

INSIDE WLJ

LABELS LAWSUIT — Two South Dakota ranchers are taking packers to court over “Product of USA” labels they say are misleading and costly. Page 4

FLY FACTORY — The USDA is launching a \$750M effort to stop the New World screwworm before it crosses into Texas and devastates the livestock industry. Page 7

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

“The manner in which the livestock industry has answered the call of their country for increased meat production during the war is reflected in figures recently released by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. More than 14 million more meat animals were slaughtered under Federal meat inspection during the first half of 1944 than in the same period in 1943, by far the greatest meat production in the history of this country,” wrote Nelson Crow in his 1944 Observations by the Editor.

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Family farms remain the backbone of agriculture

— Census shows decline in small farms

Family farms continue to dominate U.S. agriculture, making up 95% of the nation’s 1.9 million farms, according to the 2022 Census of Agriculture Farm Typology Report released Aug. 19 from USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

The typology report defines a family farm as one where the producer and their relatives own the majority of the business, and it classifies operations based on ownership and gross cash farm income (GCFI).

“Classifying America’s 1.9 million farms to better reflect their variety is critical to evaluating and reporting on U.S. agriculture,” said NASS Administrator Joseph Parsons. “Typology allows us to more meaningfully explore the demographics of who is farming and ranching today as well as their impact on the economy and communities around the country.”

Understand farm typology

The typology report divides farms into family and non-family

operations, then groups family farms into four broad categories:

- Small family farms (less than \$350,000 GCFI), further split into low sales (under \$150,000) and moderate sales (\$150,000-349,999).
- Midsize family farms (\$350,000-999,999 GCFI).
- Large family farms (\$1 million-4.9 million GCFI).
- Very large family farms (\$5 million or more GCFI).

In 2022, small family farms represented 85% of all U.S. farms, but only 14% of the value of agricultural products sold. Midsize operations accounted for 6% of farms and 16% of product value. Large and very large farms—though only 4% of all farms—produced 51% of the nation’s agricultural output.

Since 2017, the total number of family farms has dropped by 8%, or nearly 159,000 operations. The steepest declines came from the small farm sector, where low-sales farms fell by 10% and moderate-sales farms by 7%. By contrast, larger farms are expanding: midsize farms grew by 2%, large farms by 40% and very large farms by 65%.

Snapshot of producers

The census not only counts farms but also profiles the people who own and operate them. Across the

U.S., there are about 3.16 million family farm producers, and their characteristics differ notably by

See FAMILY FARMS on page 16



Becky Harrell, Harrell Hereford Ranch

The latest USDA Census of Agriculture Farm Typology Report reveals family farms make up 95% of the farms in the U.S. Pictured here, Harrell Hereford Ranch in eastern Oregon near Baker City.

Meat allergy from ticks framed as moral good in paper

— Proposes tick gene editing

A pair of bioethicists from Western Michigan University suggest that a tick-borne allergy that renders people unable to eat red meat may not be a public health issue at all, but rather a moral improvement.

In a paper titled “Beneficial

Bloodsucking” published in Bioethics, Parker Crutchfield and Blake Hereth argue that alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), an allergy spread by the bite of the lone star tick, should be seen as a “moral bioenhancer.” Because AGS makes people sick when they eat mammalian meat, the researchers said it discourages an act they assume to be morally wrong: eating meat.

“AGS promotes in the people who have it a resistance to eating mammalian meat,” the authors wrote. “Thus, they eat less mammalian meat, which is an improvement in their capacity for moral behavior.”

AGS develops when the immune system reacts to a sugar

See TICK ARGUMENT on page 12

Court upholds exemption for ag emissions reporting

— Rules against greens

In early August, a federal court ruled in favor of the agriculture industry in a case challenging air emissions reporting requirements.

The U.S. District Court for

the District of Columbia on Aug. 7 upheld the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) rule that exempts farms and ranches from reporting air emissions from animal waste under two federal environmental laws.

The Emergency Planning

and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) require industries to disclose hazardous substance releases to the EPA.

“CERCLA and EPCRA

were intended to address the worst industrial and toxic chemicals, not govern family farms and ranches,” said National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) Executive Director of Natural Resources Kaitlynn Glover. “This decision affirms that

family cattle producers should not have to file reports for a natural, biological process under a law meant for significant chemical contaminants.”

NCBA was a n intervenor-defendant in the case, alongside the American Farm

Bureau, National Pork Producers Council and U.S. Poultry & Egg Association.

Case details

CERCLA requires facilities

See POLLUTION on page 9

Cattle markets strengthen across the board

Cattle markets closed higher over the week, with futures, cash trade and boxed beef prices all trending upward.

Live cattle futures closed higher over the week. The August contract gained about \$5 to close at \$238.65, and the October contract gained about \$8 to close at \$234.72.

“It’s anticipated that prices will trade at least steady, if not a bit higher, again this week simply because feedlot managers possess enough leverage in the marketplace to be able to roll their showlists over if prices aren’t what they want,” wrote ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, in her Thursday midday comments.

Cash trade through Thursday totaled about 47,000 head. Live steers sold from \$237-247, and dressed steers sold from \$380-392.

“Packers will be heading into next week’s ‘long week buying for a short week’ with every intention of paying no more than steady,” wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, in The Beef on Thursday.

Cash trade through Aug. 17 totaled 59,039 head. Live steers averaged \$240.20, and dressed steers averaged \$382.04.

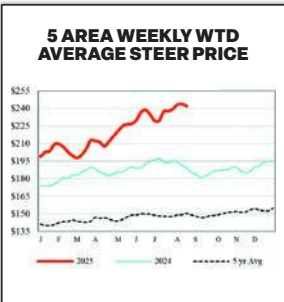
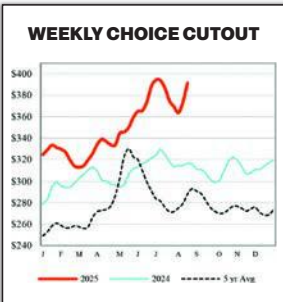
Slaughter through Thursday totaled about 450,000 head,

compared to 446,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for a week earlier is projected at 530,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending Aug. 9 was 536,811 head. The average steer dressed weight was 939 lbs., 2 lbs. below a week earlier.

“Box prices are surging, boosted by sharp drops in daily slaughter and uncertainty regarding imports from Brazil and continuing blockage at the U.S. Mexico border of live imports of cattle,” wrote the Cattle Report on Thursday.

Boxed beef prices climbed higher, finally crossing over the \$400

See MARKETS on page 15



↑	↑	↑
LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
\$244.87	\$386.91	\$345.58
WEEK ENDING: 8-21-25		

Time Sensitive
PERIODICAL : Priority Handling

COMMENTS

Still climbing

This market feels like we've been climbing a mountain that we aren't sure where the summit is. Each time we reach a peak, we find there is another just around the corner, but we're so far up, we don't know where we started from. Over the past two weeks, the markets across the country have soared into new realms. Social media has been buzzing with new record highs across the country. In Turlock, CA, they posted new record highs in every single weight class from four-weights all the way through nine-weights. This trend is happening every day at nearly every sale barn and video sale. At the Northern Livestock Video Auction sale on Aug. 18, one major highlight was 780 unweaned steer calves weighing 405 pounds that brought \$607.50/cwt.

As of this writing, Superior Livestock Auction was having their annual "Big Horn Classic" sale in Sheridan, WY. For perspective, this is normally a five-day event. This year, it's two-and-a-half days long. When you step back and look at their marketings, cattle that were normally held for this sale were moved forward and sold in previous sales. Overall head count is slightly down, just like every other video company and sale barn, simply because overall herd numbers are down across the nation. For more perspective, Northern Video has seen the same trend. In June, they sold 181% more steers in 2025 than they did in 2024, according to preliminary data.

This is the trend right now. A lot of cattle moved forward, and without cattle imports across the southern border where they claim over 1 million head are waiting to enter, feeders are forced to lock in what they can. Reps across all the companies say they don't see any cattle waiting to be marketed here domestically. One rep told me that this Superior Livestock sale will conclude his marketings for the year for the first time in his 20-year career. "I don't even have any prospects to call on, the cattle just aren't there," he said. "The ones that are, are already sold."

Derrell Peel of Oklahoma State University says, "The calculated feeder cattle supply this year is the smallest in available data for both the January and July Cattle reports. The tight feeder supply is the result of declining calf crops. Calf crops have declined the past seven years and are down 8.8% from the cyclical peak in 2018. The 2025 U.S. calf crop is the lowest since 1941. The beef cow herd is at a cyclical (maybe) and multi-decade low and is showing little sign of rebuilding. The closure of the Mexican border adds to the ever-tighter feeder cattle supply. The lingering question in the background continues to be that of heifer retention. With still no indication of significant heifer retention, the implication is that tight feeder supplies must get tighter yet in order to begin the process that will lead to eventual herd rebuilding. Herd rebuilding is slow to start and appears to be slow-paced at this time. This suggests that cattle prices will move higher and remain elevated for an extended period of time with a peak that is still in the future."

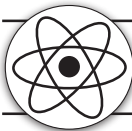
The forward movement in the market is now being felt as retail beef prices soared by over 10% in July alone with the consumer not backing off at all. In some states, Choice beef surpassed the \$9/lb. mark, showing a nearly 15% surge in price year over year. This, coupled with deep red ink for the packers, is going to be the market resistance that we see. According to the Sterling Beef Profit Tracker, plant utilization is down 10% across the board. Operating expenses are feeling the pressure right now. Although carcass weights carried overall beef production in the U.S. to an actual increase of 2% in 2024, feeder cattle are going to see even bigger weights come in, especially with commodities at lower levels once again this year with bumper crops about to be harvested.

In the past month, major media outlets have started to highlight beef prices. The spotlight is just starting and will most likely bring more attention to beef prices at the counter, which we all know is not a good thing to see. I do think the consumer is going to be much more cognoscente of what they pay. Most major analysts, including CattleFax, say \$8.50-9.50/lb. is where the resistance will happen. Guess what, we're there. Now, over the next quarter, we will see what signal the consumer sends as the grilling season comes to end and schools start back up.

Lifestyle trends over the past several years are prioritizing proteins, especially beef. Positive acceptance for health, safety and quality has North American beef as a staple in most diets. Diets, like the dubbed "carnivore diet," emphasize higher protein and fat intake with reduced carbohydrate consumption. Beef is king right now, but I do feel we are going to test our limits at the counter when we ask the consumer to absorb even higher prices. Generational differences show that millennials love protein sources and accounted for 62% of consumption last year. For now, we ride the highs and enjoy the moment if you have inventory to sell. — **LOGAN IPSEN**



IPSEN



RESOURCE SCIENCE

Wolf populations are expanding in the western states. It started with the introduction of wolves into Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho in the 1990s, which was followed by wolves spreading across Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Washington, Oregon and northern California. Wolves were transplanted into Colorado in 2023 and 2025. Mexican wolves were maintained in captivity, followed by releases into the wild in Arizona and New Mexico.

Wolves kill livestock and negatively affect ranchers. Recent issues of the *WLJ* have several Story Shorts articles on wolves in the western states. The July 28 and Aug. 4 issues of *WLJ* report that Colorado has three new wolf packs, and plans to release more wolves next winter in southwestern Colorado, including Gunnison County. The Aug. 4 *WLJ* reports that a Mexican wolf moved north of Interstate 40 in New Mexico, which is the northern boundary of the Mexican wolf range. I will explain why this is an important science issue.

The wolves in all of the western states except New Mexico and Arizona are the northern wolf subspecies, originally imported from Canada for the 1990s transplants to Montana, Idaho, and recently, to Colorado. The wolves in New Mexico and Arizona are the Mexican wolf subspecies. I've written in the *WLJ* and science journals about the indefinite nature of subspecies, including wolf subspecies (see the References at wlj.net). Subspecies are populations in different geographic areas with different characteristics like coat color, size and genetics. Subspecies belong to the same species and can interbreed. Subspecies are like livestock breeds, but without the controlled mating that maintains livestock breeds as genetically different.

Wildlife, including wolves, disperse and interbreed among areas. This makes the subspecies category indefinite because of genetic mixing over space and time. But the Endangered Species Act (ESA) allows the listing of subspecies, not only an entire species, as endangered. The Mexican wolf is listed as an endangered subspecies in Arizona and New Mexico, separate from wolves in the other 48 contiguous states. Wolves are not listed as endangered in Alaska, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and eastern Washington and Oregon. Wolves are listed as an endangered species, called a distinct population segment (DPS), in the rest of the 48 contiguous states. This is confusing because the ESA can consider species, subspecies and DPSs as endangered. The federal government is managing subspecies and DPSs, which are populations, with the ESA, but managing wildlife populations is a state function. Because science shows that subspecies and DPSs are not definite groups, the government has been using the ESA with indefinite science without fully acknowledging it.

WOLVES AND SCIENCE

The Mexican wolf and northern wolf subspecies are likely to mix as their ranges expand (see the References). Northern wolves have moved into Arizona and New Mexico in the past, and the recent movement of a Mexican wolf north of I-40 near Mount Taylor and the plan to bring wolves to southwest Colorado indicate the subspecies' ranges will likely overlap at some time. Gunnison, CO, to Grants, NM, near Mount Taylor is about 400 miles, which is within the travel distances recorded for wolves.

Does it matter if northern wolves and Mexican wolves interbreed? Wolf populations have always increased, decreased and interbred over their ranges. Some biologists consider mixing the wolf subspecies as good because it will increase genetic variation, like crossbreeding livestock. Other biologists consider mixing the wolf subspecies as not good because it will change the genetics of the Mexican wolf. It's not clear if or how the northern and Mexican wolves will be prevented from mixing, or if it's scientifically good or bad.

Biologists and environmental groups insisted that the Mexican wolf be designated a subspecies which led to their listing as an endangered species under the ESA. The government decided the Mexican wolf was a legitimate subspecies, even though the scientific literature shows that subspecies are not definite. Whether this is biased science or simply opinion, it's not definite science.

The problem is that the ESA includes subspecies and DPSs as "species." Good wildlife management is focused on populations in geographic areas, like your state's game management units. But is the ESA meant to manage populations or entire species? Congress needs to address this question. ESA listings result in the federal government seizing wildlife jurisdiction from states using the indefinite science of subspecies and DPSs. It's a science issue, and the ESA is not using rigorous science.

Some biologists think subspecies are legitimate and disagree with descriptions of the indefinite nature of subspecies. But many scientists have written about the indefinite nature of subspecies and populations (DPSs) in the scientific literature (see the References). This must be acknowledged for the ESA to use the best science. This is important because wolves protected by the ESA are killing livestock and hurting American ranchers and agriculture. — **Dr. Matt Cronin, *WLJ* columnist**

(Matt Cronin is a biologist with Northwest Biology and Forestry Company LLC in Bozeman, MT, and a teaching professor at Montana State University. He may be contacted at croninm@aol.com.)



OBITUARY



Jason Schmidt;
1971-2025

Jason Aaron Schmidt, 54, of Crystal Springs, ND, was called home to his Heavenly Father on Aug. 8, leaving behind a legacy of hard work, advocacy and devotion to his family.

Jason was born on Aug. 4, 1971, to Ivan and Mary Schmidt in Jamestown, ND. He grew up active in FFA, 4-H, basketball and helping on his family farm. He graduated from Tappen High School in 1989. Jason's desire to learn and passion for agriculture took him to North Dakota State University (NDSU), where he

proudly became a Bison. He earned a bachelor's degree in animal science and a minor in agriculture economics. Jason also participated in Saddle and Sirloin, competed on the NDSU Meats Judging Team, and—most importantly—met the love of his life, Serena.

Jason and Serena were married on July 9, 1994, and together had four children: Paige, Austin, Madelyn and Ava. Their children and all their accomplishments were Jason's greatest pride and joy. Jason, his son, Austin, and father, Ivan, operated a cow-calf and backgrounding operation, which was his true passion. Jason was so proud of his red cows, green tractors and North Dakota-raised beef.

Jason was a forward thinker who defended his livelihood as a strong advocate for agriculture and his community through his involvement in many boards and organizations. He was a loyal member of the North Dakota Stockmen's Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), North Dakota Beef Commission, Kidder County

School Board, Crystal Springs Township, St. Paul's Catholic Church, Kidder County FFA Chapter Advisory Board, Tappen Ag 4-H leader, Kidder County Extension Advisory Council, Young Cattlemen's Conference, North Dakota Farm Bureau and North Dakota Farmer's Union.

Being just a member was never an option for Jason; his strong leadership skills led him into many executive positions. Jason was the president of the Kidder County School Board, supervisor for the Crystal Springs Township, co-chair of the Safety and Production Innovation Committee for the Cattlemen's Beef Board, newly elected to North Dakota's State Board of Agricultural Research and Education, past chairman of the North Dakota Beef Commission, past president of the North Dakota Stockmen's Association, and past Region 7 vice president for the NCBA.

Jason's legacy is not measured only by the titles he held, but by the lives he touched and the example he set. He had a way of making everyone feel welcome—whether through a

firm handshake, a quick-witted remark or a genuine interest in others' lives. If a love for family and dedication to agriculture could have kept someone here forever, Jason would still be with us today. Through his family, cattle, community involvement and contagious personality, Jason left a lasting impact that will live on through the next generation and be carried forward by his family.

He is survived by his wife, Serena; children, Paige (Jayden), Austin, Madelyn and Ava; parents, Ivan and Mary Schmidt; sister, Cassie (Scott) Weness; brother, Jeremy Schmidt and many nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts and uncles—all of whom he cherished. He is preceded in death by his grandparents, William and Anita Schmidt and Aaron and Bonnie Rolf, and father-in-law, Leo Mock.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorials be made to the North Dakota Stockman's Foundation, 4520 Ottawa St., Bismarck, ND 58503 or the Kidder County FFA Chapter, 101 4th St. SE, Steele, ND 58482.

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.

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CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+13	+1	+88	+153	+36	+28	+47	+48	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+80	+57	+1.36	+101	+103	+123	+60	+184	+340

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AAA 21273860 BD: 08-08-2024

N700 S Architect 9501 x Ellingson Homegrown

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+11	+4	+93	+144	+28	+17	+47	+37	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+64	+64	+58	+97	+107	+87	+53	+141	+280



AAA 21273919 BD: 08-06-2024

N674 EZAR Step Up 9178 x Tehama Roulette C462

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+2	+3.7	+90	+154	+33	+34	+43	+54	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+69	+1.20	+1.16	+85	+94	+105	+85	+191	+333



AAA 21273812 BD: 08-13-2024

N760 E&B Rival 175 x Tehama Patriarch F028

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+12	-.4	+88	+155	+37	+26	+40	+48	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+87	+.74	+1.46	+77	+101	+131	+66	+197	+333



AAA 21140812 BD: 02-22-2024

N520 Tehama Testament x Tehama Roulette C462

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+13	+0	+80	+140	+26	+17	+43	+52	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+59	+1.28	+74	+93	+82	+98	+84	+182	+329



AAA 21275050 BD: 09-06-2024

N841 Woodhill Reality x S S Niagara Z29

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+6	-.1	+81	+142	+34	+12	+53	+51	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+66	+1.10	+78	+104	+99	+117	+71	+188	+348



AAA 21284619 BD: 08-13-2024

N918 Ellingson Prolific x Tehama Tahoe E425

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+6	+1.0	+87	+144	+33	+15	+42	+30	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+69	+1.10	+56	+104	+102	+101	+71	+172	+327



AAA 21140797 BD: 01-25-2024

N370 Tehama Tahoe B767 x Bruin Gambler 9206

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+6	+1.9	+89	+153	+21	+9	+49	+43	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+64	+1.07	+58	+71	+84	+103	+72	+175	+298



AAA 21273800 BD: 08-11-2024

N742 S Architect 9501 x Tehama Tahoe B767

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	
+13	-.4	+91	+150	+24	+24	+46	+48	
CW	MARB	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+61	+.77	+.60	+97	+97	+98	+59	+158	+302

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Beef label suit goes to appeals court

The fate of an antitrust lawsuit filed by two South Dakota ranchers against major meat packers, alleging they are labeling beef products as “Products of the USA” when most of the meat is not produced in the U.S., will be decided by a federal appeals court.

Ranchers Tim Taylor and Bryce Baker filed a class-action lawsuit in 2023 alleging the labeling practices of JBS Foods USA, Tyson Foods Inc., Cargill Meat Solutions Corp. and National Beef Packing Company LLC, have cost ranchers across the country billions of dollars in lost revenue annually since 2015.

The producers originally

filed their case in state court, and it was later moved to the U.S. District Court for the District of South Dakota. In January, the court denied the companies’ motion to dismiss, and the companies appealed to the U.S. Appeals Court for the 8th Circuit to try to end the case.

Recently, attorneys general (AGs) in South Dakota, Nebraska, Idaho, North Dakota, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Montana, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming filed an amicus brief in support of the ranchers.

The states told the 8th Circuit that they have an economic interest in the outcome, as they “raise, process and ship to market a large share of the domestic beef products consumed in this country.”

The AGs point to a USDA study that found 84% of consumers are misled by the labeling—that they don’t consider cattle born, raised and slaughtered abroad to be a “Product of USA.”

The states argue that the “deceptive” labeling gives the companies an unfair advantage over ranchers who produce domestic beef.

The Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) approved the companies’ use of the “Product of USA” label on foreign beef that was processed and packaged in the U.S. by the companies, based on a USDA policy

book and informal USDA regulatory comment.

According to the Federal Meat Inspection Act’s, or FMIA, definitions of “misbranded,” the states argue that the packing companies’ labeling is deceptive because the products purport to be domestic in origin.

USDA has since promulgated a new “Product of USA” definition effective January 2026 that products sold with this label be “born, raised, slaughtered and processed” in the U.S.

“The FSIS’s erroneous approval of defendants’ use of the ‘Product of USA’ label does not magically make a deceptive

label non-deceptive,” the state AGs argue in their brief.

“Because South Dakota seeks simply to enforce its laws in accordance with the correct, controlling definitions codified in the FMIA and its implementing rules, South Dakota law is not preempted by the FMIA and may be invoked to police and prevent defendants’ anticompetitive and deceptive practices. Though defendants would have it otherwise, states are not potted plants in the national regulatory framework enacted to prevent the importation and distribution of misbranded beef products.”

The ranchers’ lawsuit alleges the labeling practices violate both truth-in-labeling laws and South Dakota state antitrust and consumer protection laws. Taylor is a cow-calf producer in Lyman County, SD, and has been a rancher for more than 30 years. Baker is a rancher in Stanley County, SD.

The companies have argued, among other things, that the case should be dismissed because federal law trumps state law, and USDA approved their labels.

The ranchers claim that the label representations by the packing companies have caused them to pay domestic producers about 40% less on average per year for their cattle since 2015.

In the food companies’ motion to dismiss the latest case,

they argue the ranchers’ state-law claims are federally preempted.

In an Aug. 6, 2025, brief filed by the ranchers in the 8th Circuit, they argue the packing companies “increased foreign beef prices to consumers and depressed prices paid to plaintiffs” for domestic beef by putting the labels on all beef processed in the U.S.

“This allowed the packers to wrongfully benefit from plaintiffs’ environmentally and socially conscious reputation as domestic beef producers,” they said.

“Put two packages of beef side by side. Both are marked ‘Product of the USA.’ But only one is made from beef that was born, raised, slaughtered, in the United States. The other package’s best-case claim to the ‘Product of the USA’ label is that the animal died here. Yet to the ordinary consumer, the packages appear to be identical. FSIS has in effect recognized this mistake and has acted to correct it,” the ranchers said.

A nearly identical lawsuit filed in federal court in New Mexico against Tyson Foods was dismissed, and the dismissal was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit in 2022. The plaintiffs’ petition to the Supreme Court was denied in that case. —

Todd Neeley, DTN environmental editor

The importance of clean water in cattle production

There’s nothing more refreshing than an ice-cold drink of water after spending time in the Kansas heat in August. According to Kansas State (K-State) University beef cattle experts, cattle feel the same—and clean water is the most critical nutrient for the animals’ health and performance.

“Water is the most important nutrient that animals are going to get, and they have to have enough of it,” K-State veterinarian Scott Fritz said.

While many producers might assume all water is created equal, experts warn that not all sources are suitable for livestock. They note that total dissolved solids, nitrate and sulfate levels and pH (acidity) can significantly impact animal health and productivity.

“Cattle nearly double their water intake (when tempera-

tures rise) from 40 F to 90 F,” Fritz said. “This increase underscores the importance of understanding water capacity and quality, especially during intense summer heat.”

Wells and ponds present different challenges.

“We’ve seen wells that were normal for 10 years, then all of a sudden the water contains as much sodium as sea water,” Fritz said.

Key factors ranchers should monitor include total dissolved solids—which should stay under 3,000 parts per million—as well as sulfate and nitrate concentrations. The veterinarians noted that water hardness typically has minimal impact on livestock.

Fritz and others agreed it’s good practice to test water sources periodically. —

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SM	76	
SW	90	10%
SF	115	20%
SG	38	
SB	154	
SC	276	

CED BW WW YW MK CW MB RE

8 2.1 97 159 21 77 0.27 0.82

2% 5% 10% 20%

Sire: Casino Constable T34 • MGS: Casino Bomber N33

DAL PORTO PATRONAGE C92



AAA Reg: 21079341

SM	65	
SW	90	10%
SF	120	15%
SG	70	25%
SB	191	15%
SC	313	20%

CED BW WW YW MK CW MB RE

4 0.9 81 147 35 72 0.84 0.99

20% 15% 10% 15%

Sire: HAYNES Patronage 122 • MGS: HA Chairman 7649

CASINO MONUMENTAL X03



AAA Reg: 21084787

SM	87	10%
SW	101	1%
SF	99	
SG	55	
SB	154	
SC	287	

CED BW WW YW MK CW MB RE

16 -1.3 84 141 36 67 0.80 0.68

10% 15% 20% 4% 25%

Sire: Casino Monumental • MGS: Casino Bomber N33

DAL PORTO COUNCIL C196



AAA Reg: 21268436

SM	69	
SW	96	3%
SF	159	1%
SG	79	15%
SB	238	2%
SC	378	2%

CED BW WW YW MK CW MB RE

10 1.7 96 171 30 100 1.08 1.16

25% 2% 2% 25% 1% 25% 10%

Sire: Bear Mtn Justice • MGS: Deer Valley Growth Fund

CASINO SURPASS X261



AAA Reg: 21261149

SM	95	5%
SW	100	2%
SF	101	
SG	64	
SB	166	
SC	309	20%

CED BW WW YW MK CW MB RE

11 -0.5 86 137 37 62 0.73 0.97

15% 15% 10% 25% 20%

Sire: BJ Surpass • MGS: Casino Bomber N33

DAL PORTO BROADCAST C156



AAA Reg: 21261905

SM	61	
SW	100	2%
SF	118	15%
SG	70	25%
SB	189	20%
SC	306	20%

CED BW WW YW MK CW MB RE

15 -0.1 83 145 36 8 0.97 0.95

3% 25% 15% 15% 4% 10% 25%

Sire: Connealy Broadcast • GAR Method

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THOMAS ICONIC 4293 | AAA# 21222987
DB Iconic G95 X Thomas Navigator 5771
CED BW WW YW Milk Marb RE \$G \$B \$C
3 2.9 82 145 25 1.31 .93 85 208 311



THOMAS VERACIOUS 4443 | AAA# 21223102
HPCA Veracious X Thomas Navigator 5771
CED BW WW YW Milk Marb RE \$G \$B \$C
13 .9 63 115 24 1.15 1.08 80 204 333



THOMAS FIREBALL 4332 | AAA# 21224033
GB Fireball 672 X HCC Whitewater 9010
CED BW WW YW Milk Marb RE \$G \$B \$C
7 2.2 84 146 24 1.38 1.06 94 193 286



THOMAS ICONIC 4279 | AAA# 21222984
DB Iconic G95 X Thomas Navigator 5771
CED BW WW YW Milk Marb RE \$G \$B \$C
7 2.1 86 156 27 1.20 .45 75 190 288



THOMAS WHITEWATER 4416 | AAA# 21220605
HCC Whitewater X SydGen Enhance
CED BW WW YW Milk Marb RE \$G \$B \$C
12 -1.1 63 125 34 1.19 1.15 87 207 304



THOMAS ICONIC 4352 | AAA# 21223042
Beal Breakthrough X Baldridge Alternative E125
CED BW WW YW Milk Marb RE \$G \$B \$C
3 3.4 89 155 26 1.56 .54 95 213 329

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Ranchers urge SCOTUS to hear WY corner-crossing case

Five groups are supporting Elk Mountain Ranch owner Fred Eshelman's petition for the U.S. Supreme Court to review a 10th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that he cannot block the public from corner crossing to reach public land surrounded by his ranch.

The groups filed briefs Aug. 18 urging the Supreme Court to take up the matter. The 10th Circuit ruled earlier this year that four Missouri hunters did not trespass when they corner-crossed to hunt on public land on Elk Mountain in Carbon County, WY.

Eshelman wants that ruling overturned, claiming that the hunters trespassed. They did not touch his land but passed through the airspace above his property.

United Property Owners of Montana, The Claremont Institute's Center for Constitutional Jurisprudence, Wyoming Stock Growers Association, Wyoming Wool Growers Association and Montana Stockgrowers Association joined Eshelman in seeking a high-court review.

Corner crossers step from one piece of public land to another where they meet at the common corner with two pieces of private property. Corner crossers do not set foot on private land, but they pass above it.

At issue is public access to 2.4 million acres of public land in Wyoming and 8.3 million acres across the West that

would be "corner locked" and inaccessible to the public if the Supreme Court sides with Eshelman. By controlling access at common corners, a landowner can essentially have exclusive use of public property, the Missouri hunters have said.

The 10th Circuit decision applies to Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Kansas. But it leaves a gray area elsewhere in the West, Eshelman's supporters say.

"The outcome of this case affects 150 million acres of public and private land," John Gabel Connors wrote in a brief for Montana landowners. "There is a need for a nationwide rule addressing corner crossing, and this case may be the only opportunity for the Court to consider the issue."

Unconstitutional?

The groups suggested numerous reasons for the Supreme Court to take up the issue. The three ranching associations also urged justices to reverse the lower-court decision.

Attorneys argued that the 10th Circuit decision was an unconstitutional taking of property without compensation. The appeals court, however, said the 1885 Unlawful Inclosures Act (UIA) prevented Eshelman from blocking public access to public land

in the checkerboard area of Wyoming.

Eshelman never had a right to exclude others and so there was no taking, according to the ruling.

That rubs Montana landowners the wrong way.

"The fundamental flaw in the decision ... is the Tenth Circuit's belief that the UIA 'permit[s] limited trespass' and 'functionally operates like a limited easement'" the brief states. The lower court concluded that corner crossing was legal and Eshelman "was not entitled to compensation for the property right that had been taken." That "taking" is unconstitutional, the group said.

The 10th Circuit ruling also opens "previously inaccessible property" to the public, creating headaches for federal and state governments and even limiting the federal government's power to purchase public access easements, the brief says.

In another brief, the Claremont Institute's Center for Constitutional Jurisprudence reached back to English common law in its arguments. "[T]he 'poorest man' in the meanest hovel can deny entry to the King," John Eastman wrote of the foundation of the United States' legal framework.

"The natural right to own and use property ... is a foundation of individual liberty," Eastman's brief states. "One

of the core principles of the American Founding is that individual rights are not granted by majorities or governments but are God-given and inalienable."

The 10th Circuit decision allows corner-crossing in the checkerboard area of southern Wyoming where the government granted land to enable railroad construction. That created the pattern of alternating square-mile sections of public and private land and the ongoing embroglio.

"Congress created the patchwork mess," Eastman wrote, "it can fix it as well." That would be by purchasing easements, he argues.

Ranchers see disruption

Stock growers leaned on potential damage to ranchers and cases known as Leo Sheep and Camfield.

In the Leo Sheep conflict, courts concluded the federal government did not have a right to construct a road across a common corner because the road was partly on private property. In Camfield, fences constructed on private land wrongly prevented access to public grazing pasture, courts decided.

The Camfield decision essentially abated a nuisance and is centered on laws preventing such things, attorney Brandon Jensen wrote for the

stock and wool growers. But Leo Sheep addresses implied easements.

The Leo Sheep precedent rejected an implied easement at common corners, albeit for a road. "Certiorari must be granted to provide necessary clarity on the application of existing legal reasoning and Leo Sheep's effect on precedent under the UIA," the brief states.

"The [Montana Stock Growers Association] believes corner-crossing is a serious threat to the integrity of private landownership, undermines long-standing property boundaries, and may set a harmful precedent that erodes the ability of landowners to manage and protect their property," Jensen's brief states.

The 10th Circuit unleashed chaos, the brief suggests.

"Without a systemic and strategic method to acquire

access to corner locked federal lands, the public will have access to lands that the state and federal government may not regulate or maintain," the filing states.

Public access to public lands "can cause great stress to livestock," stock growers said. Ranchers will be shouldered with "the burden to absorb the costs to their livestock operation if livestock are disturbed or livestock is lost to an errant hunter's shot (which certainly happens); the burden to clean up the public lands intermingled with their private lands from trash, empty cartridges, plastic water bottles, gut piles and waste which can attract predators that may also choose to prey on livestock"

The 10th Circuit decision also creates a gray area with respect to liability, the filing states. — **Angus M. Thuermer Jr., WyoFile**

CALENDAR

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.

Nov. 12-14 – The Washington Cattlemen's and Cattlewomen's associations' 100th Annual Convention and Tradeshow will be held at the Wenatchee Convention Center in Wenatchee, WA. Details: washingtoncattlemen.org/convention.

HERITAGE

BULL SALE

BAR R BOLD RULER 4002 1/16/24

BA7 OAKS BOLD RULER X WILKS REGIMENT 9035



CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
2	3.7	99	174	35	1.25	0.66	64	218	347

BAR R DYNAMIC 4006 2/14/24

B A R DYNAMIC X BAR R JET BLACK 5063



CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
15	-0.5	91	158	21	0.80	1.09	59	172	282

TRI T PATRIARCH 206 4112 1/9/24

TEHAMA PATRIARCH F028 X STERLING PACIFIC 904



CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
6	.8	84	152	18	1.06	0.75	57	177	287

BAR R DYNAMIC 4010 2/15/24

B A R DYNAMIC X CONNEALY CONFIDENCE PLUS



CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
19	-4.8	71	129	32	1.27	0.91	51	176	279

TRI T PATRIARCH 205 4102 1/3/24

TEHAMA PATRIARCH F028 X E&B PLUS ONE



CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
8	1.1	74	146	43	0.99	0.87	84	183	321

TRI T EXEMPLIFY 6049 4133 2/11/24

TOLEDO EXEMPLIFY 823 1131 X BALDRIDGE BEAST MODE 8074



CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
11	0.9	81	142	30	0.80	0.44	69	174	295



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US will build sterile fly factory in Texas

The federal government is ramping up efforts in Texas to combat the spread of New World screwworm, a pest that could devastate the cattle and wildlife industries in Texas and the nation.

The USDA announced a slew of new initiatives and investments to monitor and prevent the spread of screwworm, which is traveling north through Mexico and was detected about 370 miles south of the U.S./Mexico border in July.

Screwworms are parasitic flies that lay larvae in open wounds of live, warm-blooded animals, causing them serious harm and, potentially, death.

Among the investments is a \$750 million facility in Edinburg, TX, that will produce about 300 million sterile screwworm flies per week, Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins announced during a news conference with Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) on Aug. 15.

By mating with sterile female flies, the intent is to produce non-viable eggs so that the population will eventually die out.

Rollins called the threat a national security issue that should concern all Americans. The fly "endangers our livestock industry and it threatens the stability of beef prices for consumers

across America," Rollins said.

The new production facility will be the first in the U.S. and will lessen U.S. dependency on production facilities in Panama and Mexico. It will also accompany an \$8.5 million screwworm dispersal facility currently under construction at Moore Air Base in Edinburg. That facility will take larvae produced in Panama or Mexico, continue growing them, and distribute the hatched sterile flies to sites of infestation.

Construction of the production facility is expected to take at least a year. Until it gets up and running, the USDA will spend up to \$100 million on technology to accelerate the U.S. response,

such as novel traps and modular sterile fly units.

Russell Boening, president of the Texas Farm Bureau, praised Rollins and the Trump administration on the new production facility.

"This threat is real and urgent, and we cannot afford delays," Boening said in a statement. "Immediate construction and deployment of this facility are essential to prevent irreversible harm to the agricultural economy and our nation's food system."

USDA is also ramping up the hiring of mounted patrol officers, known as tick riders, who typically patrol the southern border to protect cattle from fever tick, but will also now serve as the

first line of defense against screwworm by monitoring livestock apprehended along the border for screwworm.

The department's Beagle Bridge will be trained to detect screwworm infections and the USDA will work with their Mexican counterparts on surveillance training to track screwworm as it moves through the country in real time.

Texas last dealt with a screwworm infestation in the 1960s. In 2023, screwworm began to spread north of the Panama Canal. It was detected in Mexico last year, prompting the USDA to suspend imports of livestock from Mexico temporarily.

If it were to spread into the

U.S., screwworm could cause an estimated \$2.1 billion loss to cattle and a \$9 billion loss to the hunting/wildlife industries in Texas.

In June, Abbott ordered the Texas Animal Health Commission and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to establish a Texas New World Screwworm Response Team to help coordinate and share information on efforts to stop the spread of screwworm.

"The reality is this is a national and international issue," Abbott said. "Our industries, our ranchers, people who buy groceries are going to face these dire consequences if action is not taken." — **Berenice Garcia, The Texas Tribune**

UNL launches online processing course

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) have opened enrollment to the public for "Prime Education: Introduction to Butchery and Meat Processing," a self-paced, online curriculum aimed at anyone interested in exploring a career in the meat processing industry.

Funding for the project was awarded to NCTA by a USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant in 2023 to provide a training curriculum for workers in Nebraska's meat processing industry. The college in Curtis, NE, partnered with the university's Department of Animal Science and private industry to develop the eight-part online curriculum. Enrollees will learn about safety, tools and equipment, sanitation and inspection, humane harvest, fresh meat fabrication, processed meats and product packaging and labeling.

Jordan Wicks, assistant professor of animal science and meats Extension specialist at the university, has collaborated with faculty members, graduate students and industry representatives from across the country to develop the curriculum. Before coming to Nebraska, she spent 10 years leading hands-on processing trainings with students.

"This program is based on what people need to know when starting in the meat processing industry, with an

emphasis on safety," Wicks said. "The ability to learn these foundational principles at your own pace and entirely online will lead to a much quicker onboarding process for processors when hiring and higher retention in the industry workforce."

The topics covered serve as an introduction to the meat processing industry not only for those doing the processing, but those in related industry positions. This also makes the course a valuable option for high school teachers, advisers and students as a method to showcase the array of career options in the industry.

"There are endless career opportunities within the industry that may not be on the processing floor day to day," Wicks said. "No matter if you're interested in sales, marketing, engineering, research or product development, there is a career for you in the meat processing industry. This curriculum will help you learn about the foundation of the industry to help you build your career path in it."

Registration for the course is \$50. To register, visit go.unl.edu/prime-education.

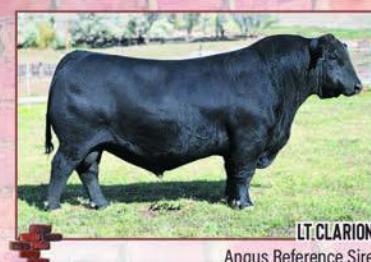
The online course must be completed by Dec. 19 to receive the digital badge recognized by the Nebraska Association of Meat Processors. An additional, optional in-person training for those who complete the online course will be offered in 2026. — **UNL Extension**



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Thomas Herefords to receive MT Leopold Conservation Award



Richard, Shirley, Tammy and Bruce Thomas of Gold Creek, MT.

Courtesy photo

Thomas Herefords of Gold Creek, MT, has been selected as the recipient of the 2025 Montana Leopold Conservation Award.

The award honors ranchers, farmers and forestland owners who go above and beyond in the management of soil health, water quality and wildlife habitat on working land.

Thomas Herefords, owned by Bruce and Tammy Thomas, and Richard and Shirley Thomas, will be presented with the award at the Montana Farm Bureau Annual Convention in November. They receive

\$10,000 for being selected.

Bruce Thomas is as passionate about conservation as he is about Hereford beef cattle, and that's saying a lot. Bruce grew up showing and fitting world-class Hereford cattle on the ranch his parents Richard and Shirley Thomas established in 1957.

His career as a sawmill's environmental manager proved to be influential. Interacting with governmental agencies and becoming well-versed with environmental regulations led him to see how doing things differently could make the ranch environmentally and

economically resilient.

"I wanted to demonstrate to both the agricultural and environmental communities that a win-win solution could be achieved," Bruce said.

Bruce and his wife, Tammy, prioritized conservation practices that could improve biodiversity and water quality, leading to healthier cattle, fish and wildlife. Their vision was set into motion in the early 2000s by enrolling land into an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract and collaborating with several public agencies and private non-

profits.

Gold Creek is a Clark Fork River tributary that runs through the ranch. Like other ranchers, ancestors built their first corrals next to the creek to easily water their cattle. Overgrazed riparian areas led to soil compaction and degradation, and creek contamination. Loss of riparian vegetation led to warmer water, impacting native fish populations and reducing wildlife habitat.

With EQIP's financial and technical assistance new cattle pens were designed to direct runoff into filtration areas on the ranch's uplands. Grazing was ceased along the creek's riparian area for five years to allow native vegetation to recover. As a result, the creek was cleaner thanks to a reduction in runoff of manure nitrates. The herd's daily weight gain also improved from a new watering system.

Converting from flood irrigation to pivot irrigation also benefitted Gold Creek by diverting 50% less water. Other environmental benefits like enhanced in-stream flow, cooler water temperatures and drought mitigation are being studied at Thomas Herefords by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and other local and state organizations and agencies.

Located in western Mon-

tana's Flint Creek Mountain Range, the ranch sits at 4,250 feet, with summer pastures up to 6,500 feet in elevation. Replacing woven and barbed wire with three-wire electric high-tension fencing is wildlife-friendly while proving a more secure fence for cattle.

Rotational grazing has improved the quality and quantity of grasses. Likewise, investment in rangeland water development has helped triple the carrying capacity of the ranch's pastures.

The Thomases prioritize soil health principles by utilizing annual soil analysis, reducing chemical fertilizer use and managing for drought by building organic matter to improve moisture retention.

While the Thomases are best known as a renowned international seedstock producer of red and white Hereford cattle, their holistic approach to ranching is just as noteworthy.

Bruce's mother, Shirley, recalls a time when she would go to a hilltop overlooking the ranch and privately wonder how she was going to pay the next month's bills. Bruce says embracing his conservation ethic is why those fears no longer exist.

As for the future, Bruce and Tammy are proud their children, Kurt, Amber, Heather and their families,

are involved in the ranch and own cattle. Along with the kids, the ranch's succession plan includes a continuation of the conservation ideals that have brought them this far.

"These award recipients are examples of how Aldo Leopold's land ethic is alive and well today," said Kevin McAleese, Sand County Foundation president and CEO. "Their dedication to conservation is both an inspiration to their peers as well as a reminder to all how important thoughtful agriculture is to clean water, healthy soil, and wildlife habitat."

The Montana Leopold Conservation Award is made possible through the generous support of American Farmland Trust, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Rangeland Resources Program, Sand County Foundation, AgWest Farm Credit, Montana Grazing Lands Coalition, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Montana Farm Bureau Federation, Ranchers Stewardship Alliance, Soil and Water Conservation Society, Western Landowners Alliance, Western Sustainability Exchange and World Wildlife Fund.

For more information on the award, visit leopoldconservationaward.org. — **Sand County Foundation**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2025

GALT, CALIFORNIA – 12:30 PM

STERLING DEADWOOD 421

AAA 20974504 BD: 04-09-2024

Poss Deadwood x baldridge Xpand x743

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	CW	MB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
10	-6	73	144	29	62	1.21	1.09	50	196	304
25%	15%	40%	15%	30%	35%	15%	15%	85%	15%	20%

STERLING GETTYSBURG 404

AAA 20980349 BD: 03-24-2024

EZAR Gettysburg 1061 x DB Iconic G95

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	CW	MB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
12	.7	76	143	31	70	1.51	1.08	65	211	339
15%	40%	30%	20%	20%	20%	5%	15%	55%	10%	10%

O'CONNELL CONCLUSION 4012

AAA 21251605 BD: 06-08-2024

V A R Conclusion 0234 x MGR Treasure

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	CW	MB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
14	-1.1	80	142	32	54	.84	.28	74	145	262
4%	10%	20%	20%	15%	55%	40%	95%	30%	60%	55%

O'CONNELL MAGNITUDE 4010

AAA 21274853 BD: 06-07-2024

MG Magnitude x Mill Brae Identified 4031

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	CW	MB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
12	-.4	80	139	23	76	1.42	1.37	86	232	387
15%	20%	20%	25%	75%	10%	10%	2%	15%	2%	1%

STERLING JAMESON 470

AAA 21055203 BD: 08-21-2024

Basin Jameson 1076 x Basin Payweight 1682

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	CW	MB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
0	4.8	118	196	24	95	1.21	.85	53	197	309
90%	95%	1%	1%	65%	1%	15%	35%	80%	15%	20%

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Vet advises ND cattle producers to look out for anthrax

Anthrax is a concern for cattle producers in North Dakota, as weather conditions in some areas once again have been favorable for this disease. Recently, an anthrax case has been identified in Stark County, ND.

Anthrax is a disease in cattle caused by the bacteria *Bacillus anthracis*. This bacteria is able to form spores that are highly resistant to heat, cold and disinfection, and can survive in soil for years until conditions are favorable. When these spores come into contact with susceptible cattle, they can "hatch" and cause infection, leading to disease and

death.

"Cattle producers should be aware that the threat of anthrax is increased when areas receive high amounts of rainfall as well as prolonged, dry conditions," said Dr. Jake Galbreath, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension veterinarian.

Dry conditions cause the anthrax bacteria to form spores. High rainfall can disturb soil, releasing anthrax spores which can stick to plant material. These spores can be inhaled when soil is disturbed or in grazing areas with previously high water levels.

In most cases, the only sign of anthrax is finding dead cattle, often with blood coming from the nose, mouth and anus. Sudden death in cattle can occur for a number of reasons, including lightning strike, clostridial infection and toxicities. However, anthrax should always be considered in any such case. If anthrax is suspected, it is important that the carcass not be moved or cut into to avoid further contamination of the area. When anthrax bacteria within the carcass are exposed to oxy-

gen, large numbers of spores are produced, which can enter the soil or infect other animals.

A veterinarian should obtain a blood sample and submit it to the NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory for testing. Veterinarians should contact the lab when sending in samples from a suspected anthrax case so lab staff can be prepared to receive them.

If anthrax is confirmed, all cattle should be vaccinated immediately. A commercial vaccine is available for cattle, sheep, goats, swine and

horses. It is a 1cc dose that is administered subcutaneously (under the skin) in the neck for cattle. A booster vaccination in two to three weeks may be recommended when anthrax is present. The vaccine is then boosted annually.

Treatment with antibiotics at the time of vaccination can interfere with immune response, but in an outbreak situation, antibiotic administration may help prevent further deaths. Cattle producers should contact their local veterinarian to determine the best response for

their herd.

"Cattle should be moved from the affected pasture if possible to prevent further infections, as it will take at least a week for protective antibodies to form after vaccination," said Galbreath.

Anthrax has the potential to infect humans, so take care not to disturb the carcass. The recommended method of disposal is to burn the carcass and the soil on which the carcass was found after placing them in a trench dug in the immediate area of the death. — **NDSU Extension**

Court rejects all three of greens' arguments

POLLUTION (from page 1)

to immediately notify EPA of any release of hazardous substances above a certain amount. EPCRA requires facilities to notify state and local authorities whenever extremely hazardous substances are released into the environment. EPCRA's notification requirements are closely tied to CERCLA's.

"Unfortunately, these laws have been weaponized by animal rights activists seeking to target family farms and ranches," NCBA said.

Two provisions require reports if it falls under CERCLA. A third provision says a report must be made if an extremely hazardous substance is released in a way that would normally trigger CERCLA reporting—even if that particular situation isn't directly covered by CERCLA's usual reporting requirements.

In 2018, Congress amended CERCLA to exempt "air emissions from animal waste (including decomposing animal waste) at a farm." Shortly after, EPA issued a final rule exempting the releases from emergency notification under EPCRA. EPA determined the releases no longer occurred in a manner that would require CERCLA reporting.

A coalition of environmental groups, including Food & Water Watch, Humane Society of the United States (now called the Humane World for Animals), Waterkeeper Alliance Inc., and Center for Biological Diversity filed suit against the EPA, challenging its final rule.

The groups argued the agency violated the Administrative Procedure Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and misinterpreted EPCRA's text.

Agricultural industry groups intervened in the suit.

In 2021, the Biden administration directed federal agencies to review actions taken during the first Trump administration and evaluate whether they aligned

with President Joe Biden's national objectives. The EPA moved for a voluntary remand without vacatur, and asked for public comments on developing regulations to reinstate the reporting of animal waste air emissions at farms under EPCRA.

The environmental groups argued EPA erred in three ways regarding the EPA's 2019 final rule. The district court sided with EPA and the agricultural group intervenors on each point.

The environmental groups said EPA contravened EPCRA by concluding that animal waste air emissions are no longer reportable following their exemption from CERCLA's notification requirements.

U.S. District Judge Timothy J. Kelly wrote in the order that EPA's rule does not contravene EPCRA because: "CERCLA's exemption for air emissions from animal waste at farms ... means that such releases do not 'occur in a manner' that requires section 103(a) reporting for purposes of EPCRA's section 304(a)(2)."

For the groups' argument that EPA acted arbitrarily and capriciously, Kelly said EPA explained the 2019 rule responded to Congress passing legislation to exempt the air emissions from animal waste.

Finally, the groups said EPA failed to conduct an environmental impact analysis before enacting the rule even though one was required.

"EPA 'ha[d] no obligation to gather or consider environmental information' and thus did not run afoul of NEPA," Kelly said.

Kelly denied the environmental groups' motion for summary judgment, and granted EPA and the agriculture groups' motions for summary judgment.

"NCBA stepped up to protect family farms and ranches through this litigation and we are pleased that the federal district court has brought clarity to this decades-long discussion," Glover said. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**



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USDA blocks tax dollars for solar on farmland

USDA announced it will no longer fund taxpayer dollars for solar panels on productive farmland, or allow solar panels made by foreign adversaries to be used in USDA projects. "One of the largest barriers of entry for new and young farmers is access to land," said Secretary Brooke Rollins. "Subsidized solar farms have made it more difficult for farmers to access farmland by making it more expensive and less available." Effective immediately, USDA will make wind and solar projects ineligible for the USDA Rural Development Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program. For the USDA Rural Development Rural Energy for America Program Guaranteed Loan Program, USDA said it will ensure farmers and ranchers using wind and solar energy sources install units that are the correct size for their facilities. Project applications with ground mount solar photovoltaic systems larger than 50kW, or that cannot document historical energy usage, will be ineligible for the Guaranteed Loan Program.

West Coast species proposed for ESA listings

The Quino checkerspot butterfly in California and the earless monitor lizard in Washington may receive protections under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The California Fish and Game Commission voted in mid-August to declare the checkerspot butterfly a candidate species under the state's ESA. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife will now conduct a review to determine whether the species should receive permanent protections under the act. In Washington, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed listing the earless monitor lizard as threatened under the federal ESA. The listing would ban U.S. imports, exports and sales of earless monitors that are taken from the wild.

Sites Reservoir negotiation sessions postponed

The first public negotiation sessions with the Sites Project Authority and Bureau of Reclamation for a partnership agreement for the proposed Sites Reservoir Project in California were postponed. The negotiation sessions, scheduled for Aug. 18 and 19 in Sacramento, CA, will be rescheduled at a later determined date.

R-CALF launches 'Label Our Beef' campaign

Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA (R-CALF) on Aug. 18 launched its "Label Our Beef" campaign to push for the reinstatement of mandatory country-of-origin labeling (MCOOL). "American families have the right to know where their beef comes from, and American ranchers deserve a fair marketplace," said R-CALF USA Marketing Director Jaiden Moreland. The campaign intends to unite ranchers and consumers for fair markets and food labels. For more information, visit labelourbeef.com.

Suit challenges methane pollution limits

Environmental groups filed a legal motion against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to stop the agency from delaying deadlines for companies to reduce methane emissions from fossil fuel extraction operations. "It's outrageous that Trump's EPA is delaying these lifesaving, climate-protecting pollution limits without giving people a chance to weigh in," said Maggie Coulter, an attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity's Climate Law Institute. Last year, the Biden administration established the deadlines for leak detection and repair requirements. On July 31, EPA issued a rule to delay the deadlines by 18 months.

USFWS proposes new Canada lynx habitat

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is proposing revisions to the Canada lynx's current critical habitat designation and releasing a final recovery plan for the species. The proposed critical habitat designation covers about 19,112 square miles across Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Washington and Wyoming. The proposal is a result of a court-ordered review, and updates the 2014 designation by reducing areas where the species is unlikely to thrive and adding new areas more suitable as habitat. The final recovery plan sets strategies and goals to support long-term conservation of the species, which is currently listed as threatened. To view the plan and leave a public comment, visit regulations.gov and search for docket ID FWS-R6-ES-2024-0142.

Bill introduced to bolster CRP

A group of senators introduced the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Improvement and Flexibility Act in an effort to bolster the conservation program. Sens. Jerry Moran (R-KS), John Thune (R-SD), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Tina Smith (D-MN) introduced the legislation on July 31. The bill intends to improve access to grazing, maximize enrollment options and expedite emergency haying in response to weather-related disasters. "The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) has long advocated for additional grazing opportunities on CRP acres," said Matt Teagarden, CEO of KLA. "Grazing benefits the native grass species, advancing the conservation goals of the program."

R-CALF: Halt Brazilian beef imports

Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA (R-CALF) submitted comments to United States Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, calling for the suspension of Brazilian beef imports. The request comes following Greer's launch of a Section 301 investigation into Brazilian trading practices. "Brazilian beef imports should not be resumed until the U.S. conducts a thorough, probing investigation into Brazil's entire beef production and beef processing acts, policies, and practices," the group said in its comments.

State says ND Beef Commission lawsuit should be dismissed

Attorneys for the state of North Dakota have asked a judge to dismiss a lawsuit that accuses the North Dakota Beef Commission of unlawfully favoring big cattle associations.

The lawsuit, filed in July, says the commission's appointment process is unconstitutional and must be changed.

In a court filing this month, the state denied those accusations and countered that the plaintiffs—a group of independent ranchers—haven't made a clear case for why they think the commission is breaking the law.

Attorneys for North Dakota also said that the ranchers can't bring the lawsuit because their window of time to do so has already expired. North Dakota law says that generally, legal action against the state must be taken within three years after an alleged harm occurs.

The lawsuit claims that Gov. Kelly Armstrong (R) and private associations wield too

much power over who serves on the North Dakota Beef Commission's board.

Under North Dakota's Beef Commission Act, which dates back to 2009, members of the commission's board are mostly nominated by private organizations and then selected by the governor, according to the plaintiffs' complaint. Anyone can submit nominations for a select few seats, though the group of cattle producers bringing the lawsuit say the governor only picks members and affiliates of the Stockmen's Association for these positions.

The plaintiffs allege that independent ranchers like themselves get no representation on the board.

They want a state district court judge to rule the Beef Commission Act unconstitutional and to strike it down. The plaintiffs also offer that, as an alternative, the court could bar the governor from selecting future commission members

solely from a candidate pool picked by private associations.

The main job of the Beef Commission is to decide how to use the state's checkoff money. For each head of cattle sold, beef producers pay \$1 to the state and \$1 to the federal government in checkoffs. The Beef Commission pulled in about \$1.67 million in revenue from checkoffs last year, according to its 2024 annual report.

In order to serve on the Beef Commission, the Beef Commission Act says beef producers cannot have requested refunds on their state checkoffs within the last three years. The plaintiffs in their complaint say this eligibility requirement is unlawfully discriminatory, and ask for the courts to suspend it.

A representative of the Beef Commission last month said the agency does not comment on pending litigation.

The plaintiffs include the Ranchers Rights Initiative and three of its directors: Kenneth

Graner, Jeremy Maher and Michael Heaton. The Ranchers Rights Initiative describes itself as a group for independent North Dakota ranchers who don't belong to any of the leading professional associations for cattle producers.

The case has been assigned to South Central Judicial District Judge Jackson Lofgren.

The North Dakota Legislature earlier this year considered legislation to have board members elected rather than appointed, though the bill died in the House.

The Beef Commission opposed the legislation. In testimony submitted on the bill, the commission said the appointment process supports a fair and impartial board. They also claimed that changing the current process would be expensive and could leave the commission vulnerable to political polarization. — **Mary Steurer, North Dakota Monitor**



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States will see another year of Colorado River water cuts

Federal officials announced Aug. 15 they would continue water allocation cuts on the Colorado River for the fifth consecutive year following a persistent drought that's shrunk the river's largest reservoir.

The Bureau of Reclamation announced that Tier 1 water cuts—the least severe shortage condition—would continue next year to preserve water levels at Lake Mead.

Federal water managers decide shortage levels each year in August, based on projected water levels at Lake Mead and Lake Powell for the start of the following year.

Lake Mead's elevation is currently at about 1,054 feet above sea level—175 feet below what's considered full. Based on water storage, the reservoir is at 31% of capacity. Reclamation projected that, by the end of this year, water elevation will be only a foot higher.

The water cuts are aimed at Arizona and Nevada, which will lose 18% and 7% of their

annual allotment of Colorado River water once again. Mexico, which also receives water from the river, will see its annual allotment reduced by 5%, federal officials said.

The continued cuts underscore "the importance of immediate action to secure the future of the Colorado River," said David Palumbo, the Bureau of Reclamation's acting commissioner in a statement, adding that "we must develop new, sustainable operating guidelines that are robust enough to withstand ongoing drought and poor runoff conditions."

Arizona's cut amounts to a loss of 512,000 acre-feet of water for another year. Nevada's cut amounts to a loss of 21,000 acre-feet of water for another year. However, the cuts are not expected to affect Nevada water users.

Southern Nevada is allowed 300,000 acre-feet from the Colorado River, but has not used its full allocation in years thanks to conservation efforts. Last year, Nevada only

used about 212,000 acre-feet of water, a reduction of nearly 6% compared to the previous year.

Nevada also returned about 244,000 acre-feet back to Lake Mead in 2024 through a community-wide water recycling program, which allowed the state to take more water from the lake.

The cuts announced Aug. 15 are in the same Tier 1 category declared last year and in 2021, when the first federal cutback on the Colorado River water took effect. A "Tier 2" water shortage for 2023 resulted in even steeper cuts.

Based on Reclamation's most recent hydraulic models, Lake Mead water level will likely fall below 1,050 feet by July 2026, triggering another Tier 2 shortage that would reduce annual available water for Nevada by another 4,000 acre-feet.

The lackluster reservoir forecast follows a winter of below-average snowpack across the Upper Colorado River Basin, a major source of

snowmelt for Lake Mead and Lake Powell.

Hydraulic studies by the federal government show the river's flow will likely decrease by 3 million acre-feet of water in the next decade, making conservation efforts more urgent.

The Colorado River Basin supplies drinking water to 40 million people across the lower basin—Arizona, California, Nevada and Mexico—and the upper basin—Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

The water cuts come as the seven states that share the Colorado River's water are in deadlocked negotiations over how the river and its reservoirs should be managed after current guidelines expire at the end of 2026.

Negotiations have continued behind closed doors for months as water officials try to reach an agreement. Upper and Lower Basin states have remained split on which half of the river should decrease their water use, and by how

much.

The federal government has given the states until mid-November to come up with a draft for a new plan. If they can't reach a deal ahead of a 2026 deadline, the federal government can step in and make those decisions itself.

"As the basin prepares for the transition to post-2026 operating guidelines, the urgency for the seven Colorado River Basin states to reach a consensus agreement has

never been clearer. We cannot afford to delay," said Department of the Interior's Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Scott Cameron. "The health of the Colorado River system and the livelihoods that depend on it are relying on our ability to collaborate effectively and craft forward-thinking solutions that prioritize conservation, efficiency, and resilience." — **Jeniffer Solis, Nevada Current**

Bioethicists consider synthetic form of AGS

TICK ARGUMENT (from page 1)

molecule introduced by a tick bite. The only effect is an allergy to red meat and other mammalian products, which can trigger hives, stomach upset or even anaphylaxis. The condition is not fatal, and symptoms appear only after consuming meat.

While health officials have treated AGS as something to prevent—working on vaccines and warning the public about ticks—the authors flip the script. If eating meat is wrong, they argue, then preventing AGS only protects people's ability to continue doing wrong.

Gene editing

The main obstacle to the permissibility of the authors' recommendation is that lone star ticks also spread other diseases, including ehrlichiosis and tularemia, which can be debilitating or deadly, the authors said.

Crutchfield and Hereth propose genetic engineering as the way forward. They point to advances in mosquito control, where gene-edited insects have been released to combat diseases carried. They also cite CRISPR experiments that have successfully eliminated Lyme-carrying capacity in ticks.

In their view, the same methods could be used to:

- Engineer lone star ticks to reliably carry AGS.
- Remove their ability to transmit other pathogens.
- Enable them to adapt to new environments so they can proliferate widely.

If scientists succeed, the authors say, they would not only be permitted but obligated to spread the engineered ticks. "Today we have the obligation to research and develop the capacity to proliferate tickborne AGS and, tomorrow, carry out that proliferation," they wrote.

The Convergence Argument

The heart of the paper is what the authors refer to as the "Convergence Argument." It combines three major approaches to ethics—consequentialism, rights-based theory and virtue ethics—to make the case for the spread of AGS.

- Consequentialism: Eating meat makes the world worse, they argue, by harming ani-

mals and contributing to climate change. AGS prevents this by forcing people to stop.

- Rights-based deontology: The syndrome does not violate anyone's rights, they say, because it is comparable to vaccination—a permissible public health intervention that prevents harm.
- Virtue ethics: By curbing the desire to eat meat, AGS nudges people closer to virtuous character, making them less likely to act wrongly.

According to the authors, if an intervention makes the world better, does not violate rights and promotes virtue, then society has a strong moral obligation to pursue it. "Promoting tickborne AGS satisfies each of these conditions," they write, concluding that it is "strongly pro-tanto obligatory."

Synthetic alternative

The authors also considered whether a synthetic form of AGS could be developed and administered directly, cutting ticks out of the process. They describe this as another form of moral bioenhancement. Unlike many theoretical proposals in bioethics, synthetic AGS would be "a feasible targeted intervention with a known morally enhancing effect"—safe, effective and reliable.

But they note practical and ethical obstacles. Few people would volunteer to receive an injection that prevents them from eating meat. If imposed by force, the intervention would raise serious concerns about autonomy and freedom—challenges they say their tick-based proposal avoids. "Rejecting tickborne AGS in favor of synthetic AGS is not as simple as it may initially appear," they wrote.

Crutchfield and Hereth stop short of calling for immediate action. Instead, they frame their paper as a challenge to conventional assumptions about health, morality and biotechnology. They argue that if one accepts the premise that eating meat is wrong, then the logic of promoting AGS follows naturally.

"Assuming that eating meat is generally morally impermissible, acquiring AGS is likely to morally enhance a person's behavior, as they are far less likely to eat (red) meat if they are allergic to it," the paper concludes. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

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STORY SHORTS

HHS authorizes use of drugs for NWS

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a declaration enabling the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to grant Emergency Use Authorizations (EUA) for animal drugs against the New World screwworm (NWS). This action applies only to animal drugs. "Today we are taking decisive action to safeguard the nation's food supply from this emerging threat," said HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Currently, no FDA-approved drugs exist for NWS in the U.S. The EUA process enables the FDA to authorize the use of existing or foreign-approved drugs, providing veterinarians and livestock producers with rapid access to treatment options. Future FDA guidance will outline the proper use of any products authorized for emergency use.

ICA launches 2025 wildfire relief fund

The Idaho Cattle Association (ICA) launched its 2025 Wildfire Relief Fund to help ranchers and rural communities recover from devastating fires across the state. Established in 2022, the fund is sustained entirely by private donations, including annual contributions from Ag West Farm Credit. ICA President Spencer Black emphasized the importance of supporting cattle producers, noting, "Wildfires have left a lasting mark on our cattle producers and for some, the damage is so severe that recovery may not be possible without access to relief funding." Applications for relief funding are being accepted until Oct. 31, and donations can be made at idahocattle.org.

UNL adds livestock to its ag budget calculator

Understanding the true cost of production is critical for making sound decisions in today's cattle industry. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's (UNL) Center for Agricultural Profitability has added a livestock module to its Agricultural Budget Calculator (ABC), giving producers a tool to build detailed enterprise budgets. The program allows producers to input production numbers, feeding programs and labor costs to calculate breakeven prices, returns and side-by-side comparisons such as retaining or selling calves. Free and web-based, ABC now supports both crop and cattle enterprises, helping producers improve decision-making, management and communication with lenders. The tool is available at agbudget.unl.edu.

BLM conducts wild horse gather in WY

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Rawlins Field Office in southeastern Wyoming conducted a wild horse gather from July 15 to Aug. 2 in the Adobe Town Herd Management Area to address excess populations above the established level of 259-536 horses. Covering nearly 348,000 acres, the gather removed horses from overpopulated rangeland to protect land health. Over the operation, 1,677 wild horses were gathered. A total of 1,624 horses were shipped to off-range holding facilities, and nine deaths occurred, including cases of capture myopathy and pre-existing conditions. Horses will be made available through adoption and sale programs after veterinary checks at facilities in Colorado and Wyoming, according to BLM.

Grizzly bear relocated in WY

On Aug. 15, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, captured and relocated a subadult male grizzly bear in Fremont County after cattle depredation on U.S. Forest Service land. The bear was relocated to the Mormon Creek drainage near Yellowstone's east entrance, based on age, sex, conflict type and proximity to nearby human activity. Officials emphasized that reducing human-related attractants, such as garbage and livestock feed, is critical to preventing conflicts and minimizing the need for future relocations.

Anthrax case reported in ND

North Dakota confirmed its first case of anthrax this year in a beef cattle herd in Stark County, according to the North Dakota State University Veterinary Diagnostic Lab. State Veterinarian Dr. Ethan Andress said, "This is the first case we have had in Stark County but have had cases in nearby counties in the past." He urged producers in affected areas to consult veterinarians on vaccination needs and to report unusual losses. Effective vaccines are available but require annual boosters. In 2024, one case was reported in Adams County, compared to 25 cases across three counties in 2023.

Custom processor opening in SD

A new custom butcher shop with a retail section is coming to Dell Rapids, SD, Sioux Falls Business reported. Schmitz Custom Meats LLC broke ground Aug. 15 on a 6,000-square-foot facility featuring modern processing equipment and space for local customers to buy meat. The project is expected to create up to six jobs. Owner-operator Steven Schmitz said the business will "lean on the agricultural roots of our state by working with local farmers and producers." The shop plans to open in spring 2026.

MT water quality bills focus of legal action against the EPA

A trio of bills Montana lawmakers passed earlier this year to loosen water quality standards is the focus of a legal action taken recently by Upper Missouri Waterkeeper, an environmental group based in Bozeman, MT.

In a 60-day notice of intent to sue, Upper Missouri Waterkeeper alleges that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has violated the Clean Water Act by failing to act on a petition to review three bills legislators passed this spring.

"It's been over sixty days since we petitioned the EPA to disapprove Montana's unlawful weakening of laws to protect clean water. During this time, our rivers and streams continue to suffer from unchecked pollution and government action," Upper Missouri Waterkeeper Executive Director Guy Alsentzer wrote in a press release.

In its June petition to the EPA, Upper Missouri Waterkeeper argued that there is "no rational basis on which EPA can approve" the three bills in question. The group included in its petition the text of three bills, all signed by the governor in May, that it described as failing to protect Montana's rivers with defensible, science-

based standards.

House Bill (HB) 664, sponsored by Rep. Bill Mercer (R-Billings), would give wastewater treatment plants and industrial facilities that discharge nitrogen- and phosphorus-laden wastewater into Montana rivers more latitude to comply with water quality regulations by striking regulations that reference numeric limits for these nutrients. Nitrogen and phosphorus can contribute to algal blooms that throw aquatic ecosystems out of balance by depriving fish and the bugs they feed on of the dissolved oxygen they need to thrive.

HB 685, sponsored by Rep. Steve Fitzpatrick (R-Great Falls), revises laws dealing with Montana's nondegradation policy, which was established to "protect all high-quality state ground and surface waters," according to a handout produced by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), which regulates water quality in Montana. HB 685 seeks to replace references to "nondegradation" with "feasibility allowance."

Fitzpatrick also passed HB 736, establishing a nutrient credit trading framework. It allows a wastewater discharg-

er struggling to meet water quality standards to work on pollution mitigation measures elsewhere within their basin. Proponents of HB 736 described it as an innovative, cost-effective attempt to improve water quality standards. Opponents argued that the measure won't ensure the efficacy of nutrient-reduction efforts.

Upper Missouri Waterkeeper's petition also outlines how DEQ has approached water quality standards in recent years. The environmental group outlines "serious concerns" about the state's "failure to faithfully apply numeric nutrient standards," focusing on the Big Hole River in particular.

In early April, Upper Missouri Waterkeeper petitioned the DEQ to designate the Big Hole River, one of the state's most popular trout fisheries, as impaired by nitrogen and phosphorus. A couple of weeks later, DEQ denied the petition, arguing that it "cannot grant" the petition due to Senate Bill (SB) 358, a bill lawmakers passed in 2021 that sought to replace numeric nutrient standards with narrative standards. SB 358 from 2021 is similar to HB 664 from

the recent legislative session.

The year after the 2021 legislature adjourned, the EPA—acting at the behest of Upper Missouri Waterkeeper—rejected SB 358. In an April 24 letter to Montana Free Press, EPA spokesperson Marisa Lubbeck wrote that numeric nutrient criteria that the EPA approved in 2015 "remain in effect for Clean Water Act purposes."

In a July 31 meeting of the Legislature's Water Policy Interim Committee, DEQ Water Quality Division Administrator Lindsey Krywaruchka, fielded questions from lawmakers about the status of HB 664 and DEQ's support of the bill. Krywaruchka said she didn't know when the EPA would finish reviewing the bill.

"If I was betting, I would say before the end of the year," she said. Krywaruchka added that the agency has not been re-evaluating expired wastewater permits to assess their compliance with numeric nutrient standards in the meantime.

Those permits are on an "administratively continued" holding pattern while the DEQ waits to see what the EPA does with HB 664, she said. — Amanda Eggert, Montana Free Press



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 BRAVO CONCLUSION 4034 3-8-2024 V A R Conclusion 0234 x SydGen Exceed 3223 <table border="1" style="width: 100%; font-size: 0.8em;"> <tr> <th>CED</th><th>BW</th><th>WW</th><th>YW</th><th>MILK</th><th>MARB</th><th>RE</th><th>SM</th><th>SB</th><th>SC</th></tr> <tr> <td>13</td><td>0.2</td><td>84</td><td>157</td><td>23</td><td>1.18</td><td>1.00</td><td>61</td><td>203</td><td>324</td></tr> </table>	CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	SM	SB	SC	13	0.2	84	157	23	1.18	1.00	61	203	324	 BRAVO CONCLUSION 4416 6-15-2024 V A R Conclusion 0234 x EXAR Monumental 605B <table border="1" style="width: 100%; font-size: 0.8em;"> <tr> <th>CED</th><th>BW</th><th>WW</th><th>YW</th><th>MILK</th><th>MARB</th><th>RE</th><th>SM</th><th>SB</th><th>SC</th></tr> <tr> <td>12</td><td>-0.1</td><td>93</td><td>169</td><td>31</td><td>1.03</td><td>1.13</td><td>60</td><td>202</td><td>322</td></tr> </table>	CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	SM	SB	SC	12	-0.1	93	169	31	1.03	1.13	60	202	322	 BRAVO CONCLUSION 4046 4-6-2024 V A R Conclusion 0234 x G A R Home Town <table border="1" style="width: 100%; font-size: 0.8em;"> <tr> <th>CED</th><th>BW</th><th>WW</th><th>YW</th><th>MILK</th><th>MARB</th><th>RE</th><th>SM</th><th>SB</th><th>SC</th></tr> <tr> <td>11</td><td>0.7</td><td>78</td><td>146</td><td>25</td><td>1.16</td><td>1.64</td><td>67</td><td>224</td><td>358</td></tr> </table>	CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MARB	RE	SM	SB	SC	11	0.7	78	146	25	1.16	1.64	67	224	358
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MARKET NEWS

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

MARKET SITUATION REPORT

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 8/21/2025	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	244.87	▲	243.46
CME Feeder Index	345.58	▲	344.09
Boxed Beef Average	407.86	▲	393.79
Average Dressed Steers	386.91	▲	385.00
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,413	▲	1,412
Weekly Slaughter**	530,000	▼	536,000
Weekly Beef Production***	457.6	▼	462.7
Hide/Offal Value	11.89	▼	11.97
Corn Price	3.89	▲	3.77
*Average weight for previous week. **Total slaughter for previous week. ***Estimated year-to-date figure in million pounds for previous week.			

BEEF REPORT: Weekly Composite Boxed Beef											
WEEK ENDING	COMPREHENSIVE Loads/Price		PRIME Loads/Price		BRANDED Loads/Price		CHOICE Loads/Price		SELECT Loads/Price		UNGRADED Loads/Price
August 15	5,940	379.51	197	418.62	1,129	387.55	1,686	380.00	582	356.06	2,347
August 8	6,016	367.72	205	407.15	1,185	374.35	1,644	367.01	629	346.17	2,354
August 1	6,529	364.54	243	399.63	1,224	370.91	2,111	366.49	738	345.37	2,214
July 25	6,801	369.20	247	402.39	1,366	376.32	2,019	369.29	760	348.94	2,408
Cutouts											
FED BOXED BEEF											
DATE	CHOICE		SELECT		COW BEEF CUTOUT		50% LEAN		90% LEAN		
August 21	407.86		383.60		333.55		186.21		430.67		
August 20	405.85		383.16		329.66		176.31		423.75		
August 19	407.20		379.76		329.55		182.23		428.47		
August 18	404.24		377.14		328.29		180.11		N/A		
August 15	400.57		370.76		328.63		191.64		422.83		

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle							
	8/15	8/18	8/19	8/20	8/21	High*	Low*
Aug.	23625	23673	23718	23900	23900	23948	16853
Oct.	23065	23118	23260	23563	23533	23563	16668
Dec.	23218	23328	23465	23700	23695	23700	17005
Feb.	23280	23440	23595	23783	23823	23823	18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle							
	8/15	8/18	8/19	8/20	8/21	High*	Low*
Aug.	34615	34890	35250	35630	35685	35685	21920
Sep.	34735	35093	35455	35888	35900	35900	22268
Oct.	34590	35025	35423	35853	35895	35895	22460
Nov.	34348	34833	35270	35678	35723	35723	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	10,381	1,539	244.87
Live FOB Heifer	5,092	1,352	244.29
Dressed Del Steer	7,611	980	386.91
Dressed Del Heifer	1,776	875	386.86
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK			
Live FOB Steer	2,475	1,514	243.46
Live FOB Heifer	966	1,298	241.80
Dressed Del Steer	4,514	983	385.00
Dressed Del Heifer	717	862	385.00
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	15,170	1,469	185.84
Live FOB Heifer	3,972	1,932	184.49
Dressed Del Steer	9,124	969	293.98
Dressed Del Heifer	1,687	877	293.87

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: AUGUST 17, 2025		
	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	N/A	N/A
Formula	N/A	N/A
Negotiated Cash	N/A	N/A
Negotiated Grid	N/A	N/A
Packer Owned	N/A	N/A
Total	N/A	N/A

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month		Neg. Sales 0-21 days	
Aug. '25		Neg. Sales 21+ days	
Sep. '25		Formula sales	
Oct. '25		Forward contract sales	
Nov. '25		Domestic sales	
Dec. '25		NAFTA Exports	

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		219.13	+1.05
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		216.75	+0.70
Ontario Auctions			
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		231.78	+3.64
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		231.37	+5.47
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs		157.07	-1.41
*Price comparison from one week ago.			

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, August 19, 2025			
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	432.62	N/A	427.11
601-700 lbs	393.45	N/A	404.82
701-800 lbs	345.52	N/A	368.61
801-900 lbs	323.74	N/A	365.35
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	423.65	N/A	379.68
501-600 lbs	377.37	N/A	382.67
601-700 lbs	356.17	N/A	348.35
701-800 lbs	328.68	N/A	323.11

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
	8/11/2025	8/4/2025		
Feeders	0	0	230,638	906,481

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE			
August 21, 2025			
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary			
Receipts EST: N/A		Week Ago EST: N/A	Year Ago Act: 6,300
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 August 21, 2025								Feeder prices for steers & heifers reflect medium and large 1 cattle, unless otherwise noted; * Indicates medium and large 1-2		
DATE MARKET	200-300 lb.	300-400 lb.	400-500 lb.	500-600 lb.	600-700 lb.	700-800 lb.	800 lb. -up	SLAUGHTER COWS SLAUGHTER BULLS	PAIRS REPLACEMENTS	
No report available Blackfoot, ID										NORTHWEST
No report available Burley, ID										
No report available Emmett, ID										
August 16 Eugene, OR	865	270-390* 240-381*	255-396* 240-345*	240-378* 270-337*	220-278* 236-282*	210-300*	205-287*	137-160 165-171	2,450-3,300 1,120-2,450	
August 18 Madras, OR	150							146-164 160-190		
August 13 Vale, OR	474		460-520 400-460	398-452 372-417	350-413 362	323-352	295-337	152-167 175-204		
August 19 Davenport, WA	295	420-440 340-417.50	177.50-425 191-395	177.50-365 195-342.50	265-348 250-317	180-327 257.50-290	210-307 202.50-282.50	129-173 154-298	3,375	
August 14 Toppenish, WA	1,150		355*		376*	305-343	242	157-188 190-206		

August 14 Orland, CA	1,861		300-420 280-470	300-425 280-445	260-409 240-365	230-336 210-321	200-335 190-306	140-173 145-202		FARWEST
August 16 Escalon, CA								90-140 140-185		
August 18 Famoso, CA	520		350-562 340-440	350-408 350-408	350-400 325-380	340-376 285-324	300-320 275-300	80-210 155-190		
August 13 Galt, CA	1,437			400-495 350-455	385-470 340-422.50	350-413 320-380	300-377 260-340	280-346 250-310	4,000-4,350 2,200-4,500	
August 19 Turlock, CA	2,388		390-505 370-500	385-565 365-537	375-480 355-450	350-425 335-360	325-379 310-346	132-170 162-197.50		
No report available Salina, UT										

August 18 Iowa	2,788		460	530	424 330-360	399-423 307-373	355-378 328-353	319-360 273.50-328	150-257.50 123-250		NORTH CENTRAL
August 19 Miles City, MT	980		550			400 372.50	370-397.50 350-359	238-360 303-365	146-176.50 179-222		
August 20 Bassett, NE	2,220		515 470		450-487.50 412.50-420	412.50-445 378-409	373-412.50 335-366	310.50-373.50 304-360			
No report available Ericson, NE											
August 19 Imperial, NE	940					379	364 341-350.50	318-362.50 332.50-337			
August 13 Kearney, NE	2,500			455-475 425-430	410 373-395	372-432.50 363-401	357-383 336-359.50	316-364 309.50-341	164.50-179.50		
No report available Lexington, NE											
August 21 Ogallala, NE	2,317					391	362-367 343-367	306.50-354 303-344			
No report available Valentine, NE											
August 15 Herreid, SD	1,010							335-351.25 312.50-332.50			
August 20 Torrington, WY	1,061					402 355		305-334 314.50-355			

August 14 Willcox, AZ	1,479	554.50-592.50 530.50-545	502.50-560 480.50-525	426-495 419.50-470	359.50-415 342.50-395	300-360 323.50-365			138-190 168-199	5,600-6,200 2,850-3,000	SOUTH CENTRAL
August 18 Colorado	1,252								125-201 141-228		
August 13 La Junta, CO	525		480-495 385-440	445-475 365-435	415-465 360-375	345-370 337.50-352.50	302.50-352	312-329	151-163 180-211		
No report available Loma, CO											
August 20 Dodge City, KS	1,364	612.50	535-620 499-520	470-552.50 457.50-473	421-450 365-398	361-417.50 335-367	374-391 350-357	297-378.50 317-347	151-172 176-225	2,825-4,700 2,175-3,625	
August 21 Pratt, KS	1,932		485-567.50 420-452.50	457.50-535 422.50-474	422.50-442.50 365-408	374-379 355.50-373.50	379-387.50 328-352	332.50-362 314-333.50	151-177.50 168-212		
August 21 Salina, KS	2,112	460	520-535 455	408-510 380-420	381-460 382.50-396	379-413 360-389	362-407.50 342-377	325.50-369.50 312.50-344.50			
August 21 Clovis, NM	2,615	575 535-550	425-610 425-570	435-520 400-470	382-470 376-440	348-412 338-388	340-364 315-352	226-349 231-286	150-191 171.50-204.50	1,850-4,400 1,375-3,400	
August 20 El Reno, OK	3,500	570 490-560	520-600 460-560	450-530 450-560	420-460 370-445	385-415 350-405	353-403 337-356	320-366 300-337			
August 19 McAlester, OK	775		480-573 485-559	473-540 418-483	391-445 365-441	345-405 340-359	358-373 278-323	226-283 231-290	152-179 180-210	2,800 1,825-3,550	
August 19 Oklahoma City, OK	5,115	645 500-540	522.50-550 455-495	435-495 371-450	396-475 351-410	355-421 328-379	344-396 312-344	307-349 296-314			
August 15 Cuero, TX	1,558	548-620 485-600	465-585 435-515	411-505 381-500	371-416 340-432	342-382 327-395	318-350 305-340	195-202 151-176		1,800-3,100 1,900-3,200	
August 14 Dalhart, TX	2,021		525 422.50-465	460-502.50 435	382.50-397.50 342.50		334.50-371.50 292.50-324	319-353 290-312	123-182 170-218		
August 14 San Angelo, TX	1,005		530-540 430-455	407.50-485 380-405	355-415 357.50-395	317.50-370 320-380	311-345 287.50-325	293-320 262.50	173-164 150-206	1,800-2,800 3,300-4,200	
August 21 Tulia, TX	1,100		445	400-452	379-427	372-407 345-359	382-389 344.50	346 275-334	150-160 180-200	2,200	

Nervous cattle markets struggle with market fundamentals

Feeder cattle prices continue to push to unimaginable highs leaving producers and traders increasingly nervous.

During mid-August, in Oklahoma auctions, 500-pound, M/L #1 steers brought \$451.90/cwt (\$2,260/head) and 800-lb. M/L #1 steers were priced at \$352.55/cwt (\$2,820/head). All feeder steers (M/L #1) below 1,050 lbs. brought more than

\$300/cwt; those below 600 lbs. were priced over \$400/cwt, and all below 400 lbs. were priced over \$500/cwt. Feeder cattle prices, especially light-weight calf prices, have moved unseasonably higher this summer.

There is a growing feeling that this market is a bubble that is about to burst. It is important to not forget the fundamentals

that explain why the market is at this level and what they say about the coming months.

The calculated feeder cattle supply this year is the smallest in available data for both the January and July Cattle inventory reports. The tight feeder supply is the result of declining calf crops. Calf crops have declined the past seven years and are down 8.8% from the cycli-

cal peak in 2018. The 2025 U.S. calf crop is the lowest since 1941. The beef cow herd is at a cyclical (maybe) and multi-decade low and is showing little sign of rebuilding.

The closure of the Mexican border adds to the ever-tighter feeder cattle supply. The slow decrease in feedlot inventories in the past two years has, to some extent, masked the fact

that feeder supplies were continuing to dwindle.

So, what happens now? Producer psychology appears to be accelerating the process. Auction volumes for feeder cattle in Oklahoma are up 29.2% year over year the past four weeks as producers rush to catch the current market. Large numbers of calves that would normally be fall-run calves in two or three months are being sold early—frequently as unweaned calves.

For example, the combined auction category for M/L #1 steers had 12.5% of calves commented as “unweaned” in mid-August, compared to 8.3% the same week last year. And this was with a total volume in the category that was up 64% year over year, meaning that the number of unweaned calves in this one category was up 147.5% from one year ago. Early feeder cattle sales are no doubt aided by good forage conditions and strong cattle performance this growing season.

Changing the timing of the

fall run of calves may briefly mask the actual feeder supply situation in the country for a few weeks. Feedlot placements will likely be larger through the third quarter than otherwise would have been the case. The likelihood is that feeder cattle volumes in the fourth quarter will drop noticeably. Stocker and feedlot buyers should not expect seasonally lower feeder prices this fall.

The lingering question in the background continues to be that of heifer retention. With still no indication of significant heifer retention, the implication is that tight feeder supplies must get tighter yet in order to begin the process that will lead to eventual herd rebuilding.

Herd rebuilding is slow to start and appears to be slow-paced at this time. This suggests that cattle prices will move higher and remain elevated for an extended period of time with a peak that is still in the future. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

Strong support sends feeders higher

MARKETS (from page 1)

mark. The Choice cutout gained about \$10 to close at \$407.86, and the Select cutout gained about \$17 to close at \$383.60.

“There is growing anticipation that boxed beef prices will experience a seasonal set back next week, with an expected bottom post-Labor Day,” Fish said. “This year it appears the September wholesale beef low will be higher than the July low.”

Feeder cattle

“Traders are seeing plenty of support,” Stewart said. “Support from feeder cattle sales in the countryside, support from strong boxed beef demand, support from the light movement that the fed cash cattle complex has seen

already this week, and, as of this point this week, total support from traders.”

Feeder cattle futures were sharply higher over the week. The August contract gained about \$16 to close at \$356.37, and the September contract gained about \$17 to close at \$358.02. The CME Feeder Cattle Index gained about \$1.50 to close at \$345.58.

Corn futures were higher, up 12 cents on the September contract to \$3.87 and up 14 cents on the December contract to \$4.11.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 3,966 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers sold \$2-10 higher with heavy seven-weight steers up to \$20 higher. Feeder heifers under 725 lbs. sold \$2-15 higher. Heavier weights sold \$3-5 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 773 lbs. sold

from \$351-374, averaging \$365.07.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 5,500 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers sold \$2-6 higher and feeder heifers sold \$5-8 higher. Steer and heifer calves sold sharply higher and with gains of up to \$25. Benchmark steers averaging 783 lbs. sold from \$353.75-367, averaging

\$358.56.

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Regional in Worthing sold 2,492 head on Monday. Compared to two weeks earlier, feeder steers under 1,000 lbs. sold \$5-10 higher and over 1,000 lbs. sold \$15-20 higher. Feeder heifers sold \$12-20 higher in a narrow comparison. Benchmark steers averaging 772 lbs. sold from \$362-377.50. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**

Early nutrition impacts on the calf's rumen

A calf's digestive system is shaped by more than time. Diet, milk intake and early environmental exposure all influence rumen development.

On a recent episode of the Kansas State (K-State) University Beef Cattle Institute's “Cattle Chat” podcast, specialists discussed how differences in calf nutrition between beef and dairy systems affect herd performance.

Billy Brown, K-State dairy cattle nutritionist, said dairy calves are introduced to grain from day one, even though they consume very little early on.

“We're trying to get fermentable carbohydrates into the rumen early,” Brown said. “Fermentation produces volatile fatty acids, which stimulate the growth of rumen papillae, which is essential for nutrient absorption.”

Since dairy calves are weaned at six to eight weeks, their rumen must develop quickly. These calves often eat five to eight pounds of grain daily by two months of age.

In contrast, beef calves develop slower due to different management strategies, according to Phillip Lancaster, K-State beef cattle nutritionist.

“Beef calves are on pasture, learning by watching their dams,” he said. “They might nibble grass and hay, but usually only eat about a pound of forage per day at two months.”

Microbial colonization in the rumen begins within days of birth in both systems. Calves pick up microbes through

their environment and dams, which jump-starts rumen activity. However, diet dictates how quickly the rumen matures.

K-State veterinarian Bob Larson said milk production also affects solid feed intake.

“A high-milking cow may delay the calf's interest in solids, while a lower-producing dam may encourage earlier forage intake,” he said.

In dairy systems, early grain intake is essential to prepare calves for weaning. Without proper rumen development, a post-weaning slump can occur, Brown said.

“Accelerated milk programs grow calves fast, but they may not eat enough grain before weaning, which can slow adjustment (from milk to grain),” he said.

Though beef calves are typically weaned later—often at five to seven months—producers should monitor signs of rumen development, including behavior and pasture consumption.

“Beef cows generally peak in milk between 30 and 90 days post-calving,” Larson said. “That's when calves get the most milk and may limit solid intake.”

Regardless of the production system, early digestive development is key to future performance.

“Whether a calf is on pasture or in a hutch, getting the rumen working early supports better health and productivity,” Brown said. — **K-State Research and Extension**

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The current value of replacement heifers

There is evidence of an increase in heifer retention with improved drought conditions across much of the central Plains and summer video auc-

tions reporting a smaller percentage of heifer calves. Retention does not appear to be

aggressive. With the calf market on pace for another year of record prices providing incentive, herd rebuilding remains

sluggish compared to past cycles.

Lingering drought continues to limit forage availability in key regions while high interest rates and the substantial capital required to develop or purchase bred females further suppresses expansion. Also, many producers remain wary of a repeat of the post-2014 market correction, adding a layer of caution to long-term decision-making. Even with bred female values at record highs relative to calf prices, breds may still be undervalued, a sign of producer hesitation rather than a lack of economic feasibility.

An excellent metric to consider when purchasing bred heifers is the number of calves it takes to pay for the purchase. CattleFax recently reported that in 2025, that figure is projected to average just 2.75 calves, well below the long-term average of 4.5 calves and far beneath the 2015 peak of 9 calves.

This ratio is likely to rise over time, driven by higher bred female prices, moderating calf values or a combination of both. If feed resources allow, this dynamic suggests that adding females to the herd today may be the best time from a breakeven perspective to expand.

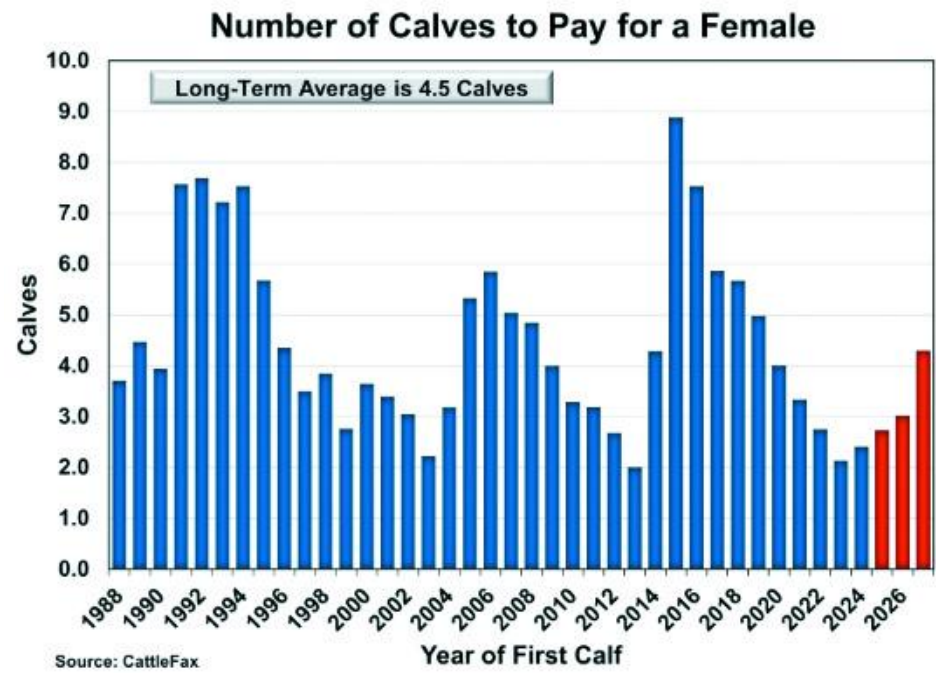
Replacement heifers are expensive; not only with respect to dollars invested, but also the expenditure of time and labor involved. Recent market reports indicate 550-pound weaned heifer calves selling for well over \$2,000 per head. Those heifers calves are still two years away from weaning their first calf if all goes according to plan. Accordingly, operations looking to add inventory may find a better option of purchasing bred heifers in the current market.

blamed as the primary culprits; however, fixed costs such as equipment, hired labor and land have increased as well.

Total economic costs associated with U.S. cow-calf production for 2018 were estimated to range from \$910 per cow for operations with 500 or more cows to \$2,099 per cow for operations with 20-49 cows. These results show significant economies of scale, with costs per cow declining with increased herd size.

Kansas Farm Management Association estimates the annual cost of running a cow to be approximately \$1,551, according to data collected in 2024. It is noteworthy that pasture and feed only account for \$684 of that total.

Market fundamentals are strong for a continued robust cattle market until cow inventories start to climb. There is currently not much indication of that happening anytime soon. That being said, what bred heifers are worth to your operation (and how many calves a female needs to raise in order recapture your initial purchase price) will depend on how much profit she nets each year per calf rather than on the gross value of each calf she produces. — **Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**



What are bred heifers worth?

Assuming weaned calves remain at a value of \$2,000-2,500 per head over the next few years, your annual cost of running a cow will largely determine what you should invest in a bred heifer. The annual cost of maintaining a beef cow is highly variable and has increased tremendously over the past five years. Variable costs such as fuel, fertilizer and herbicides have been

Family farms collectively manage 880M acres

FAMILY FARMS (from page 1)

farm size:

- Gender: Women make up 38% of small farm producers, compared to 28% in midsize and 24% in large-scale operations.
- Age: Nearly 39% of small farm producers are 65 or older, higher than the 34% in midsize farms and 30% in large farms.
- Beginning farmers: One-third (32%) of small farm producers are beginning farmers with 10 years or less of experience, compared to 19% of midsize and 14% of large-scale producers.
- Off-farm work: A majority of small farm producers (62%) report another occupation besides farming. Among large-scale operators, farming is the primary occupation for 78%.
- Military service: About 10% of small farm producers have served in the military, double the share of midsize (5%) and large-scale (4%) producers.

farms) and specialty crops (26%).

Small farms also stand out for their significant role in local food systems, accounting for 44% of all direct sales to consumers, compared with 18% from midsize farms and 19% from large-scale operations.

U.S. family farms collectively manage 880 million acres, but land and output are distributed unevenly. Small farms hold the largest share of farmland (39%), yet their contribution to sales remains modest. Large-scale farms, on the other hand, control 26% of farmland but account for more than half of all agricultural sales.

Government payments, production expenses and net cash farm income also vary across sizes. Large-scale farms capture 35% of government payments and 55% of all net cash farm income. Small farms, by comparison, receive 30% of government payments but generate just 7% of total net cash income.

The Census of Agriculture, conducted every five years, offers a critical window into farm dynamics. Despite consolidation and changing demographics, family farms continue to be the cornerstone of American agriculture. As Parsons noted, typology is more than numbers—it provides a window into “who is farming and ranching today as well as their impact on the economy and communities around the country.” — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

Economic picture

Farm specialization varies significantly depending on farm size.

- Small farms often focus on cattle (31%) or other crops like hay and forage (25%).
- More than half (55%) of midsize farms specialize in grains and oilseeds.
- Large and very large farms diversify more broadly, with significant shares in dairy (23% of very large



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Protecting farms and ranches from wildfires

Wildfires affect America's farm and ranches, damaging and destroying homes, barns, agriculture production facilities, crops and livestock. Below are some tips to help avoid or minimize fire damage to your property.

Measures include:

- Install and maintain smoke detectors. Smoke detectors should be installed in barns and buildings and checked at least once per month. Batteries should be changed at least once per year.

- Develop an escape or evacuation plan and practice it. The evacuation plan should also include how to transport animals and livestock that may be in danger.

- Post emergency numbers in a central location, including the fire department, police department, local emergency response coordinator and others who provide emergency assistance.

- Place fire extinguishers in all barns, vehicles and tractors. Check extinguishers periodically for charge. Discard damaged or used fire extinguishers.

- Store fuels, pesticides medicines and other chemicals in a fire-retardant enclosure or secure location away from heat sources and combustible materials. In the event of a wildfire, these substances should be removed from the premises.

- Keep barns and buildings clean of trash and other combustible materials such as hay, lumber, logs and empty feed sacks.

Practice farm and ranch fire safety

Make sure your farm/ranch has adequate water supply, such as an irrigation ditch, a water tank, a cistern or a pond. Keep stock tanks full when weather allows by turning on solar wells, windmills and pipeline fed tanks. This will help your local fire department have a water source in case of a fire.

When it is dry be careful when driving ATVs, vehicles, tractors and bale feeders in dead, tall standing grass. Any kind of spark or heat source may ignite the dry grass on fire.

Keep irrigation sources free of combustible material. It may warrant running the irrigation well to wet things down especially if a fire is headed your way.

Keep farmstead areas clear of weeds, grass, and other debris.

Keep areas near buildings mowed and trees pruned six to 10 feet above the ground and fuels away from buildings that could create a path for fire into the eave/soffit.

Make sure dead trees are removed especially if they are near electrical lines.

Park tractors and implements away from combustible materials such as hay bales, haystacks and fuel storage containers. Have tractors hooked up to discs so you can use this equipment to make a fire break for an approaching fire.

Fill liquid tanks when not in use with water for fire suppression.

Obtain fire insurance for livestock, buildings and equipment.

Conduct random, but regular inspections and fire drills. Invite the fire department for these drills to minimize confusion during an actual occurrence.

Keep above ground fuel storage at least 40 feet from buildings.

During a fire

If a wildfire threatens your farm or ranch, always remember that human life must be first priority, property comes second. Keep in mind, however, that when firefighters arrive, they may ask which to save first, second, third, etc., so determine beforehand the order of importance: livestock, machinery or feed.

If you become trapped in a burning barn or building, practice fire safety:

- Get out quickly, but safely.
- Stay low since smoke rises and cover your mouth with a clean cloth to avoid inhaling hot smoke and gases.

- Close doors after escaping rooms to slow the spread of fire. If smoke is pouring in the room at the bottom of the door, and the door feels hot, keep it closed.

- Open a window to escape or for fresh air while waiting to be rescued.

- If no smoke is coming under the door and it is not hot, open it slowly to escape.

If you have time to evacuate animals, proceed with caution. Some animals may refuse to leave, and some may even run back into a burning barn or building. Make sure to close gates prohibiting access to dangerous areas. When evacuating animals, do not lead them to where they will be-

come trapped or to a dead end.

The aftermath of a wildfire can be hazardous. A few precautions must be taken after a wildfire takes place on your property:

- Stay out of damaged barns and buildings and return to your property only when authorities permit you to do so.

- Notify proper authorities if you believe that hazardous materials were released in the fire or during firefighting. Place warning signs on contaminated areas.

- When disposing of some materials, such as those potentially contaminated with chemicals, check on state and local requirements for disposal procedures.

- Consult someone from the local Emergency Planning Committee or the State Division of Emergency for legal clean-up procedures if needed.

- Keep livestock away from contaminated feed or water.

- Wear protective gear when entering contaminated areas and damaged barns and buildings. Protective gear includes

steel-toed boots, hard hat, respiratory protection, gloves and other protective clothing.

- Before entering a barn or building assess the true integrity of the structure. Always turn off the electrical power and other utilities to the structure until a thorough inspection by a fire marshal or a legal authority clears it to be entered.

- If the decision is made to demolish a building, hire a professional. Professionals will be able to do the job more efficiently and safely.

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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.

Sept. 15 – The Idaho Cattle Association is proud to once again announce the Heifer of the Year contest in 2025. The contest is open to students in grades 7-12. Details: www.idahocattle.org.

Sept. 19 – Graduate students pursuing careers in meat science and animal science are encouraged

to apply for the annual W.D. Farr Scholarship program. The 2025 recipients will be recognized at CattleCon 2026, Feb. 3-5, in Nashville, TN. Details: www.nationalcattlemensfoundation.org.

Oct. 1 – The application period for the California Cattlemen's Association 2025 scholarships is now open. Any young, regular or feeder member is eligible to apply. Details: calcattlemen.org/scholarship.

Oct. 15 – The New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association, in partnership with Purina Mills and Depot Farm and Ranch Agency, is thrilled to announce fall scholarship applications are open. Details: www.nmagriculture.org.

Oct. 15 – The New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association will welcome college interns at its 2025 Joint Stockmen's Convention in Albuquerque, NM. Details: 505-247-0584.

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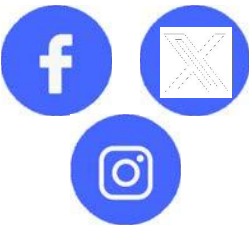
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of steel working pens with scale, a second set of almost new working pens, watered by subs
on electricity with pipelines furnishing water for drinkers in each pasture. Gramma & buffalo
grasses. Broker Owned.

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Ben G. Scott – Broker • Krystal M. Nelson – NM QB



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

Sep. 14 – Visalia Livestock Market, Bull Sale, Visalia, CA
Oct. 4 – California Breeders, Bull & Female Sale, Turlock, CA
Oct. 5 – Cal Poly Bull Test Sale, San Luis Obispo, CA
Oct. 18 – FAMOSA All Breeds, Bull Sale, McFarland, CA
Nov. 1 – World of Bulls & Replacement Female Sale, Galt, CA

ANGUS

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. 15 – The Chosen Bull Sale, Turlock, 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
Oct. 3 – Elwood Ranch, Bull Sale, Red Bluff, CA
Oct. 4 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID
Oct. 10 – Kern Cattle Female Sale, Visalia, CA
Oct. 11 – Evergreen Exclusive Sale, Ellensburg, WA
Oct. 11 – Vintage Angus Ranch, Female Sale, Modesto, CA
Oct. 12 – Arellano Bravo Angus, Female Sale, Walnut Grove, CA
Oct. 14 – 9 Peaks Ranch, Bull Sale, Fort Rock, OR
Oct. 14 – Coleman Angus, Female Sale, Charlo, MT

Oct. 14 – Fish Creek Ranch of Montana, Female Sale, Online
Oct. 15 – Montana Ranch, Female Sale, Big Fork, MT
Oct. 16 – Thomas Angus Ranch, Production Sale, Baker City, OR
Oct. 17 – Basin Angus, Female Sale, Billings, MT
Oct. 17 – Hall Ranch, Complete Dispersal Sale, Bassett, NE
Oct. 18 – NILE Angus Female Sale, Billings, MT
Oct. 24 – Birch Creek Angus, Bull Sale, Ruby Valley, NV
Oct. 25 – Bear Mountain Angus, Female Sale, Palisade, NE
Oct. 27 – Dal Porto Livestock, Female Sale, Anselmo, NE
Nov. 6 – Memory Ranches, Bull Sale, Wells, NV
Nov. 8 – Montana Ranch, Bull Sale, Big Fork, MT
Nov. 10 – Green Mountain Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Billings, MT
Nov. 12 – Riverbend Ranch, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Nov. 13 – JR Ranch & Sackmann Cattle, Production Sale, Othello, WA
Nov. 17 – J&L Livestock, Female Sale, Billings, MT
Nov. 19 – TD Angus, Female Sale, North Platte, NE
Nov. 22 – Frank Cattle & Genetics and Baldrige-Tiedeman Angus, Female Sale, Lodgepole, NE
Nov. 22 – Redland Angus,

Bull Sale, Buffalo, WY
Nov. 22 – Spring Cove Ranch, Female Sale, Bliss, ID
Nov. 25 – Paint Rock Angus, Bull Sale, Hyattville, WY
Nov. 28 – Vermillion Ranch, Bull Sale, Billings, MT
Dec. 1 – Stevenson's Diamond Dot, Fall Sale, Hobson, MT
Dec. 2 – Stevenson Angus, Fall Sale, Hobson, MT
Dec. 2 – Zumbrunnen Angus, Bull Sale, Lusk, WY
Dec. 3 – McDonnell Angus, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT
Dec. 4 – Sitz Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Harrison, MT
Dec. 6 – Reverse Rocking R Ranch, Bull Sale, Maxwell, NM
Dec. 8 – Shipwheel Cattle Company, Bull Sale, Chinook, MT
Dec. 13 – Gaugler Angus, Bull Sale, Judith Gap, MT
Dec. 18 – Bobcat Angus, Bull Sale, Great Falls, MT

CHAROLAIS

Oct. 18 – Fink Beef Genetics, Production Sale, Randolph, KS

HEREFORD

Sep. 8 – Genoa Livestock, Bull Sale, Minden, NV
Sep. 18 – Churchill Cattle Company, Complete Dispersal, Manhattan, MT
Sep. 20 – Ehke Herefords, Female Sale, Townsend, MT
Oct. 4 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID
Oct. 18 – Lambert Ranch, Bull Sale, Oroville, CA

Nov. 24 – Berry Herefords, Bull Sale, Cheyenne, WY
Dec. 5 – Western States Hereford Sale, Reno, NV

OPTIMIZER

Dec. 1 – Jacobsen Ranch, Bull Sale, Great Falls, MT

RED ANGUS

Sep. 21 – Stegall Cattle Co., Bull & Female Sale, Colusa, CA
Sep. 27 – McPhee Red Angus, Production Sale, Lodi, CA
Nov. 1 – Bet on Red, Female Sale, Reno, NV
Nov. 6 – Memory Ranches, Bull Sale, Wells, NV
Nov. 10 – Ludvigson Farms, Bull Sale, Park City, MT
Dec. 3 – Big Sky Elite, Female Sale, Three Forks, MT
Dec. 12 – 5L Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sheridan, MT

SALERS

Dec. 1 – Jacobsen Ranch, Bull Sale, Great Falls, MT

SIMANGUS

Sep. 24 – Eagle Pass Ranch, Bull Sale, Dos Palos, CA
Sep. 25 – Beef Solutions, Bull Sale, Lone, CA
Sep. 28 – Traynham-Cox LLC, Production Sale, Fort Klamath, OR
Nov. 7 – Table Rock Ranch, Production Sale, Ririe, ID
Dec. 5 – Yardley Cattle Co., Female Sale, Beaver, UT
Dec. 6 – Western Choice Female Sale, Billings, MT
Jan. 26, 2026 – APEX Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Dannebrog, NE

SIMMENTAL

Dec. 5 – Yardley Cattle Co., Female Sale, Beaver, UT
Dec. 6 – Western Choice Female Sale, Billings, MT
Jan. 26, 2026 – APEX Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Dannebrog, NE

STABILIZER

Nov. 21 – Leachman Cattle of Colorado, Bull Sale, Meriden, WY
Dec. 6 – Leachman Cattle of Colorado, Bull Sale, Loma, CO

COMMERCIAL

Sep. 11 – Cattle Country Video, Cheyenne, WY
Sep. 15 – Northern Livestock Video Auction, Fall Premier, Billings, MT
Sep. 16 – Western Video Market Sale, Ogallala, NE
Oct. 17 – Western Video Market Sale, Cottonwood, CA

Nov. 21 – Rollin' Rock Angus, Bred Heifer Sale, Pilot Rock, OR
Dec. 2 – Western Video Market Sale, Reno, NV

HORSE

Sep. 6 – Rhoades Angus, Bull & Ranch Horse Sale, Cambria, CA
Sep. 13 – Legacy Ranch, Horse Sale, Prescott, AZ
Sep. 13 – Reno Snaffle Bit Futurity, Horse Sale, Reno, NV
Sep. 20 – Weaver Quarter Horses, Horse Sale, Great Falls, MT
Oct. 12 – Will Gill & Sons, Horse Sale, Madera, CA



307-532-3333 • Torrington, WY

FRONTIER FALL ROUND-UP

Thursday, September 11, 2025

Cheyenne Frontier Days Event Center
 Cheyenne, WY



- ♦ Sale Day Bid Line: 307-575-5005
- ♦ Broadcast on YouTube @ CattleCountryVideo
- ♦ View Sale & Bid Online @ www.cattleusa.com
- ♦ Preview Lots on www.cattlecountryvideo.com

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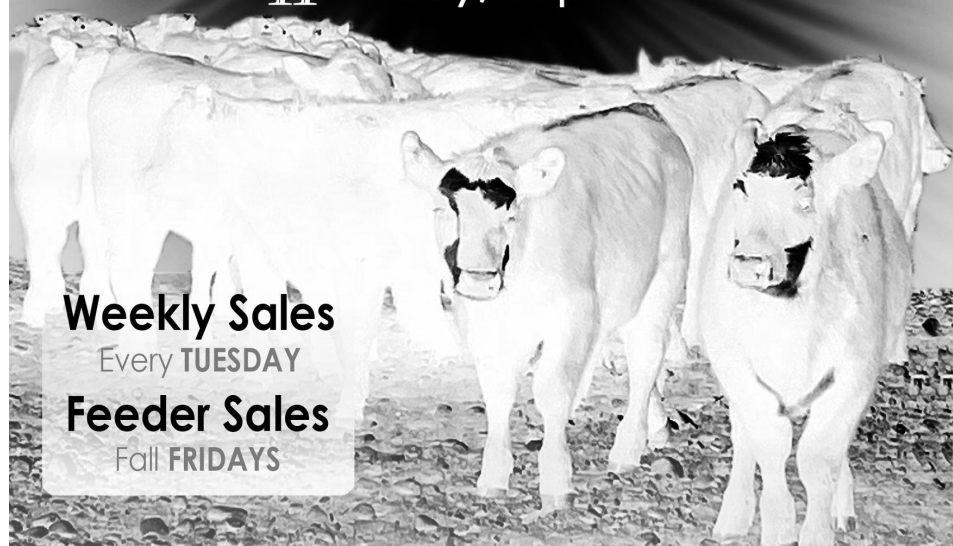
Cream of the Crop

I Friday, September 5

EXPECTING 2500 HEAD

Yearlings & Calves off Cows

II Friday, September 19



Weekly Sales

Every TUESDAY

Feeder Sales

Fall FRIDAYS

MONTANA LIVESTOCK AUCTION

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DUNIPAGE

AN ANGUS LEGACY

INAUGURAL BULL SALE

Dunipace Angus Ranch with Bar KJ Angus

Saturday, September 6, 2025 - 12:00 Noon

Dunipace Angus was established in 1968 by Jack and Susan Parnell in Auburn, CA. Traveling the country and marketing Angus cattle was Jack's passion and he was instrumental in creating demand for Angus nationwide when they were not necessarily the breed of choice. In 1986, Jack was asked to enter public service and chose to go to work FOR ranchers and farmers, and the herd was dispersed. Over the past few years, the Dunipace herd has been reestablished and the next generation of Parnell's are excited to relaunch the Dunipace brand. The foundation of Dunipace Angus was built on the principals of quality and integrity, and the goals remain the same today. We invite you to join us for our inaugural event and look forward to earning your business.

Sale will be held at the EZ Angus Sale Barn located just south of Milton, California



AAA 21004300 DOB: 1/26/2024
Poss Ratified x G A R Greater Good

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
8	2.4	93	156	33	1.34	1.19	96	230	394



AAA 21005069 DOB: 3/4/2024
Basin Jameson 1076 x G A R Home Town

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
4	2.8	110	188	26	1.73	0.98	70	242	384



AAA 21009737 DOB: 2/19/2024
RSA True Balance 1311 x Connealy Confidence Plus

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
14	-2.3	64	119	34	1.49	1.29	81	224	372



AAA 20967406 DOB: 1/9/2024
EZAR Gettysburg 1061 x G A R Reliant

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
11	1.8	93	165	18	1.2	1.21	58	237	365



AAA 20970536 DOB: 1/12/2024
Virginia Tech Statesman x PCC Horizon 025

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
4	2.7	96	178	28	1.39	0.74	56	242	370



AAA 20967429 DOB: 1/29/2024
EZAR Gettysburg 1061 x KB-Full Measure C40

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
-1	5	98	180	33	1.21	1.45	33	266	378



AAA 20967402 DOB: 1/7/2024
EZAR Gettysburg 1061 x G A R Sunrise

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
14	0.3	81	153	30	1.44	1.4	58	222	346



AAA 20967424 DOB: 1/25/2024
EZAR Gettysburg 1061 x Connealy Clarity

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
8	1.7	84	156	28	1.19	1.36	34	247	354



AAA 20987570 DOB: 3/18/2024
SG Salvation x Connealy Clarity

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
9	0.7	83	133	28	1.51	1.07	102	217	383



AAA 20987572 DOB: 3/28/2024
SG Salvation x GB Fireball 672

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
11	1.9	87	149	19	1.54	1.16	46	252	373



AAA 21014671 DOB: 3/24/2024
EZAR Gettysburg 1061 x G A R Ashland

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
11	0.5	86	156	22	1.24	1.1	66	210	338



AAA 21014668 DOB: 3/22/2024
EZAR Gettysburg 1061 x G A R Home Town

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	MARB	RE	SM	\$B	\$C
9	0.1	76	137	30	1.52	0.92	71	229	368



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To be added to the mailing list, either text 916-806-1919, or scan this code with your phone.



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