

INSIDE WLJ



LAMB INVESTIGATION — Congress pushes for investigation into lamb and mutton imports into the U.S. Page 6

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"Drought stricken cow/calf producers could improve pasture prospects next summer by planting extra high-quality legumes, such as alfalfa or red clover, in the spring. However, in order to give legumes a fair shot at establishing themselves, producers are urged to turn their cows back out on those pastures now. Adding legumes to hay meadows and cool-season pastures is the best way to increase forage quality and animal performance," said Bruce Anderson, extension forage specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln," read the Nov. 17, 2003, WLJ article offering advice to producers dealing with extreme drought.

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BLM seeks input on Gunnison sage-grouse plan

— Grazing potentially impacted

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has opened a public comment period for managing Gunnison sage-grouse on public lands to protect habitat from energy development, livestock grazing, recreation and mineral development in southwestern Colorado and southeast Utah.

The Gunnison sage-grouse is similar to the greater sage-grouse, but was designated as its own species in 2000. In 2014, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) designated the Gunnison sage-grouse population as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The sage grouse occupies 10% of its historical range in eight population centers, mainly in the Gunnison Basin, according to BLM.

BLM released a draft resource management plan (RMP) amendment and draft environmental impact statement (EIS) in 2016 but suspended the plan in 2018 when USFWS announced a recovery plan for the bird. In 2020, USFWS developed the final recovery plan for the Gunnison sage-grouse using

occupied habitats where breeding occurs and unoccupied habitats where the bird formerly occupied.

Alternatives

The draft RMP/EIS incorporates recommendations from the

recovery plan and details five alternatives for addressing the conservation needs of the sage grouse with public land uses.

Alternative A, the no action alternative, would continue the current BLM management in the planning area comprising over

25 million acres of lands administered by BLM, other federal agencies, Tribes, the states of Colorado and Utah, local governments and private ownership.

See GROUSE on page 7



Larry Lamsa

The BLM is proposing several alternatives for a plan to manage Gunnison sage-grouse populations in southwestern Colorado and southeast Utah.

USDA reports progress on competition efforts

— New officer position created

USDA has announced its latest efforts to address the competition issue in the markets and create a more level playing field.

The department has finalized the first of its three rules under the Packers and Stockyards Act, which relates more to the poultry industry. In addition, USDA shared several other updates based on President Joe Biden's 2021 executive order to promote competition in the economy. These include clarifying domestic origin requirements to sell meat to USDA for nutrition assistance programs and creating a position for a chief competition officer at USDA.

"This rule and the other actions we are announcing today bring transparency and accountability to transactional relationships across the poultry industry, seed

industry and federal procurement, and they are critical steps in USDA's competition and farmer fairness," said USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack in a statement.

New updates

In addition to releasing a final rule for poultry growers, the Biden administration announced three related updates to help boost competition.

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is clarifying that meat products must be from animals born, raised and slaughtered in the U.S. to meet the domestic origin requirements for USDA's commodity procurement program. Food products are procured domestically for use in nutrition assistance programs, and it was determined the current guidelines

See COMPETITION on page 11

Greens win challenge over Kern River flows

— Bakersfield and ag impacted

In a win for environmental groups, a California state judge ordered the city of Bakersfield, CA, to keep water flowing in the Kern River to protect fish populations.

Kern County Superior Court Judge Gregory Pulskamp granted a preliminary injunction preventing the city from using any dams to restrict water flow and engage with environmental groups on a flow rate to keep the river from drying.

Bring Back the Kern, the Center for Biological Diversity and other environmental groups filed suit in November 2022, arguing the city and other water districts in the area regularly divert water from the river in violation of the California Constitution, which stipulates the right to water shall be limited to what is re-

quired for beneficial use.

The groups also argued the state's water and fish and game codes define water for recreation and preservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources is a beneficial use. The lawsuit further cited the Fish and Game Code, stating it is unlawful to constrict the passage of fish and allow sufficient water to pass over or through the dam for fish that may be below it.

Kern River background

According to court documents, Kern River water rights now held by Bakersfield were initially recognized in the 1888 Miller-Haggin Agreement, which established two points of water flow measurement: an upstream first point of measurement and a downstream second point of measurement.

Bakersfield operates six weirs—low dams that raise the water level upstream—that divert water for the city and other irrigation districts through canals for residential, industrial and agricultural use. A majority of the river is diverted between First Point and the Calloway Weir—located nine miles downstream from First Point—resulting in the river being dry most of the year. Water has flowed in the Kern River channel downstream of the Calloway Weir primarily only during very wet, high-flow conditions or when water has been introduced from the State Water Project.

Court ruling

Pulskamp said based on previous

See KERN RIVER on page 13

Market anxiously waits for next Cattle on Feed report

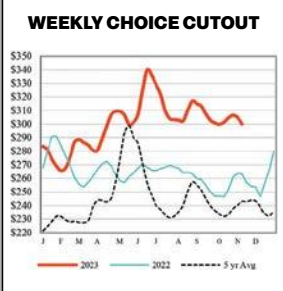
While the market was able to recover its losses on the board over the week, Thursday set futures back to where they started. Cash trade remained lackluster and a couple dollars lower than a week earlier.

"CME cattle futures had staged an impressive rally off of last week's lows until today, when the market threw itself into reverse and is now down over a couple hundred points," Cassie Fish, market analyst, wrote in The Beef on Thursday.

"Actually, an unconfirmed rumor that Tyson Foods was hacked appears to be at least partially responsible for today's fast and nervous sell-off," Fish continued. "Cattle traders recall the short-term bearish impact of a JBS hack in May 2021 that disabled operations. That turned out to be a great buying opportunity in futures."

Live cattle futures climbed higher over the week but took a nosedive on Thursday, ultimately closing sideways. The December contract gained 40 cents to close at \$174.75, and the February contract gained 85 cents to close at \$175.32.

"Tomorrow's much anticipated USDA Cattle on Feed report will be released," Fish said. "If the hack rumor proves false, it would not be a stretch to look for some futures market price recovery into the report, given how much bearishness has been priced in the market."



• Formula net purchases: \$188.03.

See MARKETS on page 19

LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
\$178.18	\$281.97	\$228.76
WEEK ENDING: 11-16-23		

Time Sensitive
Priority Handling
PERIODICAL :

COMMENTS

Another speed bump?

The latest Cattle on Feed (COF) report, which we hadn't seen yet ahead of press time, was expected to show more cattle on feed than last year. The big September placements shook the markets pretty good as we watched feeder cattle lose \$40/cwt in just a few weeks. This next COF report is expected to show October placements up around 7%, according to the market analysts; is this going to shake the market again? The average analyst guess was 101.9% on feed, 106.1% placed and 98% marketed with one extra marketing day.

The holiday markets usually bolster the rib values and raise the cutout values, but that hasn't happened yet. Packers were buying for a short processing week with Thanksgiving ahead of us. They have been processing fewer cattle than a year ago, but the cutout appears stuck at the \$300 level; it should pick up after Thanksgiving and into the new year.

Futures markets haven't been kind, the longs started leaving the building several weeks ago and broke both the fed cattle and feeder cattle contracts, but they should return soon. The CME Feeder Cattle Index is now \$228.76. However, light steer calves under 550 pounds are selling well, long-weaned calves are bringing the most and unweaned calves are selling at a big discount—this is pretty common going into winter.

Dr. Derrell Peel, economist at Oklahoma State University, remarked, "Strong feeder prices can also impact live cattle imports. Mexican feeder cattle imports, which were at the lowest level since 2008 last year are up sharply in 2023. The January-September total Mexican cattle imports were up 45.9% year over year. However, the current year-to-date total is down 3.6% from the 2017-21 average for the first nine months of the year. Imports of Canadian feeder cattle are down 24.6% for the year to date from last year and are down 35.7% from the 2017-21 average level.

"Nationally, beef cow slaughter is down 12.6% year over year for the year to date. However, the decrease has been smaller, down just 8.4% year over year in the last eight weeks. The current pace of beef cow slaughter suggests a 2023 herd culling rate of 12%, above the long-term average rate of about 10% and indicates additional herd liquidation.

"Taken together, the feeder marketings, feedlot placements and slaughter data all suggest that the industry continues to extract animals from the system in a manner that indicates continued liquidation. Cattle numbers generally will continue to get tighter in 2024. When heifer retention and herd rebuilding begin, cattle numbers will get significantly tighter very quickly."

Kirk Donsbach at StoneX said, "There has been a lot of chatter that declining exports and increasing imports caused our recent market collapse. While that statement is factually true, imports are up 7% and exports are down 15%, it has been true for months. It was true when cattle futures were setting all-time highs. I do not correlate imports and exports in the last two weeks of trade. In my opinion, the overly long funds got a bearish Cattle on Feed report, and they took their money and left. Without them, there were not enough buyers to support the market once it started selling off. Stop orders were hit and the market cascaded lower. Packers facing slim margins were happy to take advantage. When the market gets cheap enough (don't know where that is) the funds will be buyers again."

It still seems the market is trying to rationalize cattle and grain prices. All the analysts agree that the markets are long-term bullish and herd rebuilding won't start in earnest until 2024, providing we have good moisture—it's starting to get dry again.

Cattle feeders will need to move cattle over the next few weeks at a lower price to clear inventory. The COF report never seems to tell us how many cattle are ready at any given time; placement weights will tell us a lot, but we're loading feedlots for next spring when high demand grilling season starts. — PETE CROW



CROW

GUEST OPINION

The question for interest rates is no longer how high they'll go but how long they'll linger around current high levels before coming down. At its latest meeting, which ended Nov. 1, the Fed held its benchmark interest rate steady in the range of 5.25-5.5% for the second meeting in a row following 11 consecutive increases. (Average borrowers' rates move higher with the Fed's benchmark; the 30-year-mortgage fixed rate recently hit 8%.)

While Fed Chair Jerome Powell held open the possibility of another increase at a future meeting, many analysts think any such increase would be small. Others think the Fed is done raising. There's an emerging consensus that rates have peaked, or nearly so.

There's less consensus on how long before rates come down, partly because analysts are divided on the outlook for the economy. Many bond investors have been thinking the answer is, "longer than we previously expected." Goldman Sachs is telling clients it doesn't see the Fed cutting rates until the end of next year.

Expecting short-term rates to remain high longer, bond investors have been demanding higher yields to compensate for what they perceive as an increase in the risk of holding long-term debt. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note recently hit 5%, though it has come down a bit since.

Investors could be wrong, of course, or forced by changing economic and financial conditions to reconsider. So, it's worth taking a look at what Federal Reserve policy makers themselves foresee.

We can do that by reviewing the so-called "dot plot" that the Fed releases each quarter. It reflects the views of the 19 members of the Federal Open Market Committee, often shorthanded the FOMC or "the Fed." These are the policymakers who set monetary policy and interest rates.

Seven of the 19 are Senate-confirmed governors of the Federal Reserve Board. The others are presidents of the 12 independent regional Federal Reserve banks. At any given time only 12 of the 19 vote—the seven governors and five of the presidents. (Four of the five rotate annually; the New York president always votes.) All 19 take part in the meetings and the dot plot shows their interest-rate projections for the next three years and longer run.

In the latest dot plot, issued in September, 10 of the 19 see the Fed's benchmark rate above 5% at the end of 2024 and 17

THERE'S GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS ABOUT INTEREST RATES

see it above 4.5%. They're predicting rates will remain near current levels for another year, at least.

By the end of 2025, 12 of the 19 project a benchmark rate in the 3s to low 4s. Only by the end of 2026 do we get majority support for the 2s.

The good news for farmers, ranchers and other business borrowers: Only one FOMC member sees the Fed's benchmark rate above 5.5% for the next three years.

Uncertainty about inflation is what's keeping the projections near recent highs. After its latest meeting, Fed chair Jerome Powell said the FOMC won't lower rates until it's convinced the inflation rate is on a sustainable path to 2%. We're a long way from 2% inflation, he said.

Of course, the FOMC members could be wrong, too. These dots are essentially forecasts. They change from meeting to meeting. And while the people making them know more than the average citizen about these things, no one has an infallible crystal ball.

You might wonder, then, is there anything that could happen that would render the consensus wrong and bring rates down earlier?

A recession might. So far, the Fed seems to have engineered a "soft landing" for the economy, but some analysts still see a hard landing and a recession ahead. Should those analysts be proven right, the Fed would come under intense pressure to lower rates. If the recession brought inflation down, a Fed decision to cut would be relatively easy. (A recession combined with stubborn inflation would be a nightmare for the Fed.)

There is another way for the consensus to be wrong and this way would be worse for business borrowers: Inflation could leap again.

Continuing war in the Middle East and Ukraine could send prices soaring. Inflation might also reignite if lots of other labor unions match the hefty wage increases the Teamsters and United Auto Workers and Air Line Pilots recently won. (Overall, though, wage increases have been coming down lately.)

Should inflation head north again, all bets are off; the Fed would almost certainly raise rates. But while surging inflation is imaginable, it's not the most likely outcome. For now, and probably for some months to come, the question really is not how high, but how long. — Urban Lehner, DTN editor emeritus

OBITUARY



Lucinda Rae Lautenschlager; 1993-2023

Lucinda "Lucy" Rae Lautenschlager passed away Oct. 13 at her family's home on their ranch near Endicott, WA. She was 30 years old. Lucy was born Feb. 6, 1993, in Colfax, WA, to Carl and Jodi Lautenschlager. She was their second born, after older brother Cody Lautenschlager and followed by the youngest, her sister, Katy Lautenschlager.

She loved to bake, clean, organize and count her money as a kid—which created no surprise when she began her career in banking at just 15 years old, when she started working part-time at the local family bank in St. John, WA. She would continue to work at Lamont Bank of St. John

as much as she could throughout the rest of her high school and college years. She loved visiting with the locals who came into the bank during her time there, and cherished the community she was a part of.

She was involved in many activities throughout her childhood in her hometown communities of Endicott and St. John. She attended elementary and middle school in Endicott, where she played T-ball, and then basketball, cheerleading and volleyball as she became of age. She took dance classes in elementary school, showed steers in 4-H and FFA at the local Palouse Empire Fair, and never missed an opportunity to volunteer at any local event or help with running concession stands or stats keeping for the other sporting events she wasn't already involved with. She attended St. John-Endicott High School from 2007 through her graduation year of 2011. There, she participated in several activities in the community, including basketball, volleyball, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and FFA.

She enjoyed attending events such as the state FBLA Convention to compete in academic and business categories, judging animals alongside her fellow FFA student members at local and state fairs, and attending the National FFA Convention during her high school years. She was recognized as a member of the National Honor Society during

those years, also. She was smart as a whip, took her studies very seriously and could often be found helping others with their homework assignments. She maintained a straight "A" average throughout her entire school career. She often reminded her siblings that she was "the smart one" and could even sometimes be found volunteering to do their homework for them.

Her studies led her to attend college at Spokane Falls Community College, where she earned her degree in small business management, with an emphasis in finance and accounting. She loved living in Spokane the few years she was up there before moving to Pullman for a job at Washington State Employees Credit Union. After her years working there in Pullman, she also worked in the Farm Service Agency office in Colfax, as a dental assistant in Colfax, as a CPA nurse aid at St. John Community Pride, and on the team at the Whitman County Gazette's office. Between and throughout her various jobs and career ventures, she also always worked as an administrative assistant with her family ranch business to do the record keeping, digital data entry, registration paperwork, and other office tasks for their registered Red Angus cattle, working frequently with the Red Angus Association on her family ranch's behalf. She was the "numbers girl" and would always amaze

everyone with how well she could recall and handle any data or number-related job. She was just getting ready to move up to Spokane again with a new friend, and she was so excited for a new chapter ahead.

Lucy will forever be loved and missed by her family, loved ones and the community members whose lives she impacted in a positive way throughout her all-too-short 30 years here in this life on Earth. Lucy is survived by her parents, Carl and Jodi Lautenschlager, of Endicott, WA; her brother, sister-in-law and nephew, Cody, Kaysha and Kayden Lautenschlager, of St. John, WA; and her sister, Katy Lautenschlager of Fort Lauderdale, FL. She is also survived by her aunts and uncles, Keith and Loretta Paulson, Ron and Carol Newton, Scott Lautenschlager, Keith and Leann Hooper; along with many cousins, and additional friends and loved ones.

A nonprofit, "Rae of Change: Lucy's Legacy," is being set up in her honor to help raise more awareness (starting at a local level) to the dangers, havoc and tragedy that comes with the mass drug and opioid epidemic, of which Lucy heartbreakingly fell victim to. In lieu of flowers, for those feeling called to donate, visit raeofchange.org to donate online, or send donations to Rae of Change: Lucy's Legacy, 1251 Cutler-Lautenschlager Rd, Endicott, WA 99125.

WLJ

Letters to the editor: Letters for publication must be no longer than 675 words, must refer to an article that has appeared within the month, and must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Addresses and phone numbers will not be published. Letters may be shortened for space requirements. Send a letter to the editor by emailing editorial@wlj.net or mailing it to Western Livestock Journal, Attn: Editorial Dept., 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.

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AAA: 20037706

KG Cowboy Kind 1042

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK
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AAA: 20037663

KG Rangeland 1339

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK
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AAA: 20125733

KG Justified 1020

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK
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AAA: 20037641

KG Cowboy Kind 1005

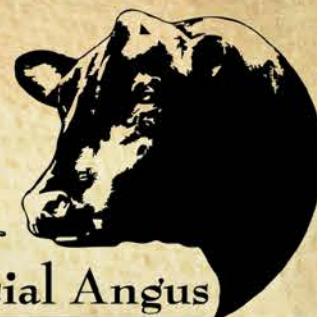
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LEGAL LEDGER

USDA OKs Paraguay beef imports

The USDA has issued a final rule to allow fresh beef imports from Paraguay. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service determined beef can be safely imported if foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) has not been diagnosed in the exporting region in the past year, the meat comes from places where FMD has not been present during the lifetime of the animals, and animals were inspected before and after death. Fresh deboned (chilled or frozen) beef will be eligible for import, although USDA expects imports to be less than 6,500 metric tons due to an export quota. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) opposes the rule, raising concerns with Paraguay's history of FMD. "USDA based their decision to allow beef imports from Paraguay on a deeply flawed risk assessment that uses old data from site visits that were conducted more than nine years ago," said NCBA Executive Director of Government Affairs Kent Bacus in a statement. "The dismissal of legitimate concerns from U.S. cattle producers is unacceptable and USDA should halt this unscientific, unsafe rulemaking."

Denver slaughterhouse ban moves forward

A citizen-led petition campaigning to ban slaughterhouses in Denver, CO, has submitted signatures to the Denver Clerk and Recorder. The effort is led by animal activist group Pro-Animal Future, which is vying to close the last of slaughterhouses in Denver: Superior Farms. The sheep processing facility has the capacity to process 500,000 head per year and is one of the largest processors for lamb in the country. The proposed ballot title poses the question of whether the city and county of Denver should prohibit slaughterhouses beginning in January 2026. In an Aug. 13 op-ed for local media outlet Westword, Pro-Animal Future campaigner Alaina Sigler wrote, "In this age of innovative meat alternatives as well as traditional plant food galore, we recognize that leaving slaughter behind will create a kinder economy for all."

Input sought on barred owl strategy

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is seeking public input regarding the threat of barred owls to native northern and California spotted owls. The agency said populations of the threatened northern spotted owl are rapidly declining as a result of habitat loss and competition with barred owls. "We've been working with partners to manage northern and California spotted owl habitat for years, but we also urgently need a management tool that addresses the increasing barred owl threat," said Kessina Lee, state supervisor for USFWS' Oregon office. The draft plan recommends actions to reduce barred owl populations in certain areas of the northern spotted owl's range. A 60-day comment period will be held once the notice is published in the Federal Register later in November. Comments may be submitted at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) by searching for docket ID FWS-R1-ES-2022-0074.

DOJ sues Koch Foods over antitrust laws

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has filed suit against Koch Foods for anticompetitive behavior. The agency alleges the company anticompetitively and unfairly required chicken growers to pay Koch a termination penalty to switch to working with a rival chicken processor. "This action to protect growers' right to compete signals the joint commitment of the USDA and Justice Department to open competitive markets," said USDA Senior Advisor for Fair and Competitive Markets Andy Green. The complaint claims Koch's termination penalty amounted to more than half of most growers' total annual take-home income, and sometimes more than one year's entire take-home income.

Animal activist hit with felony charge

Co-founder of animal activist group Direct Action Everywhere (DxE) Wayne Hsiung was recently convicted of two counts of misdemeanor trespass and one count of felony conspiracy to trespass. Hsiung led two protests in 2018 and 2019 that resulted in activists taking 70 chickens and ducks from two Sonoma County, CA, farms. Hsiung's sentencing hearing is scheduled for Nov. 30 and he faces up to three-and-a-half years in prison. DxE activists plan to protest at the hearing, according to a Facebook event. "We are outraged that animal rescuer Wayne Hsiung was cuffed and taken into custody after being convicted of felony conspiracy and two counts of misdemeanor trespass for helping animals facing criminal abuse," the event description read.

Ag groups oppose Cascades grizzly plan

More than a dozen ag groups have signed onto a letter opposing grizzly bear introduction in the North Cascades of Washington. "With all the progress being made species-wide and nationwide, and the increasing pressure from Congress to delist the grizzly bear altogether, establishing another pocket of genetically indistinct bears will only jeopardize future science-based efforts to delist," the letter read. The groups contend that establishing a nonessential experimental population of bears in the ecosystem has the potential to devastate hundreds of livestock producers. "Local farmers and ranchers, as well as elected leaders from Washington state, have objected to this proposal for years," the letter concluded. "We urge the Service to listen to these local voices and withdraw the proposal." The letter was signed by the Public Lands Council, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, American Farm Bureau Federation and a dozen state cattlemen's associations and farm bureau groups.

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Congress members support lamb investigation

A bipartisan coalition of 14 members of Congress are urging for an investigation into lamb and mutton imports into the U.S. In a late October letter, the lawmakers penned a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai, requesting the U.S. International Trade Commission initiate a global safeguard investigation.

The letter follows an earlier request in August by the Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF). The group submitted a petition, coined the Protect American Lamb project, asking Congress and the Biden administration to provide relief to sheep producers who are being impacted by the “unrestrained importation of substantially lower-cost foreign lamb and mutton.”

The members urged Tai to consider R-CALF’s request and have the commission conduct an investigation to determine

if lamb and mutton is being imported at a rate to be of substantial injury to domestic producers.

“These trends support a prompt and fair investigation by the International Trade Commission of whether the import surge is a substantial cause of serious injury to the United States sheep industry.”

— Letter from Congress

“These trends support a prompt and fair investigation by the International Trade Commission of whether the import surge is a substantial cause of serious injury to the United States sheep industry,” the letter read. “A request initiated by your office could help ensure the long-term stability and sustainability of this important domestic industry.”

The letter was signed by Reps. Blake Moore (R-UT-01), Harriet

Hageman (R-WY-At large), Mark Amodei (R-NV-02), Yadira Caraveo (D-CO-08), John Curtis (R-UT-03), Mary Miller (R-IL-15), Burgess Owens (R-UT-04), Matthew Rosendale (R-MT-02), Michael Simpson (R-ID-02), Dina Titus (D-NV-01), Doug LaMalfa (R-CA-01), Steven Horsford (D-NV-04), Russ Fulcher (R-ID-01) and Susie Lee (D-NV-03).

Petition details

In the petition, R-CALF claimed there has been an overwhelming increase in imported lamb

and mutton from 1993-2022, which has reduced American sheep operations by more than 60%. The group pointed to Australia as the No. 1 culprit of displacing domestic lamb and mutton production.

“The most obvious reason that Australian lamb and mutton imports have displaced such a large share of domestic lamb and mutton (and, as stated above, the reason the USDA believes is the most important factor) is because Australian imports are delivered into the U.S. market at a significantly lower cost than what domestic lamb can be produced for in the United States,” the petition read.

The petition concludes by urging the Biden administration and Congress to establish tariffs and a tariff rate quota system to ensure competitiveness of the domestic sheep industry. — **Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor**

Farm bill extension goes to president's desk

The farm bill extension tied to short-term federal funding passed the Senate Wednesday night, Nov. 15 on an 87-11 vote and now goes to President Joe Biden to avoid the risk of another government shutdown.

On the farm bill, the extension, with the backing of the leaders of the House and Senate agriculture committees, extends the 2018 Farm Bill until Sept. 30, 2024.

The bill, which was passed by the House earlier in the week, will fund USDA and the Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, Energy and Veterans Affairs through Jan. 19, 2024, and the rest of the government through Feb. 2, 2024.

If Congress cannot complete its fiscal year 2024 funding bills by the end of April, lawmakers face 1% spending cuts across the board in federal programs.

On the farm bill, Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, said early Nov. 16 that extension is appreciated but he called on Congress “to stay focused on a new, modernized farm bill that recognizes the many changes and challenges of the past five years.”

Duvall added, “The current farm bill was written before the pandemic, before inflation spiked, and before global unrest sent shock waves through the food system. We need programs that reflect today’s realities. So much work has been done by the agriculture committees in both the House and Senate over the past 18 months to prepare to craft a smart and effective farm bill. Congress must keep that momentum going.”

Rob Larew, president of the National Farmers Union (NFU), issued a similar statement saying NFU is encouraged by the strong bipartisan support to extend the 2018 Farm Bill. Now it is time to move ahead.

“Family farmers and ranchers must have clarity about the status of farm programs to make informed planting and business decisions heading into the next growing season, and an extension accomplishes that in the short term,” Larew said. “We will continue working to craft and pass a five-year farm bill that provides strong support for family farmers, ranchers, and our communities.”

Along with extending out the farm bill programs, the bill makes some adjustments to dairy programs, such as extending the Dairy Forward Pricing Program to 2027. The bill also suspends the “permanent price support authorities” for commodities as well through the end of the 2024 calendar year.

Also among the programs extended is the Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program, which is funded at \$15 million for fiscal year 2024. Feral hogs continue to be a major problem in Southern states and they also keep expanding northward as well.

The bill also provides another \$10 million for the Urban, Indoor and Other Emerging Agricultural Production Research, Education and Extension Initiative. The Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research receives \$37 million. The Organic Production and Market Data Initiative received \$1 million for fiscal year 2024.

A few other programs extended include the Bio-based Markets Program, the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels and the Feedstock Flexibility Program. — **Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor**

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Over 375,000 acres at issue in sage grouse plan

GROUSE (from page 1)

Alternative B would prioritize removing threats to the bird within occupied and unoccupied areas and includes a 4-mile buffer around the habitat. Sub-alternative B1 excludes livestock grazing in the Gunnison sage-grouse habitat.

Alternative C would achieve the purpose of the draft RMP by "minimizing, avoiding, or compensating for impacts from resource uses and activities in occupied and unoccupied habitat." Under this alternative, resource uses and other actions would be allowed if impacts to the sage grouse could be avoided or minimized.

Alternative D, BLM's preferred alternative, would also achieve the purpose of the RMP, but would "allocate resource uses and resource values while sustaining and enhancing ecological integrity." Conservation measures are based on the latest available science and focus on occupied and unoccupied habitat and include a 1-mile buffer around habitat and could include establishing linkage-connectivity areas.

Alternative E expands management direction for resources and direction not addressed in the Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA) for the Gunnison Basin population and includes buffers for some resources.

Grazing impacts

According to BLM, the agency administers 16 grazing allotments encompassing 375,900 acres of public land within the decision area. BLM grazing allotments within the decision area range in size from 300 acres to approximately 40,000 acres. A total of 186,080 animal unit months (AUMs) are currently authorized across the decision area.

Under Alternative A, grazing would be unaffected.

Alternative B is the most restrictive for livestock grazing. In addition to retiring grazing allotments under Sub-alternative B1, under Alternative B2, occupied habitat management areas (OHMA) would be unavailable for livestock grazing between March 1 and July 15 for the life of the RMP amendment. Livestock grazing would continue to be authorized in OHMA between July 16 and February 28.

A minor increase in allotment availability and AUMs would be allowed under Alternative C. Season of use restrictions on permitted livestock use would only be applied if the allotment does not meet land health standards. Livestock crossing/trailing permits through OHMA would be authorized on existing approved routes.

Actions proposed under Alternative D are generally the same as Alternative C.

The effects of Alternative E on livestock grazing would be similar to those under Alternatives C and D but would only occur in the

Gunnison Basin. Under Alternative E, allotments that meet CCA management guidelines and livestock grazing is managed in riparian to improve habitat would continue to be allowed.

Objections

Environmental groups said BLM's preferred alternative does not do enough to

protect the habitat of the sage grouse, and the strategies have been discredited by sage grouse science. They continued the preferred alternative offers less protection than the Greater sage-grouse plan, and livestock grazing and energy extraction should be off limits.

"The agency's preferred alternative is surprisingly

weak, and in some cases doesn't measure up to the habitat protections that already apply for the unlisted greater sage-grouse," said Erik Molvar, executive director with Western Watersheds Project. "The agency's preferred plan is going to need a major overhaul, strengthening protections on issues including livestock grazing,

road construction, and energy development, if the federal government is to do its part to help restore Gunnison sage-grouse to the healthy and abundant populations necessary for the full recovery of the species."

Comment period

BLM is accepting written comments on the draft

RMP/EIS through Feb. 6, 2024. Comments can be made on BLM's website at tinyurl.com/5n7m9tr9 through the "Participate Now" option. They can also be mailed to BLM Southwest District Office, ATTN: GUSG RMPA, 2465 S. Townsend Ave, Montrose, CO 81401.

— Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor

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Research looks to transform manure into protein

Can you turn manure into a cow, chicken or fish? Texas A&M AgriLife Research scientists are looking to do just that, in a roundabout, circular economy, kind of way.

A three-year, \$618,000 grant from the USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture is funding a study by scientists in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Science Department of Entomology and Mississippi State University to explore dairy manure clean-up via black soldier flies. The team would then examine the flies' value as a potential ingredient in livestock, poultry and aquaculture feed.

The project will concentrate on both environmental health and economic benefits of converting dairy waste into protein that could be used for feed. Early data indicate probiotics could be used to accelerate the digestive process in fed animals, increase conversion of waste to insect biomass, decrease greenhouse gases and noxious odors, and reduce concerns about pathogens that might be present in the manure.

The study will be led by Jeff Tomberlin, Ph.D., professor, AgriLife Research Fellow, Presidential Impact Fellow and Center for Environmental Sustainability through Insect Farming director, and Anjel Helms, Ph.D., an assistant professor and chemical ecologist, both in the Department of Entomology.

Heather Jordan, Ph.D., associate professor and micro-

biologist at Mississippi State University, will examine the resulting larvae and frass, which is the material remaining after larvae digest manure, for microbial diversity and feed safety. Helms' postdoctoral research associate Amber MacInnis, Ph.D., will lead the day-to-day data collection with the help of students.

"We're testing the limits of black soldier fly production in conjunction with probiotics to see how efficient they could be for large animal production facilities, in this case dairies," Helms said. "Manure management is an expense to these producers, and we are testing to see if this is a way to manage that waste and turn it into a productive feed source."

Black soldier fly larvae consume their weight in organic waste daily for a two-week period—around 1 gram or the weight of a single raisin per larva. That may sound insignificant, but those amounts add up when multiplied by millions of black soldier fly larvae.

For example, existing facilities in Europe, Asia and North America can digest 100 tons of waste daily using black soldier fly larvae.

MacInnis' experiments are done in plastic containers filled with around 18 pounds of manure where 10,000 black soldier fly eggs are placed. The larvae hatch, consume the dairy manure for two weeks and then are harvested, and the process is repeated.

An important part of the project is to determine how

safe harvested larvae are when converted into ingredients for feed. Little is known about pathogen diversity in larvae that consume manure that in turn could impact feed safety. Helms suspects larvae consuming manure are safe for livestock consumption, but the end-product must be certified.

"This is an exciting study to be a part of because it is problem-solving at its core," Mac-

Innis said. "These dairies produce an enormous amount of waste. If black soldier flies can be an efficient part of their management process and provide other benefits, that could be a big breakthrough across the industry."

Black soldier flies consume organic waste, including manure, but the process of waste conversion leaves room for efficiency improvements.

The study will utilize probiotics to enhance black soldier fly waste conversion of dairy manure and remove more than 50% of nitrogen and potassium from the waste. Helms said the team is working with Jordan to study the probiotic impacts.

Manure conversion by black soldier flies is also expected to provide an environmental benefit beyond reducing reliance on traditional manure

management methods like waste storage lagoons.

"There is potential for layers of economic and environmental benefits to incorporating black soldier flies in manure management," Helms said. "Turning waste into a resource sounds too good to be true, but we are understanding more and more about the ways black soldier flies can solve a lot of problems." — **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**

Global food production per person has grown over time

From 1990 through 2019, the calories available to consume per person increased 13% on average. The largest changes among the U.S., Brazil, China and India from 1990-2019 were in Brazil and China, with daily per capita food available for consumption increasing by 530 calories per person in Brazil and 840 calories in China (20 and 34% respectively).

China was below the world average food consumption per person in 1990 but above the world average in 2019. The amount of different food types consumed in an individual country depends on income and culture, especially for animal products.

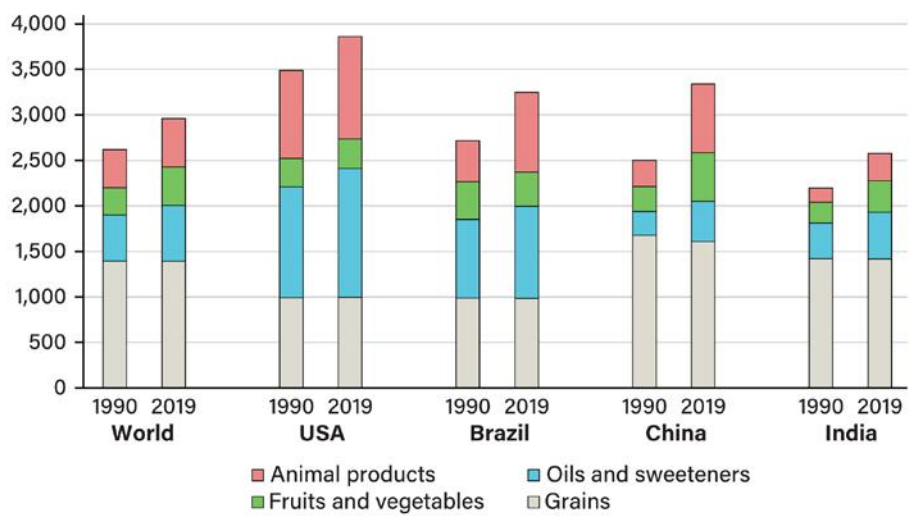
Per capita consumption of animal products grew rapidly in Brazil and China but was still below the U.S. level in 2019. Per capita calorie consumption in India was lower than the world average in both 1990 and 2019.

— **USDA Economic Research Service**

Per capita calories available for consumption for select countries, 1990 and 2019

USDA Economic Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Calories per person per day



Note: Calories available for consumption include post-retail food waste at home and in restaurants and are therefore greater than calories consumed.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using food balance sheets from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.



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Hunters urged to practice biosecurity this season

Positive cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) are being reported in domestic poultry flocks across North Dakota. The risk of transmission from wild birds to domestic birds has increased with a slow in migration due to the mild temperatures.

Wild birds and some mammals are testing positive for HPAI. Hunters who have contact with domestic poultry should be aware of what steps to take if they see sick or deceased wildlife, advise North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension specialists.

"If you hunt game or wild birds and own domestic poultry, do not wear hunting clothes or footwear while you are in with your birds," said Miranda Meehan, NDSU Extension livestock environmental stewardship specialist. "Infected birds shed bird flu viruses in their saliva, mucous and feces."

"The primary carriers of avian influenza A are waterfowl, gulls, terns and shorebirds," said Dr. Gerald Stokka, NDSU Extension veterinarian and livestock stewardship specialist. "H5N1 HPAI has been detected in wild birds throughout all U.S. migratory flyways. Wild birds can be infected without showing symptoms of the infection. While waterfowl are the primary carriers, positive cases are being documented in predatory birds and mammals."

All poultry owners, no matter the size, should practice good biosecurity to protect their flock from HPAI.

"The best defense against HPAI is having a biosecurity plan in place," said Mary Keena, NDSU Extension livestock environmental management specialist. "It is your job as a flock owner to create a line of separation between your clean flock and the potentially unclean issues that wildlife or visitors may bring."

Biosecurity practices that can reduce the risk to domestic birds include:

- Do not haul disease home. If you've been out walking in fields or wetlands while hunting, be sure to change clothing and footwear before crossing the clean/dirty line to care for your flock.

- Do not walk or drive trucks, tractors or equipment through areas where waterfowl or other wildlife feces may be. If you cannot avoid this, clean your shoes, vehicles and equipment thoroughly to prevent transferring disease.

- Field dress game birds when possible to reduce the potential for disease transfer.

- Dogs are not at high risk to contract the virus. However, there have been documented cases of dogs transmitting HPAI to domestic flocks. If your dog has interacted with wildlife, take measures to keep them away from poultry.

- If visitors will be interacting with your birds, make sure you know where they have been, require them to wash their hands, and ensure their clothes and footwear are clean and disinfected.

- Reduce the attractiveness for wild birds to stop at your place by cleaning up litter and spilled feed around poultry housing areas.

- If you have free range guinea fowl and waterfowl, consider bringing them into coops or flight pens under nets to prevent interaction of domesticated poultry with wild birds and their droppings.

Non-lethal methods to deter

wildlife are available on the USDA Wildlife Damage webpage: bit.ly/deter-wild-birds.

Avian influenza surveillance and testing in wild birds is being done by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. Report sick and dead wildlife at bit.ly/mortality-report. Direct wild bird avian influenza questions to the North Dakota Game and Fish

Department at 701-204-2161.

Avian influenza is a zoonotic disease, meaning there is a chance it can be transferred to humans.

"While this risk is low, hunters of wild birds are more likely to have increased exposure to the virus, which may increase risk of infection," said Mary Keena, NDSU Extension livestock environmental management specialist.

"According to the CDC, if you

must handle wild birds or sick or dead poultry, minimize direct contact by wearing gloves and washing your hands with soap and water after touching birds," said Stokka. "If available, wear respiratory protection such as a medical facemask. After handling wild birds, discard the gloves and facemask, change your clothing, disinfect footwear, and then wash your hands with soap and water."

The North Dakota Game and

Fish Department suggests the following practices to reduce risk of infection:

- Do not handle game that is found dead or appears to be sick.

- Do not eat, drink or smoke while cleaning game, and avoid contamination of your eyes, mouth, nose, or any open cuts or sores with blood or other fluids from game that you are cleaning.

- Wash hands, cleaning

utensils and other surfaces with soap and hot water immediately after cleaning game.

"There is no evidence that anyone has contracted the virus from eating a fully cooked bird, either domestic or wild," said Julie Garden-Robinson, NDSU Extension food and nutrition specialist. "It is always a safe practice to fully cook wild game to 165 F, regardless of whether there is a threat of HPAI." — NDSU Extension

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Farm leaders urge action on port and freight issues

Officials for Bay Area ports and leaders of California agricultural associations met recently to brainstorm on solutions to better facilitate farm exports from state ports, which a 2021 study called “the least efficient in the world.”

At a San Francisco hearing held by the California Assembly Committee on Ports and Goods Movement, farming leaders and port directors discussed port shortcomings during the pandemic that stranded farm goods and continue to challenge the movement of freight within California.

A large portion of the food grown in California, especially tree nuts, rice and wine, is exported, making the state’s farms and farm communities dependent on foreign demand and the flow of agricultural commodities through ports.

“Over 40% of what we grow in California needs to find an export market,” California Farm Bureau Presi-

dent Jamie Johansson said at the hearing.

“Port infrastructure and functionality opened the world to California’s bountiful agriculture and incredible innovation,” said Aubrey Bettencourt, CEO of the Almond Alliance. “It has made California the global economic powerhouse that it is in the last century. But what got us here isn’t going to get us there in this next century.”

California farm products typically fill about one-third of all shipping containers leaving California ports and about half the containers that leave from Oakland.

In 2021, pandemic-related supply chain gridlock at the Port of Oakland resulted in a shortage of shipping containers, disrupting the export of farm commodities and causing an estimated \$2.1 billion in agricultural export losses. Many container ships skipped the Port of Oakland altogether due to the congestion.

“Foreign markets turned to

other countries to supply their goods,” Johansson said.

California farmers and farm communities are still dealing with the fallout of that congestion, Bettencourt told committee members. “Pandemic supply chain disruptions wreaked havoc on the almond industry,” she said.

A large inventory of unsold almonds has destroyed the market, depressing global almond prices. “We are still not recovered from the pandemic because of how much product was unable to be shipped,” Bettencourt said. “The cash flow into the communities is totally drying up.”

Now, two years later, farmers are still trying to win back export markets they lost due to the port backlog. Bettencourt said some carriers restored services out of Oakland, but “some may never return.”

University of California researchers have cautioned that reputational damage to California ports could have lasting consequences for the

state’s agriculture sector.

“The lost farm exports mirror the fact that California ports are among the least efficient in the world,” the researchers said in a 2021 study titled “Containergeddon” and California Agriculture,” which analyzed the impacts of the supply chain gridlock. “As a result, some importers now view California as an unreliable source of agricultural products due to inferior port infrastructure.”

Port directors who testified at the hearing advocated for investment in improving infrastructure at the ports. Projects are already underway to widen roadways at the Port of Oakland and widen the turning basin to improve the traffic flow of container ships. “We need to be more resilient taking care of our exporters,” said Danny Wan, executive director of the Port of Oakland.

Assembly Member Mia Bonta (D-Alameda) emphasized the need for California’s ports to run efficiently so that

businesses in the state can compete globally. “I want to make sure California maintains its primacy,” she said.

Assembly Member Vince Fong (R-Bakersfield) added that state legislators want to “keep our farmers competitive overseas.”

The Biden administration recently announced \$653 million in grants for 41 projects to improve ports across the country. The grants include \$52.6 million for upgrades to the Port of Long Beach, which also exports commodities from California farms.

In addressing future challenges, discussion at the hearing centered on a landmark rule adopted earlier this year by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The Advanced Clean Fleets rule will phase out most diesel trucks in the state over the next two decades.

Under the rule, drayage truck fleets, which haul agricultural products and other cargo from rural parts of California to coastal ports, must fully convert to zero-emission vehicles by 2035, seven years before most other sections of the trucking industry. Agricultural and trucking groups have raised alarm over that deadline, cautioning that it could impede the movement of fresh produce and other freight.

Wan questioned the wisdom of a rule that he said will likely see the diesel trucks

decommissioned from California sold to other states and used there. “It’s not like these trucks are going to disappear from planet Earth,” he said.

Rather than regulators imposing unrealistic deadlines on trucking companies, a better route would be for the state to encourage the transition from diesel trucks to zero-emission vehicles through “penalties and incentives rather than regulatory mandates,” Wan said.

Rayne Thompson, vice president of government relations and sustainability for Sunkist Growers, said the concern with the CARB rule is that freight costs are going to go up significantly” due to expenses related to investing in the necessary infrastructure and technology.

With stringent regulations and high input costs, California farmers are already “struggling to compete” in the global marketplace, Johansson said. “This problem will soon be exacerbated by the impending Advanced Clean Fleets rule.”

The increased costs will likely weigh most heavily on small farmers, Johansson added. “The consolidation that you see happening is a real effect of any rising costs,” he said. “You simply have to become more efficient. And oftentimes to do that, you have to become bigger.” — **Caleb Hampton, assistant editor of Ag Alert, California Farm Bureau Federation**



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Group sues USFS to halt MT trout release project

A Missoula, MT, based nonprofit that advocates for wilderness conservation is pushing back on a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) plan to poison 46 miles of waterways within the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness in an effort to clear them for Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

In a lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court Nov. 8, Wilderness Watch argues that the Buffalo Creek project violates the Wilderness Act, which holds that wilderness areas should retain “primeval character and influence” and be “protected and managed so as to preserve [their] natural conditions.”

The Buffalo Creek project was authorized by the Custer Gallatin National Forest in August at the behest of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, which seeks to expand Yellowstone cutthroats in waters beyond their native range to create a climate refuge for the fish as the waterways they’ve historically inhabited warm.

Hidden Lake and the upper reaches of Buffalo Creek are naturally fishless due to the area’s topography, but state wildlife officials have stocked rainbow trout in Hidden Lake since at least 1932. Now the state hopes to address the hybridization of rainbow trout and Yellowstone cutthroat trout in lower stretches of the watershed by applying rotenone to Upper Buffalo Creek and 36 acres of wetlands and lake surface, to create what Wilderness Watch describes as “an artificial reserve of Yel-

lowstone cutthroat trout.”

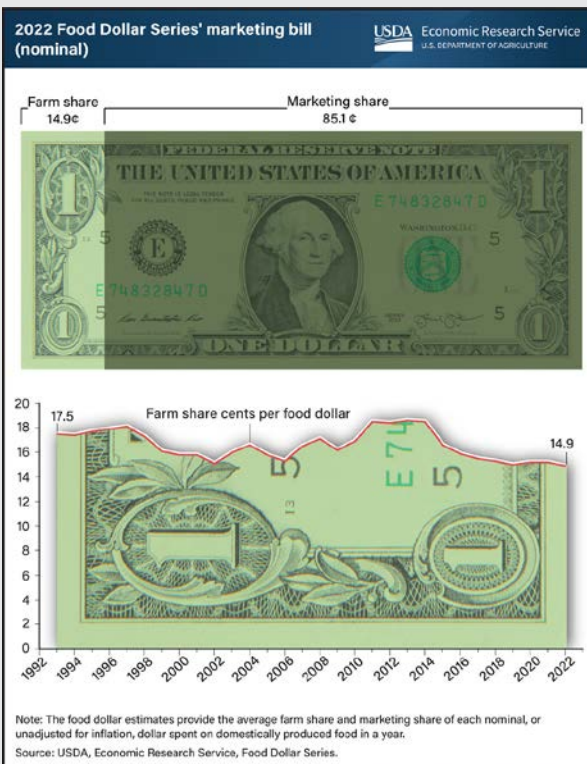
Wilderness Watch Executive Director George Nickas described the plan as an attempt to “play God with species and habitat manipulation.” His group also takes issue with the expansion of motorized activity within the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness that USFS has authorized for the poisoning and restocking project. Up to 81 aircraft landings and 60 days of motorized use have been approved to execute the plan.

“The Wilderness Act was passed precisely to rein in the propensity of managers to want to control nature. Our lawsuit seeks to preserve the wild character of the Wilderness and to let nature continue to evolve of its own free will,” Nickas wrote. His organization is asking courts to block the project, which is slated to begin next year.

In an April 2022 press release announcing USFS’ support for the Buffalo Creek project, Gardiner District Ranger Mike Thom wrote that the agency was “poised to create secure cold water refugia and strongholds for the long-term sustainability and success of Yellowstone cutthroat trout.”

“This is one of those prime opportunities working jointly with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to benefit the natural characteristics of wilderness with native fish communities critical to our ecosystem,” he continued. — **Amanda Eggert, Montana Free Press**

Farm share of food dollar under 15 cents in 2022



U.S. farm establishments received 14.9 cents per dollar spent on domestically produced food in 2022 as compensation for farm commodity production. This portion, called the farm share, is a decrease of 0.3 cents from a revised 15.2 cents in 2021.

The farm share covers operating expenses as well as input costs from nonfarm establishments. The remaining portion of the food dollar, known as the marketing share, covers the costs of getting domestically produced food from farms to points of purchase, including costs related to trans-

porting, processing and selling to consumers.

One of the factors behind the long-term downward trend in the farm share is an increasing proportion of food-away-from-home spending. Farm establishments receive a lower portion of dollars spent on food away from home because of the added costs of preparing and serving meals.

The USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) uses input-output analysis to calculate the farm and marketing shares of a food dollar, which is an average of all domestic expenditures on U.S. food. — **USDA ERS**

Giving campaign to support ag research

The California Bountiful Foundation, the nonprofit science and research affiliate of the California Farm Bureau, is beginning its annual fundraising campaign with a goal of supporting scientific and economic research on agricultural production to ensure food security for all Californians.

The Bountiful Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, conducts research and compiles scientific and economic data on agriculture, food prices, water and the environment. The foundation is led by Dr. Amrith Gunasekara, former manager of the Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation for the California Department of Food and Agriculture and science advisor to the state agriculture secretary.

The Bountiful Foundation, reorganized by the Farm Bureau in April 2022, solicits grants and provides funding to support studies on issues affecting farmers, ranchers, timber producers and consumers. Research interests focus on climate-smart agriculture, water use, regulations, food prices and sustaining California's agricultural heritage into the future.

"California farmers and ranchers produce a diverse bounty of high-quality foods in America's most productive

agricultural state," said California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson. "The California Bountiful Foundation conducts and enables important research to inform policymakers on supporting our critical agricultural production and safeguarding our California landscape while providing Americans with ample supplies of safe, nutritious and affordable foods."

Currently, one in five California residents—about 8.4 million people—faces food insecurity. This year's fundraising campaign, including Giving Tuesday on Nov. 28, is focusing on Bountiful Foundation efforts to lead and support agricultural research on California agricultural contributions to addressing food insecurity.

"The California Bountiful Foundation is dedicated to research on sustaining agriculture into the future while conserving our water resources, protecting the environment and curbing food insecurity by producing more healthful and affordable foods to meet the needs of all Californians," said Dr. Gunasekara.

To learn more about the California Bountiful Foundation and how to donate, visit www.cfbf.com/CBF. — **California Farm Bureau Federation**

Additional two P&S Act rules still in works

COMPETITION (from page 1)

for beef, pork, lamb and bison products were not as clear as other products, USDA said.

"This clarification to the domestic origin requirement will ensure U.S. producers reap the full benefit of USDA purchase programs and recipients of nutrition assistance programs benefit from domestically produced meat products," the department said.

Tanner Beymer, National Cattlemen's Beef Association senior director of government affairs, told *WLJ* that a very small percentage of beef goes into the USDA commodity procurement program and that he sees the domestic origin requirements update more of a precursor to USDA's Product of the USA rule that is in the works.

The administration also announced the creation of the AMS chief competition officer to "formalize and enhance implementation of key competition policy priorities." In addition, the officer will support Packers & Stockyards Act enforcement, seed transparency and competition, and partnerships with state attorneys general, USDA said.

There is limited information so far on the new officer position, but Beymer said the role would fall under the jurisdiction of USDA's Packers and Stockyards Division, which is already significantly underfunded and understaffed. He likened the new role to the administration reinventing the wheel as opposed to addressing the meat of the issue.

The third update is regarding competition and innovation in seeds. AMS

said it is holding seed companies accountable by requesting companies examine how they are "providing variety transparency to farmers at the point of sale, disclosing the variety to growers usually at the time of purchase and no later than the commencement of shipment."

Final rules

Last summer, USDA announced it would begin issuing a series of three rules to increase transparency and boost competition in the ag markets. Two rules have been announced so far, with the first rule the subject of USDA's recent announcement, and a third rule set to be released later this year.

The first rule, the Transparency in Poultry Grower Contracting and Tournaments final rule, amends the Packers and Stockyards

Act with the intention of increasing transparency for poultry growers. The rule requires live poultry dealers to give critical information about terms of their agreements to poultry growers, along with provide tournament-specific disclosures of inputs to growers who are paid using a poultry grower ranking system.

Once the final rule is published in the Federal Register it can be viewed in its entirety by visiting [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) and searching for document ID AMS-FTPP-21-0044.

USDA's second rule, which addresses inclusive competition and market integrity rules under the Packers and Stockyards Act, has been sent to the White House for review. The third rule is set to be proposed by the end of the year. — **Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor**

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Texture of food determines consumer preferences

Are you a sucker, cruncher or chewer ... maybe even a smoosher? Think about it: How do you taste your food?

Texture has been one of the trends in food product messaging for several years, said Rhonda Miller, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Research Faculty Fellow and meat science professor in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Animal Science.

Miller is applying her mouthfeel research to products in the beef industry to determine how to improve consumption. She conducted a three-phase Mouth Behavior Study involving how all four types of eaters consume beef and steak.

People manipulate food in their mouths differently—some use their molars and chew; some people manipulate the food with their tongue. Chewers and crunchers like to use their teeth to break down foods.

Suckers and smooshers manipulate food between their tongue and the roof of their mouth.

But these texture terms are not universally understood—a “good crunch” to a cruncher is much different to a chewer.

“Most people don’t even realize they are manipulating their food in their mouth,” Miller said.

But Miller does, as she operates the Sensory Science Evaluation Laboratory, conducting research on a variety of meat and food products, evaluating them for flavor and palatability.

The science of mouthfeel

Little is known about what drives people’s preferences, but everyone is born with a preference for texture, Miller said. Texture is a strong driver of rejection of a food item. Researchers are interested in whether texture impacts

purchasing habits regarding food products.

“In general, people have a very low texture awareness,” she said. “They talk about flavor, but not texture, because we have a low awareness of how to verbalize that.”

Miller breaks down the mouthfeels a little more: chewers and crunchers have the same mouth motions, but chewers are less vigorous in their chew and eat food more slowly, while crunchers eat food forcefully. Crunchers are often accused by others of being too loud. They crunch until the food is gone. Smooshers use their tongue and the roof of their mouth; suckers appropriately suck the flavor out before chewing.

She said the U.S. population consists of about 8% suckers, 43% chewers, 33% crunchers and 16% smooshers. The study also showed that suckers reject products at a 45% level, while smoosh-

ers reject at 29%, crunchers at 16%, and chewers at 10%.

Her study revealed that many times, products are made without considering consumers’ sensory behaviors.

“But we know there are some that are: for instance, granola bars—do you want them crunchy or chewy? You can look at the package merchandising and see they know there is a difference in what their consumer wants,” she said.

“So as meat scientists, our concern is, especially when beef prices are high, retailers want to know how they can get consumers to buy beef one more time a month,” Miller said.

Applying the science to beef

Miller found interesting differences in the way chewers, crunchers, smooshers and suckers experience hamburgers and steaks

based on the way the meat was processed prior to cooking.

Ground beef burger patties were rated on descriptive textures such as surface roughness, firmness, connective tissue amount, cohesive mass, particle size and chewiness. Consumers identified factors that influenced their evaluation.

- Chewers must have flavorful burgers, no soggy buns, no rubbery feel or gristle, and the patty can’t be dry or too greasy.

- Crunchers want a burger that is not too dry or raw, not chewy, crumbly or chunky, no soggy bun and the meat can’t stick to their teeth.

- Smooshers want a juicy, well-seasoned patty, no gristle, not congealed or sludgy and no residue feel in their mouth.

- Suckers defined their ideal burger as juicy, not too chewy, but not crumbly, and the seasoning should come before cooking.

The goal of this study was to determine how fat content affected consumers’ perceptions. Chewers and smooshers found higher-fat patties less tough and chewy, with crunchers saying 93% lean beef was too dry. Higher fat was associ-

ated with higher tenderness. For the suckers, it wasn’t about fat content, but rather whether the meat was chopped or ground.

The verdict on chopped beef patties—chewers said lean chopped patties were tougher, crunchers said they were less juicy, smooshers said they were greasy, and suckers said they were dry. The final outcome was that ground beef patties from the chuck are less polarizing across the mouth behavior groups compared to ground beef patties made from other lean sources.

“We learned a lot, and I walked away with an ‘aha’ moment,” Miller said. “The ideal patty is easy to bite and stays together well. Also, we learned that chewers do not like McDonalds.”

When it came to steaks, the higher-marbled steaks were liked by consumers across each mouth behavior group, but for different reasons. The aging process produces big gaps among mouth behaviors.

“We’ve been a little stale in how we as meat scientists think,” Miller said. “This study has helped me think outside of the box—but I don’t have any definitive answers yet.” — **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**

Free NCBA admission for FFA, 4H members

The next generation of agricultural leaders are invited to attend the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) Trade Show at CattleCon24 for free on Friday, Feb. 2, 2024. FFA and 4-H members can receive free trade show admission on Next Gen Ag FFA & 4-H Day, which will include a variety of events and activities for youth and families.

Courtesy of Culver’s, the first 250 FFA members to register will receive complimentary Friday NCBA Trade Show admission. FFA members and alumni are also invited to the Culver’s Blue Jacket Custard Social.

Nationwide is providing complimentary Friday NCBA Trade Show admission to the first 250 4-H members who register. Nationwide is also sponsoring a special Learning Lounge session about careers in agriculture featuring Mary-Thomas Hart, chief counsel at NCBA.

“Youth engagement is critical to the future of America’s rural communities, and industry events like the NCBA Trade Show are great places to learn about career opportunities while building a national network of producers and industry experts,” said Hart. “As a 4-H alumnus, I look forward to meeting 4-H members from across the country who are excited about civic engagement and a future in cattle production.”

NCBA Trade Show attendees can explore more than eight acres of displays and exhibitors offering the latest advancements, from equip-

ment and technology to pharmaceuticals and feed supplements. In addition to finding the right product or service to solve any problem, there are a variety of educational opportunities within the show.

Attendees can stop in the Learning Lounge to enjoy informal, face-to-face talks in an intimate setting right on the trade show floor. The popular Stockmanship & Stewardship Demonstration Arena also returns with stockmanship experts providing low-stress cattle handling demonstrations, Beef Quality Assurance educational sessions, industry updates and facility design sessions. Cattle Chats will feature beef industry educational sessions, and the Chutes and Scales Showdown will offer a side-by-side comparison of equipment where producers can watch cattle run through chutes then get hands-on experience.

Other activities include an appearance by the Oscar Meyer Wienermobile, the “Pups & Popsicles” reception featuring furry friends and refreshing treats, and entertainment throughout the trade show.

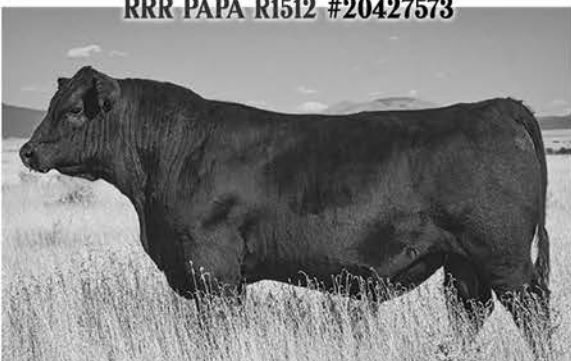
To receive free Friday NCBA Trade Show registration, FFA members must use the code FFACULVERS, and 4-H members, 4HNW. A variety of other registration options are also available. For more information and to register and reserve housing, visit convention.ncba.org. — **NCBA**



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RRR PAPA R1512 #20427573



CED	BW	WW	YW	MLK	PAP	MRB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
8	1.0	74	130	26	0.76	1.03	0.95	87	196	341

Sired by Haynes Papa, R1512 has genetic diversity with balance in a heavy muscled bull.

RRR MAVERICK R0622 #20350515



CED	BW	WW	YW	MLK	PAP	MRB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
9	0.2	68	120	33	0.30	1.58	0.54	62	229	359

Full brother to the \$900,000 Poss Deadwood.

RRR DEADWOOD R6082 #20713173



CED	BW	WW	YW	MLK	PAP	MRB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
14	-0.8	71	120	32	-0.39	1.57	0.52	57	203	320

Amazing what genetics can do as you look at this bull with his calving ease, PAP and muscle.

RRR ERICA DIANA R6002 #20713261



CED	BW	WW	YW	MLK	PAP	MRB	RE	\$M	\$B	\$C
10	1.2	90	153	23	0.91	1.68	0.84	84	241	397

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Student opens 4H livestock opportunities to youths with disabilities

In 2020, Allison Walbrecht, a 16-year-old student at Lincoln Southwest High School in Nebraska, had an innovative idea—one combining her love for agriculture with her desire to provide opportunities to children with disabilities. But, she wondered, would it really work?

Her idea: Create the Unified Showing 4-H Club. In it, a youth with a disability would pair with a teen helper in a “showman and buddy” partnership to develop skill in animal husbandry and ultimately participate in the 4-H livestock exhibition at the Lancaster County Fair.

She had her doubts. “I was so scared they would hate it,” said Walbrecht, part of the fifth generation of a Lancaster County ranch family.

But then Josh Layman, one of the first club participants, arrived at her family’s ranch and dispelled her worries. Josh, who is autistic, ran straight to the lamb pen and plopped down excitedly in the middle of the creatures.

“The lambs came right up to him, and they ate right out of his hand,” said Walbrecht,

now a sophomore animal science major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). “The lambs knew immediately that Josh had this love for them and for livestock. It was beyond anything I could ever describe.”

Josh became an enthusiastic member of the club, and in the years since, his experiences have demonstrated Unified Showing’s life-changing possibilities. He has steadily deepened his knowledge and developed into a first-class showman. This year at the Lancaster County Fair, he was asked to compete in the sheep show—and became the lightweight champion.

“It’s blossomed into an amazing thing,” said Calvin DeVries, the Nebraska Extension 4-H educator for Phelps and Gosper counties. He was the Lancaster County 4-H educator when Walbrecht began the club.

“Everybody’s talking about it, everybody wants to do it,” he said. “I hope it can be something that grows into a statewide event in the soon to near future.”

Gage and Otoe counties,

in addition to Lancaster, now have Unified Showing Clubs, and several counties, including Box Butte, have adopted the curriculum. Unified Showing aims to send an important message about understanding others and expanding people’s opportunities, Walbrecht said.

“Youth getting agricultural experience and the skills that 4-H teaches them—there’s no limit on how valuable that is,” she said.

Unified Showing has come to hold great meaning for Josh and his family, said his mother, Kristi.

“Allison, her mother, Denise, and the Unified Showing buddies have been such a blessing to Josh,” she said.

“Watching him each summer with them and the sheep has brought Josh’s dad and I such joy. And we are so proud of him. Seeing him develop such a positive relationship with them and the sheep is heartwarming.”

Livestock events featuring

Unified Showing members regularly produce a surge of audience attention as club members display their lambs, halt them and answer judges’ questions, DeVries said.

“The 20 minutes they have in the ring—that’s everything to those kids, to get to show their animal at the fair,” he said. “If you were to compare attendance at every event on the livestock side that I’ve witnessed myself, I think the stands have been the fullest at the point when this is taking place,” DeVries said. “You can just see everybody in awe. If there’s one thing that stands out in conversations after the fair, I think it’s always that Unified Showing.”

The club’s benefits also extend to the teen buddies. “Some of the buddies are involved in agriculture and some of them have never seen a livestock animal before either,” Walbrecht said. “It’s incredible to see how they are able to grow as a

person and be part of that. To see the relationship grow between a showman and a buddy is out of this world. A lot of times, they’ll go to school together, so it’s fun to hear about how they see each other in the halls or just how they grow in appreciation for what they have.”

The Unified Showing Club has been around long enough that some members are starting to age out—but Walbrecht is determined to keep the opportunities going for those teens. So, she has started her own business, Unified Agriculture, a direct-to-consumer beef-sales enterprise creating ag-focused employment opportunities for those with disabilities.

Claire Bruns, a Lincoln Southwest student who was one of the club’s first showmen, is the co-founder of Unified Agriculture, which currently has eight head of purebred Angus steers.

Many of the club’s showmen have developed a pas-

sion for livestock raising and care, and it’s important for the ag sector “to let them in the door,” Walbrecht said. “I think every reason why it’s important to have anybody involved in agriculture are the exact reasons—times a thousand—why it’s important to have my kids involved.”

Long term, Walbrecht aims to maintain her Unified Showing and Unified Agriculture initiatives while pursuing a career in marketing for agriculture, to “tell the story” of the beef industry’s benefits for consumers.

Walbrecht’s central reward has been the opportunity to help showmen discover and display their talents, she said.

“But then to be able to say I have been blessed enough to be within an industry my entire life and be able to share that with people who might not have that opportunity—it’s been the greatest joy of my entire life.” — UNL Extension

Water parties ordered to make concessions

KERN RIVER (from page 1)

rulings by the California Supreme Court, the public trust doctrine grants the state the duty to manage resources such as water, and the doctrine “prevents any party from acquiring a vested right to appropriate water in a manner harmful to the interests protected by the public trust.” The environmental groups have standing to enforce the Fish and Game Code statute as they are a member of the public to enforce the public doctrine, he ruled.

Pulskamp continued that the code states a minimum flow standard, which requires dam operators to maintain enough water to keep fish in good condition. It prevents a dam operator from diverting all the water.

in his opinion.

Pulskamp ruled that all parties should determine the amount of river flow to keep fish in good condition as the city has the Water Resources Department and the environmental groups have access to subject matter experts.

The court will ensure compliance is made, and if the two sides cannot come to an agreement, they can ask the court to make a determination regarding compliance or flow rates, or make any determination pertinent to the order.

The environmental groups applauded the decision, stating it was a victory for the river and the community that fought for many years to protect the fish.

“While we still have work to do, this injunction is a monumental stride toward giving the citizens of Kern the

“We are looking forward to collaborating with the city to implement this injunction effectively, aiming for a win-win outcome for everyone involved.”

— Tim McNeely

Pulskamp cited other courts that have determined the legislature has balanced competing claims for water and given priority to the preservation of fisheries.

“For the foregoing reasons, this court must conclude that Plaintiffs have a very high likelihood of succeeding on the merits,” Pulskamp wrote

thriving river they rightfully deserve,” said Tim McNeely, spokesperson for Bring Back the Kern. “We are looking forward to collaborating with the city to implement this injunction effectively, aiming for a win-win outcome for everyone involved.” — Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor

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\$31,918 \$Profit, 4-Star All-Around



-2.50 PAP EPD, 44 PAP Score
\$25,597 \$Profit, #2 Feed-Gain EPD



-1.1 PAP EPD, 39 PAP Score
\$22,972 \$Profit, 4-Star Maternal



-0.8 PAP EPD, 40 PAP Score
\$25,349 \$Profit, 4-Star Maternal



-2.0 PAP EPD, 40 PAP Score
\$18,185 \$Profit, 4-Star Terminal



-0.73 PAP EPD, 39 PAP Score
\$25,471 \$Profit, 4-Star Terminal



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Cost of Thanksgiving dinner down slightly from record high in 2022

Gathering around the table for a Thanksgiving dinner won't take as much of a toll on your pocketbook this year compared to 2022, but the meal still reflects historically high costs. The American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) 38th annual survey provides a snapshot of the average cost of this year's classic holiday feast for 10, which is \$61.17, or less than \$6.20 per person. This is a 4.5% decrease from last year's record-high average of \$64.05, but a Thanksgiving meal is still 25% higher than it was in

2019, which highlights the impact high supply costs and inflation have had on food prices since before the pandemic. The centerpiece on most Thanksgiving tables—the turkey—helped bring down the overall cost of dinner. The average price for a 16-pound turkey is \$27.35. That is \$1.71/lb., 5.6%, down from last year. Farm Bureau "volunteer shoppers" checked prices Nov. 1-6, before most grocery store chains began featuring whole frozen turkeys at sharply lower prices. Ac-

cording to USDA Agricultural Marketing Service data, the average per-pound feature price for whole frozen turkeys declined further during the second week of November. Consumers who had not yet purchased a turkey may have found additional savings in the days leading up to Thanksgiving. "Traditionally, the turkey is the most expensive item on the Thanksgiving dinner table," said AFBF Senior Economist Veronica Nigh. "Turkey prices have fallen thanks to a sharp reduction in cases of avian influenza,

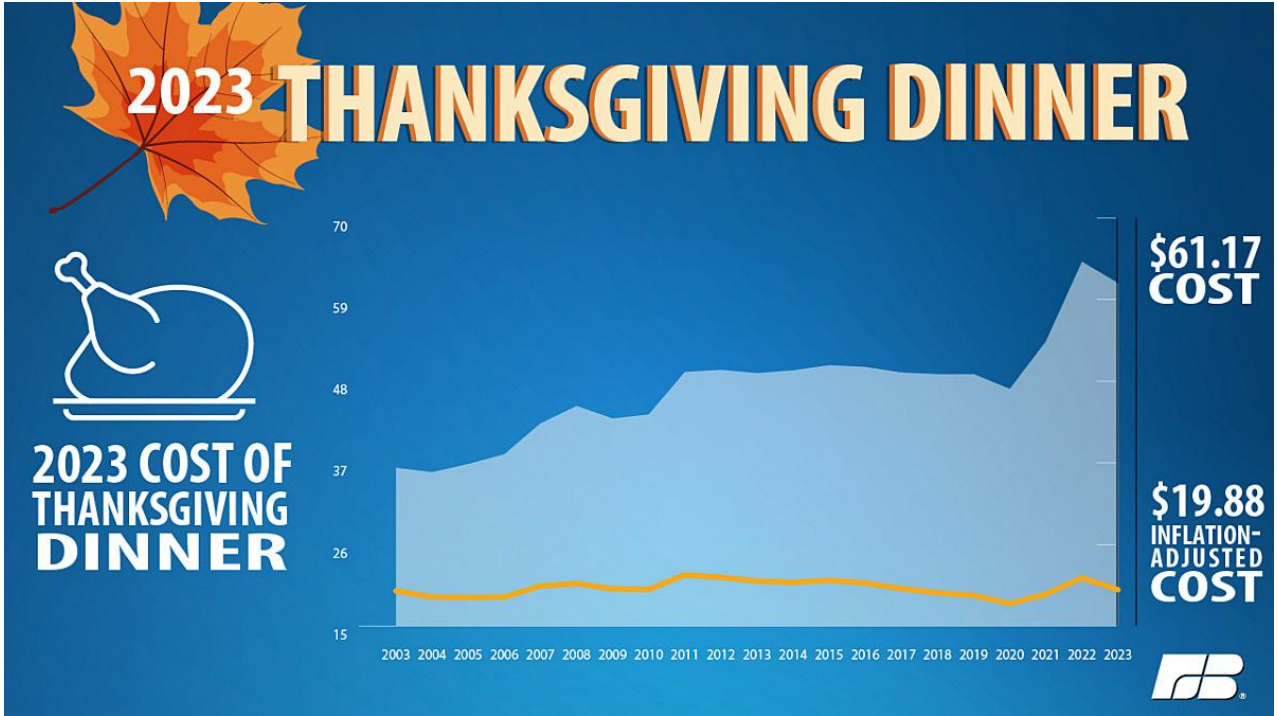
which have allowed production to increase in time for the holiday." The shopping list for Farm Bureau's informal survey includes turkey, stuffing, sweet potatoes, rolls with butter, peas, cranberries, a veggie tray and pumpkin pie with whipped cream, all in quantities sufficient to serve a family of 10 with plenty of leftovers. "While shoppers will see a slight improvement in the cost of a Thanksgiving dinner, high inflation continues to hammer families across the country, including the

nation's farmers," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "Growing the food families rely on is a constant challenge for farmers because of high fuel, seed, fertilizer and transportation costs, just to name a few." "While high food prices are a concern for every family, America still has one of the most affordable food supplies in the world. We've accomplished that, in part, due to strong farm bill programs," Duvall continued. "Although our focus is sharing time with family and friends this Thanksgiving, our thoughts also turn to encouraging Congress to double down on a commitment to passing a new farm bill with a modernized safety net to support those who raise the crops and livestock that supply Thanksgiving dinner and every dinner."

In recognition of changes in Thanksgiving dinner traditions, the Farm Bureau price survey also includes boneless ham, Russet potatoes and frozen green beans, in an expanded menu. Adding these foods to the classic Thanksgiving menu increased the overall cost by \$23.58, to \$84.75. This year's national average cost was calculated using 245 surveys completed with pricing data from all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Farm Bureau volunteer shoppers checked prices in person and online using grocery store apps and websites. They looked for the best possible prices without taking advantage of special promotional coupons or purchase deals. The AFBF Thanksgiving dinner survey was first conducted in 1986. The informal survey provides a record of comparative holiday meal costs over the years. Farm Bureau's classic survey

menu has remained unchanged since 1986 to allow for consistent price comparisons.

- Individual prices**
- 16-lb. turkey: \$27.35 or \$1.71/lb. (down 5.6%).
 - 14-oz. of cubed stuffing mix: \$3.77 (down 2.8%).
 - Two frozen pie crusts: \$3.50 (down 4.9%).
 - Half pint of whipping cream: \$1.73 (down 22.8%).
 - 1 pound of frozen peas: \$1.88 (down 1.1%).
 - One dozen dinner rolls: \$3.84 (up 2.9%).
 - Misc. ingredients to prepare the meal: \$3.95 (down 4.4%).
 - 30-oz. can of pumpkin pie mix: \$4.44 (up 3.7%).
 - 1 gallon of whole milk: \$3.74 (down 2.6%).
 - 3 pounds of sweet potatoes: \$3.97 (up .3%).
 - 1-lb. veggie tray (carrots & celery): \$.90 (up 2.3%).
 - 12-oz. bag of fresh cranberries: \$2.10 (down 18.3%).
- AFBF analysis revealed regional differences in the cost of the meal. The cost for the classic meal was the most affordable in the Midwest at \$58.66, followed by the South at \$59.10, the West at \$63.89 and the Northeast at \$64.38. The expanded meal (classic meal plus boneless ham, Russet potatoes and green beans) was the most affordable in the Midwest at \$81.83, the South at \$82.61, the West at \$87.75 and the Northeast at \$88.43. AFBF also conducts an annual summer cookout survey in advance of the Fourth of July holiday. Be sure to watch for that in late June 2024. — AFBF



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The positive effect of grazing corn residue

Are you looking for additional income from your corn acres or feed for cattle? Grazing corn residue is a low-cost winter feed source for cattle and a source of additional income for farmers without negative effects on the cropland. Many crop producers are concerned that trampling from cattle grazing corn residue negatively affects crop yields. When grazed at proper stocking rates however, small but positive effects on crop production after grazing have been observed. Research conducted at the University of Nebraska has shown that grazing corn residue at the recommended stocking rate does not reduce corn or soybean yields in irrigated fields the following growing season. In fact, a long-term study in eastern Nebraska at the Eastern Research and Extension Center showed 2-3 bushels/acre improvements for soybean production following grazed corn residue in a corn-soybean rotation. This

result was the same whether cattle grazed in the fall from November through January or spring from February through April. A five-year study in western Nebraska measured corn yields from continuous corn after cattle grazing in the fall and found no negative effects on corn yields the following year. It must be noted that minor surface compaction can result from grazing during wet weather. However, this compaction often disappears through the natural wetting and drying and freezing and thawing processes. Additionally, this compaction does not restrict root growth and does not carry over into the following growing season. Grazing corn residue benefits both cattle and crop producers. Corn residue should be viewed as an economical source of winter roughage for cattle that can provide an extra source of income for corn producers that does not affect next year's crop production. — Nebraska Extension

CA governor fast tracks Sites Reservoir project

— Signs SB 149

Taking advantage of an infrastructure streamlining bill, Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) has fast-tracked plans to develop the Sites Reservoir project.

The proposed Sites Reservoir, located northwest of Sacramento, will hold up to 1.5 million acre-feet (an acre-foot

is 325,851 gallons) of water by capturing storm-related runoff and a portion of storm-related flood water north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Signed by Newsom in July, Senate Bill (SB) 149 streamlines efforts for governor-certified projects to avoid California Environmental Quality Act

(CEQA) litigation delays. The courts must decide CEQA challenges, including all appeals, as feasible, within 270 days. According to Newsom's announcement, this will save months, even years, of litigation delays after an environmental review is passed.

"We're cutting red tape to

build more faster," Newsom said. "These are projects that will address our state's biggest challenges faster, and the Sites Reservoir is fully representative of that goal—making sure Californians have access to clean drinking water and making sure we're more resilient against future droughts."

The Sites Reservoir is the first project to receive SB 149 certification. It comes after the Bureau of Reclamation and Sites Project Authority released the project's final environmental impact report and environmental impact statement.

The \$4.5 billion project has received \$60 million from the

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and additional funding from the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act, for a total of \$233.7 million in federal contributions to date. California has funded over \$46 million for the project from early funding and is eligible for another \$875.4 million from Proposition 1 bonds.

Proposition 1, approved by voters in 2014, authorized over \$7 billion in general obligation bonds to fund watershed protection and restoration, water supply infrastructure projects and drinking water protection.

Environmental groups have opposed the project, stating it will have adverse environmental impacts, harm those who rely on rivers and fish for their livelihoods and "create some of the most expensive water in the state, affordable to only a few."

According to the California Water Commission, final permits and approvals are expected in late 2024, with construction to begin in 2025. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

Grazing project helps improve grazing accessibility

Alex Masser raises 25 cow-calf pairs, a bull and eight horses on his farm in Ebensburg, PA. Prior to working with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Alex had about 25 acres of pasture and was utilizing large paddock sizes for rotational grazing. Through his partnership with NRCS, he has fenced animals out of a large ditch on his property, adding an additional 10 acres of pasture. Additionally, he will complete a full watering system this year that allows him to utilize the pastures in the best way possible.

Alex's goal is to have the maximum amount of rest time on every paddock, reaching 90-100 days at times. He moves the cattle as he sees fit and according to what the grass needs. This means he will sometimes move the cattle two or three times a day, depending on where he is for work that day.

Alex runs an ag fencing business as well and travels around to complete projects for other people. He enjoys spreading his

knowledge of what he has learned, what works and what didn't work for him as he helps other cattle farmers in the process.

Alex started with rotationally grazing and moving cattle once or twice a week, but needed more pasture to be able to utilize the rigorous rotational grazing that he now has. There was a lack of forage available for the number of animals that he had, and a lack of water throughout his existing grazing areas and proposed areas. A deep ravine is present that animals had access to, and he had springs drying up on the property. Converting the cropland to pasture has resulted in the springs no longer causing issues for him. However, this did cause some other concerns.

His NRCS contract was originally supposed to have spring developments to provide water for his cattle, and once they dried up, it caused modifications to be made as an alternate source of water for the grazing system was needed. A well was

dug up and only provided about one gallon per minute of flow. An additional modification was done to add a reservoir for the well to be sure that there would be enough water for the cattle in all areas of the grazing system.

Alex has installed the fence and is in the process of completing his watering system to allow the cattle full access to pasture throughout the grazing season. His focus is on having the longest rest periods possible on all pasture fields and he has an attitude of "using cattle to manage the grass, rather than using the grass to provide for the cat-

tle."

These practices have transformed this farm from row crops to lush pastures that, with proper management, will grow deep roots and provide forage for the cattle year round. The farm has been in his wife's family for a long time, but Alex had only raised horses prior to moving to western Pennsylvania. Now, Alex is learning and growing with his farm. He hosted his first pasture walk event in July and hopes for many more to come.

Virgil Wilford, district conservationist for Ebensburg, has been working with Alex since

the partnership began. Virgil spoke on his experience and said, "NRCS has been assisting Alex since early 2021 on this project, developing a grazing plan, scope of work, and submitting an Environmental Quality Incentives Program application. The application was contracted in early August of 2022 and within two weeks, a few of the practices were being installed. He has been great to work with and can't wait to see the finished operation once all the practices have been installed." — **Alicia Huber and Virgil Wilford, USDA**

Webinar offered on backgrounding calves

High calf prices and relatively low grain prices can still make backgrounding economically feasible for 2023. North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension specialists will offer a webinar on backgrounding calf management on Nov. 28 at 7 p.m. CST.

Many ranchers have delayed calf weaning as they switch to April-May calving to avoid late spring snow storms in North Dakota. Traditionally, October calf weaning was common in North Dakota. Now weaning is occurring in November and December with younger, lighter calves.

Backgrounding is the term used when feeding calves after weaning to allow growth, improve animal health, transition to different feed rations and delay marketing. Usually, backgrounding occurs during the cold winter months and does not incorporate grazing.

Feed is the highest cost input for backgrounding, except the cost of the calf.

"Compared to last year, feed prices are lower," said Karl Hoppe, NDSU Extension livestock systems specialist. "Corn price has reduced the feed cost per pound of gain."

He will share more information on rations and cost of gain during the Nov. 28 webinar.

Bryon Parman, NDSU Extension agricultural finance specialist, reminds ranchers that feed costs are only part of the equation. During the webinar, he will compare prices for weaned versus backgrounded calves.

"Market outlook and livestock risk protection are huge drivers for profitable backgrounding," said Tim Petry,

NDSU Extension livestock marketing specialist and a presenter for the webinar. "Delaying marketing of calves is always a good position in an 'up' market, but will we have an 'up' market? Marketing information is helpful in planning."

Another factor for feeding performance is the health of the calves. During the webinar, NDSU Extension veterinarian Jerry Stokka will discuss vaccinations and how to know when other interventions may be needed.

Increasing calf weight gain with implants is cost effective when used correctly during backgrounding.

"Following the label directions is necessary and some new rules have changed the when and what," said Zac Carlson, NDSU Extension beef cattle specialist.

Webinar topics and presenters are:

- Market outlook: What to expect and price protection, Petry.
- Budgets for different classes of cattle, Parman.
- Rations, feed cost and cost of gain, Hoppe.
- Implants: What to use and value, Carlson.
- Calf health: What to do after the vaccinations, Stokka.

To register for the backgrounding webinar, visit ndsua.org/backgrounding23. The webinar will be recorded and available at tinyurl.com/57cd5mey.

For more information, contact Karl Hoppe at 701-652-2951 or karl.hoppe@ndsua.edu, or contact your local agriculture and natural resources Extension agent. — **NDSU Extension**

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Genomic testing for selecting replacement heifers

Most of our spring-born calves are in the weaning process. This is the time many producers are shipping feeder cattle to the market. Some producers are thinking about the next generation of their herd. Heifer retention is a big decision producers must make to ensure they maintain the breeding herd. This decision has traditionally been made based on a physical characteristic, who the dam is, or how much feed is available.

With so many variables at play, it is hard to know how the heifer is going to perform or if she is going to wean a calf when she's a two-year-old. With such a long window and investment to determine the heifer's fate in the herd, producers should take advantage of genomic testing to get accurate information on maternal, performance and carcass traits.

Genomic testing is conducted on a small ear tissue or blood sample, this is compared to proven genetics and provides more predicted progeny data than an EPD. The best time to genomic test to make culling decisions is at birth when you are tagging the new-born, but it can occur at any time. Results from the genomic test can provide:

- Producers with data backed decision makers to improve the genetic potential of the herd.
- The ability to produce efficient animals on pasture.
- The opportunity to sell premium calves or bred heifers to generate more income.

Questions you may be asking yourself:

Which is better, genomic testing or EPDs?

Depending on the trait, a genomic test can replace 10 progeny for a sire with no other progeny. Relying

on EPDs only works if the bull generates progeny. Genomic testing uses the genes of that specific animal and compares them to other animals in a large database to provide predictions of calf's genetics. Genomic labs are offering tests for commercial cattle selection, extending this valuable technology to more producers in the industry.

Will this make me more money?

A genomic test can range from \$15-40, depending on how detailed you want the results. Genomically testing all of your heifers born can be an expensive investment but can pay dividends when you are picking quality heifers that produce quality calves. Keeping a low performing heifer can cost you \$2,304/head in Oklahoma compared to a high-producing heifer. Using genomic testing can identify and select better performing heifers that will pay for themselves in two to three calf crops.

To start genomic results may not seem promising, but with careful bull selection, herd genetics can be improved over time. Cost savings from selling low performing heifers and keeping the ones that will produce a nice calf will pay for the test. Remember, this is a one-time cost, so testing potential replacement heifers first will give you the information you need to make sound keep/cull decisions. Eventually it would be a good idea to test the whole herd and cull animals that don't fit your operation goals.

To calculate the cost for you to retain your heifer(s) for breeding, use the Beef Cattle Research Council calculator at tinyurl.com/3dyhdjs8. — **Chris Johnson and Jacee DeVries, Oklahoma State University**

STORY SHORTS

USDA expands migratory big game pilot

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced it is expanding its partnership to support the conservation of private working lands and big game populations to include Idaho and Montana. Producers in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming can apply for conservation programs through NRCS and the Farm Service Agency for conservation programs offered for grasslands, shrublands and forested lands for the new Migratory Big Game Initiative. "This opportunity is available statewide, but priority areas of Carbon, Hot Springs, Lincoln, Park, Sublette, Sweetwater, Fremont and Teton counties, which were developed in coordination with state wildlife agencies, will be given preference," the release stated. The program builds on the success of the Wyoming pilot program announced in May 2022 and compliments other ongoing conservation efforts, such as those conducted under the Working Lands for Wildlife. Interested producers should contact the NRCS at their local USDA Service Center.

Input sought for local meat grants

USDA has published a draft programmatic environmental assessment (PEA) for the Local Meat Capacity Grants program to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the establishment of the program. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has preliminarily determined there is not a significant impact on the human environment and, as a result, has begun preparing an environmental impact statement. USDA said, "AMS intends for this PEA to establish a framework that will make any future assessments more efficient by placing project-specific actions that may need more analysis into priority tiers." In April, AMS announced it was accepting applications for the Local Meat Capacity Grants program for funding up to \$75 million to support independently owned meat and poultry processing businesses to provide additional and more efficient processing options for local livestock producers.

Grant awards for local food systems

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service announced it awarded \$32 million in grants to expand and strengthen local and regional food systems and increase the availability of locally grown agricultural products. The grants will be distributed through the Local Agriculture Market Program's Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Programs (FMLFPP) and the Regional Food System Partnerships (RFSP) grant program. "These grant programs support local and regional food producers by broadening marketing opportunities, such as farmers markets, local food hubs, and farm-to-institution programs," said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt. "Not only do these channels provide consistent and profitable revenue streams to farmers, they also increase consumer access to fresh, locally sourced foods across the nation." Over 80 grants were awarded through FMLFPP to support producer-to-consumer markets and local and regional food businesses that engage as intermediaries in indirect producer-to-consumer marketing. Through RFSP, funds will support 10 partnerships to increase locally sourced food in institutions such as cafeterias, schools, hospitals and governments.

BLM placed 8,045 wild horses in FY 2023

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced the agency and its partners helped place 8,045 wild horses and burros into new homes in fiscal year (FY) 2023. Of the wild horses and burros placed, 6,220 animals were adopted, 1,798 were sold and 27 were transferred to other government agencies, making it the second-highest number of animals placed into new homes in over 25 years. Over one-third of the animals adopted were adopted through the BLM's Adoption Incentive Program, which offers \$1,000 to the adopter one year after the titling of a wild horse or burro.

\$153M in America the Beautiful grants

The Biden administration has joined with private and public sector partners, including the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, to announce over \$153 million in grant funding for conservation projects through the America the Beautiful Challenge. The 74 grants announced were made possible through the administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, other federal conservation programs and private sources for a total of \$153 million. The grants will enable Tribes, states and other grantees to encourage the development of landscape-level projects that benefit wildlife and conservation to disadvantaged communities. The Department of the Interior (DOI) said approximately 40% of the grants will be awarded to Tribes for projects that incorporate Indigenous knowledge in planning and implementation. "Nature is essential to the health, well-being and prosperity of every community in America," said DOI Secretary Deb Haaland. "Through the President's Investing in America agenda, we have the historic opportunity to invest in locally led, collaborative efforts that can help combat the impacts of climate change, advance environmental justice, and safeguard the lands and waters we all love." A complete list of 2023 grants made through the America the Beautiful Challenge can be found at tinyurl.com/39fd9jh4.

September beef exports trend lower

September beef exports continued to struggle compared to last year's record totals but showed increasing strength in Western Hemisphere markets, according to data released by USDA and compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

September beef exports totaled 98,757 metric tons (mt), down 15% from a year ago and the lowest of 2023, while value fell 12% to \$795.5 million. Exports were lower across the board to major Asian destinations but gained momentum in Mexico, Canada, Central America, Colombia and Africa.

For January through September, beef exports were 13% below last year's record pace in volume (980,100 mt) and down 18% in value (\$7.49 billion).

"U.S. beef continues to face tough sledding in our Asian markets, where weakness in major currencies persist and consumer confidence remains guarded," said USMEF President and CEO Dan Halstrom. "In the past few weeks we have seen several Asian trading partners step up

efforts to stimulate their economies and ease pressure on consumers. In the meantime, bright spots for U.S. beef continue to emerge in the Western Hemisphere, led by strong demand in Mexico."

Lamb exports lower overall

September exports of U.S. lamb totaled 245 mt, down 9% from a year ago, while export value fell 11% to \$1.17 million. Exports trended higher to the Caribbean, including in-

creases to Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and the Leeward-Windward Islands, but were lower to Mexico and Canada. For January through September, lamb exports were down 5% to 1,872 mt, valued at \$9.5 million (down 10%).

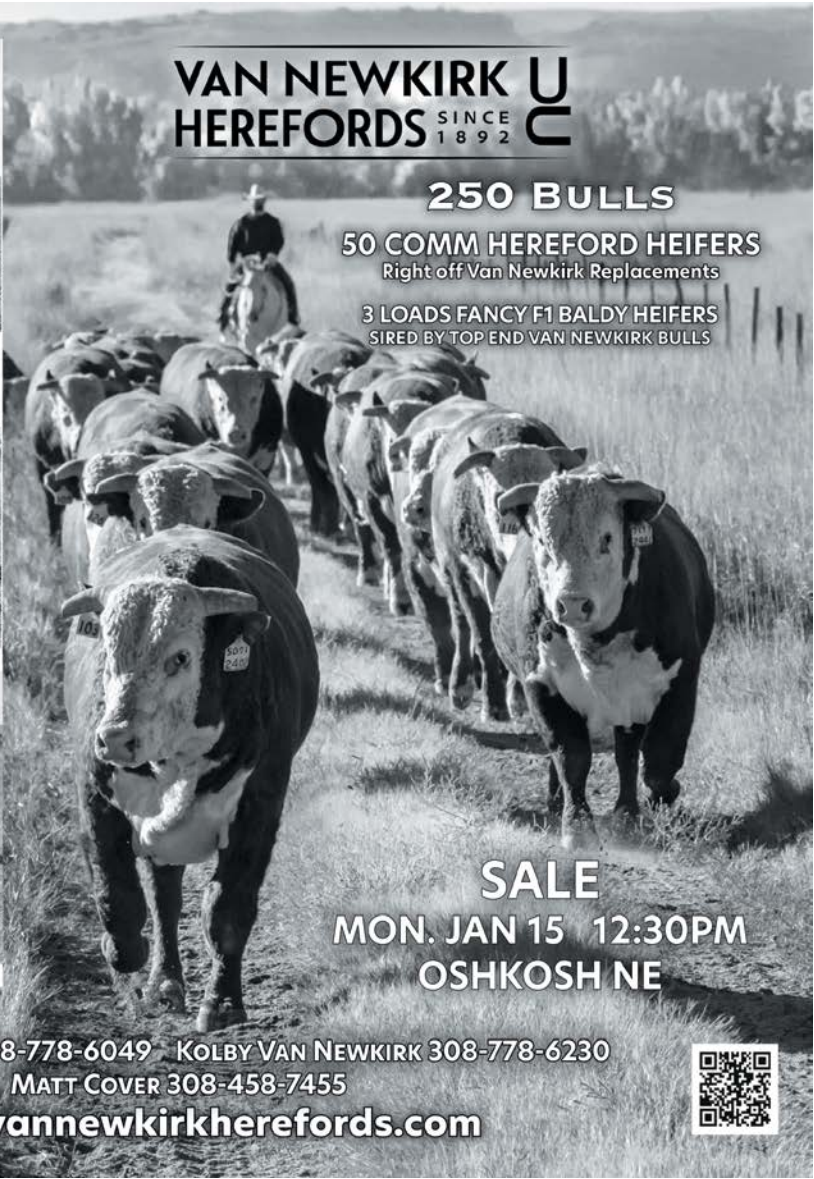
A detailed summary of the January-September export results for U.S. beef, pork and lamb, including market-specific highlights, is available from the USMEF website, usmeff.org. — **USMEF**



Lot 1
BW .5 WW 57 YW 82 M 34 M&G 63 REA .36 IMF .37 CHB 154

Lot 14
BW 3.3 WW 65 YW 95 M 35 M&G 68 REA .69 IMF .32 CHB 150

Lot 137
BW 3.0 WW 61 YW 100 M 38 M&G 68 REA .55 IMF .18 CHB 127



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Artificial intelligence creates opportunities, risks in ag space

An executive for Deere & Co. and one from a venture capital firm each pitched using the farm bill to help more farmers purchase and subscribe to precision agricultural tools during a hearing on artificial intelligence (AI) in agriculture.

The U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee held a hearing Nov. 14 looking at the opportunities and risks for farmers and food security from the rapid acceleration of AI in agriculture.

Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), chairwoman of the committee, opened the hearing by saying, "American agriculture has always been at the forefront of innovation, and artificial intelligence has the potential to revolutionize the way we grow, harvest and distribute our crops." She added, "In this rapidly evolving landscape, it is imperative that we strike a balance between harnessing the benefits AI offers while addressing the concerns it raises, such as data privacy, workforce implications and equitable access to technological advancements."

After a few more sentences, Stabenow said her entire statement up to that point was generated by AI. "This just shows us how real this technology and its implications can be," she said.

While praising the potential, Stabenow also cautioned against "placing vast amounts of data in the hands of a few private companies," saying it could accelerate consolidation in agriculture, harm minority farmers or small farmers and that high costs could put precision technology "out of reach for everyone except the largest operations."

Sen. John Boozman (R-AR), the committee's ranking member, highlighted the "tremendous opportunities" from AI technology ranging from monitoring livestock for diseases to precision agriculture, such as targeted fertilizer and pesticide application, as well as inspecting systems to identify sources of leaks in irrigation equipment.

"AI has the potential to dramatically increase efficiency and minimize waste, resulting in improved yields and profitability," he said.

Still, Boozman also pointed out potential risks. He

said new regulations may be needed to protect consumers, "especially when it comes to the use of applications that handle sensitive data."

Other senators also raised separate concerns about how AI will affect farm labor and the overall workforce in agriculture. Another challenge is ensuring there is broadband access in rural America to allow these new technologies to work.

AI acceleration in ag

Mason Earles, an assistant professor at the AI Institute for Next Generation Food Systems, University of California-Davis, said advances in AI are accelerating quickly. Talking about software development, he said it is a lot faster to go from concept to product now than just five years ago. For example, today it might only take a single day to develop a model that highlights the differences between beneficial versus destructive moths, Earle said. Five years ago, a group of software developers would have taken significantly longer to develop such a tool.

"What that ends up meaning is we get more products to market faster for agricultural AI startups and industry," Earles said, though he added that AI still requires data and human supervision.

Agricultural experts are still needed to connect with the software developers, for instance.

"Even in the last week or two weeks, we've seen a huge change in how humans and AI communicate," Earles said.

Earles said he opened an app and offered a scenario of an Iowa farmer who found a small worm infesting a soybean field. AI immediately came back with five options, but the app also asked if an image was available. "This is just like talking to a person, right?" he said. "So, I showed an image of what I know to be this type of worm and it correctly identified this type of worm."

Earles then suggested AI had the ability to become "AI advisors" to farmers, but the models still need to be trained to give proper recommendations.

Deere "see and spray"

Jahmy Hindman, senior vice president and chief technology officer for Deere & Co., said Deere currently connects more than 650,000 machines globally using cellular networks. That allows data collected during planting and harvesting to be sent to cloud storage for analysis.

Hindman and others indicated some of the challenges right now remain connectivity problems in rural America including in the field.

Hindman also talked about Deere's "see and spray technology" that uses cameras to scan for weeds using artificial intelligence and spray only where needed. The technology has been used in roughly 275,000 acres of corn, soybeans and cotton to reduce 2 million gallons of herbicide use.

"But reducing herbicide use is just the start of AI's potential in agriculture," Hindman said, pointing to other technologies such as autonomous tillage.

Pitching for farm bill funding

Hindman then called on Congress to include proposals in the farm bill such as the Precision Ag Loan Act and the Producing Re-

sponsible Energy and Conservation Incentives and Solutions for the Environment Act. Both bills would open up USDA's loan programs and conservation cost-share programs to allow more farmers to buy precision farming equipment.

"U.S. farmers would benefit greatly from incentives to help them acquire the precision technology needed to do their jobs more efficiently and sustainably," Hindman said.

Multiple senators referenced the two different bills and need to consider adding them to the farm bill.

Sanjeev Krishnan, chief investment officer for S2G Ventures in Chicago, said federal funding is needed to help scale these technologies in precision agriculture. Such funding would help "de-risk" the scaling of new technologies, "but also create longer-term decision-making focused on soil health and sustainability," Krishnan said. "So, I think it's a really important area for public policy to get involved in to give farmers not just the tools, but the financing to increase yield per acre and profit per acre."

Looking at outside investment in agriculture, Krishnan said venture capital in agricultural technology has drawn more inter-

est but still lags behind other industries. That investment has gone from less than \$1 billion a decade ago to peaking at about \$12 billion a year, but right now is closer to \$6 billion year-to-date. Agriculture remains a small slice of the venture capital space. Only about 3% of venture capital is invested in "ag tech," he said.

Privacy protection

Todd Janzen, an attorney in Indiana, also is an administrator for the Ag Data Transparent Organization, a group that certifies companies that are transparent about how they collect and use farmers' data. Janzen pointed to various tools farmers already use and the data collected from farmers in the process. Janzen noted farmers are sensitive about sharing their data, "and they have a good reason to be so."

Farmers lack trust in the cloud-based platforms and have privacy concerns about their proprietary data. A lot of agreements also are "overly complex," making it difficult for farmers to understand the kind of data they must share. Farmers should know when they sign up for AI platforms if their information is going to be used to train the AI platform and what is in it for farmers.

"Farming is their livelihood so I think they have a reason to be skeptical of just turning over all of this information about their livelihoods over to third parties," Janzen said.

Jose-Maria Griffiths, president of Dakota State University in Madison, SD, emphasized some of the risks of artificial intelligence still come down to a set of algorithms that are subject to hacking and cybersecurity attacks. She talked about Ukrainian farmers' tractors basically becoming frozen in place right before Russia launched its attack on Ukraine nearly three years ago as one example. The tractors' systems had been attacked.

As AI evolves, that data spreads across the sector, Griffiths said. That also increases the "threat landscape" as networks develop more points where the system can be attacked, she said. More work is needed to protect agricultural data through tools such as encryption, she said. That goes beyond machinery to the seeds, their treatments and inputs for seeds, she said.

"You can't separate any new technology these days from cybersecurity," Griffiths said. "The two have to go together." — **Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor**



COMING EVENTS

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

Nov. 29-Dec. 1 – Attendee registration and the hotel room block for the 2023 California Cattlemen's Association/California CattleWomen Convention in Sparks, NV, is now open. Details: calcattlemen.org/convention2023. **Nov. 29-Dec. 1** – The 53rd Annual American Gelbvieh Association Convention will take place at the Omaha Marriott Downtown at the Capitol District in Omaha, NE. Register today to reserve early bird pricing at gelbvieh.org. More info, call 303-465-2333 or email info@gelbvieh.org.

Dec. 13-14 – The 28th Range Beef Cow Symposium will take place at The Ranch in Loveland, CO. There also will be a pre-symposium Beef Quality Assurance training on Dec.

12. Early registration closes Nov. 25. To register, visit tinyurl.com/4ky7xp8m or contact Ryan D. Rhoades at 970-217-0239 or rhoades@colostate.edu.

Jan. 10-13 – Registration is now open for the 2024 American Sheep Industry Association Annual Convention at the Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel in Denver, CO. Early bird rates apply through Dec. 8 and all online registrations must be completed by Dec. 18. Details: tinyurl.com/33x26zdm.

Jan. 21-Feb. 2, 2024 – Mark your calendars for the 2024 Cattle Industry Convention & National Cattlemen's Beef Association Trade Show, which is heading to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL. Additional information is available at convention.ncba.org.



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AAA 20412543

CED	BW	WW	YW	ACTUAL PAP
3	12	54	108	49

HT PROFOUND 2023
AAA 20407356

CED	BW	WW	YW	ACTUAL PAP
11	-0.8	58	103	45

HT COW MAN 2142
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MARKET NEWS

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

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 11/16/2023	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	178.18	▼ 180.81	152.02
CME Feeder Index	228.76	▼ 237.01	175.39
Boxed Beef Average	294.72	▼ 299.42	257.10
Average Dressed Steers	281.97	▼ 286.65	241.94
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,379	▼ 1,381	1,384
Weekly Slaughter**	618,000	▼ 632,000	671,000
Weekly Beef Production***	514.2	▼ 525.0	558.2
Hide/Offal Value	18.74	▲ 12.65	14.86
Corn Price	4.75	▲ 4.68	6.68
* 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	
November 10	6,306	296.75	192	332.38	1,117	305.16	1,901	298.26	776	272.54	2,321	257.51
November 3	7,059	299.84	204	337.64	1,198	308.51	2,052	301.94	932	277.75	2,673	258.08
October 27	6,975	301.00	185	341.42	1,295	309.63	1,981	303.38	812	281.03	2,703	260.88
October 20	6,698	298.62	230	337.70	1,234	306.06	1,993	299.98	815	277.11	2,426	261.91
Cutouts												
FED BOXED BEEF												
DATE	CHOICE		SELECT		COW BEEF CUTOUT		50% LEAN		90% LEAN			
Nov 16	294.72		267.65		221.28		N/A		273.23			
Nov 15	296.33		267.85		227.70		63.31		284.28			
Nov 14	295.67		267.88		226.97		62.43		N/A			
Nov 13	297.85		269.24		226.30		66.04		283.00			
Nov 10	300.46		267.42		229.19		67.63		287.87			

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle						
	11/10	11/13	11/14	11/15	11/16	High* Low*
Dec.	17418	17493	17585	17778	17475	19183 15388
Feb.	17465	17525	17688	17878	17533	19633 15310
Apr.	17693	17745	17880	18048	17710	19975 16853
Jun.	17203	17250	17373	17503	17220	18270 17203
CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle						
	11/10	11/13	11/14	11/15	11/16	High* Low*
Nov.	22973	23073	23005	22943	22938	26813 18755
Jan.	22643	22830	22900	23090	22750	26833 22750
Mar.	22863	23008	23138	23350	23010	25723 23858
Apr.	23233	23365	23498	23730	23370	24613 23080
*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		531	1,456	178.18		
Live FOB Heifer		788	1,359	177.84		
Dressed Del Steer		5,432	985	281.97		
Dressed Del Heifer		1,222	847	282.00		
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK						
Live FOB Steer		1,785	1,490	180.81		
Live FOB Heifer		1,509	1,337	181.45		
Dressed Del Steer		1,517	949	286.65		
Dressed Del Heifer		942	848	287.58		
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR						
Live FOB Steer		12,429	1,512	152.02		
Live FOB Heifer		7,613	1,300	154.41		
Dressed Del Steer		5,366	976	241.94		
Dressed Del Heifer		1,476	867	241.52		
NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: NOVEMBER 12						
	Domestic		Imported			
Forward Contract	26,450		3,621			
Formula	252,782		1,708			
Negotiated Cash	77,547		1,075			
Negotiated Grid	50,376		2,684			
Packer Owned	11,853		N/A			
Total	419,008		9,088			
SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS			FORWARD BEEF SALES			
Delivery Month			Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,855		
Nov. '23			Neg. Sales 21+ days	798		
Dec. '23			Formula sales	3,616		
Jan. '24			Forward contract sales	36		
Feb. '24			Domestic sales	5,754		
Mar. '24			NAFTA Exports	114		
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			N/A	N/A		
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs			N/A	N/A		
Ontario Auctions						
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs			171.10	+0.23		
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs			N/A	N/A		
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs			84.12	-4.03		
*Price comparison from one week ago.						
Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Friday, November 3, 2023						
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario			
501-600 lbs	279.25	281.91	263.06			
601-700 lbs	258.05	260.27	243.80			
701-800 lbs	244.89	246.32	227.57			
801-900 lbs	228.46	228.38	200.57			
Heifers:						
401-500 lbs	260.21	255.20	217.63			
501-600 lbs	239.06	234.74	217.67			
601-700 lbs	226.65	224.24	203.41			
701-800 lbs	218.77	215.96	176.83			
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		
	11/6/23	10/30/23				
Feeders	29,883	33,356	1,026,479	682,027		
USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE						
November 16, 2023						
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary						
Receipts EST: 9,400		Week Ago Act: 9,750		Year Ago Act: 7,950		
Columbus, NM		Santa Teresa, NM				
Compared to Tuesday, steer calves and yearlings sold steady. Heifers steady. Trade and demand moderate. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 300-600 lbs.		Compared to last week, steer calves and yearlings sold steady. Heifers steady. Trade and demand moderate. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 300-600 lbs.				
Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2				
300-400 lbs		300-400 lbs				
220-230		220-230				
400-500 lbs		400-500 lbs				
210-220		210-220				
500-600 lbs		500-600 lbs				
200-210		200-210				
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2				
300-400 lbs		300-400 lbs				
260-270		260-270				
400-500 lbs		400-500 lbs				
240-250		240-250				
500-600 lbs		500-600 lbs				
220-230		220-230				
(slide 10 cents on steers and heifers basis 300 lbs. All sales fob port of entry.)						

Selected Auction Week Ending November 16, 2023					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	
November 10 Blackfoot, ID	N/A		260-295 240-278	240-305 215-275	220-288 215-249	205-258 190-231	195-224 190-222	190-217 185-216	82-97 93-108		
November 9 Burley, ID	975		357-375 258	120-374 252-265	214-303 240-252	224.75-255.50 204			82-96 102-105		
No report available Emmett, ID											
November 11 Eugene, OR	1,017		215-278 170-228	190-261 160-210	190-258 165-208	186-253 143-190	154-202 110-137	155-199	88-115 100-111	590-1,485	
November 13 Madras, OR	1,334		300-340 275-300	275-339 275-322	270-298 167-265	240-261 203-229	205-227		90-116 110-129		
No report available Vale, OR											
No report available Davenport, WA											
November 9 Toppenish, WA	2,100		280*	300-310* 232-245*	202.50-264* 205-220*	180-210* 170-180*			86-117 111-128.50	1,260-1,400	
November 9 Orland, CA	3,135			220-310 200-282	200-271 180-244	190-245 170-226	180-220 160-209	170-205	100-116 95-134	1,700-2,800 1,700-2,950	
November 15 Escalon, CA	N/A								75-100 90-135		
November 6 Famoso, CA	405		250-300 180-210	250-302 185-247	250-275 185-220	220-250 180-210	190-213	175-181	100-140 110-133		
No report available Galt, CA											
November 14 Turlock, CA	998		250-295 220-261	245-289 214-241	235-270 207-233	227-245 187-208	180-200 170-190	170-190 160-185	94-120 108-132		
November 7 Salina, UT	3,147	305-400 285-335	310-430 280-385	280-370 255-305	240-302.50 215-277.50	225-252.50 202.50-242.50	180-234 172.25-213	159-221 120.50-195.75	79.55-104 113.50-167		
November 13 Iowa	8,544		250-355 241-295	260-330 220-267	242.50-300.50 215-275	237-285 200-253	223-258 196-206	202.50-238 177-215.50	76-122 100-140		
November 14 Miles City, MT	5,796	330	340.50-382.50 280-320	297.50-347.50 263-307	262-321 221-281	251-273.50	217	196.50-211	69-98 91-112.50	1,200-1,275	
November 15 Bassett, NE	2,870		292 277	317-338 261-274	265-332 251-267.50	251-267 220-251	254.50-266.50	237.50-246 194-223.25			
November 11 Ericson, NE	3,139		330-341 294-315	282-336 253-292	277-314 240-261.50	249.50-285 227-253	256	222			
No report available Imperial, NE											
No report available Kearney, NE											
November 10 Lexington, NE	4,184		349 278-281	293-312 245.50-276	256-311 230-258.50	240-259.50 220-240	249-250.25 220				
November 9 Ogallala, NE	5,019		347-390 262.50-328	310-367.50 260.50-283	260-320 236.50-270	236.50-264 219-235	237.50-240 220.50-231	202-220.50			
November 9 Valentine, NE	3,525		316-327.50 274-295	317-341 267-276	275-317 254-270	251-272 246	239.50				
November 10 Herreid, SD	7,487		333-349 246-297	292-242.50 254-291	259-297.50 231.50-281.50	246.75-268.75 219-239	248-259 223	233.75-245.75 210-220.25			
November 8 Torrington, WY	6,110		365-380 299-320	306-377 269-314	272-318 249-273	260-278 231-240	232-238 225	221-229 190-219			
November 10 Wilcox, AZ	1,918	307-344 222-257.50	286-332.50 224-259	229-290 213-244	212-235 192-215	192-210 156-188.50			75-106 90-120	1,325-2,275 1,100-1,300	
November 13 Colorado	22,357	352.50-355 301	340-365 279-300	299-345 261-297.50	237.50-313 222.50-266	217.50-274 207.50-248	205-240 199-226	169-230 165-210	61-150 69-150	750-2,950 825-2,825	
November 11 La Junta, CO	1,799									1,825-2,550 1,060-2,825	
No report available Loma, CO											
November 15 Dodge City, KS	2,871	322.50-334 277.50	272.50-321 267.50-300	273-316 240-296	246-285 220-257	220-257 203-245	225.25-232 201-216	210-229 176-210	81-110 81-120	2,100 1,100-1,975	
November 16 Pratt, KS	2,000		280	299 236-251	217-234	219-225.50 210.50-212.50	210-237.25 200-211	205.50-235 198-200.50			
November 9 Salina, KS	2,661		314 241-254	251-274 226-258	243-260 226-247	218-259 205-238	205-230 208-217.25	210-236 190-212			
November 16 Clovis, NM	2,641	241-292	285-332 244-312	245-290 222-271	224.50-269 210-244	205-240 200-229.50	162-222 184-219.50	102-220 176			
November 15 El Reno, OK	10,352	350	325-370 265-310	290-350 227.50-285	245-325 213-297.50	224-280 204-252	224-233 209-225	209-241 170-214			
November 15 McAlester, OK	2,680		299-337 248-276	279-325 232-318	255-292 223-256	224-285 196-236	203-235 176-194	183 150-171	74-101 94-112	1,125-2,050 1,025-1,750	
November 14 Oklahoma City, OK	9,169	362 307	319-375 233-301	270-360 219-283	245-319 206-259	219-260 201-232	202.50-233.50 192-222	166-224 155.50-205			
November 10 Cuero, TX	1,488	250-300 204-300	255-325 217-295	234-300 204-280	227-250 200-244	209-241 186-230	191-209 173-195		74-100 90-129		
November 10 Dalhart, TX	1,831	232-400 236	310-325 241-295	240-310 215-300	235-285 205-251	218-239 210.50-229	206-219 185-214	200-210 189-195	70-107.50 101-124		
November 9 San Angelo, TX	1,290			287-293 247.50-254	260-274 222-225	239-242 221-229	235-239 193-199		89-107 105-130	1,475	
November 9 Tulia, TX	1,468	277	300 237-256	251.50-303 215-229	242-262 203-219	224-249 191-194	191-232	220	85-95 100-110		
November 13 Alabama	13,722		252-295 208-237	240-290 193-242.50	220-265 192-225	200-250 187-216	190-232.50 182-200		77-107 88-124	700-2,300 640-1,650	
November 14 Lexington, KY	1,614	242-265* 190-217.50*	262-320* 190-222*	238-279* 190-226*	231-254* 186-227*	230-240* 169-220*	224-229* 158-21775*	130-198* 126-150*	84-114 106-134	975-1,300	
November 13 Joplin, MO	7,443		300-330 265-275	280-312.50 245-265	258-286 223-247	232-263 215-231	236.50-245.50 216	203.50-236 209-209.75			
November 13 Tennessee	8,724	205-305* 170-285*	210-310* 175-275*	205-290* 162.50-260*	194-276* 144-251.50*	187-260* 126-230*	170-241* 135-209*	145-227* 93-195*	70.50-113 77-133	1,275-2,225 540-1,575	
November 13 Virginia	4,922		165-261 161-219	191-271 122.50-219	185-279 155-223	160-246 125-202	162.50-220 146-189	117.50-224.50 120-181			

The cattle markets this fall and later

Figure 1. Stocker Steer Prices, Fall 2023
Oklahoma Auctions, M/L #1, \$/cwt.



Feeders sell lower in the country

MARKETS (from page 1)

- Forward contract net purchases: \$174.97.
- Negotiated grid net purchases: \$189.12.

On a dressed basis:

- Negotiated purchases: \$285.54.
- Formula net purchases: \$297.05.
- Forward contract net purchases: \$284.97.
- Negotiated grid net purchases: \$297.90.

Slaughter through Thursday totaled 495,000 head, a couple thousand head more than a week earlier. Total slaughter for a week earlier is projected at 618,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending Nov. 4 was 636,337 head. The average steer dressed weight was 927 lbs., 1 lb. below the prior week.

Boxed beef prices were lower over the week. The Choice cutout lost about \$5 to close at \$294.72, and the Select cutout lost about \$2 to close at \$267.65.

"All of the slaughter volumes are well below the prior year by 5-6% yet box prices have struggled for a foundation troubled by declines in beef exports and increases in beef imports," the Cattle Report wrote on Thursday.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures followed the path of live cattle futures, trading higher over the week but experiencing losses on Thursday. The November contract gained 37 cents to close at \$229.37, and the January contract gained \$2.58 to close at \$227.50.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index lost more than \$8 to close at \$228.76.

"The October placement number is expected to be 6% over last year's extremely low placement number," the Cattle Report wrote of the upcoming Cattle on Feed report. "Any placement number under 10% over last year would be bullish given the low 2022 October placement number, but

futures act like another leak of the report."

Corn futures closed higher, with the December contract up a few pennies to \$4.74 and the March contract up 11 cents to \$4.93.

Kansas: Winter Livestock in Dodge City sold 2,162 head Wednesday. Compared to the previous auction, feeder steers 400-950 lbs. sold \$6-10 lower. Feeder heifers 400-925 lbs. sold \$4-8 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 773 lbs. sold between \$225.25-232, averaging \$227.88.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards sold 8,000 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers sold \$5-10 lower with feeder heifers \$7-12 lower at the mid-session. Benchmark steers averaging 765 lbs. sold for \$243.

Nebraska: Tri-State Livestock in McCook sold 1,910 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, steers sold \$10-20 lower and heifers were \$12-24 lower. A group of steers averaging 700 lbs. sold for \$214.

New Mexico: Roswell Livestock Auction in Roswell sold 1,264 head on Tuesday. Compared to a week earlier, steer calves 300-400 lbs. sold \$5-8 higher, 400-500 lbs. sold steady to \$8 higher and 500-600 lbs. sold \$2-7 higher. Heifer calves 300-350 lbs. were \$2 higher, 350-400 lbs. sold \$10 lower, 400-500 lbs. were \$1-5 higher and 500-600

lbs. sold sharply lower. Feeder heifers 600-650 lbs. were \$10 higher.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 8,750 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers and heifers were very lightly tested. A few feeder steers sold \$5-10 lower, and a few feeder heifers sold \$8-12 lower. Lighter weight long-weaned calves suitable for wheat sold \$10-15 higher, and heavier weight and unweaned or short-weaned calves sold \$4-8 lower.

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Regional Cattle Auction in Worthing sold 3,987 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, light steers 550 lbs. were steady and 600-750 lbs. sold \$11 lower. Yearling steers 850 lbs. were steady, and 950 lbs. sold \$8 lower. Light heifers 500-550 lbs. sold \$4-8 higher, 600 lbs. sold steady and 650-750 lbs. were \$10-12 lower. Yearling heifers 800 lbs. traded \$8 lower, and 850 lbs. were steady. Benchmark steers averaging 730 lbs. sold between \$216-239, averaging \$225.29.

Wyoming: Torrington Livestock in Torrington sold 6,110 head on Wednesday. Compared to the previous sale, steer calves traded steady and heifer calves traded \$2-5 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 783 lbs. sold from \$232-238, averaging \$233.68. — **Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor**

Cattle producers are taking advantage of the much stronger cattle prices this fall. In numerous meetings this fall, producers have indicated they are selling the majority of steers and heifers; in part to capitalize on higher prices, and in some cases, because of continuing drought and pasture and hay limitations which are making additional sales necessary.

Reported national feeder cattle volumes (auction, direct and video/internet) are up 5.6% year over year since Labor Day, with the majority in September (contributing to the large September feedlot placements). The total volume in October was up 2.4% but was down year over year at the end of October and beginning of November.

In Oklahoma, feeder cattle auction volumes have been down 13.7% year over year this fall. However, there are indications of another month of large placements in the next Cattle on Feed report.

Bigger feeder cattle (600 pounds and higher) prices have fallen about 9-10% since September, mostly under the weight of the

huge market correction in feeder and live cattle futures. Despite the recent decrease, prices for these heavier feeder animals are still 33-35% higher compared to the same time last year.

Stocker calf prices in Oklahoma have continued to show strength this fall (Figure 1), helped, no doubt, by recent rains and improved wheat pasture prospects. Producers looking to graze wheat are expecting to have wheat pasture, albeit later than usual in many cases. The latest Crop Progress report pegs Oklahoma wheat planting and emergence just slightly behind the average pace and rates the crop at 49% good to excellent. Stocker steer prices in Oklahoma are averaging 45-50% higher year over year.

Strong feeder prices can also impact live cattle imports. Mexican feeder cattle imports, which were at the lowest level since 2008 last year, are up sharply in 2023. The January-September total Mexican cattle imports were up 45.9% year over year. However, the current year-to-date total is down 3.6%

from the 2017-21 average for the first nine months of the year. Imports of Canadian feeder cattle are down 24.6% for the year to date from last year and are down 35.7% from the 2017-21 average level.

Nationally, beef cow slaughter is down 12.6% year over year for the year to date. However, the decrease has been smaller, down just 8.4% year over year in the last eight weeks. The current pace of beef cow slaughter suggests a 2023 herd culling rate of 12%, above the long-term average rate of about 10%, and indicates additional herd liquidation.

Taken together, the feeder marketings, feedlot placements and slaughter data all suggest that the industry continues to extract animals from the system in a manner that indicates continued liquidation. Cattle numbers generally will continue to get tighter in 2024. When heifer retention and herd rebuilding begin, cattle numbers will get significantly tighter very quickly. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

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WEDNESDAY WEEKLY SCHEDULE

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

FALL FEEDER SALES

NO SALE: NOVEMBER 22
HAPPY THANKSGIVING
NOVEMBER 29
DECEMBER 13

SPECIAL COW SALE

DECEMBER 6

FEATURING 200 PAIRS
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CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAY
DECEMBER 20
LAST SALE OF 2023

UPCOMING WESTERN VIDEO MARKET SALES
DECEMBER 5 - RENO, NV



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.)

Dec. 1 – Angus/Talon Youth Educational Learning Program student intern applications are due Dec. 1. Details: bit.ly/AngusFoundationTalonProgram or JBoester@Angus.org.
Dec. 1 – The American Angus

Association has five internship positions for the summer of 2024 in the fields of marketing, publications, communications, events and junior activities, and Angus Genetics Inc. Details: angus.org/careers.

Jan. 10 – Applications for the Angus Foundation's spot at the Young Cattlemen's Conference (YCC) can be found at tinyurl.com/3etp6sdu. YCC is a program developed for up-and-coming cattle producers who are interested in seeing every part of the supply chain from production to marketing, to Capitol Hill.

USMEF Conference concludes with elections, logistics update

2023

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Livestock Link

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) Strategic Planning Conference wrapped up Nov. 10 in New Orleans, LA, with the election of a new officer team. Randy Spronk, a pork and grain producer from Edgerton, MN, is the new USMEF chair.

A past president of National Pork Producers Council and Minnesota Pork Producers Association, Spronk is president and managing partner for Spronk Brothers Holding, which includes operations that produce pork and feedgrains along with feed milling and delivery. Spronk is also part of a group of producers that purchased a former Hormel plant and is marketing pork products under the label of Wholestone Foods.

"It's phenomenal to see how different organizations work together through USMEF to export U.S. beef, pork and lamb worldwide," Spronk said. "We bring all the sectors together into one room and discuss trade. What are the obstacles? What are the things we've done right?"

Spronk has participated in numerous trade missions, beginning with a 1999 journey to Japan with then-Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura. He made his first return to Japan this year as part of a USMEF delegation that also visited South Korea. Spronk has also promoted U.S. red meat products in several Latin American markets while on trade missions and during USMEF product showcases in Colombia, Panama and the Dominican Republic. These experiences have driven home the importance of market diversification, ensuring that the U.S. meat industry is not overly dependent on a few major destinations.

Diversification, which Spronk says is the key to maximizing export value, is one of the "Three Ds" he emphasized in his address to USMEF members: *diversification* of export markets and *differentiation* of high-quality U.S. red meat, to expand global demand.

"Having multiple markets will bring more value back to our producers," Spronk said. "We also have to differentiate what we do in the United States from others so that we have long-term growth in our markets. I think we have a strong story to tell on sustainability and it can help differentiate us, because of how responsibly we produce our feed and livestock. It's a story that nobody else in the world can replicate."

Spronk succeeds outgoing USMEF Chair Dean Meyer, a corn, soybean and livestock producer from Rock Rapids, IA. Steve Hanson, a cattle rancher from southwestern Nebraska who is also president of the Nebraska Cattlemen, will serve as USMEF chair-elect in the coming year. The vice chair is Jay Theiler, executive vice president of corporate affairs for Agri Beef, based in Boise, ID.

The newest USMEF officer is Secretary/Treasurer David Bruntz, a farmer and cattle feeder from Friend, NE. Bruntz farms with his brother and nephew, raising corn and soybeans along with fed cattle. His past leadership roles include serving as chair of the Nebraska Corn Board, president of the Nebraska Cattlemen and National Cattlemen's Beef Association regional vice president. Bruntz has also served on the USMEF Executive Committee, representing the feedgrains sector.

Friday's closing business session also included an update on transportation and logistics issues that impact U.S. pork, beef and lamb exports. Mark Szakonyi, executive editor for the Journal of Commerce, reviewed the Federal Maritime Commission's

(FMC) progress in implementing the Ocean Shipping Reform Act. The legislation passed in mid-2022 but the FMC is still working through key rulemakings mandated by Congress on detention and demurrage billing practices and the circumstances in which ocean carriers may refuse cargo. Szakonyi also previewed upcoming negotiations on a new labor contract for East and Gulf Coast longshoremen.

Greg Shimonek, director of key accounts for Americold Logistics, informed USMEF members about the growing number of options for moving meat and other refrigerated food products by rail. To date these services have been limited to transport within the U.S. market and to coastal ports for export, but Americold is working with Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railroad and regulatory officials to accommodate direct transport to destinations in Mexico. This type of service is of increasing interest to exporters due to heightening congestion at some U.S.-Mexico border crossings.

Thursday's activities included meetings of USMEF's standing committees, where USMEF international staff and other speakers updated attendees on issues of particular interest to the pork, beef, exporter and feedgrain and oilseed sectors. USMEF members also toured the Port of New Orleans and nearby cold storage facilities operated by Lineage Logistics.

Also on Thursday, USMEF presented its Michael J. Mansfield Award to former ambassador to China and longtime Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad. Bill Westman, who had a long career with the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service and later directed international affairs for the North American Meat Institute, received the USMEF Distinguished Service Award. More details on these awards are available from the USMEF website, usmef.org. — USMEF

TSCRA testifies on unsecure border burdens

Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) Director J.R. Ramirez recently testified before the House Subcommittee on Border Security and Enforcement and the Subcommittee on Counterterrorism, Law Enforcement and Intelligence at a hearing titled "The Real Cost of an Open Border: How Americans are Paying the Price."

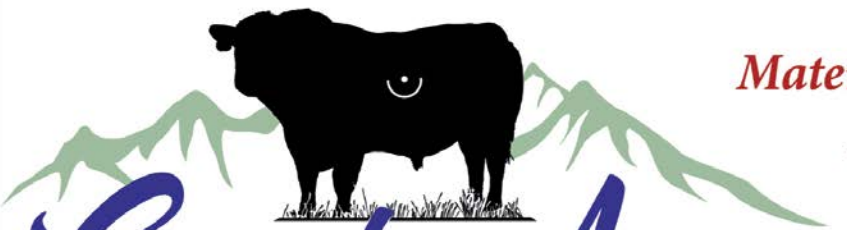
Ramirez, a fifth-generation rancher in Zapata County, TX, provided a snapshot into the financial challenges facing ranchers along the Southern border and highlighted his own personal experiences.

"Damaged fences and gates, high speed chases, break-ins, stolen vehicles and trespassing are daily occurrences," Ramirez testified. "Ranchers like me on the front lines are bearing financial burdens that are threatening our ability to operate profitable businesses."

Ramirez reported more than 30 documented cases of breached fences or gates by a vehicle in the last 12 months with repairs ranging in cost from \$1,000-10,000 each. This financial burden is amplified when cattle escape into other pastures or neighboring ranches, leading to delays in breeding, heightened risk for disease outbreaks and difficulty implementing grazing management plans.

"We consistently deal with droughts, inclement weather, increased input costs and ever-fluctuating cattle prices," Ramirez said. "Those factors alone make ranching a costly endeavor and challenging livelihood, but when you add in the cost resulting from the current state of our border, it is almost impossible to make a profit."

Ramirez called on Congress to do better for ranchers, families and citizens paying the price for an unsecure border. — TSCRA



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Your cattle forage analysis results are in: Now what?

Harvested forages, like hay, are a significant investment for cattle nutrition programs. The USDA currently estimates hay to cost \$209 per ton as of September, up 28.3% from 2011. These prices can vary widely depending on your location and the demand for forage.

No matter your overall cost of buying or baling hay, it is vital to get a grasp on the quality of your forages to know if your cattle are getting what they need. Before you start feeding forage, get it sampled and then create a balanced nutrition program.

"While it can seem like a daunting task, understanding a few key values can make results analysis easier," said Chad Zehnder, Ph.D., cattle nutritionist with Purina Animal Nutrition.

Here are a few values to pay attention to when you get your cattle forage analysis back:

Dry matter (DM)

Dry matter is the simplest measurement to understand, and it is critical to know. Analysis results should always be viewed on a DM basis to remove moisture variation, especially when comparing values between forage for cattle.

"Dry matter can tell you quite a bit about how forages were harvested and how they may transform during storage," said Zehnder. "You'll also know your risk for mold and yeast growth."

Crude protein (CP)

Crude protein is a calculation of nitrogen content multiplied by 6.25. In most cases, CP can be used to balance protein in cattle feed

rations.

"Stored cattle forage that has undergone significant heating is an exception. In this instance, the analysis should account for bound protein or unavailable protein, defined as ADF-CP, where ADF is acid detergent fiber. This value is used to report available crude protein, which can be used to balance cattle feed rations for protein," said Zehnder.

Energy content

Values used to interpret energy content are often the most confusing. The only real determination of a feed's energy value is through feeding trials. Therefore, a forage's energy is estimated based on measurable values in a feed-stuff.

"ADF and neutral detergent fiber (NDF) are laboratory procedures used to predict forage digestibility and intake potential," said Zehnder. "Forage intake potential decreases as forages mature and NDF fractions increase. Likewise, cattle forage digestibility decreases as ADF fractions increase."

ADF content is the best laboratory measurement of forage energy value. ADF is used in prediction formulas to calculate energy value expressed as net energy gain and net energy maintenance (NEm). These values can be used to balance cattle feed rations for energy requirements.

"Relative feed value (RFV) is often reported and considers forage dry matter digestibility and dry matter intake," said Zehnder. "RFV is not used to balance diets but can be useful in com-

paring multiple lots of hay or to get a basic idea of forage quality."

Minerals

Consider macromineral content (Ca, P, K and Mg). Concentrations can vary, but knowing forage macromineral content can help estimate supplementation requirements; for example, if you've experienced winter tetany in the past and want to estimate magnesium supplementation needs.

While macromineral analysis can be helpful, micromineral analysis is more expensive. It's also difficult to get a representative sample of microminerals because forage content varies by field and season.

"That's why providing quality mineral year-round is important, so you ensure your cattle are receiving the nutrients they need," said Zehnder.

Final thoughts

A good rule of thumb for balancing a cow ration is to aim for the following daily nutrition requirements for a 1,400-pound cow during the middle of pregnancy on a dry matter basis:

- 23 lb. of DM.
- 7.1% CP.
- 0.44 Mcal/lb. of NEm.
- 0.19% calcium.
- 0.15% phosphorus.

These values will need to be adjusted based on a variety of factors, including animal age, stage of production, current body condition, animal size, environment, etc.

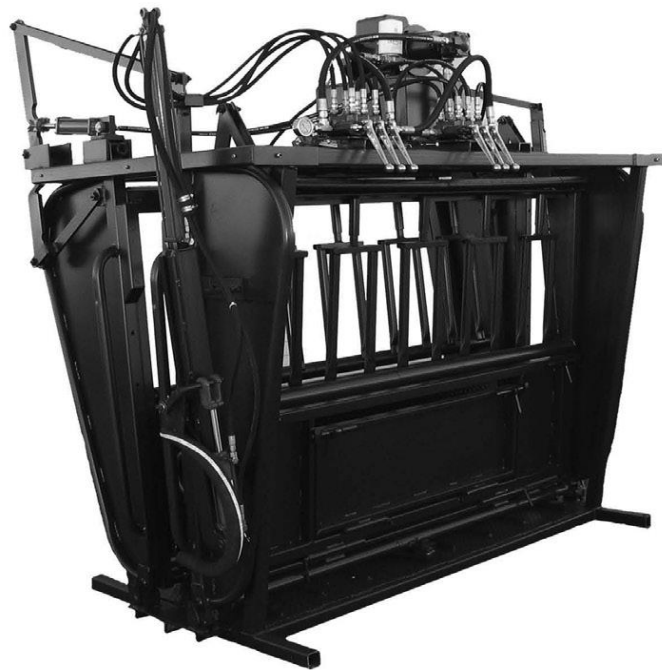
"Well-interpreted results can be used to fine-tune cattle diets, meet cattle requirements and optimize performance. But don't interpret alone," said Zehnder.

Bring your feed supplier, nutritionist and agronomist to the table. A whole-farm

approach can help determine the best way to use your cattle forage today and

help you raise better forages in the future. — **Purina Animal Nutrition**

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How corn stalk bales can be a feed resource

When eating a salad, imagine how it might taste if all there was to eat were the stems of the plant. Not very appealing, right?

Similarly, cattle that are offered corn stalk bales to eat in place of hay also often find that to be less palatable, said Phillip Lancaster, beef cattle nutritionist for the Kansas State (K-State) University Beef Cattle Institute.

Speaking on a recent "Cattle Chat" podcast, Lancaster said there is an increase of corn stalks being baled as a feed resource this year because of the shortage of hay and the decrease in pastures available for fall grazing due to a lack of moisture.

"Traditionally, grazing cattle in the late fall on harvested corn fields can be an option to extend the grazing season because cattle can eat the husks and leaves, which have a decent nutritional value," Lancaster said. "However, this year farmers are baling up the corn stalks after they've harvested the crop, which leaves only the stalks that are lignified and indigestible."

He said that when cattle are

offered a corn stalk bale, they will consume the resource at a higher proportion of stalks than they would if they were just grazing the field.

"Producers feeding those bales will have quite a bit of wastage unless they grind them and add them to a mixed ration," Lancaster said.

For producers who need to use this as a feed resource, Lancaster said they need to supplement the cattle with protein.

He added: "For cows going into their third trimester this winter, their maintenance requirements are higher so along with protein they will also need to be supplemented with energy as well."

Additionally, there is a potential health concern with bales that were made from a failed corn crop when fed to the cattle, Lancaster said.

"If nitrogen fertilizer was put on the crop in the spring and then it failed, the plant may still be holding that nitrogen," Lancaster said.

In that case, producers will need to test the bales for nitrates, according to Lancaster. — **K-State Research and Extension**

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SALE REPORTS

TD ANGUS FALL FEMALE SALE

Nov. 10, North Platte, NE
259 total registered females \$4,553
1 Flush 27,500
1 Pregnancy 70,000
460 Commercial bred heifers 2,829
150 Commercial bred cows 2,833
Auctioneers: Joe Goggins and Ty Thompson

TOPS—Open heifers: F047 Pick by Sunbeam; to RS Angus, Dodge City, KS, \$20,000. T/D Ruby of Tiffany 3321, 2/6/23 by Myers Fair-N-Square M39; to Baalman Angus, Menlo, KS, \$19,000. **Bred heifers:** T/D Blackcap Empress K23, 1/27/22 by B/R MVP 5247; to Christie Tipps Ranch, Miami, TX, \$20,000. T/D Primrose 2141, 1/18/22 by HCC Whitewater 9010; to EZ Angus Ranch, Porterville, CA, \$19,000. **Flush:** Baldrige Isabel F047 and bull of buyer's choice; to EZ Angus

Ranch, Porterville, CA, \$27,500. **Pregnancy:** Heifer pregnancy by T/D Doc Ryan 049; to Herbster Angus Farms, Falls City, NE, \$70,000, 1/2 interest. — **TY GRO-SHANS**

ARNTZEN ANGUS RANCH FEMALE SALE

Nov. 10, Lewistown, MT
284 AI-bred heifers \$2,688
329 Bull-bred heifers 2,210
87 Bred cows 2,798
88 Replacement heifer calves 1,681

Auctioneer: Kyle Shobe
TOPS: 45 bred heifers, AI'd to calve 2/9/24; \$3,050. 28 bred heifers, AI'd to calve 2/11/24, consigned by Heartland Cattle; \$3,000. 21 bred heifers, AI'd to calve 2/9/24, consigned by; \$2,950. 42 bred cows, due 4/1/24; \$2,850. 52 bred heifers, AI'd to calve 2/24/24, consigned by Matt

and Jamie Wickens; \$2,800. 23 bred heifers, natural bred to calve 3/1/24; \$2,800. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

MONTANA RANCH BULL SALE

Nov. 11, Big Fork, MT
95 Total registered bulls \$9,158
8 Bred heifers 4,343
40 Commercial bred heifers 2,425
Auctioneer: Roger Jacobs
Sale Manager: Dave Mullins

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TOPS: Montana Kingdom 2294, 7/9/22 by Square B Atlantis 8060; to Mohnen Angus, White Lake, SD, and Elmore Cattle Co., Hillsborough, OH, \$40,000, 2/3 interest. Montana Killebrew 2049, 2/12/22 by Square B Atlantis 8060; to Wes Kilmurry, Atkinson, NE, \$35,000, 2/3 interest. Montana Kosar 2021, 2/15/22 by Sitz Stellar 726D; to Chundy Land and Cattle, Haiglar, NE, \$30,000. Montana Klondike 2212, 6/20/22 by

Sitz Logo 8148; to Talkington Angus Ranch, Belfield, ND, \$20,000. Montana Koufax 2029, 2/9/22 by Square B Atlantis 8060; to Mike Smith, Harrison, NE, \$20,000. Montana Kelly 2036, 2/10/22 by Sitz Stellar 726D; to C Bar Angus, Malta, MT, \$20,000. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

MOHICAN WEST BULL SALE
Nov. 13, 2023, Laurel, MT
38 Total bulls \$3,520
Auctioneer: Joe Goggins

TOPS: Mohican The Boss 24K, 1/31/22 by NJW 78P 88X Cowboss 199B ET; to Walt Ranch, Jordan, MT, \$7,250. Mohican 54K, 2/11/22 by WLKR MW JM Decree 333 G91 ET; to Davenport Ranch, Forsyth, MT, \$6,500. TDP Masterplan 183F; to Jarrett Hadley, Baker, MT, \$5,250. Mohican 4013 41K, 2/6/22 by Innisfail WHR X651/723 4013 ET; to Madison Peck, Balentine, MT, \$5,000. — **DEVIN MURNIN**



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Dec. 5-6 — PAYS Blue Ribbon Female Sale, Billings, MT
Jan. 11, 2024 — Leachman Cattle, Bull Sale, Online
Jan. 23-27 — Red Bluff Bull & Gelding Sale, Red Bluff, CA
Feb. 3 — Klamath Falls, Bull & Female Sale, Klamath Falls, OR
Feb. 17 — Great Basin Bull Sale, Fallon, NV

ANGUS

Nov. 21 — Paint Rock Angus, Bull Sale, Hyattsville, WY
Nov. 25 — Vermilion Ranch, Bull Sale, Billings, MT
Nov. 27 — Spring Cove Ranch, Female Sale, Bliss, ID
Nov. 27 — Stevenson's Diamond Dot, Production Sale, Hobson, MT
Nov. 28 — Jorgensen Land & Cattle, Bull Sale, Winnemucca, NV
Nov. 28 — Stevenson Angus, Bull Sale, Hobson, MT
Nov. 29 — Beef Country Breeders, Bull Sale, Columbus, MT
Dec. 2 — Hollow Top Angus, Bull Sale, Ramsay, MT
Dec. 2 — Reverse Rocking R, Bull Sale, Maxwell, NM
Dec. 5 — Zumbrunnen Angus, Bull Sale, Lusk, WY
Dec. 7 — Sitz Angus, Bull Sale, Harrison, MT
Dec. 8 — KG Ranch, Bull Sale, Three Forks, MT
Dec. 9 — Gaugler Angus, Bull Sale, Judith Gap, MT
Dec. 13 — Shipwheel Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Chinook, MT
Dec. 15 — Bobcat Angus, Production Sale, Great Falls, MT
Dec. 16 — Currant Creek Angus, Bull Sale, Roundup, MT

Jan. 11, 2024 — Foundation Angus Sale at NWSS, Denver, CO
Jan. 26 — Ruggles Angus, Bull Sale, McCook, NE
Jan. 27 — Baldrige Performance Angus, North

Platte, NE
Feb. 9 — Bar KD & Lambert Ranch, Bull Sale, Alturas, CA
Feb. 9 — Burgess Angus, Bull Sale, Homedale, ID
Feb. 9 — Dutch Flat Angus & CX Ranch, Bull & Female Sale, Lewiston, ID
Feb. 10 — EZ Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Madras, OR
Feb. 12 — BB Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Connell, WA
Feb. 13 — South Mountain Cattle, Bull Sale, Caldwell, ID
Feb. 14 — Meadow Acres, Bull Sale, Stanfield, OR
Feb. 16 — Rees Brothers, Bull Sale, Morgan, UT
Feb. 17 — Great Basin Bull Sale, Fallon, NV
Feb. 19 — Teixeira Cattle, Bull Sale, Terrebonne, OR
Feb. 19 — Weaver Ranch, Production Sale, Fort Collins, CO
Feb. 20 — Kessler Angus, Bull Sale, Milton-Freewater, OR

CHAROLAIS

Feb. 20, 2024 — V-A-L Charolais, Bull Sale, Vale, OR

HEREFORD

Dec. 1 — Western States Hereford Sale, Reno, NV
Jan. 15, 2024 — Van Newkirk Herefords, Bull & Female Sale, Oshkosh, NE
Feb. 2 — Elkington Polled Hereford Ranch, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Feb. 9 — CX Ranch & Dutch Flat Angus, Bull & Female Sale, Lewiston, ID
Feb. 9 — Lambert Ranch & Bar KD, Bull Sale, Alturas, CA
Feb. 10 — BB Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Connell, WA
Feb. 13 — South Mountain Cattle, Bull Sale, Caldwell, ID
Feb. 16 — Rees Brothers, Bull Sale, Morgan UT

RED ANGUS

Dec. 6 — Big Sky Elite, Female Sale, Logan, MT
Dec. 8 — 5L Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sheridan, MT
Dec. 11 — Cross Diamond, Bull Sale, Bertrand, NE
Dec. 15 — 5L Red Angus, Bull Sale, Sheridan, MT

SALERS

Dec. 4 — Jacobsen Ranch, Bull Sale, Great Falls, MT

SIMANGUS

Dec. 2 — T-Heart Ranch, Female Sale, La Garita, CO
Dec. 2 — Western Choice Simmental, Female Sale, Billings, MT
Jan. 29, 2024 — APEX Cattle,

Bull, Bred Heifer & Fall Pair Sale, Dannebrog, NE

SIMMENTAL

Jan. 29, 2024 — APEX Cattle, Bull, Bred Heifer & Fall Pair Sale, Dannebrog, NE

STABILIZER

Dec. 2 — Leachman Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Loma, CO
Dec. 9 — Leachman Cattle, Bull Sale, Alma, NE
Dec. 9 — Leachman Cattle, Bull Sale, San Saba, TX

COMMERCIAL

Nov. 27 — Spring Cove Ranch, Female Sale, Bliss, ID
Jan. 25, 2024 — Red Bluff, Replacement Female Sale, Red Bluff, CA

HORSE

Jan. 23-27, 2024 — Red Bluff Bull & Gelding Sale, Red Bluff, CA

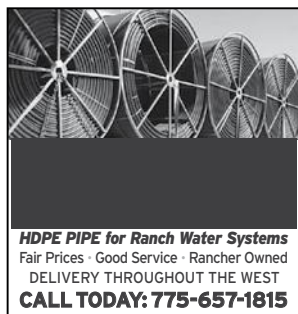
DOG

Jan. 23-27, 2024 — Red Bluff Stock Dog Sale, Red Bluff, CA

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Zoetis Preconditioned Feeder Sale
Lunch at 11 am
Feeders start selling at noon

Sale Dates
Nov 20 21st Century Female Sale
Dec 4 Feeder Sale Third Party Verified
Dec 11 Bred Cow Sale

Field Reps:

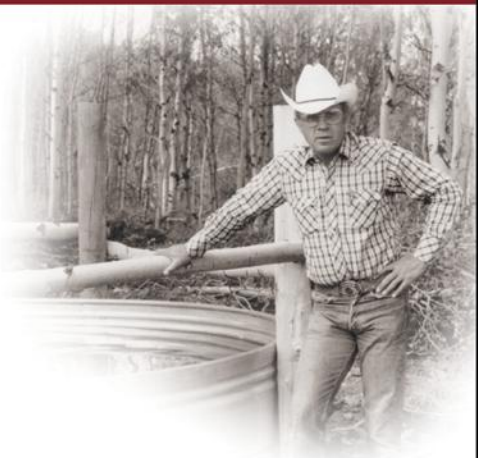
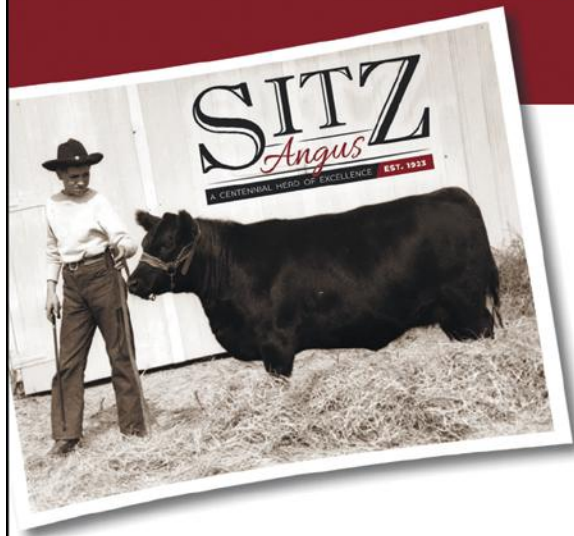
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SITZ Centennial 11702



Lot 100

Reg #20306671 S: SITZ Logo 8148 MGS SITZ Stellar 726D
CED 4 BW 0.4 WW 83 YW 139 SC 0.48 HP 18.2 Milk 26
MARB 0.44 REA 0.84 \$M 90 \$C 285 PAP 39

58th Annual Fall Bull & Female Sale

December 7, 2023

11:00 AM (MST) | Harrison, MT

462 PAP-Tested 2-Year Old Bulls

310 Home-Raised, SITZ-Bred Heifers

110 SITZ-Bred, Running-Age Cows

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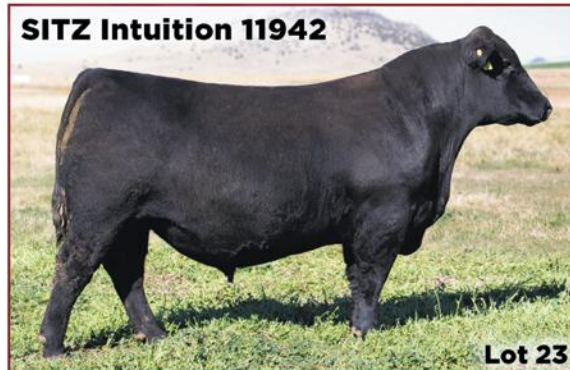
SITZ Continuity 8732



Lot 3

Reg #20321078 S: SITZ Continuity
CED 7 BW 0.4 WW 78 YW 133 SC 1.57 HP 22.2
Milk 30 MARB 0.85 REA 0.88 \$M 112 \$C 312

SITZ Intuition 11942



Lot 23

Reg #20306689 S: SITZ Intuition
CED 6 BW 0.9 WW 80 YW 132 SC 0.31 HP
20.0 Milk 24 MARB 0.93 REA 0.71 \$M 104 \$C 313

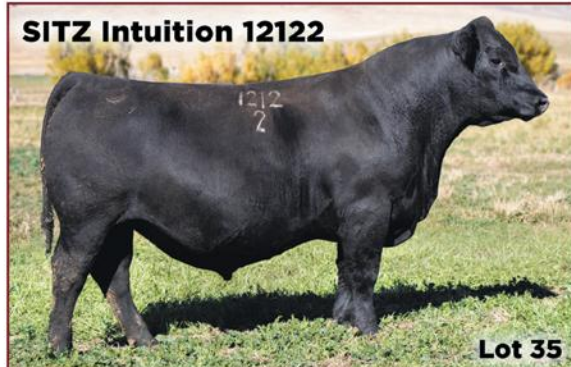
SITZ Continuity 10142



Lot 45

Reg #20306589 S: SITZ Continuity
CED 7 BW 0.3 WW 79 YW 139 SC 0.66 HP
17.8 Milk 29 MARB 0.52 REA 0.72 \$M 88 \$C 276

SITZ Intuition 12122



Lot 35

Reg #20306698 S: SITZ Intuition
CED 10 BW -0.1 WW 76 YW 128 SC 0.16 HP 17.4
Milk 35 MARB 1.15 REA 0.81 \$M 84 \$C 312

SITZ LT Resilient 10412



Lot 1

Reg #20307895 S: SITZ Resilient 10208
CED 12 BW -0.6 WW 79 YW 133 SC 1.09 HP 17.5
Milk 28 MARB 0.60 REA 0.95 \$M 92 \$C 268 PAP

SITZ Resilient 10202



Lot 53

Reg #20306594 S: SITZ Resilient 10208
CED 3 BW 2.7 WW 78 YW 129 SC 1.52 HP 14.0
Milk 20 MARB 0.66 REA 0.69 \$M 67 \$C 242

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