

### INSIDE WLJ

**CATTLE SNIPING** — Court dismisses Cattle Growers' legal challenge over USFS' aerial shooting of feral cattle. Page 3

**LOCKOUT** — House oversight hearing questions USFS' preparedness for wildfire season. Page 11

#### A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"Campaigns to require special labels for foods made with genetically-engineered (GE) crops have been sporadic and unsuccessful in the past, but the issue may have reached a critical mass following a ballot initiative in California. Previous state-level attempts to label GE foods—most recently in Vermont and Connecticut—have cropped up and died in short succession. Some on both sides of the California initiative say that state's economic and agricultural influence could force federal agencies to create national labeling standards this time around," read the June 25, 2012, *WLJ* cover story.

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# Greens appeal decision to revoke American Prairie bison permits

## —Bison to be removed from allotments

Environmental groups are pushing back against the Trump administration's early May decision to revoke American Prairie's bison grazing permits on allotments in Phillips County, MT. American Prairie and Western Watersheds Project each filed an appeal in early June challenging the decision, which found that American Prairie's bison did not meet the definition of livestock authorized to graze on public lands under the Taylor Grazing Act.

On May 8, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) reversed a 2022 decision that permitted American Prairie to graze bison on the Telegraph Creek, Box Elder, Flat Creek, Whiterock Coulee, French Coulee and Garey Coulee allotments in Phillips County. The agency determined that American Prairie manages its bison as wildlife used primarily for conservation and ecological restoration rather than production, and therefore was in-

eligible for the grazing permits.

American Prairie said the BLM's decision terminated the group's more than 20 years of bison grazing

on federal lands and about 940 bison are required to be moved by the end of September.

In their June 4 appeal, American

Prairie argued that the BLM unlawfully interpreted the Taylor Grazing

**See BISON SUIT on page 7**



Adobe Stock

American Prairie and Western Watersheds Projects appealed the Bureau of Land Management's decision to revoke American Prairie's grazing permits for bison in Phillips County, MT.

## Additional screwworm cases confirmed in US

### —Six cases identified

Since the first detection in South Texas on June 3, additional cases of New World screwworm (NWS) have been detected in the U.S.

As of June 11, six cases of NWS were identified in the U.S. A total of four cases have been reported in beef calves in Texas, along with one goat in Texas and one dog in New Mexico.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, alongside state partners in Texas and New Mexico, continues to lead an aggressive response to New World screwworm in the United States," USDA said.

In Texas, two NWS cases were reported in calves in Zavala County, two cases were reported in La Salle County and one case was reported in a goat in Gillespie County. In New Mexico, one case

was reported in a dog in Lea County.

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) set 12-mile infested zone quarantines in Gillespie, Kerr, Kimble, La Salle, Webb, Uvalde and Zavala counties following the detections. Animals in the infested zones may not move outside the zone without prior authorization and a certificate following inspection and treatment. Unauthorized movement is subject to administrative penalties and/or criminal prosecution.

Following the detection in New Mexico, the New Mexico Livestock Board issued an emergency declaration allowing for additional state and federal assistance to combat the pest. The case was believed to be an isolated incident, but as the dog's recent travel and

**See SCREWWORM on page 5**

## BOR, Lower Basin states sign water-sharing MOU

### —Agencies will move water 'on paper'

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and six water agencies from California, Nevada and Arizona have agreed to explore new ways of sharing water supplies across state lines through desalination, water recycling and other alternative sources. Officials said the effort could help improve long-term water reliability throughout the Colorado River Basin as drought and growing demand continue to strain the system.

The memorandum of understanding (MOU), signed at the

Carlsbad Desalination Plant on June 1, opens the door for discussions about sharing water across state lines using existing infrastructure, offering a potential way to improve water reliability as supplies continue to tighten across the Colorado River Basin.

"This agreement brings partners together across state lines to explore desalination, water recycling, and new ways to move water where it's needed most," said BOR Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Andrea Travnicek. "We see this as another great opportunity to open doors to solutions that can strengthen the entire Colorado River Basin."

According to BOR, the concept would allow agencies to move water "on paper" through exchanges and transfers using existing infrastructure.

The agreement does not approve any specific project or change existing water rights. Instead, it creates a framework for agencies to work together as they explore the legal, policy and operational issues involved in future interstate water exchanges.

Under the MOU, water agencies will explore the use of desalinated seawater and recycled water in pilot

**See WATER SHARING on page 12**

## Futures rebound on stronger market sentiment

Despite the news of additional New World screwworm detections in the U.S., the market traded higher over the week.

Live cattle futures found several-dollar gains. The June contract gained \$4.85 to close at \$251.47, and the August contract gained \$4.82 to close at \$242.67.

"So far, the market has digested the news of the past week and decided it was not bearish," wrote Robin Schmahl, DTN contributing analyst, in his early Thursday comments. "The bearish aspect would be if beef demand were to decline."

Cash trade through Thursday totaled only about 4,000 head. There was no trend noted for live steers. Dressed steers sold for \$402.

"Packers disappeared mid-week hoping to show their needs were not immediate nor critical," the Cattle Report wrote on Wednesday.

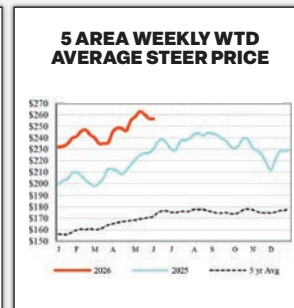
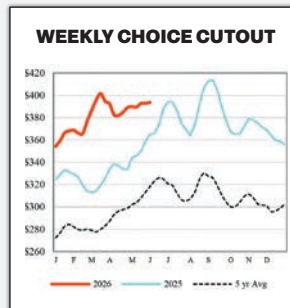
Cash trade for the week ending June 7 totaled 78,391 head. Live steers averaged \$256.62, and dressed steers averaged \$404.74.

Slaughter through Thursday totaled 421,000 head, compared to 428,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for a

week earlier is expected at 533,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending May 30 was 451,309 head. The average steer dressed weight was 973 lbs., 5 lbs. lower than the previous week.

Boxed beef prices closed lower over the week. The Choice cutout lost \$2.65 to close at \$393.21, and the Select cutout lost more than \$11 to close at \$373.25.

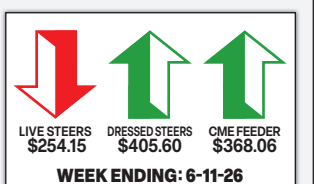
PERIODICAL: Time Sensitive Priority Handling



### Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures gained their momentum

**See MARKETS on page 9**



# COMMENTS

## Preserving marketing heritage



GROSHANS

Recently, I attended the Livestock Marketeers Hall of Fame Banquet in St. Joseph, MO, held at the headquarters of the American Angus Association. Each year, I look forward to this event because it provides an opportunity to reconnect with fellow marketers, reflect on the history of our profession and celebrate the people who have dedicated their lives to serving the livestock industry.

The Livestock Marketeers is a nonprofit organization devoted to preserving the history and advancing the future of the livestock marketing profession, and this annual gathering serves as a reminder of the important role the organization continues to play.

Each summer, the Hall of Fame Banquet is held in conjunction with the Marketeers Classic Golf Tournament, bringing together livestock marketing professionals from across the country. Founded in 1965, the Livestock Marketeers was established as a fraternal organization for individuals involved in livestock marketing.

Members include fieldmen, auctioneers, sale managers and other leaders who represent a wide variety of livestock-related businesses. While the industry has changed dramatically over the decades, the organization's mission of promoting fellowship, professionalism and service remains as strong today as it was when the group was founded more than 60 years ago.

One of the most encouraging developments within the organization has been the creation of its scholarship program. Established in 2024, the program was designed to support students who demonstrate an interest in entering the livestock marketing industry. In just a short time, six scholarships have already been awarded to deserving young people who represent the next generation of livestock marketers.

Investing in future leaders is essential to ensuring the continued success of the industry, and the scholarship program reflects the organization's commitment to helping young people pursue careers in livestock marketing.

A highlight of the evening was the induction of the 2026 Hall of Fame class. This year's honorees were Bill Bowman of St. Joseph, MO, and Delvin Heldermon of Sulphur, OK. Both men have spent the better part of their lives marketing livestock and serving producers across the country.

Through their professionalism, integrity and dedication, they have earned the respect of their peers and the appreciation of the cattlemen and livestock producers they have served throughout their careers. Their induction into the Hall of Fame places them among a distinguished group of individuals whose contributions have helped shape the livestock marketing profession for generations.

While the awards and recognition are certainly important, the greatest value of the event may be the camaraderie shared among those in attendance. Livestock marketing professionals spend much of their lives on the road. Their careers are built around helping producers market quality livestock and connecting those cattle with progressive buyers.

The work often requires long drives, countless miles on the highway, frequent flights and nights spent in hotels far from home. During sale season, the pace becomes even more demanding as schedules fill with production sales, auctions and industry events.

Despite the challenges, livestock marketers share a deep passion for the people and communities they serve. They understand the importance of building relationships and maintaining trust, both of which are essential to the success of the livestock business.

Events such as the Livestock Marketeers Hall of Fame Banquet provide an opportunity to slow down, reconnect with old friends, make new acquaintances and celebrate the accomplishments of those who have dedicated their lives to the industry.

As I left Kansas City, I was once again reminded of what makes this profession so special. The livestock business is built on relationships, hard work and a commitment to serving others.

The Livestock Marketeers Hall of Fame Banquet continues to honor those values while preserving the rich history of the profession and helping prepare the next generation of leaders who will carry it forward. This year's gathering was another memorable celebration of the commitment to livestock marketing and a fellowship that continues to make a lasting impact on the livestock industry. — **TY GROSHANS**



## DITTMER'S TAKE

President Donald Trump probably would make a good horse or cow trader, as he uses leverage adroitly. He has threatened to cut one-third or half of America's troops, planes and ships from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. He had already raised tariffs on European Union (EU) steel and aluminum, and threatened to raise the 15% tariff on goods to 25% if they didn't deal. So, after nine months, the EU seems ready to approve a new trade deal with the U.S.

U.S. Ambassador to the EU Andy Puzder expects approval by mid-June. The U.S. would set tariffs of 15% on most goods entering from the EU, while the EU would lower or eliminate tariffs on U.S. goods. Special preferential treatment will be given U.S. agricultural goods. The U.S. adjusted their tariffs last fall, complying with the July 2025 deal, but the EU hasn't yet implemented the deal.

Puzder said only Trump could manage this. He was also surprised the EU was able to get the deal through the EU's two houses of parliament. We're surprised for one, that they could get any sort of "preferential treatment" for agricultural goods through the ultra-protective EU farm bloc.

For two, importantly for beef, Puzder said the deal includes reducing non-tariff trade barriers. He wasn't specific, but the EU's non-tariff trade barriers have reduced or eliminated American imports. Will beef get relief now?

China used the timing of the Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping summit to renew registration of hundreds of U.S. beef processing plants to export to China. Evidently, details beyond that have been scarce and no purchase agreements have been announced on beef.

Action on imports of feeder cattle from Mexico is unlikely from USDA for a while as everyone's attention is focused on the New World screwworm's (NWS) appearance in Texas. As of this writing, four calves have been affected by the NWS. The comprehensive response was well mapped out ahead of time involving USDA and Texas officials. If these calves are native to Texas and weren't shipped in, that confirms the fly has crossed the border.

That means imports of lean beef will continue to be the primary method of supplementing the tremendous demand for ground beef in America.

Some considerations:

- Affordability is always critical for the meat protein that is premium priced by dint of hard-earned consumer demand.

## DEAL WITH EU EXPECTED MID-JUNE

- We are now producing six to 10 times more Prime carcasses; the rest is mostly Choice. We have more fatty trim.
- Trim value is boosted by blending it with lean beef.
- We have fewer beef cows and dairy cows as culls.
- Part of the total value of a carcass is determined by trim value. It's worth much more as an ingredient in ground beef than as tannage or pet food.

• That carcass value comes back to feedyards, to customers feeding in feedyards and the producers supplying the feeder cattle to feedyards.

• The beef production chain has spent decades and millions of dollars, including grocery chains, restaurants and fast food chains, developing ground beef demand.

• Demand for ground beef is not impervious to price and supply factors, as evidenced by value meal campaigns key to fast food chains.

• Our modern culture thrives on eating out, especially young people. Ground beef in some form is key.

• The demand for ground beef as a convenient and versatile ingredient is dependent on its reputation for quality, taste and safety. We must continue only importing lean beef that is either USDA-inspected or verified USDA-equivalent.

• Lowering tariffs by government means lean beef is available to private firms at a more favorable price point.

• The government and beef industry has followed a countercyclical approach for beef imports for decades, importing more when we had fewer cows and less when our cow numbers were up. That serves both the beef industry and consumers best.

Speaking of affordability, it seems the administration is suffering a pestilence also present in the cattle industry: PDS (Packer Derangement Syndrome). Even if basic economic logic—economies of scale—dictates that breaking up the big packers would raise consumer prices, at a time when record prices are already testing the limits of consumer demand, bureaucrats want to fight the big packers.

That reflects disregard for the beef industry's long-term future, from the bull/semen tank to the consumer's plate. — **Steve Dittmer, WLJ columnist**

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

## GUEST OPINION

## SUCCESSION'S SECRET SAUCE

Management succession in a family business is easy to define but hard to do. Put simply, it is the act of transferring authority and responsibility to the next generation. In practice, it is anything but simple.

Succession involves relinquishing control of your business, which you've managed for decades. It needs communication, which is notoriously difficult in family businesses. It challenges your identity as a farmer or rancher, a vocation not so easily shed. It requires getting comfortable with the next generation's approach to business and life, which can be quite different than how you were raised or taught.

Succession also causes you to confront your mortality and your purpose in life. It forces you to consider the next chapter of your life story, when you may consider your current chapter unfinished. It's no wonder that people hesitate to engage in succession planning and transition discussions.

It's tempting to solve succession planning with checklists, timelines, organizational charts, job titles and legal documents. Such tools are indeed part of the solution and a necessary part of the transition effort.

The problem is that succession is as much a psychological and behavioral transition as it is a management, ownership, legal, financial or tax transition. Succession requires you to think and act differently, not just create plans. It means changing how you see your work on the farm or ranch, moving from doing the work or leading the team to watching or helping someone else do the work. And, if you stay around, it means submitting to someone else's leadership.

It is difficult moving out of the top spot but still being around the farm and watching someone else take over the daily work. In nonfamily business settings, the CEO seldom stays around after a leadership transition. He or she knows the next leader will lead differently, and that change will be hard to watch.

Succession is built on your accomplishments, as the very act of transitioning means the business has survived the economic cycles of agriculture through at least one generation and usually several. But, as the next generation begins to take over, it also brings your shortcomings into focus. The next leader changes the business, and those changes can feel like a critique of the way you operated.

The longest-running study on human development, the Harvard Study of Adult Development, has found that "close relationships, more than money or fame, are what keep people happy throughout their lives." Furthermore, psychologists suggest that friendships help delay mental and physical decline, reducing the risk of loneliness, depression and anxiety while bolstering self-esteem.

I've seen firsthand through my work with family businesses and peer groups that friendships—particularly among senior generation members who are going through the succession process—can help smooth the transition. Friends can encourage you. They can challenge and critique you. If you let them, they can hold you accountable for making progress. A small group of friends serves as your personal board of directors.

Friends are the people with whom you can share your hopes and concerns about succession. Perhaps one of your friends has been through a similar transition and has wisdom to offer. More likely, the mistakes they made can be instructive for your own transition experience. Friendships are where you find commonality, security and support.

C.S. Lewis said, "Friendship is born at the moment when one person says to another 'You too? I thought I was the only one.'" Try looking to your friends for help with succession—you may be surprised at how they help. — **Lance Woodbury, DTN farm business adviser**

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# Conservation groups file lawsuit to stop logging, burning in Gallatin Mountains

Four conservation organizations claim in a new federal lawsuit the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) could be logging and using prescribed burns in one of Montana's best-known recreational areas without presenting required research that would demonstrate the project isn't negatively impacting a handful of threatened or endangered species.

Attorneys for the Gallatin Wildlife Association, Alliance for The Wild Rockies, Native Ecosystems Council, and Council on Wildlife and Fish say logging and burning on more than 5,600 acres between Hyalite and South Cottonwood canyons, south of Bozeman in the Gallatin Mountains would mean cutting through old-growth forests, building new roads and negatively impact threatened species ranging from Canada lynx to Northern goshawks to whitebark pine

trees. It claims USFS officials have overlooked or ignored a handful of federal laws to fast-track the project which the groups say will be highly visible to recreational enthusiasts.

USFS staff have a policy of not commenting on any pending litigation.

The lawsuit said while the USFS has given notice of the project, many of those details—or lack thereof—make it impossible to understand what will be happening and therefore it's impossible for scientists and the courts to understand the possible effects of the project. The attorneys claim the USFS hasn't disclosed the number, location or status of whitebark pine throughout the area.

"In addition, the Forest Service relies on an over-broad and legally unsupported delineation of the wildland urban interface to

exempt large areas of lynx habitat standards that prohibit vegetation management projects that degrade snowshoe hare habitat," the suit said.

Canada lynx, which are listed by the federal government as "threatened," rely on the snowshoe hare as a food source.

The conservation groups claim the USFS is using an overly broad definition of wildland-urban interface area to push ahead plans. The court documents accuse the USFS of using a law allowing officials to clear brush and trees from near structures as justification for damaging lynx habitat without more public scrutiny.

The attorneys claim that the USFS used a different density than what is required by the Healthy Forests Reforestation Act in order to claim the logging and burning area is a wildland-urban interface area and therefore allowing officials to more aggressively manage wildfire risks because there are structures in

the area.

"Neither the project's documents nor the Gallatin Community Wildfire Protection Plan identify structures in the project area, population density, groups of homes, shared utilities or other municipal infrastructure," the lawsuit said.

They also said that the USFS provides no information about large stands of whitebark pine trees.

"Many logging units in the project will be highly visible for visitors and recreationalists to Hyalite Canyon, which is the most visited area of any National Forest in Montana," the lawsuit said.

Of the 836 acres of old-growth forest in the project area, attorneys warn that 562 acres will no longer be considered "old growth" after that.

Attorneys said that forest officials have already admitted in the planning documents that "the project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect wildlife, habitat, and a tree species

protected by the Endangered Species Act, including Canada lynx, Canada lynx critical habitat, grizzly bears and whitebark pine."

The suit claims that as many as 3,688 acres of Canada lynx habitat is at risk with the project.

The conservation groups question why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service didn't issue a biological opinion on the project, something that is often standard for similar projects.

The groups said that the National Environmental Policy Act also requires more public involvement so that residents can help guide the project, something the conservation organizations argue didn't happen in this case.

"In this case, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acted arbitrarily and capriciously in violation of the Endangered Species Act and the Administrative Procedures Act when it did not prepare a site-specific no-jeopardy determination that consider the action and/or the

project's environmental baseline, effects, including from temporary roads and cumulative effects," the court documents said.

The groups are asking the federal courts to declare that the logging project violates a number of federal laws and policies, including the National Forest Management Act, the Healthy Forest Reforestation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Administrative Procedures Act.

They are asking the courts to vacate the project's decision and stop authorities from implementing the 15-year project. The groups are also asking for attorney's fees.

"The Gallatin Range is undergoing tremendous recreational impact from the local community," said Clint Nagel, President of the Gallatin Wildlife Association, one of the groups challenging the move in court. — **Darrell Ehrlick, Daily Montanan**

## Appeals court dismisses NM feral cattle suit

A federal appeals court dismissed a 2023 legal challenge by the New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association over the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) practice of aerial shooting feral cattle in the Gila wilderness.

The June 3 U.S. Court of Appeals 10th Circuit ruling notes that the cows are mostly eradicated from the Gila National Forest—and the federal government has directed staff to try and capture any stragglers rather than shoot them—making the yearslong legal fight moot.

"There is no reasonable expectation the Forest Service will resume aerial shooting of the Gila cattle," the order stated.

As part of the dismissal, the court overturned a lower federal district court's order that upheld the government's authority to remove the cattle by shooting them from a helicopter because it said the feral cows no longer qualified as domestic livestock.

The problem of feral cattle—or previously domestic herds that have returned to a wild state—has been a longstanding concern in the Gila, prompting outcry over animal welfare, endangered species and land use.

Over the years, 756 cattle were removed (dead or alive) from the Gila Wilderness, USFS said in a 2022 news release. Of those cattle, only one cow captured in 1998 had branding indicating it had been part of a domestic herd.

Between 2022 and 2023, a special team of federal

officials sniped a total of 84 cattle from a helicopter on public lands, over legal objections from the New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association.

Only an estimated 10-20 cattle remain, according to 2024 court documents.

Parties on opposite sides of the case—the New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association and the Center for Biological Diversity, which argued that the culling of the cows protects fragile wildlife and endangered species—both declared victory from the dismissal.

New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association President Tom Paterson told Source New Mexico the dismissal of the lower court's order is a win, and cited the lawsuit's pressure on federal officials to halt the practice.

"I think that the overarching point is that the likelihood of the Forest Service ever engaging in aerial removal, not just the Gila, but across the West, is pretty minimal," Paterson said. "Leastways, I hope so."

Todd Schulke, co-founder of the Center for Biological Diversity, said in a statement that the U.S. Forest Service was right to remove the feral cattle and argued that federal officials maintain the authority to do so in the future.

"The livestock industry's sham lawsuit was a waste of time and money. With cows gone, these wild streamside habitats are finally recovering, which is wonderful news for endangered species," Schulke said. — **Danielle Prokop, Source New Mexico**

# FORT RANCH

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# Drought prompts federal agency to offer emergency loans to NM farmers

The USDA on May 26 declared a drought disaster in all 33 New Mexico counties, making farmers and ranchers who suffered livestock or other losses eligible for low-interest emergency loans.

The USDA's two disaster declarations cite the U.S. Drought Monitor, which showed all of New Mexico in some stage of drought, with most of the state experiencing "extreme" or "severe" drought.

Because of the USDA's declaration, farmers and ranchers are eligible for loans up to \$500,000 covering a range of costs at lower-than-market interest rates. For example, producers can receive a federal Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan for operating costs at 4.75% interest, according to a USDA fact sheet.

The loans can pay for production costs associated with a disaster, essential living expenses, farm reorganization costs or the refinancing of certain debts, according to the USDA.

The federal deadline to apply for the loans is Dec. 24. USDA officials directed farmers and ranchers interested in the loans to their local FSA officers for more information.

Extremely low snowpack this winter exacerbated ongoing drought in New Mexico and across the West. Recent-

ly, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D) declared a drought and wildfire emergency, which directed a state task force to help local governments as much as possible.

The governor's declaration also coincided with the publicization of a new website—

the Drought Information Portal—that contains an array of state and federal resources regarding the ongoing drought, weather conditions and fire risk.

A recent industry report found that New Mexico's food and agriculture industries

generated more than \$50 billion in economic activity in 2025, including employing 146,000 people statewide who work in farm or food industries and earn \$5.9 billion in wages. — **Patrick Lohmann, Source New Mexico**

## Balancing cow size, carcass weights and total system efficiency

The beef industry is currently experiencing a tug-of-war between biological efficiency and market signals that reward heavier carcass weights. Recent Rancher's Thursday webinar sessions highlighted the growing tension in the beef industry between the market driven feeding for heavier carcass weights, selection for increased growth and efficiency, and the economic realities of maintaining larger cows.

Carcass weights are increasing largely because feedyards are keeping cattle on feed longer and marketing systems reward pounds of carcass weight. At the same time, cow size has increased in turn raising maintenance requirements and forage demand.

Speakers also discussed the biological factors behind heavier carcasses. Growth in

finishing cattle remains relatively linear even at heavier weights, and modern marketing systems favor carcass-based pricing. There are market incentives that encourage feeding cattle to heavier endpoints, including low cattle numbers, relatively inexpensive feed and reduced discounts for heavy weight and Yield Grade 4 carcasses. These conditions can improve gross revenue at the feed lot but also increase days on feed and reduce feed efficiency.

Bigger cows are not necessarily more efficient cows. Cow size is closely related to feed intake, so selecting for larger mature size without considering forage resources can reduce stocking flexibility and increase production risk, particularly during drought or periods of high feed costs. Match-

ing cow type to the ranch environment remains one of the most important management decisions producers make.

Ultimately, long-term profitability of beef production depends on balancing genetics, nutrition, and available resources across the entire production system. Producers who align cow size, stocking rate, and marketing strategy with their forage base are better positioned to remain resilient in volatile markets and challenging weather conditions.

Efficiency should drive replacement and management decisions. The most profitable cow herds are those that fit their environment and optimize performance from pasture to packer. — **Paul Beck, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle nutrition specialist**

## LEGAL LEDGER

### Bill would include virtual fencing in ECP

A group of bipartisan senators on June 9 introduced the Fencing Eligibility for New Conservation Equipment Act. The bill would authorize the USDA to include virtual fencing as an option for farmers and ranchers under the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP). "This legislation opens the door for producers to use new technology, like virtual fencing, to replace their damaged or lost fence lines after disasters strike," said Sen. Deb Fischer (R-NE), one of the bill's sponsors. "This would be a great opportunity for farmers and ranchers to seize if it makes sense for their operation." Other sponsors include Sens. Pete Ricketts (R-NE), Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and Michael Bennet (D-CO).

### China recognizes Brazil as free of FMD

After more than two decades, Chinese authorities have recognized the entire territory of Brazil as free from foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), which is expected to immediately reopen pork exports from Brazil to China. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture said "the recognition expands opportunities for exports of Brazilian beef and pork products to the Chinese market, such as offal and bone-in meat," according to Brazilian news outlet Globoru. Prior to the authorization, only the state of Santa Catarina—which has seven plants authorized to export to China—held the FMD-free status, the Brazilian Association of Animal Protein (ABPA) said. Now, the states of Rio Grande do Sul with eight plants, and Mato Grosso, with 1 plant, will be authorized immediately. "The measure reinforces the high level of sanitary trust that exists between Brazil and China and creates even more favorable conditions for deepening trade relations between the two countries, especially at a time of growing global demand for safe food produced under high sanitary standards," said ABPA President Ricardo Santin.

### Interior seeks input on modernizing grazing regs

The Department of the Interior continues to seek public input on a proposal to update livestock grazing management on public lands. The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) mid-May proposal to revise regulations would give ranchers more flexibility, improve rangeland health and support rural communities, the Interior said. The rule proposes streamlining grazing administration and expanding rangeland health standards. Comments on the rule are due by July 13 and can be submitted at [tinyurl.com/3pr7u3fe](https://tinyurl.com/3pr7u3fe). Earlier in May, BLM also rescinded the Conservation and Landscape Health Rule, also known as the Public Lands Rule, which went into effect June 11. BLM said the action restores balance to federal management under multiple use and sustained yield.

### CO Cargill workers file for unfair labor practices

Teamsters Local 455 in Fort Morgan, CO, filed unfair labor practice charges against Cargill on June 10, saying Cargill cut off workers' access to pay and benefits. "Cargill is hurting working families in Fort Morgan by illegally cutting benefits and refusing to pay its own workforce after now locking them out for multiple weeks," said Dean Modecker, Teamsters Local 455 secretary-treasurer. The company and the 1,700 Fort Morgan union workers have been in a standoff since May 20 following unresolved collective bargaining agreement negotiations. "These charges make clear that Cargill cannot ignore the law. It's time for the company to stop stalling and return to the bargaining table," Modecker said. Cargill maintains that they remain "open to discussing with the union how the contract package might be structured in different ways to address employee priorities and support a stable future for the Fort Morgan facility."

### MN ranchers reject Beef Checkoff price increase

In May, Minnesota beef producers voted against a proposed refundable 50-cent increase to the state's Beef Checkoff following a statewide referendum. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture reported a total of 3,477 ballots were mailed to producers, and of the eligible ballots submitted, there were 380 votes opposed and 377 votes in favor. As a result, the current Beef Checkoff assessment will remain at \$1 per head at the time of sale, split between the Minnesota Beef Council and the Cattlemen's Beef Board.

### New migratory big game framework announced

USDA on June 2 announced a new framework for migratory big game conservation. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) said the Migratory Big Game: A Framework for Conservation Action is the most "unified, landscape-scale approach" undertaken by FSA and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to support big game conservation while putting farmers and ranchers first. "Across the West, the future of iconic big game herds—elk, mule deer and pronghorn—depends on the health of our working lands," said NRCS Chief Colton L. Buckley. "Privately owned lands provide the vital seasonal habitats and connectivity required to sustain these healthy, resilient herds." The framework has the following three strategies: protect habitat and connectivity, reduce barriers to movement and improve habitat quality.



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# Canada, states implement tighter import requirements

## SCREWWORM (from page 1)

exposure history was unknown, animal health officials conducted additional inspection and increased outreach in the area.

USDA has expedited the targeted release of sterile flies and will continue to deploy ground release chambers in areas that report detections of NWS.

## USDA press conference

On June 8, USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins hosted a press conference from Kerrville, TX, to provide updates on NWS.

"These developments obviously represent a serious threat to our livestock and wildlife, but they haven't caught us off guard," Rollins said. "We have been tracking this pest for a long time, and we have fought before, and we will do so again."

Rollins announced that USDA is advancing several next-generation tools and technologies submitted through the department's New World Screwworm Grand Challenge, which closed earlier this spring. Through the program, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is investing up to \$100 million to support projects intended to combat the NWS. "You will hear of some of

those innovations coming out week by week by week," Rollins said.

Rollins also noted that the construction of the NWS sterile fly production facility at Moore Air Base in Edinburg, TX, is being fast-tracked to get up and running as soon as possible.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) also spoke at the press conference, emphasizing the importance of checking animals daily.

"Check for any wounds, even small wounds like tick bites or navel of newborns or other openings," Abbott said. "Treat wounds promptly and work to reduce fly populations around your operations. Report immediately any suspicion of New World screwworm in wounds to the Texas Animal Health Commission."

Any suspected cases can be reported to the TAHC 24-hour call line at 1-800-550-8242. Any suspected cases in wildlife can be reported to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department biologists at 512-389-4505.

Associate Administrator for APHIS and Director of the New World Screwworm Directorate Michael Schmoyer also announced USDA would be conducting a trial to look at the use of ivermectin in feed for wildlife populations to control infestations.

During the Q&A portion of the press conference, Rol-

lins was asked about Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller's comments on ranchers not reporting NWS cases over fears of government-mandated quarantines.

"That is a very unserious comment from a perhaps unserious ag commissioner with just a few months left," Rollins responded. "It is also a very dangerous suggestion."

She added, "From my perspective, (ranchers) have been nothing—as you would expect—but patriotic; (they) know they're part of the battle. We're all on the same team and we have to solve this together."

## Livestock import restrictions

Following the initial news of a confirmed case of NWS in Texas, Canada an-

nounced it would implement temporary import restrictions on livestock entering Canada from affected areas. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency said animals that originate from or that were present in Texas within 21 days prior to border crossing will not be accepted into Canada.

"While our colder climate is not hospitable for the long-term establishment of the fly in Canada, they can survive shorter periods of time in the summer months," the agency said. "Taking this action now is an appropriate risk mitigation measure to prevent its introduction and protect animal health."

Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist, said the move was largely political as it will affect a very small volume of trade.

"Although there is significant bilateral cattle trade between Canada and the U.S., very few Texas cattle are typically involved," Peel said. "Canada is well north of the climate boundary for NWS and the threat is minimal."

Several U.S. states also announced tighter veterinary requirements for livestock entering from Texas, including Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Montana and Tennessee.

## NWS senior advisor appointed

On June 8, USDA announced the appointment of John Bellinger as the new senior advisor for New World screwworm preparedness. In his role, Bellinger will help explore all available technologies to combat the pest, USDA said.

"John's roots in Texas where New World screwworm is at ground zero, and his private sector experience in the related food safety and cattle industries, will help the administration advance our response and protect U.S. livestock," Rollins said.

Bellinger currently serves on the Texas A&M Board of Regents as chair of the Committee on Research. He is the co-founder and former CEO of Food Safety Net Services, along with the founder and CEO of Agri-West International. Bellinger also is the former chairman of the U.S. Meat Export Federation and the Southwest Meat Association.

The most up-to-date NWS information may be found at [screwworm.gov](http://screwworm.gov). — Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor

## Growing US red meat's presence in Japan

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) efforts to increase consumer awareness and grow U.S. beef and pork's presence on the menus of nationwide restaurant chains in Japan is stepping forward through an extended promotion with a family-style chain. Washoku Sato, a Japanese cuisine-based chain,

included three U.S. beef and pork dishes on menus at 201 locations nationwide.

Since October, U.S. pork loin has been a featured item on Washoku Sato's tonkatsu menu, U.S. beef short plate is promoted on its sukiyaki menu and U.S. beef large intestines is a featured item on its hot pot menu. Washoku

Sato estimates it utilizes 50 metric tons (mt) of U.S. beef and 30 mt of U.S. pork loin each month for these three dishes.

"We're working to demonstrate profit potential and consumer demand for U.S. beef and pork with national restaurant chains," said Japan Director Satoshi Kato.

"This promotion with Washoku Sato is a model for how chains can incorporate U.S. products into their national menus and develop customer demand for these U.S. beef and pork dishes."

Support was provided by USDA's Regional Agricultural Promotion Program. — USMEF



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# Groups sue to stop logging in Flathead National Forest

Conservation groups in the Flathead Valley are suing the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) over the West Reservoir Project in the Flathead National Forest.

The groups, supported by EarthJustice, say that the project, which will include 4.7 miles of new roads, 2,001 acres of logging and more than 4,600 acres of prescribed burning, has sidestepped protections and manufactured an "emergency" to push the project through. The advocacy groups, Swan View Coalition and Friends of the Wild Swan are suing to stop the project.

The suit goes on to say that the Forest Service has failed to remedy violations to the Endangered Species Act. The project area is located west of Hungry Horse Reservoir and the suit was filed in Missoula.

"The Flathead fabricated an emergency in order to sidestep protections for grizzly bears and bull trout while also cutting the public out of the process," Arlene Montgomery, program director for Friends of the Wild Swan, said in a press release. "They were planning this timber sale for 3 years, no emergency here, only unlawful behavior."

The USFS does not typically comment on pending litigation.

The suit says building more

roads can harm grizzly bears, which can learn to avoid roads, constricting their range. The plaintiffs also alleged the logging, road building and prescribed burns could harm endangered bull trout populations.

USFS has said the project's purpose "is to improve the diversity and resilience of forest vegetative communities and associated wildlife habitat."

Courts have previously ruled in favor of conservation groups in Flathead National Forest, including dismissing an earlier appeal by the USFS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife regarding road building in that area.

"The West Reservoir project comes amidst a series of Trump administration attempts to undermine the Endangered Species Act and cast

aside our nation's most imperiled wildlife and ecosystems," said Ben Levitan, senior attorney with Earthjustice's Biodiversity Defense Program, in a press release. "We're committed to giving imperiled species the protections they're guaranteed under the law, including for grizzly bears and bull trout in Flathead National Forest." — **Jordan Hansen, Daily Montanan**

## Exporters meet with buyers at Red Meat Symposium in Mexico

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) recently held its second U.S. Red Meat Symposium in Mexico City, Mexico, enabling U.S. exporters to meet face-to-face with prospective buyers from throughout Mexico.

The symposium included an examination of Mexico's economic and political climate and provided opportunities for buyers to connect with U.S. farmers and ranchers. A delegation of 18 producers and other industry leaders participated in the symposium and in market tours.

Increasingly important to

the U.S. red meat industry, Mexico is the leading destination for U.S. pork, setting records in each of the past five years. It is also a growing market for U.S. beef and lamb. New trade and product opportunities continue to emerge, which is why USMEF launched the first symposium in 2024, rather than rely on traditional industry trade shows.

"We decided to create our own trade event. This way, if potential buyers are at the symposium, it's because we invited them. We know the kind of company they are and

the amount of product that they're buying," said Gerardo Rodriguez, USMEF regional director for Mexico and Central America. "Participating exporters also have their product showcased and can meet buyers from all over the country: Chihuahua, Guadalajara, Tijuana, Mexicali, Cancun, Veracruz and Monterrey."

The U.S. Red Meat Symposium was made possible with support from USDA, the National Pork Board, the Beef Checkoff Program and Nebraska Beef Council. — **USMEF**

## STORY SHORTS

### Express Ranches plans cattle herd dispersal

Despite plans to disperse the Express Ranches cattle herd this fall, the Funk family says the Yukon, OK, ranch is not for sale to data center groups and will remain in agricultural use, according to local news outlet KFOR. The family confirmed that the herd dispersal will move forward with "The Big Event Dispersal" scheduled for Oct. 5-7, followed by a fall bull sale on Oct. 19 and a spring bull and female sale on March 31, 2027. The family described the decision as "bittersweet" but said it remains proud of what Express Ranches accomplished during more than 30 years in the purebred cattle industry. The family also addressed rumors that the property could be sold for development and said the land remains privately owned and operated by the Funk Estate. "The family cares deeply about the people and well-being of Canadian County and is committed to the continuation of ranching operations on the land," the family said in a statement. The Funk family also noted that, due to declining demand for events and hitch competitions, the Express Percherons and some Express Clydesdales were recently sold to carefully selected new owners. However, the Express Clydesdales program remains active and open for visitors by appointment, as well as weddings and private events.

### ID authorities investigate cattle shootings

Idaho authorities are investigating a series of livestock shootings across Gooding, Jerome, Jefferson and Payette counties that have left multiple cattle dead and ranchers facing thousands of dollars in losses. At least three cattle have been confirmed unlawfully killed, while eight deaths remain under investigation as officials work to determine whether the incidents are connected. Idaho State Brand Inspector Cody Burlile called the shootings a serious crime affecting ranching families and their livelihoods. Investigators are seeking information from anyone who witnessed suspicious activity in remote grazing areas. If you have any information, contact the state brand inspector at 208-884-7070 or email [contactbrands@isp.idaho.gov](mailto:contactbrands@isp.idaho.gov). The Idaho Cattle Association is offering a reward for information leading to arrests.

### Scottish traceability rules lead to mass cattle cull

Scottish government inspectors will not attend the planned slaughter of 271 cattle at Falkland Estate in Fife, Scotland, after receiving threats through social media and phone calls, according to a report by the BBC. The cattle were set to be culled after the farm failed to properly register the animals, leaving them unable to enter the food chain under Scotland's livestock traceability rules. Government officials had originally planned to oversee the cull but later informed the estate they would verify the process through other means. The BBC reported that callers sought inspectors' names and addresses, prompting safety concerns. Estate representatives said the decision places additional pressure on staff as they carry out one of Scotland's largest recent cattle culls.

### Performance Beef, PAC form partnership

Performance Livestock Analytics (PLA) and Production Animal Consultation (PAC) have formed a partnership that will give Performance Beef users access to veterinary consulting services through the platform. Under the agreement, producers can work with PAC veterinarians to review health protocols, treatment records and pull-rate trends while using data collected through Performance Beef. The goal is to help producers evaluate herd health and make management decisions using information from their own operations. PLA said the collaboration is intended to help producers connect animal health programs with production outcomes and operational results. PAC said the agreement is the first of several planned integrations for the platform.

### California seeks input on veterinary access

California livestock producers are being asked to share their experiences with veterinary care as concerns grow about access to food-animal veterinarians statewide. The California Farm Bureau and the California Department of Food and Agriculture have launched a survey to gather information on the availability of routine herd health services, emergency care and ranch calls. Survey results may help support future veterinary shortage designations and increase participation in the USDA Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, which is designed to attract veterinarians to underserved areas. The survey is open to producers through June 30 at [survey.monkey.com/r/CHQX858](https://survey.monkey.com/r/CHQX858).

### USDA awards \$12 million for CWD control

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will provide about \$12 million to support efforts aimed at controlling and preventing chronic wasting disease (CWD) in both wild and farmed deer and elk populations. According to APHIS, roughly \$6 million will support projects focused on farmed cervids, \$5.5 million will fund research and management efforts for wild populations and \$500,000 will be directed toward prevention and management activities on Tribal lands. The funding will support research, surveillance, disease management and indemnity payments while helping states, Tribes and universities develop new tools to slow the disease's spread.

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# BLM 'confident in the legal and factual basis' of decision

## BISON SUIT (from page 1)

Act to require applicants to have livestock that are production-oriented, when there is no such requirement found in statutes, regulations or other applicable legal authorities.

"BLM's new interpretation created additional qualifications for grazing applicants—an action beyond its statutory authority," the group claims.

American Prairie furthered that the agency engaged in illegal rulemaking, failed to provide a reasoned explanation

for its sudden change and ignored evidence that the bison are both domestic and production-oriented. The organization contends the herd qualifies as production-oriented because animals are used for Tribal food sovereignty programs and a public hunting program.

The group asked the court for a stay on the decision, arguing that denying such a request would "concretely and substantially harm American Prairie, the local community in Phillips County, and several tribes."

Western Watersheds Proj-

ect, in their own June 6 appeal, said its members enjoy witnessing the restoration of bison and their native landscape, and are adversely affected by the decision. The group also said the BLM erred in its interpretation of the Taylor Grazing Act, and that American Prairie's focus on conservation is in harmony with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

The group further contended that the BLM's decision should have triggered a National Environmental Policy Act analysis.

Western Watersheds Proj-

ect also asked the court for a stay of BLM's decision, asserting "given that American Prairie has grazed bison on some of these allotments since 2005, and has done so on all affected by the decision for years, a stay to maintain the status quo will not harm the parties."

In a statement provided to Public Domain, a BLM spokesperson said the agency was "confident in the legal and factual basis for its decision."

"While we do not comment on pending litigation, the Bureau of Land Management's decision was firmly grounded in federal law and a thorough review of the administrative record," the spokesperson wrote. "The agency determined that American Prairie's bison operation does not satisfy the statutory requirements for a federal grazing permit under the Taylor Grazing Act because the herd is managed primarily for conservation purposes rather than livestock production."

## Background

In late July of 2022, the BLM Malta Field Office issued a final decision authorizing cattle and bison permits to American Prairie on seven allotments in Phillips County. The BLM authorized cattle and/or bison grazing permits on four allotments, bison grazing permits where bison grazing was previously permitted on two allotments and cattle-only grazing on one allotment.

The decision was appealed by various parties, including the Montana Stockgrowers Association, the state of Montana and the governor of Montana. The appellants' requests for a stay were denied.

In March 2023, the BLM issued the permits to American Prairie on all seven allotments.

In February 2025, the BLM filed a motion for voluntary remand without vacatur of the 2022 final decision. A few months later, in December, the secretary of the Interior assumed jurisdiction of the

still-ongoing administrative appeals and granted the BLM its motion for remand. In doing so, the secretary directed BLM to consider arguments raised in the appeal in the course of the review of the final decision.

In January of this year, the BLM issued a proposed decision to terminate American Prairie's permits for bison and issue them for cattle-grazing only. In February, American Prairie filed a protest.

The BLM's May decision addressed the protest, along with 34 other protest letters, but ultimately found that American Prairie's bison herd is managed as wildlife in a way that is not meant for production.

"Termination of American Prairie's permits to the extent they authorize bison grazing is therefore required to bring the BLM's permitting actions into compliance with governing law," the BLM wrote. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**

## Colyer Herefords and Angus named BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year

The Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) recognized Colyer Herefords and Angus, Bruneau, ID, as the 2026 BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year on June 3 during the group's annual research symposium in Boise, ID. This national award recognizes a producer's dedication to improving the beef industry at the seedstock level.

Rooted in Bruneau since 1876, Colyer Herefords and Angus represents a masterclass in balancing multi-generational heritage with cutting-edge genetic progress. Today the fifth, sixth and seventh generations of the Colyer family manage the ranch, which has evolved from a traditional commercial cow-calf operation into one of the nation's premier seedstock programs.

The Colyer philosophy is built on a "commercial-first" mindset. After a strategic shift in 1992 to focus entirely on seedstock, the family dedicated itself to producing Hereford and Angus genetics that thrive in the rugged western environment. A hallmark of the family's program is the production of black baldy females, leveraging heterosis to improve fertility and longevity for their customers.

What truly sets the Colyers apart is their early and unwavering adoption of technology. From purchasing their first computer in 1984 to achieving the prestigious Platinum TPR status, a distinction held by only 23 Hereford breeders in the U.S., the ranch prioritizes data integrity. By utilizing artificial insemination, embryo transfer (ET), in vitro fertilization and genomic testing, they provide commercial cattlemen with a level of predictability that is rare in the industry.

Their commitment to the "conception to consump-

tion" chain is further evidenced by their direct involvement in marketing their customers' feeder cattle, ensuring that Colyer genetics deliver value at every level of the beef industry.

The current cow herd consists of approximately 200 registered Hereford and 200 registered Angus females, along with roughly 300 recipient cows used in their ET program. The ranch markets cattle through multiple annual events, including an annual bull sale hosted in February, Frozen Genetics Sale on March 3, 2026, and the 25th Annual Female Sale scheduled for Oct. 3.

"For nearly 150 years, the Colyer family has made a lasting impact on commercial cow herds across the United States by supplying Hereford and Angus genetics rooted in disciplined selection, comprehensive data collection and a focused breeding program," says Shane Bedwell, American Hereford Association chief operating officer. "Their longevity, combined with a forward-thinking approach to genetic improvement, is something that should be admired across the beef industry."

Beyond the ranch gates, the Colyer family remains deeply embedded in their community and industry. With family members serving as EMTs, school board trustees and industry leaders, their impact extends far beyond the cattle they sell.

The American Hereford Association nominated Colyer Herefords and Angus for this award, which is sponsored by Drovers.

Approximately 400 beef producers, academia and industry representatives attended the organization's 58th Annual Research Sym-

posium and Convention in Boise, ID. BIF's mission is to help improve the industry by promoting greater acceptance of beef cattle performance evaluation. — **BIF**

**WVM western video market**

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## COMING EVENTS

(Send calendar of events information to [editorial@wlj.net](mailto:editorial@wlj.net).)

**June 16-18** – Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA will host its 2026 National Convention and Trade Show at The Monument in Rapid City, SD. Details: [rcalfconvention.com](http://rcalfconvention.com).

**June 24-25** – The California Cattlemen's Association 2026 Midyear Meeting will be at the

Atlantis Casino Resort in Reno, NV. Details: [tinyurl.com/mvmds854](http://tinyurl.com/mvmds854).

**Sept. 15-17** – The Stockmanship & Stewardship event in Grand Island, NE, will help ranchers gain practical, hands-on knowledge that strengthens animal care, enhances cattle handling skills and supports the sustainability of their operations. Details: [stockmanshipandstewardship.org](http://stockmanshipandstewardship.org).

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# MARKET NEWS

## MARKET SITUATION REPORT

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

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 6/11/2026	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	254.15 ▼	254.67	237.09
CME Feeder Index	368.06 ▲	364.26	314.62
Boxed Beef Average	393.21 ▼	395.86	376.72
Average Dressed Steers	405.60 ▲	N/A	382.00
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,470 ▲	1,469	1,425
Weekly Slaughter**	533,000 ▲	448,000	582,000
Weekly Beef Production***	479.1 ▲	402.5	506.3
Hide/Offal Value	14.78 ▲	14.65	11.25
Corn Price	4.20 ▼	4.31	4.42

\*Average weight for previous week. \*\*Total slaughter for previous week. \*\*\*Estimated year-to-date figure in million pounds for previous week.

BEEF REPORT: Weekly Composite Boxed Beef												
WEEK ENDING	COMPREHENSIVE Loads/Price		PRIME Loads/Price		BRANDED Loads/Price		CHOICE Loads/Price		SELECT Loads/Price		UNGRADED Loads/Price	
June 5	6,392	393.97	359	401.40	1,195	398.54	1,907	391.99	473	383.81	2,458	369.93
May 29	5,678	394.37	285	402.42	1,099	398.75	1,790	391.59	420	388.13	2,084	370.66
May 22	6,601	392.82	360	399.79	1,215	396.10	2,129	389.95	504	386.86	2,392	371.21
May 15	6,201	391.12	310	401.26	1,121	396.64	1,937	387.92	472	387.56	2,360	369.40

CUTOUTS						FED BOXED BEEF					
DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT		50% LEAN	90% LEAN					
June 11	393.21	373.25	359.63		194.38	N/A					
June 10	393.28	375.70	360.08		183.60	458.28					
June 9	392.90	376.93	362.56		N/A	N/A					
June 8	392.20	378.09	361.29		198.42	471.34					
June 5	392.70	382.69	356.94		186.79	456.89					

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle							
	6/5	6/8	6/9	6/10	6/11	High*	Low*
Jun.	25008	24653	24848	25035	25165	25873	16853
Aug.	24165	23673	24000	24265	24325	25598	16668
Oct.	23413	22935	23240	23513	23593	25120	17005
Dec.	23368	22958	23175	23410	23505	25093	18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle							
	6/5	6/8	6/9	6/10	6/11	High*	Low*
Aug.	35390	35070	35508	35645	36065	38103	21920
Sep.	35083	34745	35188	35340	35740	38280	22268
Oct.	34723	34378	34810	34958	35370	38020	22460
Nov.	34368	34015	34433	34575	34958	37860	24118

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

FED CATTLE TRADE	Head Count	Avg. Weight	Avg. Price
<b>WEEKLY WEIGHTED AVERAGES</b>			
Live FOB Steer	173	1,508	254.15
Live FOB Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Steer	1,008	1,009	405.60
Dressed Del Heifer	293	888	404.59
<b>SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK</b>			
Live FOB Steer	658	1,511	254.67
Live FOB Heifer	304	1,343	254.86
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR</b>			
Live FOB Steer	2,767	1,455	237.09
Live FOB Heifer	2,198	1,320	236.02
Dressed Del Steer	180	979	382.00
Dressed Del Heifer	40	826	370.00

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: JUNE 7, 2026		
	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	26,088	2,257
Formula	216,487	2,428
Negotiated Cash	83,630	70
Negotiated Grid	32,193	2,288
Packer Owned	10,588	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>368,986</b>	<b>7,043</b>

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month	Neg. Sales 0-21 days	Neg. Sales 21+ days	1,831
Jun. '26	134,018	810	
Jul. '26	94,108	3,680	
Aug. '26	144,599	71	
Sep. '26	82,555	5,534	
Oct. '26	110,456	166	

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		255.22	+4.84
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		253.46	+4.56
Ontario Auctions			
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		247.77	-0.70
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		245.85	+0.83
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs		172.21	-3.92

\*Price comparison from one week ago.

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, June 9, 2026			
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	510.44	N/A	483.28
601-700 lbs	460.28	N/A	440.28
701-800 lbs	409.78	N/A	407.89
801-900 lbs	365.67	N/A	384.52
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	495.66	N/A	445.57
501-600 lbs	449.73	N/A	422.72
601-700 lbs	414.73	N/A	392.12
701-800 lbs	376.30	N/A	349.37

USDA MEXICO TO U.S. WEEKLY LIVESTOCK IMPORTS				
Species	Current Week	Previous Week	Current Year-to-date	Previous Year-to-date
Feeders	6/1/2026	5/25/2026	0	230,638

IMPORTS SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE			
June 11, 2026			
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary			
Receipts EST: N/A	Week Ago EST: N/A	Year Ago Act: N/A	
THIS REPORT WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED AFTER MAY 12TH 2025. THE BORDER WILL BE CLOSED FOR LIVESTOCK IMPORTS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.			
Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	N/A
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	N/A
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	N/A
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	N/A
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	N/A
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	N/A

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

Selected Auctions										
Week Ending June 11, 2026										
DATE	MARKET	200-300 lb.	300-400 lb.	400-500 lb.	500-600 lb.	600-700 lb.	700-800 lb.	800 lb. -up	SLAUGHTER COWS	PAIRS
Feeder prices for steers & heifers reflect medium and large 1 cattle, unless otherwise noted; * Indicates medium and large 1-2										
No report available Blackfoot, ID										
June 4	Burley, ID	397		444	391-436	415-425	337-340	296-351	137-239	
No report available Emmett, ID										
June 6	Eugene, OR	749	410-522*	375-470*	350-447*	315-415*	270-342*		175-196	
June 8	Madras, OR	263	447-465*	355-447*	320-383*	295-377*	270-342*		204-230	2,400-3,350
June 3	Vale, OR	453	450-485	500-530	460-490	400-419	390-408	312-330	165-192	
June 9	Davenport, WA	150	1,825-1,925						181-196	
June 4	Toppenish, WA	2,025	1,750-1,825						210-241	
June 4	Orland, CA	2,927		400-500	350-452	325-442	300-400	275-351	170-191	
June 10	Escalon, CA	N/A		380-500	330-464	305-400	280-340	255-330	170-216	
No report available Famoso, CA										
June 3	Galt, CA	1,371		400-500	380-450	370-425	300-362	275-336	100-218	3,000-4,500
June 9	Turlock, CA	1,372		400-450	400-440	335-390	300-350	180-225	2,500-4,050	
No report available Salina, UT										
June 8	Iowa	8,526	675-690	542.50-640	499-613	436-542.50	409-477	354.50-429	302.50-384	150-300
June 9	Miles City, MT	903		535-625	457.50-555	372.50-500	350-433	335-372	259-346	165-247
No report available Bassett, NE										
No report available Ericson, NE										
No report available Imperial, NE										
No report available Kearney, NE										
No report available Lexington, NE										
June 4	Ogallala, NE	8,629		600	539-590	507.50-555	435-487.50	387-440	315-392	
No report available Valentine, NE										
No report available Herreid, SD										
June 10	Torrington, WY	1,011				451	401-425	371-398.50	321-327	
								366-390	318.50	

June 4	Willcox, AZ	N/A	427-550	472-530	415-505	404-480	364-428		155-190	3,350-4,000
June 8	Colorado	1,677	435-500	425-487	381-478	346-360	319-350		200-216	3,100-3,600
June 3	La Junta, CO	1,178		550-670	480-585	440-472.50	350-420	337.50-350	325-332.50	171-187
No report available Loma, CO										
June 10	Dodge City, KS	805		626-647.50	515-552.50	490	480	384	338-367	137.50-187.50
June 11	Pratt, KS	1,971		555	492.50	425	411	369	315-317	205-290
No report available Salina, KS										
June 10	Clovis, NM	1,122		610-750	515-635	305-600	480-525	352-416	320-370	155-180.50
June 10	El Reno, OK	6,000		560-570	460-540	410-487	360-412	340-347	300-342	165-220
June 9	McAlester, OK	720		710	530-660	500-545	425-525	390-445	360-390	295-368
June 8	Oklahoma City, OK	4,540		590-600	450-540	395-460	380-455	337.50-392.50	315-355	285-323
No report available Cuero, TX										
June 4	Dalhart, TX	2,159		640	430-500	445-532.50	412-470	385-425	344-387	289-367
June 4	San Angelo, TX	593		540	430-500	370-450	375-428	342-398	320-362	280-327.25
June 11	Tulia, TX	507		592.50	480-595	445-465	392.50-416	370-416	320-363	143-180
				482.50-502.50	440-500	387.50-425	377-382.50	370-416	250-312.50	3,925-4,050
				530-535	425	432-465	392-406	332-372	303-342	173-228
				470-510	378-450	318-408	315-348		260-300	154-175
				514-528	462	359	365-375			187-215
				462	400-420	356-359			305	155-170
										180-210

June 5	Alabama	7,080	560-650	520-610	430-550	400-480	360-437.50	345-425	150-202.50	1,950-4,900
June 8	Lexington, KY	559	515-635*	570*	430-469*	429-459*	299-427*	319-377*	310-334.50*	1,700-2,300
June 8	Joplin, MO	8,773		462-540*	437-490*	371-427.50*	330-389*		235-281*	202-246
June 8	Tennessee	7,908		620-680	515-560	445-540	400-460	360-402	299.50-377	
June 8	Virginia	4,267		530-580	430-510	410-460	352-445	335-377	315-326	
				505-740	500-660	390-575	345-495	300-389	285-366.75	140-210
				455-700	340-545	355-505	307.50-440	265-350	260-317.50	174-240
				480-532	422.50-524	330-510	385-455	348-396	240-350	2,52

# Committee meets to advise DWR on CA water plan

An advisory committee to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) held its first meeting in mid-May to begin work on the next update to the California Water Plan, the state's long-range strategy for managing water resources across all sectors.

The plan is updated every five years and guides state-

wide water policy, planning and investment priorities.

The meeting came months after Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) signed Senate Bill (SB) 72 in October, launching a multiyear effort to modernize California's water planning framework in response to intensifying droughts, floods and long-term water reliability chal-

lenges tied to climate change.

SB 72 established an interim statewide planning target of 9 million acre-feet of additional water supply by 2040. The target is expected to play a central role in the development of the state's 2028 and 2033 water plans.

A focus of the recent meeting—held in Sacramento

over two days—was to establish the committee's purpose and build a shared understanding of the challenges ahead.

DWR Director Karla Nemeth presented a "state of the state" overview examining California's water history and evolving challenges, while DWR State Climatologist Mike Anderson dis-

cussed how effects of climate change are expected to impact the state's future water supply.

Another focus of the meeting was groundwater recharge. SB 659, signed in 2023, requires DWR to include actionable recommendations and best practices in the 2028 water plan and future updates to expand groundwater recharge efforts statewide. The legislation directs the department to estimate recharge potential and identify the legal, regulatory and financial tools needed to advance recharge projects.

The meeting also examined the policy drivers shaping future planning efforts.

Throughout the meeting, speakers emphasized the need for collaboration across regions, sectors and communities as California faces mounting water pressures.

Officials said the advisory committee will play a key

role in helping the state integrate regional priorities, technical expertise and multibenefit water strategies into the planning process.

Alexandra Biering, a policy advocacy director for the California Farm Bureau, is one of several agricultural water-use representatives on the committee. The others include Anja Raudabaugh of Western United Dairies, Cannon Michael of Bowles Farming Co., Ngodoo Atume of the University of California Small Farmers Program, and representatives from multiple irrigation districts and water agencies that serve agricultural water users.

Because of the scale and significance of the effort, the water plan is expected to receive close scrutiny from water agencies, agricultural interests, environmental organizations, Tribal governments and the public. — **California Farm Bureau Federation**

## Feeders see tremendous gains over the week

### MARKETS (from page 1)

back over the week. The August contract gained over \$17 to close at \$359.65, and the September contract also gained over \$17 to close at \$356.52.

"Unlike the live cattle contracts, the feeder cattle contracts are further away from their resistance, which means the market should be able to trade higher with ease if traders continue to believe that's the way the market should go," ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, wrote in her Wednesday midday comments.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index gained \$3.80 to close at \$368.06.

Corn futures traded lower, down 20 cents on the July contract to \$4.11 and also down 20 cents on the December contract to \$4.39.

**Missouri:** Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 8,500 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, at the mid-session, feeder steers

sold steady to \$10 higher. Feeder heifers sold \$5-15 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 774 lbs. sold from \$360-380, averaging \$363.14.

**Nebraska:** North Platte Stockyards Livestock in North Platte sold 525 head on Tuesday. Due to a lack of recent sales, a trend could not be established, but demand was moderate. A group of steers averaging 842 lbs. sold from \$350-354.50, averaging \$353.70.

**Oklahoma:** Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 4,800 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers sold steady to \$5 higher, with instances of \$10 higher on heavier weights. Feeder heifers sold \$2-8 higher. Steer calves sold \$10-20 lower, and heifer calves sold \$2-8 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 767 lbs. sold from \$365-370, averaging \$368.02.

**South Dakota:** Sioux Falls Regional in Worthing sold 929 head on Monday. Compared to the previous sale, feeder steers and heifers were

not well compared on the much lighter offering. A group of benchmark steers averaging 768 lbs. sold from \$376-378, averaging \$377.58.

**Texas:** Giddings Livestock in Giddings sold 746 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, lightweight feeder steers and heifers weighing under 400 lbs. were \$15-20 lower on a limited test. Feeder steers over 400 lbs. sold \$2-5 higher. Feeder heifers

over 400 lbs. were fully steady to \$2 higher. A group of steers averaging 730 lbs. sold from \$350-375, averaging \$361.72.

**Utah:** Producers Livestock in Salina sold 475 head on Tuesday. Compared to the last auction, feeder cattle sold sharply lower on calves and yearlings. Benchmark steers averaging 760 lbs. sold from \$330-351, averaging \$344.77. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**

## Strengthening women's voices in agriculture

Twelve farm and ranch women leaders graduated from the spring session of Women's Communications Boot Camp hosted by the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). The agricultural leaders completed an intensive four-day course that featured hands-on sessions focused on public speaking, working with the media and messaging.

Program graduates will use their training to strategically support issues important to farmers and help tell agriculture's story. This includes participating in local media opportunities, sharing information with elected officials and joining social media campaigns that spotlight modern agriculture.

"Women play a vital role in advancing agriculture through leadership and engagement," said Isabella Chism, an Indiana row crop farmer and chair of the AFBF Women's Leadership Committee. "As Boot Camp graduates refine their communication skills, their impact will benefit their communities as well as Farm Bureau at the local, state and national level."

Boot Camp graduates are Kelsey Prothro and Margie Raimondo of Arkansas; LaDonna LaValle of Florida;

Sherry Kenney of Louisiana; Jennifer Williams of Mississippi; Nicole Lujan of New Mexico; Michelle Patterson of North Carolina; Caitlyn Barton of Ohio; Mieke deJong of Oregon; Diann Bussell and Haley Brazel of Tennessee; and Natalie Fullmer of Utah.

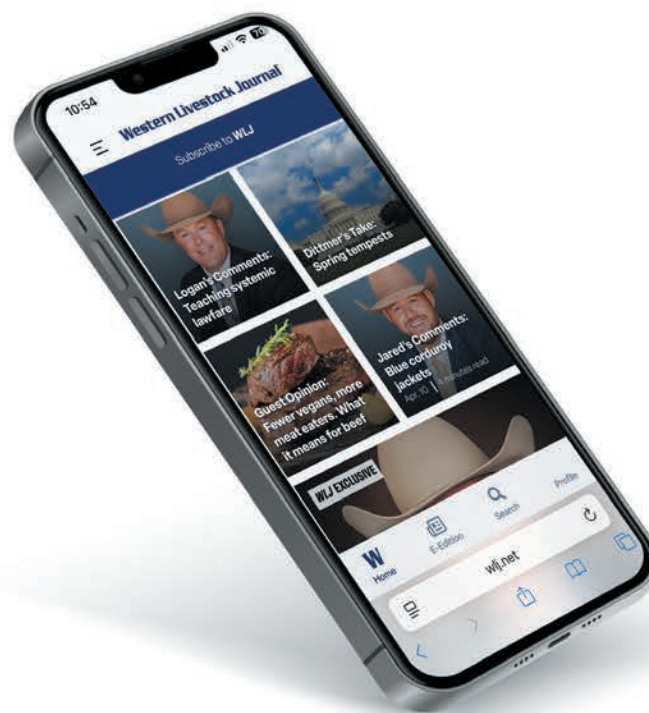
"Farm Bureau women across the country continue to step up as advocates for agriculture," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "We value their commitment to leadership and lifelong learning."

This is the 24th Boot Camp hosted by AFBF. The program has 353 graduates and is open to all women involved in Farm Bureau.

"This training let us 'put our boots to the ground' through real-life scenarios that prepare us to effectively share with people outside of agriculture," said graduate Haley Brazel, a farmer and Farm Bureau member in Tennessee who is also an analyst at her local USDA Farm Service Agency office.

The American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee, in partnership with AFBF staff, hosts and provides training for Women's Communications Boot Camp biannually. Applications open June 22 for the fall 2026 Boot Camp session. — **AFBF**

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# Wildfire concerns and forest treatment topics of USFS hearing

As drought deepens across much of the West, lawmakers used a House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands oversight hearing to press U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Chief Tom Schultz on whether the agency is prepared for what could be another challenging wildfire season.

The hearing on June 5 came as the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) wildfire outlook forecasts above-normal wildfire potential across large portions of the West through summer and into early fall.

According to the NIFC outlook, more than 2.4 million acres had already burned nationwide by May 31, nearly double the 10-year average for the same period. Forecasters pointed to worsening drought, a lack of snowpack and above-normal temperatures as factors likely to drive fire activity in the coming months.

"The status quo is failing our forests, our firefighters, and the growing number of communities that live with the threat of catastrophic wildfire every year," Subcommittee Chairman Tom Tiffany (R-WI-07) said during his opening remarks.

## NIFC regional outlook

According to the NIFC outlook, much of the western U.S. is expected to face elevated wildfire risk throughout the summer and into early fall. The Northwest is among the

areas of greatest concern, with above-normal fire potential forecast across eastern Oregon and Washington beginning in June before expanding across nearly the entire region by August and September.

The outlook also highlights the central Great Basin and much of the Rocky Mountain region as areas likely to experience above-normal fire activity. Elevated fire potential is forecast during June across Utah, western Colorado, portions of the Great Basin and the Greater Four Corners region. While summer monsoon moisture may help moderate conditions in parts of Arizona and New Mexico later in the season, NIFC expects heightened wildfire risk to persist across western Colorado, Utah and portions of the northern Great Basin into July and August.

In Wyoming, the Powder River Basin was specifically identified as having above-normal fire potential during June, while elevated risk also extends across portions of eastern Montana near the Canadian border. NIFC noted that drought is expected to persist across much of the northern two-thirds of the West through August.

The Southwest presents a more mixed outlook. Above-normal fire potential is expected through June across much of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado. Still, conditions could improve later in the summer if the North American monsoon develops as forecast.

NIFC cautioned that widespread drought, warm temperatures and increasingly dry fuels could support rapid fire growth until meaningful rainfall arrives.

## Schultz highlights preparedness

Against that backdrop, Schultz defended the agency's readiness heading into the heart of the fire season.

"Wildfire readiness and response remains one of our most urgent responsibilities," Schultz told lawmakers. "We're prioritizing rapid, aggressive initial response so that we can keep fires small."

Schultz told the committee that USFS has hired more than 11,000 firefighters and expects to reach 11,300 firefighters by July. The agency has also expanded its pool of trained support personnel and firefighting contractors ahead of the summer fire season. He said that despite the highest number of wildfire starts on national forest lands in nearly 10 years during fiscal year 2025, acres burned remained about half the 10-year average, while the agency recorded its strongest initial attack success rate in 12 years.

Still, a major point of contention during the hearing involved hazardous fuels reduction work.

Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO-02) highlighted a recent analysis showing USFS completed approximately 35% fewer acres of hazardous fuels treatments in

2025 than in 2024. He questioned whether staffing reductions and policy changes under the Trump administration contributed to the decline.

Neguse cited a study by the Center for Western Priorities, which found that the USFS treated approximately 2.6 million acres through prescribed fire, mechanical thinning and other fuels-reduction projects during calendar year 2025, down from about 4.1 million acres the previous year.

Schultz pushed back on the assertion that fuel work had declined significantly. He told lawmakers that treatment totals fluctuate annually and that most of the decline occurred in the South rather than in

western states facing the highest wildfire threats. According to Schultz, the agency has already treated approximately 2.2 million acres during fiscal year 2026, putting the agency ahead of last year's pace.

## Forest management

In addition to fuel reduction, lawmakers addressed forest management practices.

Republicans emphasized active forest management, timber harvesting and passage of the Fix Our Forests Act as tools to reduce wildfire risks and improve forest health.

"When we stop managing forests, nature eventually does it for us, usually through in-

sects, disease, and fires," Tiffany said.

Democrats raised concerns about workforce reductions, proposed budget cuts and the future of research and forestry assistance programs. Rep. Jared Huffman (D-CA-02) said USFS has lost roughly 25% of its workforce since early 2025 and called a reported 35% decline in hazardous fuels treatments "very alarming to anyone who lives in fire country."

While opinions differed on how best to address the problem, lawmakers on both sides acknowledged that the conditions facing federal forests this summer are increasingly severe. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**



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**Jun. 30** – Cattle Country Video Sale, Laramie, WY  
**Jul. 13** – Western Video Market Sale, Reno, NV  
**Jul. 6** – Superior Livestock Auction, Steamboat Springs, CO  
**Jul. 7** – Turlock Livestock Auction Yard, Female Sale, Turlock, CA  
**Jul. 25** – Cattlemen's Livestock Market, Bred Female Sale, Galt, CA

**Aug. 1** – Turlock Livestock Auction Yard, Bred Female Sale, Turlock, CA  
**Aug. 4** – Cattle Country Video Sale, Gering, NE  
**Aug. 17** – Superior Livestock Auction, Sheridan, CO  
**Sep. 10** – Cattle Country Video Sale, Cheyenne, WY

### HORSE

**Jul. 11** – High Desert Quarter Horse Sale, Redmond, OR  
**Aug. 22** – Memory Ranches, Foal Sale, Wells, NV

## April beef exports below year-ago levels

Beef exports trended lower in April due to the impasse with China, along with year-over-year declines in other major markets, according to data released by USDA and compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

April beef exports totaled 89,783 metric tons (mt), down 11% from a year ago, while value fell 5% to \$780.6 million. While prospects are brightening for U.S. beef's return to the China market, April results still reflected a near-total lock-out.

April shipments were higher than a year ago to Taiwan and Egypt and increased significantly to the Caribbean and ASEAN regions and to Peru, but trended lower to other major markets. Beef variety meats were again a bright spot in April, with exports climbing 20% from a year ago to 25,314 mt, led by growth to top volume market Mexico, valued at \$114.7 million (up 40%).

April beef exports shined on

a per-head basis, as export value equated to \$415.88 per head of fed slaughter, up 5% from a year ago.

For January through April, beef and beef variety meat exports were 11% below the 2025 pace at 365,138 mt, and declined 5% in value to \$3.13 billion. But when excluding China from these results, exports were up slightly (0.3%) in volume and increased 7% in value.

"Global demand for U.S. beef has proven very resilient, even in the face of tight supplies and higher prices," said USMEF President and CEO Dan Halstrom. "But there are certainly significant headwinds, including the impact of weak currencies in Korea, Japan and Southeast Asia, and higher energy prices weighing on consumer confidence and disposable income. And while we were thrilled to see China renew U.S. beef plant registrations following the summit meeting between President Trump and President Xi, ad-

ditional obstacles must also be addressed before U.S. beef's presence in China rebounds."

## Lamb exports down in April

April exports of U.S. lamb muscle cuts totaled 231 mt, down 10% from a year ago, while value fell 16% to \$1.2 million. January-April exports were 4% above last year's pace in volume (1,042 mt) and 3% higher in value (\$5.7 million), led by growth in the Bahamas, Netherlands Antilles and Leeward-Windward Islands.

Lamb exports to Mexico have trended lower in 2026, after reaching the highest level since 2014 last year. No exports have yet been reported to Canada this year, after totaling 233 mt in 2025.

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

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J106, 8/19/2021 by S A V Downpour 8794 bred to 2S Sharpie L71; to Welter Brothers Angus, Onslow, IA, \$28,500. T K Madge F401, 9/5/2018 by Musgrave 316 Stunner bred to 2S Sharpie L71; to Grant Raml Cattle, Goodwin, SD, \$19,000. T K Prairie Queen F364,

8/19/2018 by Musgrave 316 Stunner bred to 2S Sharpie L71; to Harwood Cattle, Geyser, MT, \$18,000. T K Blackcap McHenry F414, 8/31/2018 by Musgrave 316 Stunner bred to 2S Sharpie L71; to TJB Gelbvieh, Chickamauga, GA, \$17,500. — **TY GROSHANS**

# Autauga Farming Company named BIF Commercial Producer of the Year

The Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) presented Autauga Farming Company Inc. the 2026 BIF Commercial Producer of the Year Award June 2 during the group's annual research symposium in Boise, ID. This national award recognizes a producer's dedication to improving the beef industry at the commercial level.

Rooted in Autaugaville, AL, Autauga Farming Company has spent more than a century refining one of the Southeast's most distinguished commercial cow herds. Founded in 1919 and now stewarded by the fourth and fifth genera-

tions of the Wendland family, the operation reflects a deep, unwavering commitment to beef improvement.

"Autauga Farming Company and the Wendland family symbolize the performance principles of the Beef Improvement Federation and have done so for generations," said Michelle Elmore, Alabama Beef Cattle Improvement Association (BCIA) executive secretary.

At the heart of the enterprise is a fall-calving herd of 1,018 breeding females—a closed herd for more than 40 years. By eliminating outside female influence, the Wend-

lands have built a genetic program precisely tailored to Alabama's sandy soils and climate. Their three-breed terminal rotation of Angus, Hereford and Charolais is engineered for maximum hybrid vigor and produces calves that excel in maternal traits, feedlot performance and carcass quality.

The family's commitment to data backs every breeding decision. As charter members of the Alabama BCIA since 1964, the Wendlands have maintained 62 consecutive years of performance records—weaning weights, gain ratios and carcass data—now

managed digitally through CattleMax and electronic identification technology. Carcass feedback from their customers directly informs sire selection, ensuring their genetics perform as well on the rail as in the pasture.

In 2025, they reintroduced artificial insemination into their replacement heifer program for the first time in 25 years to tighten the calving window and improve calf uniformity. The Wendlands didn't just build a better herd; they built a better market. Co-founding the Producers Feeder Calf Sale in 1980, they established a regional benchmark

for pre-conditioned, vaccinated, uniform calf loads that command premium prices.

"Their innovative spirit and love of agriculture have and will continue to make a positive and influential impact," Elmore summarizes. "Each generation has served as a dedicated model for progressive agriculture. Autauga Farming Company will continue to be an advocate for improvement in efficiency, profitability and sustainability of agriculture."

Autauga Farming Company was nominated for the award by the Alabama BCIA. The award is presented by BIF and sponsored by Drovers.

Approximately 400 beef producers, academia and industry representatives attended the organization's 58th Annual Research Symposium and Convention in Boise, ID. BIF's mission is to help improve the industry by promoting greater acceptance of beef cattle performance evaluation. — **BIF**



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JULY <b>23</b>	LIVEAG VIDEO AUCTION BOISE, IDAHO	SEPTEMBER <b>10</b>	LIVEAG FORT WORTH VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION	DECEMBER <b>10</b>	LIVEAG LAS VEGAS VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION
AUGUST <b>5</b>	PRODUCERS LIVESTOCK VIDEO AUCTION	OCTOBER <b>8</b>	LIVEAG FORT WORTH VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION	DECEMBER <b>15</b>	END OF YEAR EQUIPMENT AUCTION
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## Agreement set to find new water sources

### WATER SHARING (from page 1)

exchange programs and assess funding needs and potential environmental or operational concerns. They will also look at potential funding sources and strategies to reduce any negative impacts associated with future exchanges.

BOR officials said the timing is important as the Colorado River Basin continues to face severe water shortages. The agency said storage levels remain near historic lows at roughly 36% of capacity, and recent low snowpack and above-average temperatures have further stressed reservoirs and critical water infrastructure.

### Building new supplies

Officials said the agreement is part of a larger shift toward finding new water sources that can supplement Colorado River supplies and provide greater flexibility in managing the basin's long-term water needs.

The San Diego County Water Authority noted that decades of conservation and investments in diversified water supplies have positioned the region to contribute surplus desalinated water to other areas experiencing shortages. As the nation's largest seawater desalination plant, the Carlsbad facility could play an important role in future interstate water exchanges being considered under the agreement.

"Next-generation strategies

in the face of climate volatility must include interstate partnerships that deliver water where it's needed most," said Dan Denham, general manager of the San Diego County Water Authority. "New ideas are challenging to implement, but it's in everyone's best interest to make this work."

Officials from Nevada and Arizona also emphasized the importance of regional cooperation as basin states prepare for future water management challenges.

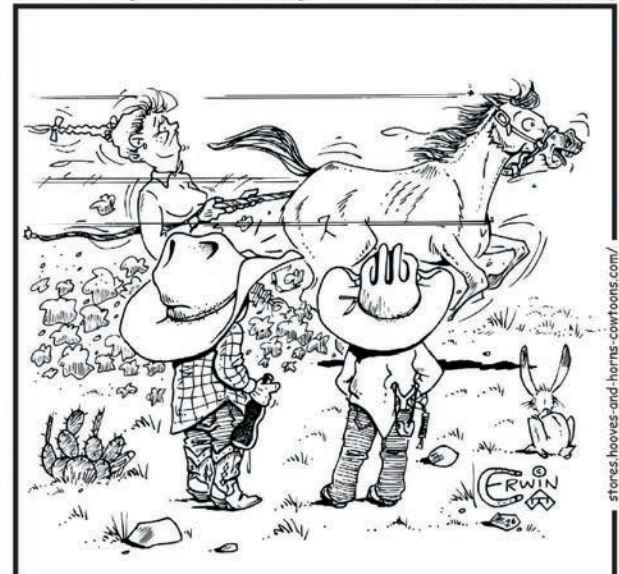
"As Colorado River conditions grow more challenging, regional partnerships like this are an essential tool to help ensure sustainable water supplies," said Southern Nevada Water Authority General Manager John Entsminger.

Arizona Department of Water Resources Director Tom Buschatzke said the agreement represents the type of innovation needed to help stabilize the Colorado River system over the long term.

"This is an important step in addressing the goal of augmenting the water supplies of the Colorado River by creating a mechanism to deliver those supplies through an exchange using existing infrastructure," Buschatzke said.

While any future exchange program would require additional analysis and approvals, the agreement establishes a foundation for discussions that could eventually create the first formal mechanism for moving desalinated or purified water across state lines within the Colorado River Basin. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

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