unlike more recent inter-

state compacts, the South Platte River Compact does not establish a commission or adjudicative body to resolve disputes between the states. As a result, the U.S. Supreme Court is Nebraska's only available forum for seeking timely and meaningful relief.

The Perkins County Canal, originally started in the 1890s but later abandoned, is at the heart of Nebraska's renewed water infrastructure efforts. In April 2022, then-Gov. Pete Ricketts (R) signed Legislative Bill 1015 into law, granting the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) the authority to develop, construct and manage the canal in accordance with the South Platte River Compact. Although the bill does not outline the canal's exact route or funding levels, it allows the DNR to acquire land, including through eminent domain, and to seek financial support through contracts and grants.

According to the Nebraska Examiner, Jesse Bradley, director of the newly formed Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment, said the agency will continue to advance the Perkins County Canal Project alongside ongoing litigation. Bradley estimated that per-

mitting and design work could be completed by 2028, allowing construction to begin thereafter. As part of the next phase, the agency issued a Request for Proposal on July 18 to select a qualified contractor to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the project. The department hopes to see water flowing through the new canal by 2032. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**



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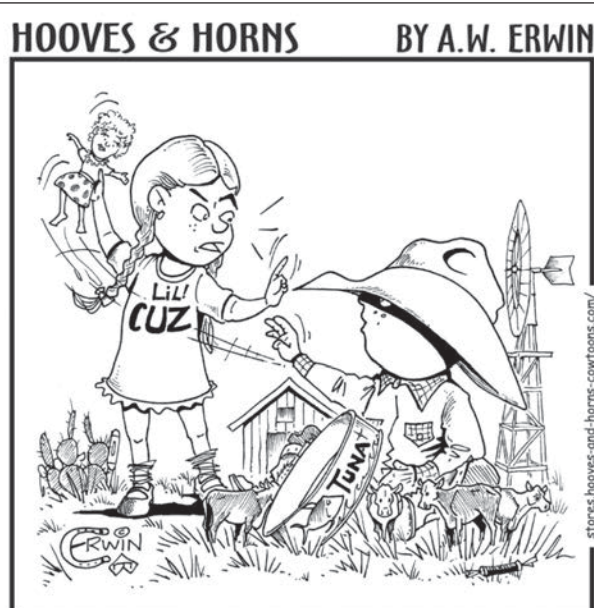
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"NO, Mutt! Betsy Wetsy doesn't wanna help yew water the livestock!"

Compact and canal

The South Platte River Compact requires Nebraska

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: 7/24/2025	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	231.88 ▲	231.73	187.25
CME Feeder Index	327.44 ▲	321.91	259.06
Boxed Beef Average	368.09 ▼	373.28	312.46
Average Dressed Steers	N/A ▲	376.20	307.00
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,411 ▲	1,411	1,382
Weekly Slaughter**	563,000 ▼	568,000	584,000
Weekly Beef Production***	486.8 ▼	490.6	491.7
Hide/Offal Value	11.79 ▲	11.68	11.50
Corn Price	4.04 ▼	4.07	4.04

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	
July 18	6,673	376.86	241	408.27	1,264	383.95	1,896	375.42	751	360.94	2,522	349.71
July 11	6,784	387.54	213	415.93	1,221	393.89	1,939	386.70	752	371.65	2,659	360.00
July 4	5,571	388.64	187	414.84	1,021	396.06	1,612	386.35	619	375.36	2,132	361.34
June 27	5,921	385.34	212	410.33	1,137	392.11	1,742	382.89	632	371.78	2,198	355.71

Cutouts						FED BOXED BEEF					
DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT		50% LEAN	90% LEAN					
July 24	368.09	347.00	325.27		253.74	418.34					
July 23	367.52	345.39	325.85		222.06	N/A					
July 22	372.50	347.94	325.80		215.87	N/A					
July 21	372.07	350.05	324.27		N/A	421.16					
July 18	373.55	351.49	325.74		N/A	N/A					

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle							
	7/18	7/21	7/22	7/23	7/24	High*	Low*
Aug.	22355	22523	22573	22740	22720	22913	16853
Oct.	21983	22163	22193	22390	22350	22390	16668
Dec.	21980	22175	22248	22428	22390	22428	17005
Feb.	21988	22173	22273	22455	22413	22455	18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle							
	7/18	7/21	7/22	7/23	7/24	High*	Low*
Aug.	32400	32760	32908	33208	33143	33208	21920
Sep.	32420	32770	32958	33243	33188	33243	22268
Oct.	32230	32598	32780	33110	33050	33110	22460
Nov.	31953	32318	32498	32868	32805	32868	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	592	1,326	231.88
Live FOB Heifer	766	1,236	230.90
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A

SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK			
Live FOB Steer	819	1,369	231.73
Live FOB Heifer	372	1,382	233.43
Dressed Del Steer	87	918	376.20
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A

SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	795	1,251	187.25
Live FOB Heifer	782	1,195	187.08
Dressed Del Steer	40	778	307.00
Dressed Del Heifer	577	820	308.00

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: JULY 20, 2025		
	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	27,010	3,100
Formula	256,238	2,825
Negotiated Cash	71,371	53
Negotiated Grid	35,621	1,015
Packer Owned	9,612	N/A
Total	399,852	6,993

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month		Neg. Sales 0-21 days	2,104
Jul. '25	125,136	Neg. Sales 21+ days	881
Aug. '25	146,838	Formula sales	3,600
Sep. '25	110,544	Forward contract sales	89
Oct. '25	171,619	Domestic sales	5,887
Nov. '25	153,846	NAFTA Exports	83

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		217.36	-2.02
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		215.32	-2.18

Ontario Auctions			
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		227.45	-1.55
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		225.55	-1.54
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs		155.27	+3.28

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, July 22, 2025				
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario	
501-600 lbs	394.49	N/A	434.11	
601-700 lbs	372.86	N/A	383.50	
701-800 lbs	337.89	N/A	351.54	
801-900 lbs	313.19	N/A	330.44	
Heifers:				
401-500 lbs	N/A	N/A	405.52	
501-600 lbs	N/A	N/A	395.09	
601-700 lbs	327.17	N/A	349.78	
701-800 lbs	315.23	N/A	313.80	

USDA MEXICO TO U.S. WEEKLY LIVESTOCK IMPORTS				
Feeder cattle imports weekly and yearly volume.				
Species	Current Week	Previous Week	Current Year-to-date	Previous Year-to-date
Feeder Steers	7/14/2025	7/7/2025		
	0	4,686	230,638	807,393

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE			
July 24, 2025			
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary			
Receipts EST:	N/A	Week Ago EST:	4,750
		Year Ago Act:	N/A

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	500-600 lbs	N/A
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	N/A
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	N/A

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

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

Selected Auctions										
Week Ending July 24, 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										
July 17	Burley, ID	260	430	417.50-420 376-399		335 316-332	225-310 299	279-299	107-169 165-184	
No report available Emmett, ID										
July 19	Eugene, OR	905	320-397* 280-367*	310-380* 270-367*	240-350* 265-343*	240-321* 242-312*	250-325* 222-290*	245-302* 190-252*	135-151 155-183	1,300-3,500 875-2,150
No report available Madras, OR										
July 16	Vale, OR	609		427.50 410	370-400 325	315-366 285-325	290-313	290-306.50 295-310	160-171 180-198	
No report available Davenport, WA										
No report available Toppenish, WA										

July 17	Orland, CA	1,191		300-450 280-455	275-418 255-390	260-380 240-332	240-317 220-280	220-308 200-271	140-169 140-210	2,700-3,675
No report available Escalon, CA										
July 21	Famoso, CA	605	350-417 340-370	340-417 320-370	340-389 300-375	295-359 260-339	280-307 260-284	250-270 260-284	80-250 140-181.50	
July 16	Galt, CA	1,060		340-450 350-410	320-415 340-406	300-357 285-340	260-317 240-300	240-310 220-281	110-184 165-199	2,600-4,000 2,000-3,500
July 22	Turlock, CA	2,283	380-435 242-379	375-442.50 239-374	358-391 224-357	340-385 211-339	306-328.50 200-305	289-318 185-288	132-180 164-208	
July 22	Salina, UT	402	408-585 280-460	345-535 270-485	285-470 260-437.50	225-377.50 225-345	252.50-334 286-332	222.50-322 257.50-330	192.50-325 252.50-305	116.30-165.10 158.50-195.85

July 21	Iowa	3,058	525	395-425	350-445 370	390-429 340-360	335-378 325-340	327-356 309.50-333	288-333	122.50-267.50 168-222
No report available Miles City, MT										
July 23	Bassett, NE	2,035				442.50-459 425-430	407 347-385	340-386 324.50-341	327.50-336.75 306.50-334	
No report available Ericson, NE										
No report available Imperial, NE										
July 16	Kearney, NE	1,500		465		362-401 379	344-361 336	313.50-342 295.50-331.50	153-175.50 188-214	
No report available Lexington, NE										
No report available Ogallala, NE										
July 24	Valentine, NE	1,727				387.50-393	395-413 359.50-380	370-383 347-349	321.50-353.50	
July 18	Herreid, SD	2,054					331-343	302	295.75-329.25 270-314	
No report available Torrington, WY										

July 17	Willcox, AZ	1,769	480.50-518 518-950	461-512.50 410-1,275	359-450 380-432.50	357.50-417.50 363-1,200	326.50-360 313-347.50		120-180 150-195	3,200-3,500 2,050-2,600
July 21	Colorado	580							87.50-189 163-225	
July 16	La Junta, CO	599		447.50-535 415-530	390-450 340-430	375-390 325-335	317.50-357.50 292.50-332.50	295-317.50 282.50-312.50	272.50-292.50 252.50-272.50	151-165 181-204
No report available Loma, CO										
July 23	Dodge City, KS	1,142	611	544 504-524	392.50	360-387	364-382 356-371	344.50-354 330-357	323 299	153-169 168-211
No report available Pratt, KS										
July 24	Salina, KS	1,703		410	439-527.50 387-440	380-490 364-385	354-413 345-370	341-385.50 312-331	295-359.75 296-319.50	
July 24	Clovis, NM	1,533		520-525 415-460	400-485 370-452	360-404 336-376	340-380 313-342	320-345 278-330	246-326 276	147-180 164.25-200.25
July 23	El Reno, OK	6,007	650	470-590 430-460	410-495 350-420	375-420 310-385	345-395 322.50-375	310-370 307.50-334	277.50-335 277.50-309	
July 22	McAlester, OK	840		495-540 431-491	409-495 358-435	363-415 318-353	343-369 309-340	273-345 270-290	250-271	153-173 158-196
July 22	Oklahoma City, OK	4,445		490-512.50 375-442.50	420-487.50 352.50-429	325-431 325-383	327-395 307.50-365	323-365 299-318	287-329 275-309	
July 18	Cuero, TX	1,032		535-570 426-485	470-540 369-515	358-420 331-410	336-366 321-400	311-340 301-320	135-171 185-201	2,500-2,800
July 17	Dalhart, TX	1,221		522	437.50-442.50	380-406	340-372.50	351.50	244-326	139-179
July 24	San Angelo, TX	861		400-420 405	395-445 340-415	352.50-407.50 317.50-372.50	344-372.50 330-333.50	310-333 262.50-285	305 277.50	137-215.50 139-157 166-182
July 24	Tulia, TX	454		530 460	38					

Drought conditions found mostly in the West

Drought conditions have diminished significantly in much of the eastern two-thirds of the country while drought continues to expand and deepen in the West, Pacific Northwest and across the northern Plains areas of Montana and North Dakota (Figure 1). Drought conditions have improved in the past two months in several major beef cow states including Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota.

Range and pasture condi-

tions in the eight western states (Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Washington) include 39.9% poor and very poor conditions, worse than last year and the five-year average for this date.

In the Great Plains region (Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming), 25.7% of pastures and ranges are in poor to very poor condition, higher than last year and the five-year average. In con-

trast, Texas and Oklahoma have just 15% of ranges and pastures in poor and very poor condition, compared to year-ago and five-year averages both over 26% for this date.

To what extent is drought limiting efforts or potential to initiate beef cow herd rebuilding this summer? Probably not a great deal and certainly less in total than any time in recent years. Although some producers are still being impacted by drought, most of the current drought regions have relative-

ly low beef cow numbers and would not offset increases in other regions.

By contrast, ample moisture in some regions is resulting in forage production that is outpacing animal grazing. In some cases, excessively wet conditions are hindering hay production, at least in terms of quality, if not quantity. Anecdotal reports from producers and lenders suggest considerable producer interest in retaining heifers but the indications are that the pace is slow. Upcoming USDA reports will hopefully provide more insight

into whether and how much herd building is underway.

Heifer slaughter has been declining in recent weeks and is down 3.5% year over year thus far in 2025 (down 5.6% in recent weeks). Beef cow slaughter is down 16.5% year over year. If the current beef cow slaughter rate persists for the remainder of the year, herd culling in 2025 may drop below 9%, a level that is certainly consistent with herd rebuilding. Taken together, heifer and beef cow slaughter suggest that the beef cow herd may stabilize and possibly increase

fractionally by the end of the year.

Feeder and fed cattle markets have shrugged off the summer doldrums and moved higher in the past week. Choice boxed beef prices, which pulled back about 5% from the late June highs, stabilized and will likely move mostly sideways through the heat of the summer. Cattle prices are expected to remain very strong with muted seasonal tendencies in the fall. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

Boxed beef continues price decline

MARKETS (from page 1)

above the prior week.

Boxed beef prices continued their seasonal decline, with the Choice cutout down \$5.19 to \$368.09 and the Select cutout down over \$6 to \$347.

Analysts released the pre-report estimates for Friday's Cattle on Feed report release. The consensus is that cattle on feed will be 99.1% for feedlots of 1,000 head or greater in July. Placements in June are estimated to be 98.1%, and marketings for June are predicted at 96.1%.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures also saw prices climb several dollars, with the August contract gaining \$3.90 to \$328.90 and the September contract up \$4.23 to \$329.65.

The CME Feeder Cattle In-

dex was up \$5.53 to \$327.44.

Corn futures were slightly lower, with the September and December losing a penny to \$4.01 and \$4.20, respectively.

Kansas: Winter Livestock in Dodge City sold 803 head on Wednesday. Compared to the previous auction, feeder steers and calves were not well tested, but a higher undertone was noted. Heifers over 550 lbs. sold steady to \$10 higher and under 550 lbs. were not well tested. Benchmark steers averaging 759 lbs. sold for \$344.50-354, averaging \$348.01.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 5,613 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers sold \$2-10 higher and feeder heifers sold steady to \$3 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 771 lbs. sold from \$320-341, averaging \$330.07.

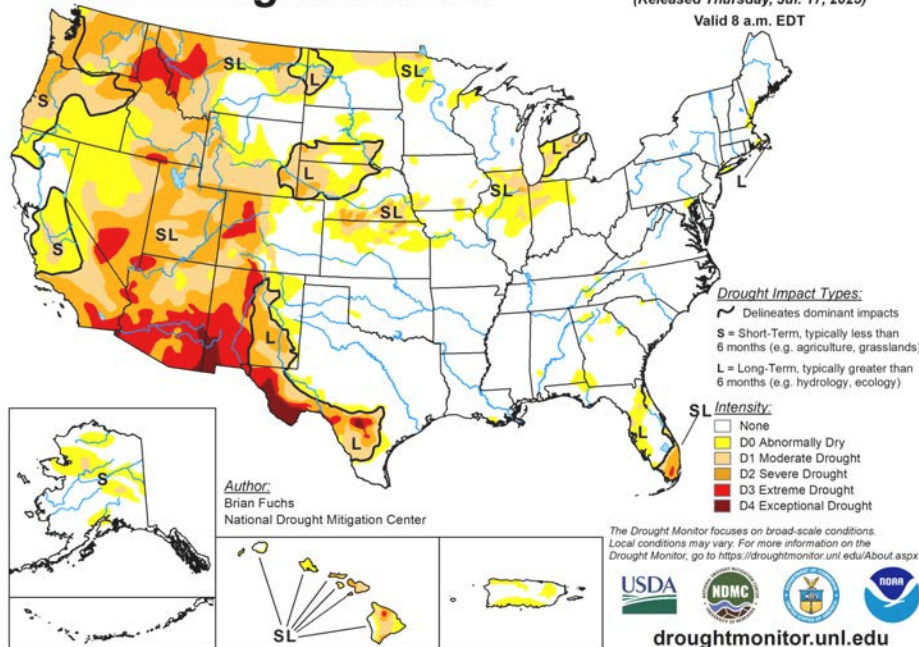
Nebraska: Bassett Livestock in Bassett sold 2,035 head on Wednesday. There

were a limited number of comparable offerings from two weeks ago, with 1,000-1,050 lbs. steers trading \$13-23 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 722 lbs. sold for \$362.50-386, averaging \$379.31.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 4,445 head on Monday. Compared to the sale held a week earlier, feeder steers sold \$4-8 higher. Steer calves traded mostly steady. Feeder heifers traded steady to \$3 lower, except over 800 lbs. were up to \$10 higher. Heifer calves sold \$5-10 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 776 lbs. sold from \$315-336, averaging \$329.47. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

U.S. Drought Monitor

July 15, 2025
(Released Thursday, Jul. 17, 2025)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



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.)

Sept. 15 — The Montana Stockgrowers Association is encouraging students to apply for its 2025 Annual Convention and Trade Show internship program. The internship will take place Dec. 8-13 in Billings, MT. Details: www.mtbeef.org.

Cows in MT still outnumber people; lead narrows

Montana's famous cow-to-person ratio has narrowed a bit. USDA data from early 2024 shows 2.12 million cattle roaming the state alongside 1.14 million people. That's still nearly two cows for every Montanan, but it's down from the more dramatic ratios of years past. As recently as 2022, the ratio was more than two cows per person.

Of course, the statewide number only tells part of the story. Drive through rural Petroleum County in the central part of Montana and you'll encounter one of the most lopsided landscapes in America: 525 people sharing space with more than 32,000 cattle, working out to 62 cows per person. Neighboring Garfield County runs a close second at 59-to-1, while Powder River County in the southeastern corner of the state clocks in at 50-to-1.

Compare that to urban strongholds like Missoula County, where humans out-

number cattle 15-to-1. In Yellowstone County around Billings, people hold a 2.5-to-1 advantage—making it the lone eastern county where humans have the numerical advantage. Then there's Mineral County in heavily forested northwestern Montana, an outlier that doesn't fit the rural mold. Despite its smaller population, cattle numbers have dropped from 400 to 300 head, giving it the state's most human-heavy ratio at 17-to-1.

The raw numbers tell their own story, too. Beaverhead County, around Dillon, leads the herd with 110,000 cattle, while Fergus (Lewistown) and Big Horn (Hardin) each top 90,000. Custer County, home to the livestock hub of Miles City, maintains 86,000 cows among its 12,000 residents—a solid 7-to-1 ratio that somehow feels modest compared to those eastern plains where cattle still rule by margins of 50 or 60 to 1. — **Jacob Olness, Montana Free Press**

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Cattle producers recognized for stewardship efforts

Cattle producers from across the country were recognized during the industry's Summer Business Meeting in San Diego, CA, through the 2025 Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP). Regional award recipients were honored for their commitment to conservation and stewardship. The national winner will be announced during CattleCon 2026 in Nashville, Tennessee, in February.

"It is an honor to recognize these cattle producers for their commitment to conservation," said NCBA President Buck Wehrbein. "Not only are they protecting natural resources for future generations, but they also serve as stewardship role models for producers across the country."

Regional ESAP winners undertake stewardship efforts unique to their environment, landscape and resources. The 2025 ESAP Regional winners are:

Region I: Whispering Hills Farm, Lawrenceburg, KY

Mike Wilson took a neglected and overgrown farm in the heart of Kentucky and gave it life. He carefully crafted his operation around the limitations of the land and resources, and adapted when necessary to make it a thriving, profitable operation that can be passed down to the next generation of stewards.

Wilson is an active participant in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) as well as the Conservation Stewardship Program

(CSP), working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement a variety of practices including pipeline, heavy use area protection, watering troughs, fencing, and forage and biomass plantings to help facilitate prescribed grazing.

In addition to livestock related enhancements, he is an advocate for keeping the balance between agriculture and wildlife. He has partnered with state foresters to improve woodland, and he removes invasive species to enhance plant diversity. Wilson continues to serve as a role model to fellow cattle producers, influencing them to take positive steps towards stewardship and conservation efforts.

Region II: M&D Overstreet Ranch, Kathleen, FL

M&D Overstreet Ranch sits at an urban-wildland interface in central Florida, surrounded by one of the fastest-growing regions in the country. The Overstreet's story is one of endurance, responsibility and a deep-rooted belief in leaving the land better than they found it. Mark Overstreet, paralyzed from the waist down since 1970, has never let his disability keep him from stewarding the land.

With modified equipment, sheer determination and an unbreakable spirit, he continues to oversee rotational grazing, soil restoration and water conservation projects that benefit not just the cattle, but all of Florida.

M&D Overstreet Ranch uses controlled burns to re-

store native grasslands, lime rock lakes to recharge the aquifer, and wildlife corridors to protect species like deer, turkeys and wading birds. Overstreet remains a mentor and advocate, proving that true leadership isn't about personal success, it's about lifting others up. His work ensures that Florida's ranching traditions, environmental stewardship and community values will endure for generations to come.

Region III: Smith Family Farms, Bankston, IA

In the family since 1853, the 100% no-till Smith Family Farms is located in the rolling hills of northeast Iowa, today owned and operated by Jack Smith, his wife Maria, and their two sons. The Smith's agriculture philosophy is based on soil health, which is accomplished through the three pillars of no-till, cover crops and cows.

The Smiths have developed a cow herd that thrives in their environment by grazing throughout most of the year, limiting additional feed resources, and calving out in the field. Rotational grazing is another cornerstone for environmental stewardship, whether rotating on cover crops, corn residue permanent pastures, or converting Conservation Reserve Program fields to pastures. In addition to their conservation efforts, the family is dedicated to preserving the state's history through the Iowa Barn Foundation, which has saved more than 300 barns. Above

all, the Smiths share their story and mentor others on their environmental and operational practices.

Region IV: McFaddin Ranch, Victoria, TX

Founded in 1877, McFaddin Ranch is a living testament to the resilience and innovation of Texas ranching. Located near the Gulf Coast, McFaddin Ranch has worked for decades to hone grazing management practices to match the environment and optimize ecosystem services. From proper stocking densities, genetics, handling, forage quality and flood and drought management, co-owner and general manager Bob McCan continually seeks out new tools and approaches that enhance all aspects of the operation.

These efforts have improved wildlife habitat, protected and enhanced water quality, and increased carbon sequestration. These stewardship efforts are helping the ranch meet its goals of integrating research-proven strategies to maintain thriving wildlife and livestock populations through complementary practices, using economic, environmental and social sustainability to guide decisions, and continuing the family's ranching legacy. In addition, McCan shares what he's learned through leadership roles at the state, national and international levels.

Region V: G&G Livestock and Cathey Cattle Company, Polson, MT

Greg and Lynn Gardner

started G&G Livestock; daughter Brittany Cathey and son-in-law Wacey Cathey later launched Cathey Cattle Company as their own direct-to-consumer beef business. Located on the Flathead Indian Reservation, the family works together to manage cattle and care for the land.

Efficient range management is the family's focus with efforts including weed control, grazing management and water development. By implementing a deferred rest rotation system, the family has seen their pastures develop deeper roots, rebound more quickly from grazing and increased grass production year to year.

The family is active in the community and supports conservation causes that improve natural resources. They partnered with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service to install additional fencing and livestock watering systems, treat invasive weeds, improve pasture and range conditions through forage plantings, and develop grazing management plans leading to measurable improvements to rangeland health.

Region VII: Wine Glass Ranch, Imperial, NE

Jeff and Connie Pribbeno and their son and daughter-in-law, Logan and Brianna Pribbeno, own and operate Wine Glass Ranch, located in western Nebraska near the Colorado border. The Pribbenos believe long-term care for their operation's ecology translates to profitability, which is why they have married together the values of ranching for profit and environmental stewardship to make a living.

The cow-calf, stocker and grain operation thrives despite the arid climate and fragile sandy soil. The family installed more than 200 miles of cross fence, creating 90 paddocks for their rotational grazing system. At any given point, 95% of the ranch is resting, and this practice has increased plant diversity and the return of native grasses such as Sand Bluestem and Indian grass, a species difficult to grow in sandy soil. With a focus on soil health, the Pribbenos work closely with several state and federal agencies on conservation projects and those partnerships have helped them with their stewardship efforts. — NCBA



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.

ALL BREEDS

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

ANGUS

Aug. 23 – Riverbend Ranch Female Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
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, Lone, CA

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

HEREFORD

Sep. 8 – Genoa Livestock, Bull Sale, Minden, NV

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

COMMERCIAL

Aug. 11 – Western Video Market Sale, Cheyenne, WY

Sep. 16 – Western Video Market Sale, Ogallala, NE

HORSE

Aug. 23 – Memory Ranches, Foal Sale, Wells, NV

Sep. 6 – Rhoades Angus,

Bull & Ranch Horse Sale, Cambria, CA

Sep. 13 – Reno Snaffle Bit Futurity, Horse Sale, Reno, NV

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California gas prices set to soar in 2026

Retail gasoline prices in California have been consistently higher than the U.S. average, but the gap may continue to grow with the upcoming closure of two gasoline refineries. In a new article by University of California (UC), Davis, economists examine the impact of these closures on California gas prices. The authors find that, by August 2026, when the full effect of the closures is realized, California prices could rise by \$1.21 if no further significant changes happen in the market.

Phillips 66 announced it would be shutting down its Wilmington refinery in the fourth quarter of 2025 and Valero announced it would

also be closing its Benicia facility in April 2026. These two facilities account for 8.3% and 8.6% of the total refining capacity in the state, respectively. What will a 17% decrease in refining capacity look like for California consumers?

To be compliant with California's stringent air quality and other environmental regulations, California gasoline must be blended with specific components not required elsewhere in the U.S. As a result, most of the gasoline used in California is produced in-state. When major California refineries shut down, this supply cannot be easily replaced with out-of-state supply and Californians are more likely to feel the re-

sults at the pump.

Price differences between California and the rest of the U.S. have been gradually increasing, said Bulat Gafarov, a co-author on the paper and an assistant professor of agricultural and resource economics at UC Davis.

"In 2000, the California gas price was approximately \$0.25 higher than the national average, but by 2025 the difference increased to \$1.50," Gafarov wrote.

The authors investigated how the upcoming decrease in refining capacity would affect short-run and long-run gas prices. Assuming no other changes to demand or California policy, they expect that, almost immediately after the

first closure, there will be a 40-cent increase in California gas prices. As the market reaches a new equilibrium after both refineries close (around August 2026), they expect to see prices rise to \$1.21 above their current market price.

"One way to potentially avoid this price increase could be to change regulatory constraints in California, which would allow more imports," co-author Armando R. Colina, a senior economist at Banco de Mexico and a UC Davis alum, said. However, given infrastructure constraints, even this may not significantly decrease the coming gas price increases. — **UC Davis Extension**



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Location: Cooper's BBQ, FTW Stockyards

Consignment deadline: September 30



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LEGAL LEDGER

Burgum must approve all wind, solar projects

All wind and solar development decisions and actions now must be personally approved by Department of the Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, according to a new Interior order. Sign-off decisions include leases, rights-of-way, construction and operation plans, grants, consultations and biological opinions. The department said it is ending preferential treatment for "unreliable, subsidy-dependent wind and solar energy." The move comes following President Donald Trump's executive order on Ending Market Distorting Subsidies for Unreliable, Foreign-Controlled Energy Sources and the implementation of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The Interior also plans to eliminate longstanding right-of-way and capacity fee discounts for existing and future wind and solar projects. "By removing these artificial advantages, the Department is leveling the playing field for dispatchable, cost-effective and secure energy sources, such as clean coal and domestic natural gas, after years of assault under the previous administration," the Interior said.

Greens sue USDA over Beef Checkoff records

The Animal Legal Defense Fund and Earthjustice filed a lawsuit against the USDA under the Freedom of Information Act to obtain records of the Agricultural Marketing Service's oversight of the Beef Checkoff program. The groups said the agency continues to run false and misleading beef production advertisements and promotional campaigns about environmental marketing claims. "Industrial beef production is a significant contributor to the climate crisis as the industry is a major source of methane, nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide, and other greenhouse gas emissions, and is responsible for biodiversity loss, deforestation, and excessive water use," the environmentalist groups said.

Trump announces new tariffs on Mexico, EU

President Donald Trump announced 30% new tariffs on goods from Mexico and the European Union (EU) will take effect on Aug. 1. The announcements came in the form of letters posted to his social media platform Truth Social in mid-July. Trump said Mexico has not done enough to stop cartels from bringing drugs into the U.S., and that the EU has too large of a trade deficit with the U.S. Trump said if Mexico or the EU retaliated with their own tariffs, then "whatever the number you choose to raise them by, will be added on to the 30% that we charge." Mexico responded to the announcement with: "It is very significant that starting July 11, we established the necessary pathway and forum to resolve any possibility of new tariffs taking effect on August 1. In other words, Mexico has begun negotiations." The EU said it has consistently prioritized a negotiated solution with the U.S. "We remain ready to continue working towards an agreement by August 1," said EU President Ursula von der Leyen. "At the same time, we will take all necessary steps to safeguard EU interests, including the adoption of proportionate countermeasures if required."

CA high court to review Kern River case

The California Supreme Court has granted review of the Kern River water diversions case and will evaluate whether to uphold a lower court ruling requiring the city of Bakersfield, CA, to keep water in the river to protect fish. "Our coalition argued in our petition to the highest CA court that the appeals court ruling was inconsistent with prior court rulings and also raised some important constitutional questions that need to be addressed," wrote petitioner Bring Back the Kern in a Facebook post. In 2023, a Kern County Superior Court ruled in favor of environmentalists who sought a preliminary injunction to stop the city and water districts from diverting water from the river. The ruling was appealed by agricultural water users, and an appeals court issued a stay on the injunction. The case is still proceeding in Kern County Superior Court, but the Supreme Court's review could mean the earlier injunction could be restored.

USMEF calls for more Africa access

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) is urging the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to review access issues in Africa and the Caribbean. USTR is conducting its annual review of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which provides favorable access to the U.S. market for products from 30 African countries. In return, those countries are supposed to open their markets to U.S. products, but some—South Africa and Nigeria, in particular—have significant trade obstacles for red meat, USMEF said. The group also asked USTR to review access under the Caribbean Basin Initiative, urging the USTR to consider market access barriers when evaluating whether to recommend any country as a Caribbean Basin Initiative beneficiary. Of particular concern is Jamaica's ban on U.S. pork and high tariffs on imported beef and pork.