Western Livestock Journal®

"The Industry's Largest Weekly Circulation"

The National Livestock Weekly

August 31, 2026 • Vol. 104, No. 40

website: www.wlj.net • email: editorial@wlj.net • advertising@wlj.net • circulation@wlj.net

INSIDE WLJ

PROPERTIES MAGAZINE — Jump inside to check out the Fall *Properties Ranch & Farm* magazine! If your copy is not inside the paper, please contact 720-370-8275.

OH CANADA — U.S. moves forward with 50% tariffs on Canadian goods, retaliatory measures expected to follow. Page 4

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"There have been two new confirmed cases of anthrax on two additional premises in Logan County, CO. The new cases are located adjacent to the original case announced on Aug. 8, 2012. No other livestock on the newly affected properties are showing clinical signs of the disease. Adjacent ranchers have been notified," read the Aug. 20, 2012, *WLJ* article.

INDEX

Trump beef import plan draws opposition

— Import source unknown

A plan to increase ground beef imports in an effort to decrease beef prices is drawing concern from industry groups, which warn the move could affect cattle prices and undermine consumer trust.

In a Aug. 21 Truth Social post, President Donald Trump announced he had completed a deal to "substantially lower the price of ground beef for working American families."

For the next 90 days, he wrote, the U.S. will allow up to 300,000 metric tons of ground beef to be imported with no out-of-quota tariff. He added that there is a commitment to sell the beef at 25% below current market prices.

"This deal will reduce prices for Americans while giving space for our Great American Beef Herd to grow again," Trump said.

Trump did not indicate the source of the ground beef or with whom he reached an agreement, only telling reporters later that day that "there are a few countries, but they're going to be sending in the highest quality beef."

White House officials said that Trump planned to formally sign an executive order within the following two weeks.

Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins told reporters Aug. 25 that she was not privy to talk about details of the decision. "I think the conversations are still going on, and that's Ambassador (Jamieson) Greer who's finalizing what exactly

See BEEF IMPORTS on page 12

Adobe Stock

Industry groups are concerned with President Donald Trump's recent announcement to increase beef imports for a 90-day time period.

Greens win partial victory over Arizona grazing suit

— Threatened species in question

A federal judge has ruled that federal agencies failed to establish adequate standards for measuring harm to two threatened species from livestock grazing in Arizona's Coronado National Forest, while allowing most of the government's broader grazing analysis to stand.

U.S. District Judge Angela M. Martinez granted part of a challenge brought by the Center for Biological Diversity and Maricopa Audubon Society, now known as Maricopa Bird Alliance, over a 2021 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) biological opinion used by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to authorize grazing in the Coronado National Forest.

The ruling focused on the biological opinion's incidental take statements for the threatened Sonora chub and Chiricahua leopard frog. Martinez found the standards failed to provide clear limits for determining when harm to the species would require the agencies to reinitiate consultation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

However, the decision was narrower than the environmental groups had sought. The court rejected their other claims, including challenges to USFWS' conclusions that grazing was not likely to jeopardize the chub, frog or threatened yellow-billed cuckoo or adversely affect their critical habitat. The judge also rejected claims that the agencies improperly declined to reopen consultation based on evidence submitted after the biological opinion.

Background

The Coronado National Forest

See CORONADO GRAZING on page 6

New Colorado River rules require Lower Basin cutbacks

— Nevada files federal lawsuit

The federal government has finalized new Colorado River operating rules that will require Arizona, California and Nevada to cut their combined water use by 1.25 million acre-feet annually for the next two years amid record-low reservoir levels.

The Department of the Interior (DOI) on Aug. 21 issued its 2027-28 Operating Guidelines along with a Record of Decision for post-2026 Colorado River operations. The decision establishes a 10-year framework for managing Lake Powell and Lake Mead while leaving room for the seven basin states, Tribes and other water users to continue negotiating a longer-term agreement.

"Forty million people, millions of acres of farmland and ranchland, industries that power the American West, and some of our nation's fastest growing metropolitan areas depend on the Colorado River," said Interior Secretary Doug Burgum.

Under a proposed Lower Basin sharing agreement, Arizona would take the largest reduction at 760,000 acre-feet (an acre-foot is 325,851 gallons) annually, followed by California at 440,000 acre-feet and Nevada at 50,000 acre-feet. The three states would also voluntarily conserve and store at least another 700,000 acre-feet over the two years.

The reductions come as river conditions have deteriorated sharply. DOI said the combined contents of Lake Powell and Lake Mead are lower than at any point since Lake Powell began filling after Glen Canyon Dam was completed in the 1960s. The agency shows Lake Powell is currently at 21% of storage capacity (3,518 feet) and Lake Mead at 27% (1,099 feet).

The Bureau of Reclamation expects Lake Powell to begin the Oct. 1 water year between 3,510 and 3,540 feet, with releases of 6-7 million acre-feet to protect Glen Canyon Dam operations. The final 2027 release will be set in April based on hydrology.

While the Lower Basin states face immediate reductions, the plan does not mandate comparable cuts from the Upper Basin states of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. Instead, it allows those states to develop an agreement involving operations at Aspinall, Flaming Gorge and Navajo reservoirs to help protect Glen Canyon Dam.

Lower Basin states react

The difference remains contentious, with Lower Basin states calling

See COLORADO RIVER on page 16

Headlines turn market lower over the week

(This report contains information available as of Wednesday, Aug. 26, due to an earlier WLJ *press time.)*

The cattle market was influenced by headlines over the week, including the news that President Donald Trump planned to increase beef imports, as well as the Mexican border reopening at an Arizona port.

Live cattle futures traded lower, down about $5 on the August contract to $218.47 and down about $8 on the October contract to $210.77.

Cash trade for the week through Wednesday totaled about 40,000 head. Live steers sold from $217-220, and dressed steers sold from $342-355.

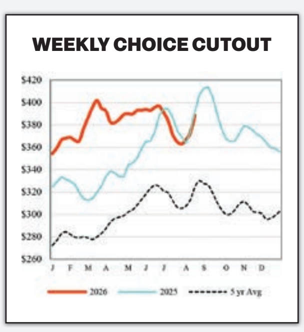
"With packers now possessing the lion's share of the market's leverage, fed cash cattle prices will likely continue to scale lower for the unforeseeable future; uncertainty surrounding the border reopening causes market anxiousness as well," wrote ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, in her Wednesday midday comments.

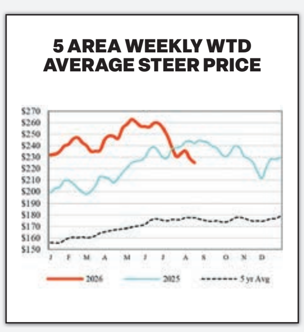
Cash trade for the week ending Aug. 23 totaled 79,292 head. Live steers averaged $224.97, and dressed steers averaged $355.49.

Slaughter through Wednesday totaled about 310,000 head, compared to 309,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for a week earlier is estimated at 523,000 head. Actual slaughter for two weeks earlier was not available by *WLJ* press time.

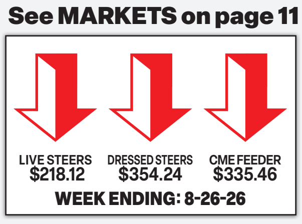
"This past week the slaughter volume increased as packers took the opportunity to make hay while the sun shines. Profits have returned to the packers helped by a reduction in slaughter capacities," the Cattle Report wrote on Wednesday.

Boxed beef prices closed modestly lower over the week. The Choice cutout lost about $4 to close at $385.13, and the Select cutout lost about a





See MARKETS on page 11



COMMENTS

Rebuilding the herd


GROSHANS

Many cattlemen and women across the U.S. are currently shaking their heads in disbelief at the outright, blatant disregard for their livelihood from President Donald Trump's latest Truth Social post.

The post: "As we work to rebuild this herd and help our ranchers, for the next 90 days, the United States will allow up to 300,000 metric tons of product for ground beef to be imported with no out of quota tariff. We have a commitment that this beef will be sold at 25 percent below current market prices."

For me, so many questions immediately come to mind. Where is this ground beef coming from, and how safe is it? Where will this product be sold? Will the consumer actually see the promised 25% discount? And perhaps most importantly, why not focus the energy and resources on lowering the cost of production for American ranchers?

We have already seen how uncertainty surrounding imported beef can affect cattle producers. In October 2025, Trump suggested importing more beef from Argentina and said that U.S. cattle producers needed help with lowering record-high beef prices for consumers. That announcement sent the feeder cattle market down $55 in a two-week period, and it came at a crucial time of year when many ranchers are marketing their calves. The result was significant financial losses for many producers.

For ranchers, these are not simply numbers on a market report. A $55 drop in the market can mean the difference between profitability and a loss. Ranchers make long-term decisions based on cattle prices, feed costs, weather and the availability of grazing land. They cannot simply increase production overnight because the government decides that more beef is needed.

Rebuilding a cow herd takes time, capital and, most importantly, confidence in the future.

A better use of resources and something that could actually help rebuild the American beef herd is the Rebuilding America's National Cow Herd (RANCH) Act. This legislation would create a new voluntary grazing land restoration program that could open up to 20 million new acres for grazing. At full enrollment, the program established by the RANCH Act could provide sufficient grazing land to support an estimated 2 to 4 million additional beef cows.

That is a solution that addresses the problem at its source. If we truly want more cattle in the U.S., we need more opportunities for ranchers to raise them. We need to look at the challenges limiting expansion, including drought, high input costs and the availability of grazing land.

AJ Munger with Eagle Pass Ranch near Highmore, SD, has been working with Sen. Mike Rounds (R-SD) on this legislation. As Rounds put it, "Anyone who has spent time around cattle understands one simple truth: no grass means no cattle.

"With ranchers facing drought, high input costs and a shortage of grazing land, America's beef cow herd is at its smallest size in over 70 years," Rounds said. "The RANCH Act would create a voluntary Ranchland Program that helps producers restore eligible marginal cropland into grasslands for grazing. Producers can use their land in a way that makes the most sense for each individual operation, giving those who know their land best the tools needed to succeed."

According to the bill text, the RANCH Act:

- Strengthens American food security by expanding the domestic beef supply and reducing reliance on imported beef.
- Puts American ranchers first, expanding the grazing land base needed to rebuild the national cowherd and meet growing consumer demand.
- Expands domestic demand for American-grown grain and forage, giving U.S. farmers a stronger, more reliable market as the cattle herd grows.

American ranchers need support from our current leadership, not more imports. They need policies that give them the opportunity and flexibility to succeed. If the goal is truly to rebuild the American beef herd, then we should be investing in American ranchers and providing them with the tools to grow their operations and focus on lowering production costs.

Importing beef may offer a short-term talking point about lower prices, but it does not create one additional American cow or acre of grass. If we are serious about rebuilding the American beef herd, we need to focus on solutions that support the people who raise them. **— TY GROSHANS**

RESOURCE SCIENCE

DO WE NEED MORE WOLVES AND BIGGER WOLVES?

Stockmen know about animal breeding. Livestock programs include selection for traits like birth and weaning weights based on a bull's performance, crossbreeding to avoid inbreeding and gain heterosis, and choosing the breed, crosses and sires best suited for your environment and operation. Research at state universities, USDA and breed associations provide modern science on genetics and breeding, and common sense and experience knowing what works in your operation are all used in livestock production. It might be of interest to *WLJ* readers that livestock genetics concepts have been applied to wolves, as described below.

Wildlife can affect your operation with loss of animals and increased costs. For example, wolves kill livestock and cause stress that can affect reproduction, behavior and body condition (see *WLJ* July 13, 2026, page 3). Mexican wolves in Arizona and New Mexico are an endangered subspecies and genetically different than northern wolves in the other states and Canada, although these differences are not very large or scientifically definite. Mexican wolves' body sizes are on average smaller than northern wolves, but they regularly kill cattle and elk.

The Mexican wolf population started with a small number of captive animals and experienced inbreeding. A captive breeding program using pedigrees and genetic data, like a livestock program, was designed to minimize this. The captive population grew and wolves were released into the wild in Arizona and New Mexico. Northern wolves were introduced into Colorado in 2023 and 2025, and could disperse southward into the range of the Mexican wolf (see the *WLJ* references at wlj.net).

Possible interbreeding of northern and Mexican wolves has been discussed by biologists with two considerations. First, interbreeding could result in heterosis and increased fitness of the Mexican wolf population. Second, interbreeding could change the genetics of the Mexican wolf subspecies and potentially disrupt adaptation to the environment in southern Arizona and New Mexico. These considerations are similar to those for crossbreeding livestock in which heterosis can be beneficial and choosing breeds with complementary traits is important.

What will be the effect of northern wolves interbreeding with Mexican wolves? I previously provided numerical data for this question by calculating possible genetic changes to Mexican wolves for a coat-color gene (*WLJ*, Nov. 27, 2024). I recently expanded the analysis to include 39 SNP (single nucleotide polymorphism) genes like the ones used for cattle genetics.

With the migration of one northern wolf into the Mexican wolf population per generation, new genes are introduced, genetic variation (heterozygosity) increases and gene frequencies change by about 1% in 10 generations and 6% in 100 generations. The black coat-color gene increases substantially with selection in two generations (see the References).

Interbreeding of northern wolves could also increase the body size of Mexican wolves. Research in Yellowstone Park found that larger wolves had better success at killing large prey (elk) than smaller wolves. Northern wolves weigh 70-120 pounds (middle value 95 lbs.) and Mexican wolves weigh 50-80 lbs. (middle value 79 lbs.), so northern wolves are on average about 16 lbs. larger than Mexican wolves.

The average genetic effect on body weight (heritability) of dogs is 0.51, and dogs are closely related to wolves, so this heritability is a reasonable approximation for wolves. Application of a standard breeding equation (response to selection = heritability x selection differential) to body weight and considering a hypothetical breeding population of 1/2 northern wolves and 1/2 Mexican wolves results in an increase of about 4 lbs. in offspring (see the References for the calculations). These are hypothetical calculations, but the point is that northern wolves interbreeding with Mexican wolves can increase body size, and hence their effectiveness at killing large animals like cattle and horses.

Wolves are a designated federal endangered species in all of the Lower 48 states except Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and eastern Washington and Oregon, where they are managed by the states. I think an important scientific aspect is that the Mexican wolf is a subspecies, and this is an indefinite biological category (see the References). There is not a scientific consensus about wolf subspecies, so the Mexican wolf endangered species status is not based on the best science. This is a very controversial topic with some biologists insisting on the validity of subspecies and others recognizing that subspecies are indefinite.

Whether interbreeding of northern and Mexican wolves is good by increasing fitness and body size, or bad by changing the genetics of Mexican wolves, is a question considering the management objective of having a viable Mexican wolf population. But this wildlife objective doesn't focus on ranchers' management objectives of raising livestock and reducing the negative impacts of wolves. Maybe the more important question is: Do we need more fit and bigger Mexican wolves that are better at killing livestock? Some readers of *WLJ* probably think the answer is no.

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) is the law that enabled the spread of wolves in the western states. Perhaps the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 should be expanded beyond U.S. Forest Service lands to be equally as important as the ESA so farmers and ranchers, who know a lot about breeding and fitness, can have more input into wildlife management. **— Matt Cronin, *WLJ* columnist**

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

GUEST OPINION

SILVER LININGS AND OPTIMISM DURING DRY WEATHER

North Dakota and surrounding states are experiencing abnormally dry to severe drought conditions. While livestock producers face many challenges during drought, there are also unique opportunities in the current climate to add to or improve operations for future years. If you think of your operation as a series of links in a production chain, those weak links can be identified during times of adversity. Identify those weak links and make them stronger for the future. A few opportunities are available during drought to improve an operation in the future.

• **Make herds stronger and more resilient.** Cull cow prices remain high, so take advantage of the market and add some immediate cash flow to the operation to invest in working facilities, water infrastructure and fencing equipment.

Critically evaluate herds for females that are less productive or require more labor. Evaluate temperament, feet, udders, eyes, calving records and calf performance to cull problem animals.

Reproductive efficiency is the largest driver of profitability in the cow herd—five to 10 times that of calf growth potential.

Cull open females, and cull females that have routinely calved late in the calving season. Around 95% of mature cows should calve in the first 63 days of the calving season. Those that calve after that benchmark are more likely to wean lighter calves and come up open next year.

• **Consider early weaning of calves, and assume higher weaning weights than expected.** Weaning calves early reduces demand on your pasture and range. This also gives cows a greater chance to improve body condition without the lactation demand of calves. Data has shown improved feeding and carcass quality when calves are weaned early.

Often, forage quality is higher during dry years due to greater nutrient density, leading to higher weaning weights.

• **Seize opportunities to make your operation drought tolerant.** Evaluate stocking rates. There is always a balancing act between forage supply and forage demand. Evaluating stocking rate during dry periods can give you a good baseline number for long-term sustainability.

Add water. Water is usually the most limiting factor to improving grazing management. Cost-share opportunities for water development may arise as a result of drought. If they do, be ready to take advantage of the opportunity.

Adding additional fencing can help you through dry weather and improve grazing management long-term. Poly wire fence can help you take advantage of grazing opportunities in crop residue. Give access to grazing in underutilized areas, and restrict grazing in overutilized areas.

• **Use resources available to help you through periods of adversity.** The Livestock Forage Disaster Program provides compensation for livestock producers experiencing qualifying drought conditions. Payments are activated when a county is in D2 for four consecutive weeks (or any seven of eight consecutive weeks) or hits D3 or D4 at any time in the grazing season.

The USDA's Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish program provides financial assistance to producers who suffer losses due to specific adverse conditions. It includes assistance for hauling feed, water or livestock to feed. Payments are activated when a county is in D2 for eight consecutive weeks or hits D3 or D4 at any time in the grazing season.

Just remember: this is temporary. The conditions that we are currently facing won't last forever. The northern Great Plains environment is challenging, and drought is part of the climate. As a reflection of the optimism that cattle producers have across the state, North Dakota increased cow numbers in 2025 by 21,000 head and added 6,000 in replacement heifers.

Knowing that we will face dry weather from time to time, we have to manage during the good times to make it through the bad. **— James Rogers, NDSU Extension forage crops production specialist**

Letters to the editor: Letters for publication must be no longer than 675 words and must include the writer's name, location and phone number. Phone numbers will not be published. Letters may be shortened for space requirements. Obituaries must be no longer than 700 words. Send a letter to the editor or obituary by emailing editorial@wlj.net or mailing to Western Livestock Journal, Attn: Editorial Dept., 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.

The national livestock weekly • Since 1922 • Western Livestock Journal LLC • 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111 • www.wlj.net
(303) 722-7600 • Fax (303) 722-0155

Member IPC

EDITORIAL@WLJ.NET	CIRCULATION@WLJ.NET	ADVERTISING@WLJ.NET	FIELD REPS
ANNA MILLER FORTOZO *Managing Editor* *(720) 372-2353 • anna@wlj.net*	**HANNAH JACKSON** *Circulation Manager & Copy Editor* *(720) 370-8275 • hannah@wlj.net*	**KIRBY BRINCEFIELD** *Senior Operations Manager* *(720) 716-3363* *kirby@wlj.net*	**JARED PATTERSON** *Caldwell, ID* *(208) 312-2386* *jared@wlj.net*
CHARLES WALLACE *Contributing Editor* *(303) 722-7600 • charles@wlj.net*	**CLASSIFIED@WLJ.NET**	**MIKE OLDCORN** *Advertising Coordinator & Graphic Design* *(720) 370-9095* *mike@wlj.net*	**TY GROSHANS** *Akron, CO* *(970) 818-6016* *ty@wlj.net*
Mailing Address: *P.O. BOX 370930 Denver, CO 80237-0930*	**TOM WHITE** *Classifieds Manager* *(720) 370-7977 • tom@wlj.net*	**TRISTAN MARTIN** *Advertising Coordinator & Graphic Design* *(720) 372-1763* *tristan@wlj.net*	**KEVIN MURNIN** *Worden, MT* *(406) 853-4638* *kevin@wlj.net*

Western Livestock Journal

WESTERN LIVESTOCK JOURNAL (ISSN 0094-6710, USPS 678660) is published weekly (52 issues annually, plus special features) by Western Livestock Journal LLC, 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111. Website: www.wlj.net. Email: advertising@wlj.net or editorial@wlj.net. U.S. subscription rate: 1 year - $55. Periodicals postage paid at Denver, CO, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Western Livestock Journal, P.O. Box 370930, Denver, CO 80237-0930.

PROGRAM DISPERSION

SUNDAY, SEPT. 20, 2026

At the ranch • CONRAD, MONTANA

AN ELITE BREEDER'S SALE 30 AQHA HORSES

Cornerstone "Montana Brand" Broodmares & Their Futuristic 2026 Foals!

...featuring Peptoboonsmal, Gallo Del Cielo, High Brow Cat outcross cowhorse blood!

Selling:
- Broodmares • Stallions • 2026 foals
- Two Yr. Old & Yearling Prospect Fillies and Geldings

A MONTANA HORSEMEN'S WEEKEND! Two Major AQHA Events!
- Weaver Quarter Horses Sale ...Sat., Sept. 19
- Sunshine Ranch Dispersion ...Sun., Sept. 20

Sample of Sale Horses...

Eddie Van Hayland x Frosted Haddie (Frosty Knight)

Eddie Van Hayland x Hydrive Cat (High Brow Cat)

Tikki Wood x Driftwood, Sugar Bars dam

Cornerstone! The Driftwood Legends ...Dynaflow Drift, White Lighting Ike, Sun Frost, War Concho ...3x Driftwood Ike!

An original...linebred to the Blackburn source. Exceptional quality, class!

Tikki Wood x Boon Dox John. Talented, strong, big future, started!

Awesome! Tikki Wood x Soula Jule Star, CD Olena.

A "Montana Brand" Franchise Matron! • AP Frosty Knight ...elite performance mare!

AP Frosty Knight ...full sister to stallion Tikki Wood! • Nursing Eddie Van Hayland '26 filly!

Elite cowhorse! Hydrive Cat (PE $6.3 million) x Shorty Lena (PE $9.5 million)! • Eddies Short Stack colt above.

"Rooster" grndgtr. ...3x Sun Frost, 7x Driftwood • Awesome Tikki Wood '26 filly!

Our "Montana Brand" Stallions ...Their progeny & service sell!

KNIGHTWOOD DANDY
2017 Grullo Stallion • 15.3 hh
AP Frosty Knight (Sun Frost)
Powerful, Smart Athlete!

EDDIE VAN HAYLAND
2020 Chestnut Stallion • 15.0 hh
Third Cutting (Boonlight Dancer)
Stalwart ...All Cowhorse!

RO ONE TIME CIELO
2022 Blue Roan Stallion • 14.3+ hh • One Time Pepto, High Brow Cat, Sun Frost, Gallo Del Cielo • **Talented, Reined Cowhorse!**


TIKKI WOOD
2007 Dun Stallion
AP Frosty Knight (Sun Frost)
The "Montana Brand" Stallion!

JOHN & CANDY BALKENBUSH
(c) 406/788-0533 • 406/278-3569 • Conrad, Montana
bbushnorth@gmail.com

Online catalog, sale info: **sunshinehorse.net**

Bid Online... DVAuction Broadcasting Real-Time Auctions

UNITED LIVESTOCK BROKERS, INC.
Jay George 605/391-6230 • Lebo, KS

US tariffs on Canada take effect, retaliatory duties expected

A week of U.S.-Canada trade negotiations ended without a deal on Aug. 21, sending 50% tariffs on Canadian goods into effect the following day and prompting Canada to prepare retaliatory measures.

During line-by-line negotiations in Washington, last-minute changes reported by both sides made an agreement unattainable.

The U.S. tariffs on Canadian dairy, steel, automotive products and other goods took effect at 12:01 a.m. on Aug. 22. In total, $20 billion worth of goods fall under the new duties, with no new talks scheduled.

"You're at war when you're attacked, and we got attacked," Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said during a press conference.

Canada's dollar-for-dollar retaliatory tariffs are expected to take effect the day after Labor Day.

Earlier in the week, President Donald Trump expressed optimism about reaching a deal. "Our farmers were paying tremendous tariffs into Canada and those tariffs are going to be eviscerated, down to zero," he said, likely referencing Canadian dairy.

Throughout the week, negotiation teams worked toward a deal that would reduce tariffs on Canadian steel in exchange for greater Canadian dairy market access and provincial restrictions on American alcohol.

But in an interview with the New York Times, U.S. Trade Ambassador Jamieson Greer said the U.S. offered to eliminate the 10% softwood lumber tariff, reduce the 25% auto tariff to as low as 7% and cut steel and aluminum tariffs from 50% to 25%. The deal also would have suspended the new 50% Section 338 tariffs on about 5% of Canadian exports.

However, the proposed deal fell apart after both sides introduced or objected to changes during the final stages of negotiations.

New trade terms for Canadian parts in vehicles were introduced during the final stages of negotiations, making Canadian automotive production "more uneconomic over time," Carney said. The U.S. also sought restrictions on Canada's ability to pursue other trade agreements. "We're the partner of choice in many respects. And the Americans wanted to restrict that," he said.

American officials also claimed Canada introduced new demands and walked back previous commitments but did not specify what those changes were.

Dairy and ag products

Agriculture emerged as a sticking point in the negotiations, particularly Canada's dairy supply-management system. In a list of 13 demands, the U.S. sought to "dismantle Canada dairy supply management entirely."

Early on the morning of Aug. 23, Trump posted on Truth Social, "Canada wants the benefits of being a State, without being one!!! They have also charged our great farmers, for many years, massive amounts of Tariffs. No more!"

Carney said the new terms "weren't economic, (were) unfair and undermine the net benefits for Canada and called into question the reliability of any deal."

Both countries are moving forward with no further talks scheduled. "We're moving forward with measures that respond to Canadian retaliation," Greer told Fox over the weekend.

Trump's decision to invoke Section 338 trade authorities originated from contention over Canadian dairy import quotas and Canadian treatment of U.S. motor vehicles and alcohol. But products such as seeds, honey, floriculture products, flower bulbs, lumber and animal products were also included on the tariff list.

Greer has since said those products would have been excluded if a deal was inked Aug. 21.

Michael Harvey, executive director of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance, told DTN the tariffs undermine integrated supply chains and create uncertainty over the future of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

"American farmers and consumers benefit from the integrated supply chains built up with Canada over the years, and it is in their interest to get back to stability in the trading relationship," he said.

Canadian dairy processors exported $585 million in dairy products to the U.S. last year, while the U.S. exported $1.3 billion in dairy products to Canada.

If Canada follows through with retaliatory tariffs, U.S. importers would pay additional duties on covered Canadian goods. Importers may absorb those costs or pass them through the supply chain, potentially resulting in higher prices for businesses and consumers.

U.S. tariffs imposed under Section 338 don't require an investigation or a specified end date, raising concerns about the future of integrated North American supply chains and the USMCA. — **Jake Zajkowski, DTN ag policy editor**

Manage cyanobacteria in water sources

Drought conditions this summer have led to an increase in cyanobacterial blooms.

"In 2026 alone, the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) sampled 40 lakes to assess the occurrence of toxic cyanobacteria," said Tate Libunao, environmental scientist at the NDDEQ.

While the NDDEQ's monitoring is limited to lakes and reservoirs, there have been numerous blooms on ponds used for livestock water.

As a result, the NDDEQ and North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension have received several inquiries about options for treating cyanobacteria to ensure water sources are safe for both livestock and recreational purposes.

"Unfortunately, options for treating cyanobacteria blooms are limited for North Dakota," said Miranda Meehan, NDSU Extension livestock environmental stewardship specialist.

Most products used to treat cyanobacteria contain copper sulfate, and their effectiveness is limited in the state, according to Meehan.

"Research evaluating the use of copper sulfate in North Dakota found that the natural water chemistry quickly made the active ingredient, copper, unavailable to the biological community," said Laxmi Prasad, NDSU Extension water engineer.

This reduces the effectiveness of copper sulfate in controlling algae blooms.

Additionally, copper sulfate poses a risk to both aquatic animals and livestock. Specifically, both copper and sulfate are deadly to aquatic animals, so their use is regulated by the NDDEQ.

High concentrations of copper can be toxic to livestock, and sheep and goats are especially sensitive to copper toxicity, according to Dr. Jake Galbreath, NDSU Extension veterinarian.

"If permitted, copper sulfate should be used with extreme caution on livestock water sources," Galbreath said.

Treating a water source with copper sulfate can also cause cyanobacteria to die rapidly and release toxins into the water, temporarily increasing the risk to livestock.

If a water source is treated with copper sulfate, animals should be kept away from the water for seven to 10 days after treatment, according to Galbreath.

The use of products such as copper sulfate provides only a short-term solution and does not address the underlying conditions that cause the bloom. Cyanobacteria blooms are caused by excess nutrients, specifically nitrogen and phosphorus.

Blooms can also be exacerbated by prolonged high temperatures and stagnant water, creating favorable conditions for recurring and potentially toxic harmful algal blooms. For long-term prevention of blooms, management practices that reduce nutrient loads to the water source should be implemented.

NDSU Extension specialists recommend the following practices to reduce nutrient levels, lowering the risk of future cyanobacteria blooms and enhancing water quality:

- Properly apply and manage fertilizer in yards and fields.
- Establish or maintain buffer strips of perennial species to reduce nutrients entering the water.
- Mow or graze buffer strips in the fall to reduce the vegetation that might release nutrients into surface water in the spring when it decomposes.
- Prevent livestock from loitering in surface water by installing alternate water sources and/or fencing to reduce access. — **NDSU Extension**

USMEF launches 'Father's Day is US Beef Day' Initiative in Japan

Inflation and a weakened currency continue pushing Japan's food prices upward. With the yen recently hitting its weakest level in 40 years, Japanese consumers are naturally trading down to less expensive food options, particularly for everyday items. At-home consumption of beef dropped 3% in 2025, and has fallen 15% since 2019, according to Japan's Agriculture & Livestock Industries Corporation.

While retail sales for imported beef are down, the weakened yen is boosting tourism. Last year, a record 42.7 million tourists visited Japan, a 16% increase over 2024, per the Japan National Tourism Organization.

"Japan has a booming tourism industry and visitors are demanding more and more beef," said U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) Japan Director Tom Kasatani. "But it is not enough to offset the recent decline in domestic consumption."

Kasatani says the decline relates to the increased global price of beef as well as a weak exchange rate between the yen and the U.S. dollar. In response, USMEF is stepping up programs to position U.S. beef as the choice for consumers celebrating special occasions such as Father's Day.

As in the U.S., traditions have developed in Japan of eating certain foods on holidays, special occasions and specific days of the year. Examples—sometimes borne of successful marketing efforts—include chocolates on Valentine's Day, grilled eel in August and fried chicken or fancy cake at Christmas. With no established tradition of eating a particular food on Father's Day in Japan, USMEF is carving out a place for U.S. beef on this special day.

"We see this as an opportunity to encourage consumers to associate U.S. beef with Father's Day," Kasatani said. "When we presented our idea to begin annual Father's Day promotions for U.S. beef to retailers and foodservice chains, they loved it."

For this year's Father's Day promotion, USMEF launched a retail campaign from May 18 to June 28. Eleven retailers with 1,060 stores participated. Seven nationwide foodservice chains with 316 outlets also took part, including steakhouses and yakiniku and family-style restaurants.

More than 28,000 U.S. beef purchasers at retail and foodservice entered to win prizes during the promotion. USMEF also conducted a social media campaign in which more than 86,000 consumers entered for prizes after reposting articles about the campaign.

The campaign was made possible through the Beef Checkoff Program, Texas Beef Council, Iowa Corn Promotion Board and USDA's Market Access Program. — **USMEF**

What should bred heifers be worth?

This has been a popular question over the past couple of years, and rightfully so. Relative to calf prices during this stretch of time, good-quality bred heifers have been undervalued. Over the past year in Oklahoma, commercial bred heifers have sold in a trading range between $3,500-5,000 per head. Favorable factors leading to values at the upper end of the spectrum include:

- Heavier bred (closer to calving).
- Tighter expected calving season.
- Genetics and quality. Especially favored are Angus-influenced black and black baldy heifers of known genetic potential confirmed bred to Angus bulls with quantified calving ease genetics, particularly when AI bred.
- Verified vaccination and health status.

Assuming weaned calves remain at a value of approximately $2,000 per head over the next few years, your annual cost of running a cow will largely determine what you should invest in a bred heifer. The annual cost of maintaining a beef cow is highly variable and has increased tremendously over the past five years.

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

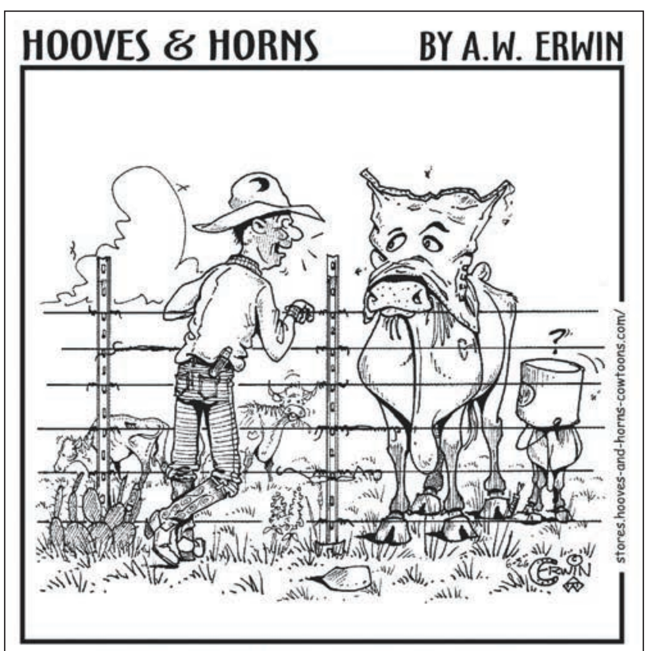
The Kansas Farm Management Association estimates the annual cost of running a cow to be approximately $1,551, according to data collected in 2024. The take home point: knowing your annual cost of running a cow has significant impact on the current value of a bred heifer to your operation.

A pair of professors at the University of Arkansas have developed a Beef Cow and Heifer Investment Analysis tool which can be used to estimate the current value of a bred heifer. This is a free-to-use online dashboard which allows producers to enter their own data. The program is available to use at tinyurl.com/4wxvbwzb.

For example, the program's default assumptions of a 92% calf crop weaned, 520-pound weaning weight, $1,100 in annual cow cost, an 8% return on investment, cows staying in production until age 10, with calf prices and inflation following USDA calf price forecast, indicate a bred heifer breakeven price of $5,018.

Changing an assumption can significantly impact the estimate, highlighting how much how much this breakeven price is operation specific.

Despite the recent volatility, market fundamentals are favorable for a continued strong cattle values until cow inventories start to climb. When that will happen remains speculative. That being said, what bred heifers are worth to your operation will depend on how much profit she nets each year rather than on the gross value of each calf she produces. **— Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**



"Nice try, 237, but I know exactly who yew are,....
An'yew got fed this mornin'."

NE rancher sues state after prescribed burn kills cattle

When a prescribed burn coordinated by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission escaped containment in April 2025 and torched more than 8,000 acres of Brown County Sandhills rangeland, the Miller family lost dozens of cattle and hundreds of thousands of dollars. Now, more than 15 months later, they're still waiting for answers, and the state is pointing its finger at someone else.

In February, Johnstown, NE, ranchers Justin and Haley Miller sued the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission as well as neighboring rancher Jack King Sr. and family members in a county court, alleging they were responsible for a fire on April 21, 2025, that led to the cattle deaths in the Plum Creek region of the Sandhills. The Millers are seeking $272,000 in damages.

While the Millers alleged that both the state and King were responsible for the damage, the state of Nebraska later filed counterclaims that the Kings were responsible.

One of the Millers' many claims was that they were not notified of a plan to burn to allow them to move cattle from nearby pastures.

The lawsuit said in preparation for a prescribed burn on land owned by Jack King Sr. and Marsha King in Brown County, Nebraska Game and Parks and the King family ignited test fires in two locations.

Nebraska Game and Parks employees shut down the burn because of swirling winds, the lawsuit said.

"The Kings objected to shutting down the planned burn, asserting that doing so would waste time and noting that various personnel were on site to participate in the burn," according to the complaint.

"In response to the Kings' objections, the employees of the state of Nebraska oversaw and conducted a burning procedure called 'blacklining operations.' The defendants ignited fires for at least two 'blacklining operations' and lost control of the fires. Over the course of the next three days, approximately 6,000 to 8,000 acres burned as a result of the fires ignited by the defendants."

Blacklining is a practice of pre-burning buffer strips of vegetation directly adjacent to a control line before a main burn is lit.

The Millers said in the lawsuit they lost 46 cows valued at about $161,000. In addition, the family said it lost the use of up to 3,500 pasture acres they rented for the 2025 season and incurred tens of thousands of dollars in other losses.

DTN reached out to the attorneys for the Miller and King families, as well as counsel for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, seeking comment. None had responded by publication time.

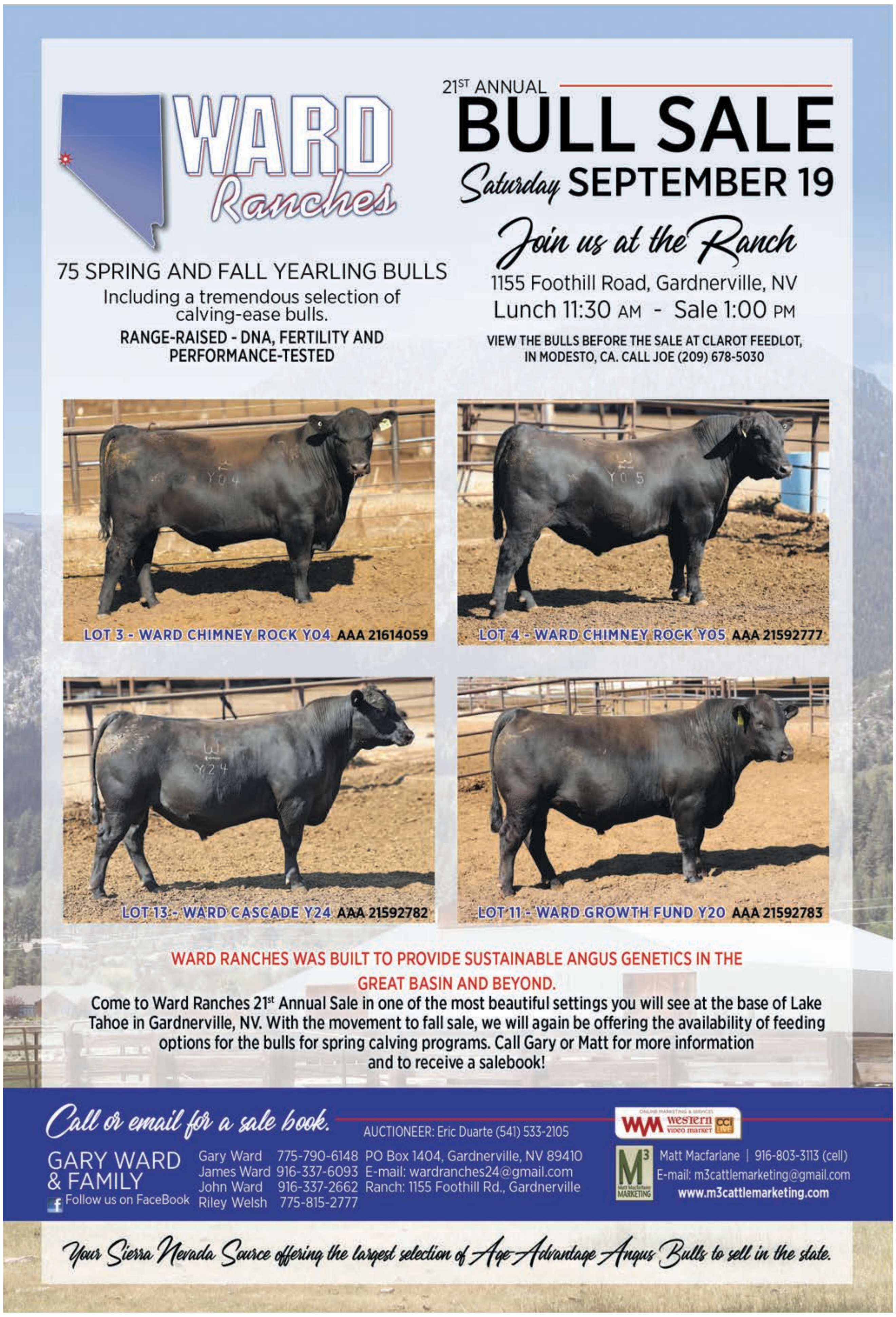
The Millers originally filed a claim with the state of Nebraska on the losses sustained in July 2025. But after more than six months, the claims were not paid, and the family filed the lawsuit.

Nebraska counterclaims

In June 2026, the state filed a response to the Millers' lawsuit, including a counterclaim that the Kings were responsible for the out-of-control fire.

"Jack King, Sr., Jack King, Jr., or Colt King acted as the 'burn boss' on the day of the burn and had the responsibility to decide whether or not to proceed with the burn described in the plaintiffs' complaint," the state said in a filing four months after the initial lawsuit was filed.

"The individual who acted as the burn boss breached his duty of care owed to the plaintiffs by deciding to proceed with the burn. As the landowner who executed an agreement with NGPC (Nebraska Game and Parks), Jack King, Sr. agreed to retain 'all responsibility for taxes, assessments and damage claims' on his property. He further agreed that NGPC 'assumes no liability for damage or injury other than that caused by its own negligence' on the property." **— Todd Neeley, DTN environmental editor**



Grazing able to continue for now in AZ forest

CORONADO GRAZING
(from page 1)

grazing program includes 177 allotments covering about 1.47 million acres, or roughly 90% of the forest. According to court documents, in 2019, USFS determined the grazing program was likely to adversely affect eight federally listed species, prompting formal consultation with USFWS.

Following two years of consultation, USFWS issued its biological opinion in September 2021, concluding grazing would not jeopardize the continued existence or critical habitat of the Sonora chub, Chiricahua leopard frog or yellow-billed cuckoo. At the same time, USFWS determined grazing was likely to result in incidental take of the chub and frog.

The environmental groups filed a lawsuit in 2023 challenging the biological opinions, arguing USFWS and USFS relied too heavily on forage utilization standards that measure the grazing program rather than the conditions needed by protected species.

They asked the court to halt livestock grazing, vacate the biological opinion and grazing authorizations, and require the agencies to conduct new ESA consultation. The lawsuit alleged the forage standards were not tied closely enough to the biological needs of the species or to determining when allowable take had been exceeded.

Martinez's opinion

Martinez's ruling focused on whether the incidental take statements set clear standards for determining when grazing caused too much harm to the Sonora chub and Chiricahua leopard frog.

For the Sonora chub, USFWS used habitat conditions as a substitute for counting individual fish because the species can be difficult to detect. One standard relied on whether livestock use exceeded authorized forage utilization levels during two of three monitoring events. Court documents show the biological opinion acknowledged that all Sonora chub outside livestock exclosures could be harmed by grazing.

Martinez found those standards were not sufficiently tied to impacts on the fish.

The judge noted the fencing and forage utilization requirements were based on grazing program metrics "created to monitor the program's goals and not to assess the chub's status." Under those standards, Martinez said, all chub within 1.2 miles of affected stream habitat potentially could be harmed without triggering renewed consultation.

The court found a similar problem with the Chiricahua leopard frog. Although the biological opinion tied allowable take to habitat conditions important to the frog, it required impacts to be directly attributable to livestock grazing or livestock management without explaining which agency would make that determination, what measurements would establish causation or how USFS would report the effects.

Martinez concluded the frog standard lacked the clear, objective benchmark required under the ESA.

Chris Bugbee, the Center for Biological Diversity's conservation advocate, said the ruling should require agencies to more directly connect grazing management with the needs of protected species and their habitat.

"This order will force federal agencies to adopt long-overdue, science-based protections that keep cows out of the waters and streambanks endangered animals need to survive," Bugbee said. "For years cattle have been allowed to trash the Coronado's streamside habitats. I'm hopeful this marks a new day for the forest's endangered wildlife."

The ruling does not immediately end grazing in the Coronado National Forest. Martinez granted the plaintiffs summary judgment only on the incidental take statements for the chub and frog and denied the remainder of their motion. The agencies and the Southern Arizona Cattlemen's Protective Association, which intervened in the case, prevailed on the remaining claims.

Martinez also stopped short of immediately vacating the 2021 biological opinion. Federal defendants have until Sept. 1 to submit arguments on the appropriate remedy, while the plaintiffs have until Sept. 14 to respond. — **Charles Wallace, *WLJ* contributing editor**

LEGAL LEDGER

US border reopens to Mexican cattle imports

The U.S. border reopened to Mexican cattle imports for the first time in more than a year on Aug. 24. Cattle were authorized to move into the country through a single port in Douglas, AZ. The initial shipment totaled 750 head, and will gradually increase to 1,500 head, according to a press release from Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo. The Mexican government said it will maintain traceability on cattle from birth until cattle are shipped over the border, in addition to implementing security and inspection measures to monitor New World screwworm (NWS) outbreaks. USDA said phased border reopenings will continue. "In 30 days, we'll open up one of the New Mexico ports and in 30 days after that, the third New Mexico port," USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins said in a USDA radio broadcast. "We don't plan to open any Texas ports any time soon, just because that is where the real activity is." The news comes shortly after NWS was detected for the first time in the state of Sonora, which borders Arizona. As of Aug. 24, there were two active NWS cases reported in the U.S., each in Texas. The U.S. border has been closed to Mexico livestock imports since last May.

USFS, grazing association sign agreement

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Thunder Basin Grazing Association in mid-August signed a shared stewardship agreement to advance long-term rangeland collaboration. The agreement creates a 20-year framework to strengthen rangeland stewardship, ecosystem health and sustainable working landscapes across the Thunder Basin National Grassland in northeast Wyoming, according to the USFS. "Through this agreement, we will identify priority areas to improve forage and soil health, expand wildlife friendly infrastructure, and work together on targeted grazing and vegetation management that strengthens the resilience of this landscape," said USFS Chief Tom Schultz. The framework will allow the parties to identify priority areas for restoration, conservation and treatment.

Senators introduce bill to rebuild cow herd

Sens. Mike Rounds (R-SD) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, on Aug. 19 introduced legislation intended to help rebuild the domestic cattle herd. The Rebuilding America's National Cow Herd (RANCH) Act would create a new voluntary grazing land restoration program that could open up to 20 million new acres for grazing. "The bipartisan RANCH Act will help farmers looking to start a cow-calf herd or expand their existing herd while also providing wildlife habitat on the land," Klobuchar said. The senators said the legislation could provide enough grazing land to support an estimated 2-4 million additional beef cows. The RANCH Act is supported by the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association, Society for Range Management and Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association, among others.

Nigeria now open to more red meat products

Nigeria is now open to a wider range of U.S. beef and pork products. According to the USDA Export Library, red meat products can be exported to Nigeria unless they are specifically excluded, such as beef or pork offal, or smoked, dried and cured beef and pork products. The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) called the move an important breakthrough for a market that has the sixth largest population in the world. "There are certainly challenges that must be overcome, and it will take some time to gain a foothold in the Nigerian retail and foodservice sectors," said USMEF CEO and President Dan Halstrom. "But the first step in developing a new market is to secure meaningful access."

Court allows stay in OK poultry litter case

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit granted Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond's motion to stay the judgment against poultry companies following a settlement this summer. In July, Drummond announced a nearly $44 million settlement to settle a two-decades-long lawsuit against poultry companies over poultry litter pollution in the Illinois River Watershed. Tyson Foods, Cargill, George's, Peterson Farms, Cal-Maine and Simmons Foods were found liable for the pollution. "All parties came to the table to find a solution to protect Oklahoma's water and to provide certainty for our poultry industry," Drummond said. "The result is a balanced solution that protects our natural resources and supports one of Oklahoma's most important industries." The case returns to district court for the judgment to be released.

EPA issues emergency fuel waiver

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a temporary emergency fuel waiver on Aug. 20 in an effort to lower gasoline prices and increase the country's gasoline supply. Beginning Sept. 1, the waiver will allow the sale of E10, gasoline blended with 10% ethanol, at a higher Reid vapor pressure. "This action will increase the domestic gasoline supply by hundreds of thousands of barrels per day by effectively ending the summer-blend gasoline requirement early," according to EPA. The waiver will remain through the end of the summer control season on Sept. 15, and also waives state level controls in Texas, Arizona and California that extend beyond Sept. 15 for the maximum period of 20 days.

Agritourism is growing in Utah, new study says

Many visit Utah to walk the red rock trails in its national parks or to glide across "the greatest snow on Earth." But, tourists are also being drawn to other sites with wide open spaces, cattle and fresh produce.

According to a new study from the state's Department of Agriculture and Food and the Utah Office of Tourism, the industry known as agritourism is growing, and it is estimated to generate about $45 million in economic activity every year.

Agritourism still represents a modest share of Utah's tourism economy, a $12.7 billion industry. But, according to the study, it is a significant asset for farmers and rural communities in the state.

"Agritourism is a real option for producers seeking to diversify their operations and find new ways to connect with their communities," Utah Department of Agriculture and Food Commissioner Kelly Pehrson said in a news release. "For many farms and ranches, adding an element of agritourism can help strengthen the viability of the operation and keep producers doing what they do best—producing food and agricultural products."

For some farms, and surrounding communities, the tourism boom has been outstanding. Utah recently made national headlines with the operations of influencer Hannah Neeleman's Ballerina Farm overwhelming nearby Midway, a quaint city an hour east from Salt Lake City.

However, the state hasn't yet reached its full agritourism potential. The market could attract up to 300,000 visitors every year, the study says, and Utah is well positioned to reach those numbers.

Utah residents represent a substantial share of the agritourism market. The most common activities among 100 agritourism providers surveyed for the study include field trips, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, farm or ranch tours, and animal experiences or petting zoos.

"The combination of world-class natural assets, rich cultural and heritage resources, strong agricultural traditions, and growing interest in local food and place-based experiences creates a uniquely multidimensional tourism ecosystem," the study says. "Agritourism can help connect these assets by bringing local residents and other visitors onto farms, ranches, orchards, vineyards, and other agricultural operations for education, recreation, entertainment, direct sales, events, lodging, and food-based experiences."

One strategy for growing the industry to its full potential is by intentionally connecting agritourism with related segments, like tourism focused on culinary experiences, or culture, or outdoor recreation, the study authors wrote.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food and the Office of Tourism, alongside local jurisdictions and other organizations could support farmers in that task "through coordinated marketing, increased public awareness, technical assistance, business planning support, visitor tracking, and resources that help operators navigate regulations, partnerships, and product development," the study says.

The industry is estimated to support 310 jobs, generate $11.2 million in earnings and $26.5 million in new economic activity, which extends to nearby restaurants, lodging, gas stations, stores and other services.

While agritourism income itself went from $1.9 million to almost $14 million in 2022, the number of farms that report agritourism and recreational services went from 212 to 249 in the same time span, the study says, "suggesting that growth has been driven more by increased revenue per participating operation than by a large increase in the number of participating farms."

"Utah is changing and growing, and agritourism is one way we're shaping that growth for good," Natalie Randall, managing director at the Utah Office of Tourism and Film, said in the release. "By investing in and expanding agritourism offerings, we're inviting visitors onto working lands for authentic and educational experiences. These opportunities will elevate the overall traveler experience and diversify revenue for our local farmers and ranchers."

— Alixel Cabrera, Utah News Dispatch

Breaking down how producers use LRP to protect feeder cattle prices

Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) has become a mainstream cattle risk-management tool as producers focus on protecting their investment in high-priced feeder cattle.

Economists at Kansas State (K-State) University highlighted how producers in major cattle-producing states are relying more on USDA's LRP policies, especially to protect feeder cattle prices.

The research was presented at the K-State Risk and Profit Conference held Aug. 20-21.

Among the findings:

- LRP is more heavily used for feeder cattle than fed cattle, with feeder cattle coverage rising sharply in recent years and reaching 6.11 million head in 2025.
- Roughly half of the feeder cattle LRP policies are concentrated in just five states: Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, Kansas and Oklahoma. They accounted for 49.6% of feeder cattle covered under LRP in 2025. The most common coverage involves 600-1,000-pound steers and heifers, while 13 weeks is the most common endorsement length.
- Most LRP is purchased at the highest coverage levels, nearly 100% of the expected price, giving producers a strong price floor.

LRP sets a price floor for producers to protect against downside risk in the market. Unlike a futures contract, there's no risk of a margin call and premiums are not due until the end of the policy contract.

In 2025, producers bought 61,060 feeder cattle LRP policies covering 6.11 million feeder cattle with a total liability, or value, of $12.47 billion.

For 2026, through Aug. 24, Risk Management Agency (RMA) data show 56,498 policies sold covering 5.54 million head, but total liability has climbed to $13.54 billion.

That means producers have insured roughly 570,000 fewer feeder cattle this year, yet the value protected by those policies is more than $1 billion higher.

The average liability per insured feeder animal increased from about $2,040 per head in 2025 to $2,440 so far in 2026, an increase of nearly 20%. That reflects how many more dollars producers have at risk on each animal.

"It's looking like the number of head covered will be lower than '25, but in terms of value of animals covered, it's going to be a higher value," said Brian Coffey, an agricultural economics professor at K-State.

The LRP report was presented at the K-State conference by Jioh Park, a graduate student for Coffey who worked on the analysis.

Cash flow advantage

One advantage of LRP is that producers don't face margin calls like they would when directly hedging with futures. Another is they don't actually pay the LRP premium until the end of the endorsement period.

Higher cattle values also increase the amount of working capital producers have at risk, making the way they hedge those cattle more important.

Ryan Engle, a commercial lending officer at Frontier Farm Credit, said some producers who used futures to hedge cattle over the past couple of years locked in a couple hundred dollars per head in profit, but then faced $400-500 per-head margin calls as cattle prices continued higher.

While those producers still had profitable hedges, the margin calls tied up money they needed to buy replacement cattle, Engle said. LRP avoids that cash-flow problem because producers don't face margin calls and don't pay the insurance premium until the end of the endorsement period.

Weights protected

LRP's feeder cattle policies can cover both steers and heifers in two weight categories: 100-599 lbs. and 600-1,000 lbs. Producers can also insure unborn calves.

The main category of coverage is 600-1,000-lb. steers and heifers. That weight class accounts for just under 65% of all feeder cattle covered by LRP this year.

More than 22,000 policies have been sold this year covering 2.57 million steers weighing 600-1,000 lbs., and another 11,000 policies covering just under 995,000 heifers in that weight class.

Another growing coverage category is unborn calves. This year, producers have bought 9,597 policies covering 831,362 unborn calves. That's more than the number of policies covering 100-599-lb. calves.

Buying policies for unborn calves allows a producer who expects to wean calves and sell them at 500-600 lbs. to lock in a price level for that calf crop.

"You don't have to wait around until the calf's on the ground and see how prices might move between now and then. It just gives the producer a little bit more flexibility to go ahead and establish a price floor," Coffey said.

Coverage levels

Most feeder cattle LRP coverage is being purchased at very high coverage levels—near 100% of the expected price. RMA data show 4.59 million feeder cattle are covered at 100% coverage levels this year.

Essentially, producers are choosing a strong price floor rather than dropping to lower coverage levels simply to obtain cheaper subsidized protection, K-State's analysis highlighted.

That pattern holds in the top five states for feeder cattle policies. The overwhelming percentage of policies are bought at the highest coverage level.

The premium subsidy at 100% coverage falls to 35%, though the dollar figure is higher in absolute terms.

"It's a graduated scale so it goes down in percentage as the coverage level goes up," Coffey said.

Producers choose both coverage levels and the length of those contracts, which shows how far ahead producers are protecting their expected sale prices or marketing plans.

Looking at 2025 and 2026 data, the most common LRP feeder cattle policy lengths are 13 weeks and 21 weeks. Those two policy lengths amounted to roughly 32% of feeder cattle policies over the last two years.

As K-State's analysis stated, "This suggests many producers buy protection closer to expected marketing."

This year, however, some producers have stretched out the length of coverage. In 2025, just 7,071 feeder cattle were covered in a 52-week policy, or just 0.1% of all policies sold. This year, that 52-week feeder cattle policy has jumped to cover 309,444 head, or 5.6% of all policies sold.

K-State's analysis also showed a bump in 52-week policies this year in each of the top five states for LRP use.

Feeder endorsement size

Looking at the top five states for LRP feeder cattle policies, producers in Texas and Nebraska have been more prone over the past three years to buying larger policies that cover 250 head or more. Producers in South Dakota, Kansas and Oklahoma have been more likely to purchase medium contracts covering 71-250 head, or smaller policies covering 70 head or less.

So far in 2026, Texas also has the most feeder cattle covered at 622,573 head, followed by 528,226 head in Nebraska and Kansas at 519,364.

Fed cattle policies

Fed cattle LRP is used significantly less than feeder cattle coverage but continues to cover more than 1 million head annually.

RMA data show 9,786 fed cattle policies sold in 2026 covering 1.49 million head with roughly $5 billion in liability. That's up from 1.39 million head covered in 2025, though producers insured 1.57 million head under the fed cattle policies in 2024.

Kansas tops the country in fed cattle policies this year at 273,476 head covered, followed by Nebraska at 243,648 head. Texas, Iowa and Colorado round out the top five states for fed cattle covered.

One unanswered question about LRP usage is whether it has changed the use of futures contracts on the CME or had a measurable effect on the feeder cattle futures.

"One thing that makes it hard is there was already a trend, at least in live cattle and feeder cattle, that more options were being used, so that was on an upward trend," Coffey said. "I couldn't say if LRP has brought more people into the futures market or caused less use of futures or options." — **Chris Clayton, DTN farm business editor**

Coming Events

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

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.

STORY SHORTS

FSIS expands NWS drug residue monitoring

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is strengthening residue surveillance to detect veterinary drugs used to treat or prevent New World screwworm (NWS) in livestock. While NWS itself poses no food safety risk in meat or poultry, FSIS said residues from drugs used against the parasite could present chemical hazards. FSIS updated two residue-testing methods July 17 to detect additional substances associated with newly approved or authorized drugs. Beginning Sept. 1, FSIS will also increase routine residue testing at livestock slaughter plants in targeted regions. FSIS will publish findings in its quarterly National Residue Program reports.

Missouri man sentenced in livestock theft

A Rolla, MO, man received a suspended 15-year prison sentence after entering an Alford plea in a Barry County livestock theft case. Melvin J. Fincher entered the plea Aug. 11 in Barry County Circuit Court. The court suspended the sentence, placed Fincher on five years of supervised probation, and ordered him to pay restitution. The Missouri State Highway Patrol said its Rural Crimes Investigation Unit began investigating Fincher after the Polk County sheriff requested help with a September 2025 cattle theft. Investigators said Fincher was also identified as a possible suspect in other cattle thefts. Authorities said Fincher was charged Feb. 11 with stealing livestock or wildlife with a prior offense and arrested March 9 in Neosho, MO.

Group launches campaign against Bacon Act

Humane World Action Fund launched an advertising campaign in August urging Congress to reject the Save Our Bacon Act and exclude it from the farm bill. The group, formerly known as Humane Society Legislative Fund, began with a $250,000 streaming ad buy in Minnesota. The ads ask voters to contact Congress about the legislation, which would limit states' ability to set production standards for agricultural products sold within their borders. President Sara Amundson said Congress should focus the farm bill on issues facing farmers rather than overturning state animal-welfare laws. The campaign follows the group's advertising during the 2023 and 2024 farm bill debate. Congress did not pass similar legislation at that time, leaving California's Proposition 12 and Massachusetts's Question 3 in place.

RAAA moves headquarters to Oklahoma

The Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) is moving its headquarters from Commerce City, CO, to the Oklahoma City, OK, area following a unanimous board vote in June. RAAA said the board considered operating costs, access to members, workforce needs and beef industry growth. "Our goal is to be a driving force when the cow herd starts to be rebuilt," said RAAA President Jeff Pettit, adding that Oklahoma places the association "right in the middle of cow country." The association said lower operating costs in Oklahoma will allow it to put more money toward member services, breed improvement, technology and youth programs. RAAA is leasing office space at 2012 S. Post Road in Midwest City while searching for a permanent headquarters. The phone number for membership services or questions will remain 940-387-3502.

Agri Star resumes production after fire

Agri Star Meat and Poultry resumed limited production during the week of Aug. 17 following a fire at its Postville, IA, processing plant. The company said on Facebook that employees and contractors cleaned and repaired parts of the facility before production resumed. "Although we still have a great deal of work ahead of us—and rebuilding will take time—bringing members of our team back through the doors and beginning production again represents an important and hopeful milestone," Agri Star said. The plant employs about 600 people and processes kosher meat. Local media outlet KCRG previously reported that the July fire destroyed about 75% of the facility. Postville Fire Chief Jeff Bohr said investigators determined the fire was accidental and likely began in the plant's laundry room.

USDA launches Harvest to Hallways initiative

USDA is launching an initiative to bring more locally produced food into schools while investing in cafeteria equipment and nutrition research. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins and Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. announced Harvest to Hallways, which includes up to $70 million for school cafeteria infrastructure and equipment. USDA also plans to provide up to $25 million in additional Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grants for fiscal 2026, helping schools purchase local foods while creating markets for farmers and ranchers. The agency will expand outreach around its Local Option School Procurement Program, which allows qualifying schools to receive reimbursement for locally produced foods. USDA and HHS will also encourage states to adopt updated nutrition practices, while HHS will provide $30 million for school meal nutrition research.

Producers should be watchful for anthrax as hot, dry conditions persist

Anthrax is a concern for cattle producers, as weather conditions in some areas are once again favorable for the development of this disease.

Anthrax is caused by the bacteria Bacillus anthracis. This bacteria is often found in soil and is able to form spores that are highly resistant to heat, cold and disinfection. These spores can survive in the soil for years under favorable conditions.

"When these spores come in contact with susceptible cattle, they can 'hatch' and cause infection, leading to disease and death," said Dr. Jake Galbreath, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension veterinarian.

The threat of anthrax is increased when areas receive high amounts of rainfall and prolonged dry conditions. Dry conditions cause the bacteria to form spores. High rainfall can disturb soil, releasing spores which can stick to plant material. Persistently dry conditions in many areas of the state mean cattle may be grazing closer to the ground or around water sources with lowered water levels, potentially exposing spores.

In most cases, the only sign of anthrax is finding dead cattle, often with blood coming from the nose, mouth and anus. Sudden death can be caused by other factors, such as lightning strike, Clostridial disease and toxicities such as blue-green algae. However, anthrax should be considered as a possibility in any such case.

If anthrax is suspected, the carcass should not be moved or cut into, as this can lead to further contamination of the area. When anthrax bacteria in the carcass are exposed to oxygen in the air, large numbers of spores form, which can enter the soil or infect other animals.

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

"If anthrax is confirmed, all cattle should be vaccinated immediately," Galbreath warns.

A commercial vaccine is available for cattle, sheep, goats, swine and horses. The vaccine is a 1cc dose administered subcutaneously (under the skin) in the neck of cattle. A booster vaccination in two to three weeks may be recommended when anthrax is present. Annual boostering is then sufficient for protection.

Treatment with antibiotics at the same time as vaccination can interfere with the immune response, but in an outbreak situation, it may help prevent further deaths.

Galbreath recommends contacting a local veterinarian to determine the best course of action.

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

Galbreath reminds producers that anthrax has the potential to infect humans, so care needs to be taken to not disturb the carcass. His recommended method for disposal is to burn the carcass and soil on which the carcass was found after placing them in a trench dug immediately adjacent to the site. If dry conditions prevent burning, deep burial is also an option. — **NDSU Extension**

MARKET NEWS

MARKET SITUATION REPORT

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

MARKET AT A GLANCE

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 8/26/2026		Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	218.12	▼	225.28	242.19
CME Feeder Index	335.46	▼	342.36	360.68
Boxed Beef Average	385.13	▼	389.93	414.41
Average Dressed Steers	345.24	▼	355.85	N/A
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,437	▼	1,438	1,415
Weekly Slaughter**	523,000	▲	517,000	547,000
Weekly Beef Production***	461.8	▲	457.6	472.6
Hide/Offal Value	14.94	▲	14.32	11.85
Corn Price	5.17	▲	4.81	3.87

*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	COMPREHENSIVE Price	PRIME Loads	PRIME Price	BRANDED Loads	BRANDED Price	CHOICE Loads	CHOICE Price	SELECT Loads	SELECT Price	UNGRADED Loads	UNGRADED Price
August 21	6,132	379.03	264	408.29	1,142	385.27	1,953	377.38	504	356.75	2,269	342.19
August 14	5,840	371.14	263	397.01	1,064	377.21	1,671	369.42	554	349.83	2,288	333.53
August 7	6,334	364.68	261	387.81	1,113	370.50	1,875	363.03	572	345.42	2,513	333.43
July 31	6,934	365.81	285	388.09	1,220	372.49	2,098	364.69	555	346.02	2,777	331.78

Cutouts — FED BOXED BEEF

DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT	50% LEAN	90% LEAN
August 27	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
August 26	385.13	362.68	346.85	125.90	446.12
August 25	388.53	368.98	355.74	127.88	460.59
August 24	385.69	365.02	351.50	137.27	448.84
August 21	385.69	361.32	349.27	130.88	448.99

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle

	8/21	8/24	8/25	8/26	8/27	High*	Low*
Aug.	22305	22008	22010	21930	N/A	25873	16853
Oct.	21793	21360	21400	21215	N/A	25598	16668
Dec.	21850	21420	21470	21383	N/A	25120	17005
Feb.	21933	21560	21605	21530	N/A	25093	18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle

	8/21	8/24	8/25	8/26	8/27	High*	Low*
Aug.	33475	33358	33523	33363	N/A	38103	21920
Sep.	32903	32423	32443	32073	N/A	38280	22268
Oct.	32365	31828	31893	31588	N/A	38020	22460
Nov.	31625	31098	31180	30900	N/A	37860	24118

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

FED CATTLE TRADE

FED CATTLE TRADE	Head Count	Avg. Weight	Avg. Price
WEEKLY WEIGHTED AVERAGES			
Live FOB Steer	7,445	1,546	218.12
Live FOB Heifer	2,073	1,365	218.31
Dressed Del Steer	17,567	1,013	345.24
Dressed Del Heifer	2,703	894	345.09
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK			
Live FOB Steer	11,320	1,566	225.28
Live FOB Heifer	2,679	1,358	225.15
Dressed Del Steer	12,716	1,006	355.85
Dressed Del Heifer	3,805	895	356.30
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	1,400	1,523	242.19
Live FOB Heifer	291	1,252	240.00
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: AUGUST 23, 2026

	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	31,743	3,582
Formula	231,994	3,573
Negotiated Cash	65,480	37
Negotiated Grid	30,335	485
Packer Owned	9,065	N/A
Total	**368,617**	**7,677**

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS / FORWARD BEEF SALES

Delivery Month			
Aug. '26	148,961	Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,616
Sep. '26	86,180	Neg. Sales 21+ days	650
Oct. '26	114,837	Formula sales	3,802
Nov. '26	108,872	Forward contract sales	64
Dec. '26	92,444	Domestic sales	5,600
		NAFTA Exports	69

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	230.06	+4.67
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs	228.02	+5.99
Ontario Auctions		
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs	235.44	+1.17
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs	N/A	N/A
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs	167.31	-6.24

*Price comparison from one week ago.

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	N/A	N/A	460.39
601-700 lbs	N/A	N/A	398.18
701-800 lbs	374.41	N/A	389.93
801-900 lbs	351.91	N/A	369.24
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	N/A	N/A	458.33
501-600 lbs	408.21	N/A	400.56
601-700 lbs	391.18	N/A	371.93
701-800 lbs	340.94	N/A	322.81

USDA MEXICO TO U.S. WEEKLY LIVESTOCK IMPORTS

Feeder cattle imports weekly and yearly volume.

Species	Current Week 8/17/2026	Previous Week 8/10/2026	Current Year-to-date	Previous Year-to-date
Feeders	BORDER REOPENED AUG. 24		0	223,508

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE

August 26, 2026

Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary

Receipts EST: 1,300 **Week Ago EST: N/A** **Year Ago Act: N/A**

Santa Teresa, NM -		Douglas, AZ -	
N/A		No recent sales to compare to, trade active, demand good. Supply consisted of steers weighing 400-800 lbs.	
Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		**Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2**	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	375-385
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	340-350
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	310-320
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2		**Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2**	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	375-385
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	340-350
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	310-320

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

Selected Auctions Week Ending August 26, 2026

Feeder prices for steers & heifers reflect medium and large 1 cattle, unless otherwise noted; * Indicates medium and large 1-2

DATE MARKET		200-300 lb.	300-400 lb.	400-500 lb.	500-600 lb.	600-700 lb.	700-800 lb.	800 lb. -up	SLAUGHTER COWS SLAUGHTER BULLS	PAIRS REPLACEMENTS
NORTHWEST										
No report available Blackfoot, ID										
No report available Burley, ID										
No report available Emmett, ID										
No report available Eugene, OR										
August 24 Madras, OR	371					320-351 285-322.50	325-356 295-320	303-332 260-290	160-183 160-190	
August 19 Vale, OR	997		502-565	435-507 402-465	405-476 350-391	371-429 308-372	340-365 321-347	300-342 306-329	169-176 176-214	
No report available Davenport, WA										
August 20 Toppenish, WA	963			505*	400-475*	325-365* 315*	310*		170-178.50 177-229	2,000
FARWEST										
August 20 Orland, CA	1,166			300-485 280-440	300-420 280-380	300-365 280-348	275-341 255-333	275-333 255-319	170-191 150-227	2,500-4,200 2,200-3,500
No report available Escalon, CA										
No report available Famoso, CA										
No report available Galt, CA										
August 25 Turlock, CA	614		370-450 370-460	355-387.50 325-395	340-390 300-355	310-338 285-310	295-320 272-294	278-295 260-280	158-189 170-195	
No report available Salina, UT										
NORTH CENTRAL										
August 24 Iowa	2,176		435-500	425 390-430	385-450 350	370-390		295-315 275	157-200 160-310	
August 25 Miles City, MT	705				382.50		316-329	288-313.25	120-167 162.50-195	2,350-3,000
August 19 Bassett, NE	1,325				370-415	422.50-427.50	364-370 320-338.50	327.50-442.50 288.50-332		
No report available Ericson, NE										
No report available Imperial, NE										
No report available Kearney, NE										
August 21 Lexington, NE	2,741			415	400	400 347.50-358.50	342-370 324-343	328-352.50 285-330		
August 20 Ogallala, NE	934				385	378-405 353.50-362.50	354.50-375 332-333	313-355.50 266-330		
No report available Valentine, NE										
No report available Herreid, SD										
August 26 Torrington, WY	1,401		518-528 486-516	465-487 435-454	450-471 394	367	352 311	265-342 252-331		
SOUTH CENTRAL										
August 20 Willcox, AZ	829	590	476-550 419-475	440-500 403.50-452	397-410 361-400	353-380 334-355			140-185 190-222	3,200-3,550.50 2,550-3,100
No report available Colorado										
August 19 La Junta, CO	858		492-575 442.50-520	425-510 435-450	415-455 402.50-417.50	367.50-402 345-382.50	343-355 313-330	320 282.50-303	161-174 191-217	
No report available Loma, CO										
August 26 Dodge City, KS	1,549		492.50-582.50 455-467.50	447.50-461 399-445	406.50-421 356-367.50	362.50-372 361-363	344-360 320-330	301-338 292	125-170 166-257	3,550-4,075 2,125-2,675
August 20 Pratt, KS	550		605 457.50-520	492-520 436-450	393 372-420	371-424 316-340	332-363 301-329	304-330 290-320	160-240 183-217.50	2,650-4,200 2,700-4,150
August 20 Salina, KS	2,868		485 445	420-472 405-450	400-437.50 350-392	365-414 325-390	327.50-357 302.50-372.50	309-345 260-318		
August 19 Clovis, NM	1,724	475	477-602 350-512	424-526 360.50-437	341-419 320-395	325-377 300-333	312-338 310-325	290-320 240-287	152-190 134-225	1,800-4,000 1,000-3,700
August 26 El Reno, OK	4,657	600 520	470-520 400-460	400-445 340-400	350-427.50 320-376	335-370 305-336.50	322.50-357 303.50-334	265-337.50 246-319		
August 25 McAlester, OK	800		453-535 404-493	390-460 367-440	350-385 331-411	339-380 322-350	302-340 270-321	383 243-290	139-183 192-217	2,050-3,725 1,875-3,700
August 24 Oklahoma City, OK	3,324	470-500	507 405-437.50	410-500 347.50-402.50	371-419 351-377	355-389 329-359	330-347 310-337	262-333 299		
August 21 Cuero, TX	1,510	493-650 461-610	425-500 383-555	370-485 339-590	325-402 320-540	313-360 295-330	296-325 280-391		151-181 195-210	3,950 2,400-3,650
August 21 Dalhart, TX	1,445	450	570 467.50	412.50	390 360	356-360 330.50-347	318-321	330-336.50 280-297	143-178 150-199	
August 20 San Angelo, TX	672		450	417.50-470 360	335-385 325-340	321-342.50 300-320	308-328 295	307.50	150-165 184-201	2,500-2,600
August 20 Tulia, TX	984	425	385-465	435-445 355-375	400-420 320-350	330-353 292-331	345.50 291-324.35	319-331 284	145-155 170-185	
EAST										
August 21 Alabama	6,869	530-595 375-595	460-560 345-490	392-485 325-530	354-422.50 300-432.50	325-370 270-400	334-350 277.50-299	300-320	135-183 173-222	2,000-5,500 1,300-5,900
August 24 Lexington, KY	459	630* 590-640*	517.50* 387-505*	427.50-460* 351-445*	380-405* 339-405*	329-382.50* 262-380.50*	354.50* 297*	239* 255-261*	151-187 167-211	4,050-4,550 2,050-3,000
August 24 Joplin, MO	4,327			405	397-415 350-360	370-390 328-350	337-354 322-331	304-344 247-310		
August 24 Tennessee	5,768	400-570 400-480	400-510 377-455	365-515 330-437.50	330-450 291-395	300-392.50 270-342	295-347 267.50-320	255-325 220-310	144-191.50 170-235	2,500-4,350 1,600-4,050
August 24 Virginia	2,034		340-437.50 330-412.50	350-465 300-405	345-495 270-405	338-405 285-364	220-354 200-310	165-308 200-220		
CANADA										
August 19 Lethbridge, Alberta	319								184-226 250-287	

MT scales back wolf harvest numbers

After a half-decade push to reduce Montana's wolf population through increasingly permissive hunting and trapping rules, the Treasure State is reversing course. Officials are reducing the number of wolves hunters and trappers can kill this season.

The new measures were enacted during a contentious annual Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting Aug. 19 that set regulations for the upcoming wolf season. They come on the heels of a new population estimate that shows a decreasing population in Montana as a whole—and nearly 370 fewer wolves in the state than officials previously thought.

"[The new regulations] prevent a runaway harvest year while also not putting an additional layer of handcuffs on us," Commissioner Ian Wargo of Kalispell said at the meeting.

Wolves in Montana were removed from the endangered species list in 2011. Ever since, Montana has managed them through hunting. A decade later, a state legislative mandate ordered Montana to decrease its wolf population without a clear target of how far to diminish numbers. In the years that followed, the state repeatedly expanded hunting and trapping opportunities even as the number of animals killed remained relatively steady.

Now, with a new estimate indicating a smaller and decreasing wolf population than previously thought, state biologists recommended allowing hunters and trappers to harvest 250 wolves this season—down from 458 last year. The commission ultimately approved a higher limit of 300, a number that could "thread the needle" between meeting the state's requirement to lower the population and reducing wolf numbers to the point where the federal government might relist the species, according to Wargo.

Wolf advocates contended that number puts too much of a dent in the population, currently estimated at 725 animals.

"The motive remains to kill as many wolves as possible," KC York of the nonprofit Trap Free Montana said during public comment.

Regional subquotas mean the bulk of this season's harvest will be focused in regions 1 and 2 in Northwest Montana, with quotas of 131 and 92 wolves respectively. Thirty-three wolves can be harvested in Region 3 and 28 wolves in Region 4. The rest of the state has far fewer, if any, resident wolves.

Two small "wolf management units" just outside Yellowstone National Park also perennially generate strong emotions over the hunt. This season, only one can be taken in each unit. The commission also reduced the overall bag limit for wolves from 15 to 10 statewide for individual hunters and trappers. In Region 3, they reduced it further: an individual hunter or trapper can take only five wolves.

In public comment, both sides of the wolf debate voiced distrust over the current population estimate, though for different reasons.

General wolf-hunting season this year begins Sept. 15. **— Nick Mott, Mountain Journal**

What to expect from Mexican cattle imports

There is lots of speculation on both sides of the border about what to expect with the resumption of cattle trade between the U.S. and Mexico. How many cattle? What type of cattle? How fast?

There are many questions about if and how much the world has changed since the border closed and whether the impacts are long-lasting or perhaps permanent. We can't be sure, but history is probably still the best guide on what to expect.

Table 1. Breakdown of 2023 Mexican Cattle Imports

Class	Weight Group	Steers	Heifers	Total	% of Grand Total
Feeder Cattle					
	<200 lbs.	0	57	57	0
	200-440 lbs.	325,418	35,879	361,354	29.0
	440-700 lbs.	584,713	283,735	868,448	69.7
	>700 lbs.	8,312	1,624	9,936	0.8
	Total	918,443	321,295	1,239,738	99.5
Fed		3,132	2,899	6,031	0.48
Sltr Bulls/Cows		562	223	785	0.06
Grand Total				1,246,554	

Mexican cattle imports averaged 1.17 million head in the 20 years from 2004-23, with a minimum of 702,600 head in 2008 to a maximum of 1.47 million head in 2012. Mexican cattle imports are highly correlated to drought conditions in Mexico, with severe drought causing unsustainable spikes in cattle imports which tend to average out. A five-year moving average of Mexican cattle imports only shows about 222,000 head variation across years.

On average, 36% of annual Mexican cattle imports cross from September through December. If the border was fully open, the average of 1.17 million head annually implies that roughly 421,000 head could cross by the end of the year.

Based on history, it might be possible for 90,000-100,000 head of cattle to cross at the Douglas, AZ, port in the last four months of the year. If we suppose that Santa Teresa, NM, and Columbus, NM, open one month later, an additional 125,000-175,000 head could be imported by the end of the year.

It is unlikely that many, if any, spayed heifers will be imported initially, so the above estimates are likely too high. It will likely take several weeks for ports to return to full capacity. For the remainder of 2026, up to 250,000 head total might be possible but 150,000 head is probably a more reasonable estimate of Mexican cattle imports by the end of the year.

The majority of Mexican cattle imports are feeder cattle and generally lightweight. Table 1 shows the breakdown of Mexican cattle imports in 2023. Feeder cattle weighing less than 700 pounds accounted for 98.7% of Mexican cattle imports, including 29% under 440 lbs. Many of the lightweight feeders will be utilized in stocker programs before feedlot placement.

Tight feeder cattle supplies in the U.S. may mean that more and lighter Mexican cattle may be placed immediately in feedlots. These cattle will be on feed for six to eight months with the first animals potentially available for slaughter by March 2027. **— Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

Feeders sell lower in the countryside

MARKETS
(from page 1)

dollar to close at $362.68.

Lean beef trim contracts have seen little movement.

The 50% lean trim August contract was unchanged at $161, and the September contract was also unchanged at $151.

The 90% lean beef trim August contract was unchanged at $449, and the September contract was also unchanged at $445.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures saw tremendous losses over the week, with the August contract down $14 to $332.75 and the September contract down $20 to $319.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index gained almost $7 to close at $335.46.

Corn futures closed higher, up 36 cents on the September contract to $5.14 and up 33 cents on the December contract to $5.36.

"Thus far this week feeder cattle prices have been mostly lower in sale barns across the country, and the light test we've seen in the fed cash cattle market has been lower too—both of which pressure the market to trade lower," Stewart said.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 4,327 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers under 750 lbs. sold $5-15 lower. Heavier weights sold from $5 lower to $6 higher. Feeder heifers under 700 lbs. sold $8-20 lower. Heavier weights sold $2-6 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 767 lbs. sold from $337-350, averaging $345.33.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 3,324 head on Monday. Compared to the last sale, feeder steers sold $4-10 lower, with instances of $15 lower on cattle over 900 lbs. Feeder heifers sold $2-8 lower. Steer and heifer calves sold $5-15 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 782 lbs. sold from $330-340, averaging $335.96.

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Regional in Worthing sold 2,368 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers sold $5-10 lower and heifers sold steady to $5 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 801 lbs. sold from $320-332, averaging $327.83.

Texas: Giddings Livestock in Giddings sold 1,146 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers and heifers sold $15-25 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 717 lbs. sold from $300-318, averaging $308.11.

Wyoming: Torrington Livestock in Torrington sold 1,401 head on Wednesday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers and heifers traded sharply lower. Benchmark steers averaging 774 lbs. sold for $352. **— Anna Miller Fortozo, *WLJ* managing editor**

Analyzing consumer demand for beef

The past several years of lower cow inventories, fewer fed cattle, higher values of live cattle and profitability across the sectors of beef production, and particularly, high retail beef prices, lead many of us to ask: "Is there a price point at which consumers are no longer willing and able to enjoy beef?"

As of now, beef demand remains exceptionally resilient and strong. According to the USDA Economic Research Service, wholesale beef prices were 19.7% higher in March 2026 than in March 2025 and are predicted to increase by 7.8% in 2026. Still consumers continue choosing beef. In fact, despite those higher prices, consumers increased both their spending and purchase volume during that same period with beef sales outpacing competing proteins like chicken and pork.

According to consumer survey data:

- The majority of U.S. beef purchasing decisions are based on taste and eating satisfaction. Increasingly, nutritional benefits and health play a role in these decisions, which is also working to beef's advantage.
- Over the past five years, the willingness of consumers to pay for beef at retail has increased faster than inflation. For example, in 2020 consumers were willing to pay $7.26/pound for ground beef at retail. This price point of their willingness to pay increased to $9.18/lb. in 2025.
- Since 2020, the percentage of consumers who regularly consume animal proteins has increased. Currently more than 85% of Americans identify as meat eaters, while the share of consumers identifying a vegetarian or vegan has declined from 14% to 7%.
- Oklahoma is one of the states with the highest percentage of consumers who self-declare as regularly consuming meat.
- As income increases, consumers are more willing to pay for beef.
- GLP-1 users are less sensitive to the price of beef.
- On average, consumers in the U.S. work about 13 minutes to pay for 1 pound of retail beef. For comparison, U.S. citizens work about 100 days each year to pay their annual federal, state and local taxes.

Consumer demand is critically important to the price of beef as well as live cattle of all types. In spite of historically low inventories of live cattle, a higher percentage of the U.S. weekly harvest mix is reaching the premium quality grades (Prime and upper two-thirds of Choice) than ever before.

Consumers have responded favorably to improving beef quality. Greater supply of marbling-rich beef has allowed more consumers to try the premium quality product. Consumers like it and are willing to spend more to enjoy it. The phenomenon has increased demand across the entire beef industry. **— Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**

Cattle groups speak out against import measure

BEEF IMPORTS
(from page 1)

that looks like, and I think the president's involved in that as well," she said.

Farm Bureau analysis

John Newton, American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) vice president of public policy and economic analysis, said in a Market Intel report that higher ground beef prices aren't the result of a sudden or easily reversible shortage.

He also noted that import timing could work against the industry's herd-rebuilding goal.

"Importantly, this announcement comes when beef imports into the U.S. are already record high and during the very window of time that many ranchers will be selling their cattle," he said.

Newton pointed to the historically low beef cow inventory as one of the primary reasons ground beef prices are higher. He said that efforts to rebuild the cattle herd are "fragile at best," noting that the number of beef heifers kept for replacement was up 3% from 2025 in the latest cattle inventory report.

"Despite the historically low cattle herd, due to a number of packing plant closures across the U.S., continued efforts to increase beef imports, and the phased reopening of the border with Mexico, cash cattle prices have fallen 14%, or nearly $40 per hundredweight, in recent months," Newton said.

At the same time, the beef cutout value has climbed to near historic highs, which contributes to higher retail prices, he said.

Drought conditions have also forced producers to liquidate cattle or put them on feed.

Since 2020, production costs for cow-calf producers are up more than $400 per head, or nearly 30%, Newton said. While recent years have been some of the best economic years for cow-calf producers, the positive returns are above variable costs only. When considering fixed costs such as land, taxes and machinery, returns above the total cost of production for cow-calf operations have been negative for 30 years, he continued.

"It is for these reasons that efforts to increase beef imports will further undermine the economic incentive for ranchers to make the investment to rebuild the herd," Newton said.

"Finally seeing the returns needed to justify reinvesting in their herds, cow-calf producers are beginning to hold on to their heifers and starting to rebuild," he said. "A surge of imports coinciding with the fall calf-selling season and the drop in cattle prices that would come with those imports would jeopardize that."

Measure faces industry opposition

Ranching and agriculture groups largely rebuked the announcement.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) said that while American cattle producers also want to keep groceries affordable for consumers, government-subsidized beef is not the way to rebuild the cattle herd.

"Cattle farmers and ranchers are responding to strong market signals and historically high demand, and we are already working to rebuild after years of ongoing drought, high input costs and other challenges that have reduced U.S. cattle numbers," said NCBA CEO Colin Woodall in a statement. "Today's announcement and other market interventions throw cold water on the prospect of herd expansion and sacrifices long-term stability for short term messaging."

NCBA encouraged cattle producers to tell Congress and the White House to oppose plans to increase foreign beef imports. The group created a form letter to submit to elected leaders, which is available at tinyurl.com/5e65es5j.

In addition, NCBA, along with the Livestock Marketing Association, AFBF and the U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA), submitted a letter to Trump expressing their concern with his proposal.

"We urge you to reverse course on this 90-day import plan and work with us instead on solutions that strengthen, rather than weaken, America's capacity to feed itself," the letter read. "We stand ready to work with you on policies that keep food affordable, protect producers and consumers, and preserve a viable future for the U.S. cattle industry."

Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA (R-CALF) said increasing foreign beef imports doubles down on a "failed strategy" to substitute foreign beef for rebuilding the domestic herd.

"We urge the administration to reconsider this approach and instead restore competition in cattle markets, implement import controls that provide producers the confidence and market opportunity to rebuild the domestic herd, and restore mandatory country of origin labeling so consumers can distinguish American beef from imported beef," said Bill Bullard, CEO of R-CALF, in a statement.

R-CALF, along with 12 state and local cattle associations, penned a letter Aug. 24 to Trump urging him to reconsider his proposal.

"We share your concern that the beef supply chain is not functioning as it should, resulting in historically high beef prices for consumers," the letter read. "However, we believe the solution lies in addressing the beef supply chain rather than treating the symptoms of low domestic supplies and historically high beef prices."

Letter signatories included cattle associations from California, Colorado, Missouri, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming.

The USCA warned that the import measure would sideline U.S. producers, threaten cattle prices and risk undermining consumer confidence.

"U.S. ranchers have endured years of low cattle prices and trade uncertainty, and now they are being used as pawns in a 90-day political timeline," said USCA President Justin Tupper in a statement. "The recent recall of beef from Argentina showed clearly that our current system is already strained. We want Americans to be able to buy beef, but prices cannot be pushed down at the expense of food safety." **— Anna Miller Fortozo, *WLJ* managing editor**

SALE CALENDAR

Sale Calendar is a service to our advertisers. There is a minimum advertising requirement to be eligible to be listed in the Sale Calendar. Contact your fieldman for more information or to have your date added to the Sale Calendar. We will only run auction sale dates or private treaty start dates.

ALL BREEDS

Sep. 2 – Superior Livestock Auction, Hudson Oaks, TX
Sep. 13 – Visalia Livestock Market, Bull Sale, Visalia, CA
Sep. 14 – Northern Livestock Video Auction, Billings, MT
Oct. 3 – Turlock Livestock Auction Yard, Bull Sale, Turlock, CA
Oct. 4 – Cal Poly Bull Sale, San Luis Obispo, CA
Oct. 17 – Western Stockmans Market, Macfarland, CA

ANGUS

Sep. 3 – Vintage Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, La Grange, CA
Sep. 4 – Byrd Cattle Co., Production Sale, Los Molinos, CA
Sep. 5 – Dunipace Angus Ranch & Bar KJ Angus, Bull Sale, Farmington, CA
Sep. 5 – Rhoades Angus Ranch, Production Sale, Cambria, CA
Sep. 6 – Heritage Bull Sale, Wilton, CA
Sep. 8 – O'Neal Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Madera, CA
Sep. 9 – Teixeira Cattle Co., Bull Sale, Pismo Beach, CA
Sep. 10 – Donati Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Oroville, CA
Sep. 11 – Tehama Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Gerber, CA
Sep. 12 – Arellano Bravo, Bull Sale, Walnut Grove, CA
Sep. 14 – The Chosen Bull Sale, Turlock, CA
Sep. 15 – Thomas Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 16 – Gonsalves Ranch, Bull Sale, Modesto, CA
Sep. 17 – Dal Porto Livestock & Rancho Casino Angus, Bull Sale, Denair, CA
Sep. 18 – O'Connell Cattle & Dixie Valley Ranch, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 19 – Ward Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Gardnerville, NV
Sep. 23 – Westside Connection, Bull Sale, Dos Palos, CA
Sep. 24 – Beef Solutions Bull Sale, Ione, CA
Sep. 27 – Traynham Cox, Production Sale, Fort Klamath, OR
Oct. 2 – Elwood Ranch, Bull Sale, Red Bluff, CA
Oct. 3 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID
Oct. 8 – Bar KJ Angus, Female Sale, Bakersfield, CA
Oct. 9 – Kern Cattle, Female Sale, Visalia, CA
Oct. 10 – Vintage Angus Ranch, Female Sale, Modesto, CA
Oct. 11 – Arellano Bravo, Female Sale, Walnut Grove, CA
Oct. 13 – 9 Peaks Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Fort Rock, OR
Oct. 13 – Coleman Angus, Female Sale, Charlo, MT
Oct. 14 – Montana Ranch, Female Sale, Big Fork, MT
Oct. 15 – Thomas Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Baker City, OR
Oct. 16 – NILE Angus Female Sale, Billings, MT
Oct. 17 – Basin Angus Ranch, Female Sale, Billings, MT
Oct. 17 – Lambert Ranch, Bull Sale, Oroville, CA
Oct. 24 – 44 Farms, Bull Sale, Cameron, TX
Oct. 26 – Dal Porto Livestock, Female Sale, Anselmo, NE
Oct. 28 – Riverbend Ranch, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Oct. 30 – Birch Creek Angus, Bull Sale, Ruby Valley, NV
Oct. 31 – Bear Mountain Angus, Bull Sale, Palisade, NE
Oct. 31 – Evergreen Exclusive, Female Sale, Ellensburg, WA
Nov. 4 – Hornung Livestock, Female Sale, Stratton, CO
Nov. 9 – Green Mountain Angus & Rooney Angus, Bull Sale, Billings, MT
Nov. 10 – Beartooth Angus, Bull and Female Sale, Billings, MT
Nov. 11 – Riverbend Ranch, Bull Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Nov. 12 – Hoffman Ranch, Bull Sale, Thedford, NE
Nov. 12 – JR Ranch & Sackmann Cattle, Production Sale, Othello, WA
Nov. 13 – Artnzen Angus, Bred Cow Sale, Hilger, MT
Nov. 14 – Montana Ranch, Bull Sale, Big Fork, MT
Nov. 16 – Montana Angus Female Sale, Billings, MT
Nov. 20 – Rollin' Rock Angus, Bred Female Sale, Pilot Rock, OR
Nov. 21 – Baldridge/ Tiedeman & Frank Cattle Co., Female Sale, Lodgepole, NE
Nov. 21 – Redland Angus, Bull Sale, Buffalo, WY
Nov. 21 – Spring Cove Ranch, Female Sale, Bliss, ID
Nov. 21 – Queen Ann Cattle Co., Bull & Female Sale, Loma, CO
Nov. 24 – Paint Rock Angus, Bull Sale, Hyattville, WY

BRANGUS

Nov. 20 – Cavender Ranches, Production Sale, Jacksonville, TX

HEREFORD

Sep. 7 – Genoa Livestock, Bull Sale, Minden, NV
Sep. 19 – Ehlke Herefords, Production Sale, Townsend, MT
Sep. 25 – Holden Herefords, Female Sale, Valier, MT
Oct. 2 – Elwood Ranch, Bull Sale, Red Bluff, CA
Oct. 3 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID
Oct. 17 – Lambert Ranch, Bull Sale, Oroville, CA
Nov. 12 – Hoffman Ranch, Bull Sale, Thedford, NE
Nov. 19 – Largent & Sons, Bull Sale, Kaycee, WY
Nov. 23 – Berry Herefords, Bull Sale, Cheyenne, WY

RED ANGUS

Sep. 19 – Stegall Cattle, Production Sale, Colusa, CA
Sep. 26 – McPhee Red Angus, Production Sale, Lodi, CA
Oct. 16 – NILE Red Angus Bull Sale, Billings, MT
Nov. 7 – Bet on Red Sale, Reno, NV
Nov. 21 – Baldridge/ Tiedeman & Frank Cattle Co., Female Sale, Lodgepole, NE

SIMANGUS

Sep. 16 – Gonsalves Ranch, Bull Sale, Modesto, CA
Sep. 23 – Westside Connection, Bull Sale, Dos Palos, CA
Sep. 24 – Beef Solutions Bull Sale, Ione, CA
Sep. 27 – Traynham Cox, Production Sale, Fort Klamath, OR
Oct. 17 – Lambert Ranch, Bull Sale, Oroville, CA
Nov. 4 – Hornung Livestock, Female Sale, Stratton, CO
Nov. 12 – JR Ranch & Sackmann Cattle, Bull Sale, Othello, WA

STABILIZER

Oct. 17 – Leachman Cattle, Stabilizer & Angus Sale, Dinuba, CA
Nov. 20 – Leachman Cattle, Bull Sale, Meriden, WY

COMMERCIAL

Sep. 2 – Superior Livestock Auction, Video Sale, Hudson Oaks, TX
Sep. 10 – Cattle Country Video, Video Sale, Cheyenne, WY
Sep. 13 – Visalia Livestock Market, Bull Sale, Visalia, CA
Oct. 3 – Turlock Livestock Auction Yard, Bull Sale, Turlock, CA
Oct. 4 – Cal Poly Bull Sale, San Luis Obispo, CA
Nov. 5 – Weaver Ranch, Female Sale, Lewistown, MT
Nov. 13 – Artnzen Angus, Bred Cow Sale, Hilger, MT
Nov. 16 – J&L Livestock, Female Sale, Billings, MT
Nov. 20 – Rollin' Rock Angus, Bred Female Sale, Pilot Rock, OR
Nov. 21 – Queen Ann Cattle Co., Bull & Female Sale, Loma, CO

HORSE

Sep. 19 – Legacy Ranch, Horse Sale, Prescott, AZ
Sep. 19 – Weaver Quarter Horses Sale, Great Falls, MT
Sep. 20 – Balkenbush Quarter Horses, Dispersal Sale, Great Falls, MT
Oct. 1 – Bowman Livestock, Horse Sale, Bowman, ND

SHEEP

Sep. 16 – Montana Wool Growers Association, Ram and Ewe Sale, Miles City, MT

SALE REPORTS

MEMORY RANCHES FOAL SALE
Aug. 22, Wells, NV
33 Stud colts . . . $9,644
48 Fillies 7,360
Auctioneer: Rick Machado

TOP: Grey filly out of Cello Drift, by Martis Speed Racer; to a buyer in Utah, $30,000. — **JARED PATTERSON**

RIVERBEND RANCH FEMALE SALE
Aug. 22, Idaho Falls, ID
38 Angus females $24,355
5 Angus pregnancies. . . . 56,000
Auctioneer: Trent Stewart
Sale Managers: Cotton & Assoc.

TOPS—Angus bred heifers: Riverbend Elba N419, 2/13/2025 by Crouch Congress bred to EXAR Bona Fide; to Edisto Pines Farm, Leesville, SC, $90,000. Riverbend Forever Lady N222, 1/21/2025 by BNWZ Bougie 1588 bred to Riverbend Saluda N1805; to Hilltop Angus, Fayetteville, TN, and 4C Angus, Shelbyville, TN, $65,000. **Fall pairs:** Riverbend Blackcap M2065, 7/8/2024 by Pine View Red State with a Basin Keystone heifer calf by side; to Nowatzke Cattle, Michigan City, IN, $60,000. Riverbend Belle M2497, 7/30/2024 by Virginia Tech Statesman with a Basin Keystone heifer calf by side; to Gutwein Angus, Francesville, IN, $55,000. **Open heifers:** Riverbend Linda N2368, 7/7/2025 by EXAR Bona Fide; to Circle G Angus Ranches, Adel, GA, $77,500, 1/2 interest. Riverbend Blackcap P860, 3/31/2026 by Schiefelbein Gable 311; to AAA Farms LLC, Milan, TN, $50,000. **Pregnancies:** EXAR Elba 9501, 3/12/2027 by G A R Market Maker; to Kern Cattle Co., Visalia, CA, $85,000. Riverbend Belle J2103, 2/19/2026 by G A R Market Maker; to Spruce Mountain Ranch, Larkspur, CO, $80,000. — **JARED PATTERSON**

SUPERIOR Livestock Auction VIDEO AUCTION

Big Horn Classic
Sheridan, WY, Aug. 17-21

Buyers stayed aggressive through a volatile week on the futures board as Superior Livestock Auction marketed more than 197,000 head at its Big Horn Classic, held Aug. 17-21 in Sheridan, WY. The offering ran roughly 75% above the head offered a year ago, swelled by drought and fire across the North and West that pushed cattle to market early.

Cattle producers sold a total of 1,357 lots consigned from 32 states, with 390 successful buyers over the five-day auction. Cattle sold on contract to deliver immediately through April 2027.

"Good cattle, good people, good markets," said Superior auctioneer Kyle Shobe. "From the auction block, it was evident again and again—short supply and balanced optimism is still driving the cash market. Yes, we have seen an adjustment since the highs of June, but there's no question we're still in high times in the cattle business. Remember where we've been, keep it in perspective, manage what you can control."

Calves out of North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana anchored the sale. Northern five-weight steers brought $385-520/cwt, slightly tested at $2-22/cwt lower than the last test. Heifers drew unusually broad interest, with buyers competing for the lighter end, four-weight Northern heifers bringing $540/cwt, and six-weight heifers reaching $480/cwt; heifers held their value across every region and in some cases higher than steers. Bred stock was in strong demand with first-calf heifer pairs topping the market at $5,850 per head. Genetics again carried a visible premium. Buyers paid up for large, uniform lots out of regions whose purebred breeders have spent decades building consistency into commercial herds, and a special Charolais section on the auction's third day drew seedstock producers into the room to stand behind their bull customers.

The auction opened days after a sharp break in the futures market with Tyson Foods announcing plant closures. The CME Feeder Cattle Index slid throughout the week. Against that backdrop, prices across the Big Horn Classic finished steady with the 2025 offering, an auction that had set records in nearly every class a year ago.

CLASSIFIED CORRAL

WESTERN LIVESTOCK JOURNAL

WWW.WLJ.NET 720-370-7977 1-303-722-0155 CLASSIFIED@WLJ.NET

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING GENERAL INFORMATION

ADVERTISING RATES

BY THE WORD: 90 cents per word for each insertion.

MINIMUM WORD RATE: 17 words or fewer, $15.30 one time.

MAD RATES: (Bold headline) $2 more per insertion for your phone number, email and/or website, plus first 2 or 3 words in bold print. (Applies to word ads only)

BOXED AND BOLD: (Boxed with bold text) $5 more per insertion. (Applies to word ads only)

BLIND BOX AD: We will assign your confidential number and forward replies to you. **Cost is $12 per 3 issues** for mail and handling service.

BOXED DISPLAY ADS: $30 per column inch for each insertion.

MINIMAL ARTWORK: No additional charge.

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO: $10, LIMIT OF ONE.

COLOR PHOTO: $35 EACH.

DISCOUNTS: 5% for running your ad 3 to 5 times; 10% for 6 times or more; up to 35% for 52 times.

SUGGESTION FOR CORRECT WORD COUNT: Be sure to include your name, address and phone number in the count, as well as all initials and abbreviations. Hyphenated words count as two.

TEARSHEETS: Available upon request only. Can be faxed or mailed.

CONDITIONS

EMPLOYMENT WANTED ADS: Must be paid in advance.

DEADLINE: Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. MT, the week prior to publication date. Newspaper is published on Mondays.

LIABILITY: Advertiser is liable for content of advertisement and any claims arising therefrom made against the publication.

Publisher is not responsible for errors in phoned-in copy. Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertising not considered in keeping with the publication standards.

COMMISSIONS: Classified advertising is NOT agency commissionable.

CLASSIFIED INDEX

CLASSIFIED CORRAL

720-370-7977 • Fax: 303-722-0155
www.wlj.net • classified@wlj.net

DO NOT PHONE IN RESPONSES TO BLIND BOX ADS. ADVERTISERS' NAMES AND LOCATIONS ARE CONFIDENTIAL. INCLUDE THE AD DEPARTMENT NUMBER IN YOUR EMAIL RESPONSE OR ON YOUR ENVELOPE AND YOUR REPLY WILL BE PROMPTLY FORWARDED.

VISA DISCOVER NOVUS AMERICAN EXPRESS Cards MasterCard

Cattle For Sale 10

Coming Soon
To a pasture near you
2 Bar Angus
Bulls - Females - Embryos - Semen
Prime by Design
Female Sale
OCTOBER 3, 2026
At the Hereford Vet Clinic Sale Facility Hereford, TX
Spring Bull Sale
MARCH 18, 2026
3rd Wednesday
1-806-344-7444
Hereford, Texas
STEVE & LAURA KNOLL
www.2BarAngus.com

PRATT FARMS
GRAY BRAHMANS
GENTLE AMERICAN BEEF TYPE GRAY BRAHMANS
Loren Pratt
520-709-1554
44996 W. Papago Rd.
Maricopa, AZ 85139

Livestock Supplies 18

POWDER RIVER LIVESTOCK EQUIP.
Best prices with delivery available.
Conlin Supply Co., Inc.
Oakdale, CA
Ask for Larry or Albert
209/847-8977

Real Estate Pacific 20A

KNIPE LAND
(208) 345-3163
knipeland.com

N VALE PIVOT FARM
280± acre row crop farm. Two parcels with 245± acres irrigated by 4 pivots (one gravity-pressurized), and 3 wheel lines. Great investment - only $5,714/ac. **$1,600,000 Sale Pending**

COW VALLEY RANCH
1,490± acres - grazing land, seasonal creeks, & hunting. **Reduced. Now $820,000**

Pasture Wanted 24

WANTED:
Winter/Fall pasture for cow/calf pairs & yearlings.
CA/NV area.
Established CA/NV operation.
Call/text (530) 304-7575

Irrigation 27

WESTERN POLY PIPE
HDPE PIPE for Ranch Water Systems
Fair Prices · Good Service · Rancher Owned
DELIVERY THROUGHOUT THE WEST
CALL TODAY: 800-718-7784

Tractors & Implements 34

Yielder 2020 No-Till Drill
- Ideal for Pasture Renovation
- Seed into sod in paired rows
- Retired at only 25K acres

Guy Swanson (509) 995-1879
evbguy@comcast.net

Loans 36

RATES AS LOW AS 5.5%!
Business & Financial Consulting.
Designed for the Farmer/Rancher
(Not the Banker)
www.agrionefinancial.com
303-773-3545
You Call Steve, I'll Come to You.
AGRI-One Financial

Schools 43

GET THOROUGH PRACTICAL TRAINING IN:
Pregnancy testing—A.I. herd health—calf delivery and care. Many additional subjects.
CATTLEMEN
Our business is to help you improve your business.
Learn more by working with live animals under expert supervision.
GRAHAM SCHOOL, INC.
641 W. Hwy 31 Garnett, KS 66032
785/448-3119
www.grahamschool forcattlemen.com
Over 100 years of continuous service
GRAHAM SCHOOL

NEED EXTRA INCOME?
Advertise a hunting or fishing lease!
CALL NOW!
(800) 850-2769

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®
Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

1. Publication Title	2. Publication Number	3. Filing Date
Western Livestock Journal	6 7 8 _ 6 6 0	8/21/26
4. Issue Frequency	**5. Number of Issues Published Annually**	**6. Annual Subscription Price**
Weekly	52	55.00

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication *(Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®)*
6021 S Syracuse Way, Suite 103
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Contact Person: Hannah Jackson
Telephone *(Include area code)*: 303-722-7600

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher *(Not printer)*
6021 S Syracuse Way, Suite 103
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor *(Do not leave blank)*
Publisher *(Name and complete mailing address)*
Kirby Brincefield
PO Box 234
Kiowa, CO 80117
Editor *(Name and complete mailing address)*
CHARLES WALLACE III
3061 AVALON COVE CT NW
ROCHESTER, MN 55901-8497
Managing Editor *(Name and complete mailing address)*
ANNA FORTOZO
8906 SANTA CLARA DR
DALLAS, TX 75218-4135

10. Owner *(Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)*

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
Western Livestock Journal LLC	6021 S Syracuse Way, Suite 103 Greenwood Village, CO 80111

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box → ☐ None

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address

12. Tax Status *(For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)*
The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:
☐ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
☐ Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months *(Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)*

PS Form **3526,** July 2014 *[Page 1 of 4 (see instructions page 4)]* PSN: 7530-01-000-9931 **PRIVACY NOTICE:** See our privacy policy on *www.usps.com.*

13. Publication Title			14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: 8/31/26	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation			**Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months**	**No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date**
a. Total Number of Copies *(Net press run)*				
b. Paid Circulation *(By Mail and Outside the Mail)*	(1)	Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	3209	3106
	(2)	Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 *(Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)*		
	(3)	Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		
	(4)	Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		
c. Total Paid Distribution *[Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4)]*			3209	3106
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution *(By Mail and Outside the Mail)*	(1)	Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	1713	1725
	(2)	Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		
	(3)	Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)		
	(4)	Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail *(Carriers or other means)*		
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution *(Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))*			1713	1725
f. Total Distribution *(Sum of 15c and 15e)*			4922	4831
g. Copies not Distributed *(See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))*			113	105
h. Total *(Sum of 15f and g)*			5035	4936
i. Percent Paid *(15c divided by 15f times 100)*			65%	64

* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

PS Form **3526,** July 2014 *(Page 2 of 4)*

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®
Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

16. Electronic Copy Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	0	0
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	3434	3538
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	5050	5273
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c × 100)	68	67

☐ **I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.**

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership
☐ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the 8/31/26 issue of this publication. ☐ Publication not required.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner	Date
Kirby Brincefield, Senior Operations Manager	8/21/26

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

PS Form **3526,** July 2014 *(Page 3 of 4)* **PRIVACY NOTICE:** See our privacy policy on *www.usps.com.*

Texas forest industry remains steady with large economic, ecological impact

The Texas forest industry continues on a steady trajectory thanks to ongoing demand for new housing and construction, as well as other manufacturing sectors that rely on renewable wood fibers, said a Texas A&M Forest Service expert.

"We're a huge state that is home to eight of the 15 fastest-growing cities in the nation," said Aaron Stottlemyer, Ph.D., Texas A&M Forest Service Forest Analytics Department head and adjunct professor in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology. "That growth, and the need for housing in particular, places demand on the forest sector for wood construction materials."

While Texas is home to more than 55 million acres of forestland, it is the roughly 12 million acres of timber-producing pine forests across 43 East Texas counties that fuel the state's forest industry.

Stottlemyer said the value of harvested timber consistently ranks among Texas' top 10 agricultural commodities. According to a Texas A&M Forest Service report, in 2024 the Texas forest sector directly contributed $27.4 billion in industry output and employed over 73,000 people.

Stottlemyer said around 85 sawmills currently operate in Texas, transforming raw timber into products like dimensional lumber, plywood and oriented strand board.

"We're one of the top wood panel producing states in the nation," he said.

While Texas is considered a net importer of forest products, the state maintains a healthy rate of international and domestic exports.

In 2024, Texas' international forest product exports totaled $2.1 billion.

"Our two biggest trade partners, both in terms of imports and exports of finished goods, are Mexico and Canada," he said.

Although primary forest products like lumber and wood panels may be the most recognizable elements of the industry, Stottlemyer said Texas' secondary forest products manufacturing sector is exceptionally important and provides stability from fluctuations in the housing market that affect demand for solid wood products such as lumber and panel.

"These secondary manufacturers take wood pulp and turn it into value-added products like paper and paperboard products," he said. "Those companies comprise a huge market share of the Texas forest sector."

He said these facilities, located primarily in the northern and central parts of the state, account for more than 65% of the state's forest sector economy.

Stottlemyer said there is also growing interest in the use and construction applications of engineered wood products like mass timber, which includes cross-laminated timber and glue-laminated timber, known as glulam.

More than 90% of timberland in East Texas is privately owned, with family forest landowners accounting for 58% of that ownership.

Stottlemyer said compared to other crops, timber is a long-term investment of 20-30 years that offers a relatively stable return for landowners. Thanks to management activities like thinning operations during growing cycles, forests can produce revenue throughout the full crop rotation.

Despite the stability, challenges persist, especially for small-scale forest owners.

"An issue across the entire nation is an oversupply of small-diameter pine trees and lack of new markets," he said. "We've seen an unprecedented closure of pulp and paper mills across the South, and we're not seeing investments in new facilities or manufacturers to take the place of those that we've lost."

Due to a combination of factors, including improved tree genetics, advanced silvicultural practices and improved sawmilling efficiency, Stottlemyer said East Texas is growing nearly 300% more wood volume than is being harvested annually.

Another challenge facing small-scale landowners—typically 100 acres and less—relates to an "economy of scale."

"The minimum acreage depends on the timber harvester, but for most, there is a threshold where they can't financially justify moving their equipment and operations around to harvest smaller timber parcels," he said.

Stottlemyer said Texas A&M Forest Service is actively working to develop solutions and find market opportunities to resolve these challenges.

"There's a lot of interest in biochar and its potential uses, from amending soil to agricultural and bioremediation applications," he said. "Other market opportunities could be sustainable aviation fuel from forest biomass, carbon and ecosystem service markets, and wood pellets for renewable energy."

There is also growing recognition of the valuable non-timber resources Texas forests provide, including recreation, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, improved air quality, and water quality and quantity.

"We cannot talk about water without talking about forests and what the forestry sector does in terms of ensuring that the citizens of our state continue to have access to clean drinking water," Stottlemyer said.

Texans can learn more about the state's forest resources and access a diverse portal of landowner tools, interactive reports and more at texasforestinfo.tamu.edu.
— Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Dry, dusty conditions can increase pneumonia

Recent rains have provided some needed relief from dusty conditions across much of North Dakota. The effects of strong winds and dry soils have been a visible challenge for farmers during spring planting and have been an unpleasant companion to outdoor activities.

Dusty conditions can also pose cattle health challenges that producers should be aware of, according to Dr. Jake Galbreath, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension veterinarian.

Dust is usually trapped in the upper airway by mucus, which is then moved upwards by tiny hairlike cells and eliminated through coughing or swallowing. High levels of dust can overwhelm these defenses, causing inflammation. Inflamed lung tissue is more susceptible to infection (pneumonia), either from pathogens carried by dust or from those normally present taking advantage of impaired defenses.

"Calves are usually more at risk of developing pneumonia because their lungs have not matured and their immune systems are not fully developed to fight infection," Galbreath said.

Early identification of respiratory issues can allow treatment before permanent lung damage occurs.

Galbreath provides warning signs for producers:

- Watery eyes that may become inflamed.
- Thick mucus from the nose or eyes.
- Persistent cough that increases with movement.
- Wheezing, harsh breathing and stretching of the neck.
- Increased respiratory rate at rest (over 40 breaths per minute).

Galbreath also recommends that producers allow extra time to move cattle, work them slowly in dusty conditions and use low-stress handling techniques.

"Working slowly is even more important in cattle with respiratory disease, as their lung function may be significantly impaired," Galbreath said.

Dusty conditions can contribute to other health problems as well. Eye irritation from dust can lead to pinkeye, as face flies that spread disease are drawn to increased secretions from the eyes. Also, persistent coughing can lead to rectal prolapse.

"While the weather conditions that cause significant dust are out of our control," Galbreath said, "producers can take some steps to help with dust and reduce the risk of developing respiratory disease."

Those steps include the following:

- Spray water in and around pens and on nearby roads to settle dust.
- Avoid unnecessary traffic on roads upwind from cattle.
- Utilize windbreaks or shelter belts.
- Clean water sources to encourage drinking, as hydration is important for airway protection.
- Move cattle from dry lot to pasture.
- Monitor pastures and stocking rates to avoid overgrazing.
- Ensure adequate trace mineral uptake to support healthy immune function.
- Vaccinate against respiratory pathogens based on herd history and consulting a veterinarian.

Treatment for respiratory disease typically includes antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medications, either steroidal or nonsteroidal. Other supportive treatments, such as vitamin or mineral supplements, probiotics, and oral electrolytes, may also be beneficial.

Producers should develop treatment protocols for respiratory issues in consultation with their veterinarian.
— NDSU Extension

Using the Livestock Indemnity Program for livestock losses

Wildfires can result in devastating livestock losses. The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) was designed to help eligible producers recover financially when livestock deaths exceed normal mortality due to "eligible loss conditions," including wildfires.

LIP provides financial assistance for livestock that die as a direct result of a qualifying wildfire. In some cases, assistance may also be available for livestock that were injured by the wildfire and subsequently sold at a reduced price.

There are four key pieces to qualifying for LIP:

- A livestock owner must have legally owned the livestock on the day the livestock died and/or were injured by an eligible loss condition (wildfire).
- Livestock must be used for commercial production and held for sale.
- Death or sale of injured livestock must happen within 30 days of an eligible loss condition.
- Livestock death losses must be beyond normal mortality.

One of the most important steps producers can take after wildfire is documenting losses. USDA requires evidence that supports both the livestock inventory before the fire and the losses that occurred afterward. Accurate documentation of normal death losses is equally important so they can be counted as part of normal mortality for the year.

It is critical producers maintain records of damages, expenses, livestock inventories, grazing records, dated photographs, receipts, veterinary records, third party certifications, brand inspections, rendering records, processing records and correspondence related to the wildfire. Good documentation today can make the recovery process much smoother.

LIP payments for livestock death losses, adjusted for normal mortality, are calculated by multiplying the national payment rate for the applicable livestock category by the number of eligible livestock in that category times the producer's share. The LIP national payment rates are calculated using market data based on the previous year.

Producers should also notify USDA FSA as soon as possible after discovering losses. Local FSA staff can help producers determine eligibility, identify required documentation, and complete necessary forms. Even if producers are uncertain whether losses qualify, scheduling a conversation with the local USDA Service Center is often the best first step.

For 2026 wildfire losses, producers who are seeking LIP support must submit their Notice of Loss and final application for payment by March 1, 2027.

USDA disaster and conservation programs are often designed to address different types of wildfire losses. However, federal rules generally prohibit receiving multiple payments for the same loss, expense, or conservation practice. Producers should discuss all wildfire-related damages with their local USDA Service Center so staff can identify the combination of programs that best fits their situation.

In addition to program-specific eligibility requirements, USDA disaster and conservation programs are generally subject to payment limitations and Adjusted Gross Income rules. These provisions can affect the amount of assistance a producer may receive. — **Nebraska Extension and the Center for Agricultural Profitability**

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

(In an effort to serve the next generation of livestock producers, WLJ's Youth Opportunities calendar lists internship and scholarship information for agricultural- and livestock-focused students, listed by application deadline. If you have an internship or scholarship to announce, please email it to editorial@wlj.net.)

Sept. 15 – The Montana Stockgrowers Association (MSGA) is encouraging students to apply for its 2026 Annual Convention and Trade Show internship program. The internship will take place Dec. 2-6 in Billings, MT. To apply, visit mtbeef.org or contact the MSGA office at 406-442-3420.

Oct. 1 – The 2026 California Cattlemen's Association Scholarships applications are now open. For more information about and to access the scholarship application, visit calcattlemen.org/scholarship.

Upper Basin states to develop Colorado River plan

COLORADO RIVER
(from page 1)

for reductions for all basin states and Nevada filing a lawsuit to set aside the Record of Decision.

JB Hamby, chairman of the Colorado River Board of California and California's Colorado River commissioner, told NPR the Lower Basin reductions are consistent with proposals California and its partners have advanced to address the river's "structural deficit," where use has exceeded available supplies. Hamby said that all seven states ultimately need to participate in reducing demand as supplies decline.

"We're open to providing relief and having some flexibility provided to the Upper Basin states," Hamby said. "But certainly, there's not going to be a situation moving forward where we have the three of seven states do all the lifting for all seven while four sit it out."

Arizona officials offered qualified support for the two-year agreement while stressing that a broader solution remains necessary.

Arizona Department of Water Resources Director Tom Buschatzke said the decision provides stability after more than three years of difficult negotiations and allows discussions to continue without surrendering Arizona's legal rights.

"With the Record of Decision, the 2027-2028 Operating Guidelines and the supporting agreements in place, we can focus on a longer-term, equitable, basin-wide outcome that includes shared sacrifices along with our Upper Basin partners in an effort to avoid protracted litigation," Buschatzke said.

Nevada, however, moved from criticism to litigation, filing a federal lawsuit challenging the longer-term framework. The state, the Colorado River Commission of Nevada and the Southern Nevada Water Authority contend the rules could eventually require Nevada to absorb a 213,556-acre-foot reduction, equivalent to about 71% of the state's Colorado River entitlement.

Nevada argues that it would disproportionately burden a state that has already reduced Colorado River consumption by more than 40% since 2002, while the Las Vegas Valley has added roughly 875,000 residents.

Nevada Gov. Joe Lombardo (R) had warned after the guidelines were released that the federal framework provides "little certainty" for Nevada and could place too much responsibility on Lower Basin users.

Southern Nevada Water Authority General Manager John Entsminger called Interior's proposed reductions "entirely unrealistic," noting southern Nevada has cut Colorado River use about 40% over the past 25 years. "Conservation has its limits," he said, arguing the proposed water supply would not meet the community's basic needs.

The dispute leaves the Colorado River states with another two years to try to bridge their differences. **— Charles Wallace, *WLJ* contributing editor**