

INSIDE WLJ

NUTRITION, FEED & HEALTH — Check out the Nutrition, Feed & Health special section this week featuring nitrate poisoning, NWS and how GLP-1 usage is affecting beef demand. Page 6

MILLION \$ DISPUTE — Washington ranching couple appeals court ruling in multimillion-dollar dispute about digging and maintaining stockwater ponds. Page 4

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"The corn market has been inching higher over the past several weeks on expectations that this year's crop may not reach previously predicted levels. Many analysts expect that USDA's corn crop estimate, set to be released Sept. 20, will show a downward revision in expected corn production. Despite the expected decline, analysts still predicted this year's corn crop will set a new record," wrote John Robinson, WLJ editor, in his Sept. 13, 2010, article.

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Trump formalizes beef import plan

— **Announces processing proposal**

After teasing the prospect in a social media post, President Donald Trump has formalized a plan to increase lean beef trimming imports with no above-quota tariff.

In an Aug. 21 Truth Social post, Trump announced he had completed a deal to lower the price of beef for Americans by increasing ground beef imports. He did not indicate specifics, including where beef supplies would be sourced.

Five days later, the White House released a presidential proclamation titled Further Ensuring Affordable Beef for the American Consumer. In the proclamation, Trump finalized the increase of lean beef trimmings subject to the in-quota rate of duty by 300,000 metric tons (mt).

"I anticipate that the action taken in this proclamation will result in the importation of ground beef that will be sold at a discounted price compared to current sale prices, helping to ensure hard-working Americans can afford to feed themselves and their families," Trump

said. The beef will be sold at a 25% discount from the going import price.

The proclamation notes that Trump's earlier February Proclamation 11010 (Ensuring Affordable Beef for the American Consumer) directed an official to monitor forecasted increases in domestic beef consumption and prices. Since then, that official informed Trump that "additional action may be necessary to ensure affordable ground beef for United States consumers."

The proclamation also noted that "even though the action taken in Proclamation 11010 has increased beef imports from Argentina, the supply contraction in the United States beef industry coupled with the growing demand for beef is resulting in higher beef prices that are expected to continue absent further action."

The additional 300,000 mt of beef will be administered on a first come, first served basis in three 30-day tranches, beginning Sept. 1, according to the proclamation. The expansion is allocated to "other countries or areas" subject to an in-quota tariff rate, but does not increase the

earlier Argentina allocations or include countries with a free-trade agreement or country-specific quotas.

"This temporary action will increase beef supply by roughly 10%

See BEEF IMPORTS on page 16



Adobe Stock

President Donald Trump has formalized a plan to allow more lean beef trimmings into the country without an above-quota tariff. Pictured here, Nelore cattle in Brazil.

Global beef supplies tighten as trade shifts

— **Cattle prices retreat**

Global beef markets are moving into the second half of 2026 with tighter production, changing trade flows and growing consumer resistance after cattle and beef prices reached record highs earlier in the year, according to Rabobank's latest Global Beef Quarterly report.

Rabobank expects global beef production to decline 2% year over year, with lower output in several major producing regions, including the U.S. and Brazil. At the same time, Rabobank said global cattle

prices have started to ease, with prices in the U.S., Canada and Australia falling 2-6% from June to July.

The report said trade restrictions are also beginning to reshape global beef flows. Australia reached its China safeguard quota in June, redirecting beef toward the U.S., Japan, South Korea and the Middle East, while Brazil is nearing its own quota and faces additional uncertainty from restrictions on shipments to the European Union.

U.S. prices retreat

In the U.S., Rabobank said cattle and beef prices reached highs across nearly every market class during the second quarter before retreating sharply entering the third quarter.

USDA's All-Fresh Retail Beef price reached nearly \$10/pound in April, while 500-lb. and 800-lb. steers averaged record prices of \$5.17/lb. and \$3.68/lb., respectively. Fed steers averaged \$2.59/lb. in May.

See BEEF SUPPLIES on page 12

Physicians group sues USDA, HHS over Dietary Guidelines

— **Asks to withdraw recommendations**

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine has sued USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) over how the agencies developed the 2025-2030 Dietary

Guidelines for Americans, alleging they bypassed federal transparency requirements and relied on a panel with food-industry ties.

The complaint, filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, seeks declaratory and injunctive relief under the Administrative Pro-

cedure Act and Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The Physicians Committee alleges the agencies used a "procedural bait and switch," replacing recommendations developed through an established public process with work from what the lawsuit calls a "se-

cret panel."

"The government allowed the meat and dairy industries to ghostwrite the Dietary Guidelines," Physicians Committee President Neal D. Barnard, MD, said in a statement. "They put money in industry's pocket and cholesterol in Americans' arteries."

Lawsuit challenges review process

The Dietary Guidelines are issued every five years and influence federal food, nutrition and health programs. Federal law requires the guidelines to be based on the preponderance of cur-

rent scientific and medical knowledge, the complaint said.

For the 2025-2030 Guidelines, USDA and HHS established a 20-member Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee in 2023. According to

See LAWSUIT on page 8

Cattle futures find some footing on the board

The cattle market traded mostly higher over the week, regaining some of the previous week's losses.

Live cattle futures traded steady to higher over the week. The October contract gained about \$4 to close at \$214.30, and the December contract gained a little less than \$2 to close at \$216.12.

"After eight days of consolidating near its recent lows, CME cattle futures have taken off and are staging an impressive short-term rally today," wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, in The Beef on Thursday. "Given the fundamentals, it's hard to see this rally is anything other than a correction after an extended downtrend."

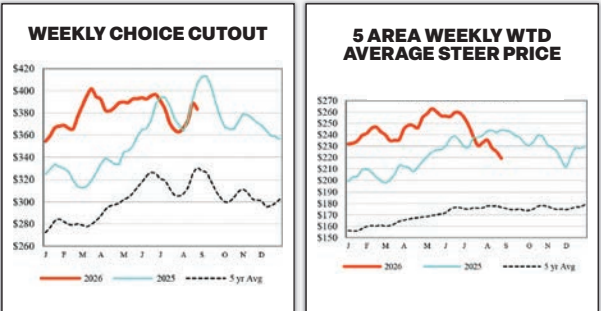
Cash trade through Thursday totaled about 37,000 head. Live steers sold from \$215-219, and dressed steers sold from \$340-348.

Cash trade for the week ending Aug. 30 totaled 73,257 head. Live steers averaged \$219.87, and dressed steers averaged \$345.50.

"There are plenty of market-ready fed cattle available in the north, especially over the next 60 days," Fish said. "It's critical that fed cattle slaughter levels increase or front-end currentness will be negatively impacted."

Slaughter through Thursday totaled about 412,000 head, compared to 415,000 head a week earlier. Total slaughter for a week earlier is estimated at 542,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending Aug. 22 was 527,019 head. The average steer dressed weight was 967 lbs., up 1 lb. from the prior week.

"This past week, the slaughter volume increased as packers took the opportunity to make hay while the sun shines," the Cattle Report wrote. "Profits have returned to the packers helped by a reduction in slaughter capacities, demoralized sellers, and firm demand for beef."



See MARKETS on page 11

↓	↑	↓
LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
\$217.91	\$345.27	\$329.18
WEEK ENDING: 9-3-26		

PERIODICAL : Time Sensitive Priority Handling

COMPASS COMMENTS

High-stakes markets

When cattle prices scale historic peaks, a fundamental shift occurs on the ranch balance sheet that has very little to do with animal husbandry, marketing or added value. In the cattle market in recent months, a set of 500 head of backgrounded calves is less representative of a standard, floating agricultural commodity. At these high valuations, it represents a high-stakes, multi-million-dollar asset portfolio.



BELLIS

While record-breaking prices look spectacular on paper, they inject unprecedented operational downside leverage into your business. For modern cattlemen, risk management is no longer a psychological exercise in curbing optimism. It is a strict discipline of equity defense.

The math of scaled price risk exposure

The dangerous illusion of a high-tide market is the belief that risk remains proportional. In reality, while your production costs and margins may have scaled up in tandem, your absolute dollar exposure has widened exponentially.

- **The baseline reality:** Historically, a 10% market correction on \$150/cwt feeder cattle meant absorbing a painful but survivable swing of \$15/cwt (\$120/head on an 800-lb steer).

- **Leverage near the peak:** That exact same 10% market downswing on \$300/cwt feeder cattle instantly vaporizes \$30/cwt of equity. More critically, real-world market corrections are rarely polite enough to stop at 10% (\$240/head on an 800-lb steer).

- **The bottom line:** When the per-head value of your inventory doubles, the amount of equity left unprotected in your pastures and pens doubles right along with it. A sudden global or national shock or terminal market turn can systematically dismantle an operation's entire annual profit margin—and erode foundational equity—in a matter of days, let alone weeks.

Collateral shock: The lender's perspective

This massive jump in risk-per-head could completely alter how the guy sitting across the desk at the bank looks at your operating note. Feeding and carrying high-value turns of cattle takes a mountain of working capital, stretching borrowing base limits tighter than a new fence.

- **A thinning margin for error:** When calves were cheaper, a lender might look the other way during a minor market hiccup because the total dollars at risk wouldn't break the ranch. At today's peak prices, that tolerance thins out completely.

- **The credit freeze:** If a market correction catches you open and unprotected, your cattle collateral value drops like a stone. That sudden dip can instantly lock up your checkbook and trigger immediate restrictions on your operating line.

- **Keeping yourself bankable:** Putting a firm price floor under your cattle isn't just about saving the profit on a single turn. It is a proactive play to insulate your balance sheet, keeping your credit open and your operation bankable if the cattle market takes a turn for the worst.

Forging an equity defense plan

To protect these heavily leveraged assets, producers can treat price protection as a fundamental fixed cost of production rather than a speculative market timing game.

- **The structural floor:** Tools like Livestock Risk Protection or Chicago Mercantile Exchange put options can create a price floor under a high-value turn while preserving the opportunity to benefit if the cash market keeps climbing. It draws a line in the dirt against adverse price moves while leaving room to participate in the upside. If the market remains above the protected level, the protection may provide no payout and the premium remains an operational cost.

- **The premium shift:** The premium paid for a price floor must be viewed through the exact same operational lens as a herd health protocol. You do not buy a respiratory vaccine hoping for an outbreak just to get a bang for your vaccine buck; you buy it to establish an invisible fence around herd health.

- **Insulating the operation:** Treating risk management premiums as an asset-preservation line item removes the emotional speculation rollercoaster and ensuing vertigo from the equation (without the need for the nearest trash-can). It solidifies that regardless of where the market sways, you now have a layer of defense around your underlying operational capital. It is the financial equivalent of carrying a spare tire. You don't hit the road praying for a blowout just to get your money's worth out of the backup tire; you do it so a stray nail doesn't leave your entire business model sitting stalled on the side of the road.

The bottom line: Engineering a resilient balance sheet

Historically, the cattle market demands that a producer shifts focus from short-term market timing to long-term capital preservation. The true metric of success in a near-peak environment isn't whether you managed to nail the exact top of the board before the market turned. It is whether you engineered a balance sheet resilient enough to withstand a drop when it occurs. Stripping the emotion out of risk management and establishing a price floor can support your operation's resilience, security, liquidity and preparation for the next unknown of the cattle market. — **GARREN BELLIS, COMPASS AG SOLUTIONS**

(Editor's note: A legal disclaimer about Compass Comments may be found above the WLJ masthead.)

GUEST OPINION

For farmers and ranchers, land is more than a place to grow a crop or raise livestock. It is where families build their livelihood and hope to create an opportunity for the next generation.

Across the country, competition for that land is growing. Housing, businesses, solar projects and data centers all demand more space. At the same time, high land values and a difficult farm economy are making it harder for farmers to buy or rent the land they need—and harder for families to turn down development offers that may provide more financial certainty than farming does today.

That challenge is compounded by the fact that nearly four out of every five rented acres of farmland are owned by non-operating landlords, leaving decisions about much of the land farmers depend on with people who may have little connection to agriculture.

That raises an important question: How do we make room for growth while ensuring America continues to have the farmland needed to feed our nation?

Since 1982, developed land in the U.S. has increased by nearly 48 million acres, an area roughly the size of Nebraska. During the same period, cropland declined by 55.7 million acres. Not every acre that leaves agricultural production is permanently lost. Farmland may shift between crops, pasture, and conservation uses depending on markets and the needs of a farm.

Commercial and real estate development is different: it's much more likely to be permanent. Once farmland is covered by roads, buildings or other infrastructure, it is unlikely to return to agriculture. Sadly, we can all point to places where farms used to be.

The impact is felt most at the local level. A solar project, data center or new subdivision may represent a small piece of America's total land base, but it's not small to the farmers and ranchers already competing for limited space. Paving over farmland with expensive development projects can raise nearby land values, splinter off fields, and raise costs for water, power and other infrastructure.

Productive farmland is critical to our nation's economic

BALANCING GROWTH AND THE FUTURE OF FARMLAND

and food security. When farms disappear, we also risk losing the businesses and rural communities that depend on a strong farm economy.

Farmers understand that communities need housing, dependable energy and new opportunities for economic growth. Data centers and solar projects can bring jobs, investment and tax revenue to rural communities. The key is to plan wisely and consider the long-term impact of where development takes place.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Farmers and other landowners must be able to make decisions about their own property, and rural communities should have a meaningful voice in projects that will shape them for decades. Whenever possible, development should avoid productive farmland, minimize the fragmentation of working farms, and consider whether land could return to agricultural use in the future. We can support economic development while also recognizing that productive farmland is a limited resource.

The best way to preserve farmland is to make sure farmers and ranchers can afford to keep farming it. Farm families are dealing with record high costs, tight margins, and land prices that often reflect what a developer can pay rather than what a farmer can earn from a crop. When farming does not provide a sustainable return, families may have few choices when a development offer arrives.

Farmers need a modernized farm bill, stronger markets, a reliable workforce, and a regulatory environment that allows them to remain competitive. Young and beginning farmers also need a realistic path to access land. Nearly 40% of U.S. agricultural land is rented, so decisions made by landowners, trusts and heirs play a major role in determining who gets the opportunity to farm.

The decisions we make today will have consequences for generations. Keeping productive land in agriculture will help rural communities thrive and ensure farmers and ranchers can continue producing the food, fuel and fiber America's families depend on. — **Zippy Duvall, American Farm Bureau Federation president**

OBITUARY



Don Nonella; 1931-2026

Donald V. Nonella of Fallon, NV, passed away Aug. 19 at the Highland Village. He was born Sept. 5, 1931, in Fort Bragg, CA, to Silvio and Martha Nonella.

Don grew up on his grandfather's ranches in Elk and Navarro Ridge, CA. He graduated from high school in 1949. He started driving teams of horses baling straw at 5 years old. He stayed

busy in his early years pitching grain bundles to a thrashing machine, shoeing horses, taking care of sheep, CAT skinning, shearing sheep and hunting.

In 1955, Don married Barbara Caughey and had four children Larry, Debra, Tom and Carolyn. Don liked ranching and driving trucks. They moved to Bly, OR, in 1966 where they built 7C Ranch, with help from their children. In 1972, he purchased his first cattle truck, a 1964 Kenworth. He started hauling cattle and didn't stop until 1997. In 1979, Don and Barabara bought the Eastgate and Campbell Creek ranches east of Fallon, NV. They built a nice herd of Hereford-Angus cross cows but had problems with the Navy. After nine years, they moved to the Elko area, keeping the cattle truck

busy, and running bred heifers in the summer.

In 1993, they leased the Savaland Haystack ranches that kept Don busy for 15 years. Barbara died in 2000 after fighting cancer. Don retired in 2008 and bought a camp trailer. He and his dog, Shep, traveled the West visiting friends and family. He wrote a book in 2013, "Starting Below the Bottom." In 2019, he moved back to Fallon and went to the sale barns on auction days, keeping up on the happenings.

"Good things don't go on forever." Don passed two weeks shy of his 95th birthday, with his good friend, Star, and her daughter, Carrie, checking in on him.

Don is survived by son Tom (Darla) Nonella of Klamath Falls, OR; grandsons Roger (Kelsey) Nonella of

Redmond, OR, and Mark (Jenna) Nonella of Klamath Falls, OR; grandson Richard (Veronica) Lamb of Spring Creek, NV; granddaughter Kelly Pfeifer of Ruby Valley, NV; great-grandchildren Riley and Reagan Nonella, Nathan, Ace and Sadie Nonella, Shayna (Brandon Mariluch), Shyann, Sharmayne (Nathan Backherms) Lamb and Thomas and Sarah Pfeifer; great-great grandson Atlas Backherms; and son-in-law Mark Leach. Don was preceded in death by his parents, Silvio and Martha Nonella; his wife, Barbara; his son, Larry; daughters Debra and Carolyn; his grandson, Ross Leach; and his siblings, Roy and Delores.

Don did not want a service, so family and close friends put him to rest with Barbara and Larry in Lakeview, OR.

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NCBA announces ESAP regional winners

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is proud to announce the 2026 Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP) regional winners. Recipients are recognized for their commitment to conservation and stewardship. The national winner, which will be selected from these seven regional recipients, will be announced during CattleCon 2027 in Nashville, TN, in February.

"These regional winners undertake stewardship efforts unique to their environment, landscape and resources and they share their learnings with fellow producers," said NCBA President Gene Copenhaver. "Their dedication to conserving natural resources is ensuring a bright future for the next generation."

The 2026 ESAP regional winners are:

- **Region I: LB Porteus Farms, Coshocton, OH**

In the 1880s, the Porteus family put down roots in the Muskingum River Valley of east-central Ohio. Today, the fifth and sixth generations lead the cattle and cropping operations and continue a long tradition of sustainability through a business commitment to economic viability, resource conservation, nutrient management, water quality and adoption of research-driven production practices.

The family's 900-head capacity state-of-the-art feeding facility includes a robotic and AI-supported feeding system, as well as a unique manure

storage component to increase nutrient content. These technological advancements significantly decrease the labor, energy and emissions profile of the operation.

Sustainability extends beyond production practices to include education, transparency and youth development. The family actively welcomes opportunities to share their sustainability story, helping build trust and understanding with consumers and neighbors.

• **Region II: Donaldson Farms/D&D Meats, Celina, TN**

With agricultural roots dating back to 1820, Donaldson Farms/D&D Meats is a vertically integrated operation that includes cow-calf, backgrounding and USDA-inspected processing facilities. The family focuses on key objectives including facilitating low-stress livestock movement, ensuring connectivity to central infrastructure, minimizing environmental impact, protecting state and federal waters, enhancing forage production, and fostering operational sustainability.

Through nutrient management, prescribed grazing, use of cover crops and limiting access to surface water, Donaldson Farms is restoring pasture productivity, protecting riparian corridors, and improving grazing efficiency. In addition, the family is creating a viable operation for the next generation to stay within agriculture.

- **Region III: Feikema Farms, Luverne, MN**

Feikema Farms started in 1950 as a small dairy and crop farm then transitioned to a beef feedyard when brothers Bob and Chuck returned home after finishing their military assignments. Now, the third generation of farmers, Shawn and Mike, are managing the 4,000-head capacity feedlot.

A devastating flood in 2014 was a turning point as the aftermath left impacts of runoff and erosion. Over the years, the Feikemas implemented basins and tiling to protect waterways and keep their fields from washing out, and they began composting manure and utilizing a large stacking pad for manure as well.

Today, their business focuses on targeted, steady growth, top yields through excellent crop management, exceptional animal husbandry, land stewardship practices that build fertility and reduce erosion, and building long-term working relationships with partners.

• **Region IV: Bloody Buckets Cattle Company, Falfurrias, TX**

The Clement family behind Bloody Buckets Cattle Company represents eight generations of military service and more than 400 years of land stewardship. The ranch's name honors its deep ties and four generations of the family's military service to the U.S. Army's 28th Infantry Division.

When James "Jim" Clement returned from service during

World War II, he worked for King Ranch, then started Los Hermanos Ranch in 1963. Today, James Clement III and his family partner with father and son, Dr. Alfonso Ortega Sr. and Dr. Poncho Ortega Jr., to manage 15,000 acres in the challenging South Texas brush country.

Together, the families have built a resilient, sustainable operation that prioritizes land health over short-term production by restoring degraded ground, using adaptive grazing and investing in infrastructure that supports both cattle and wildlife.

- **Region V: V Box Land and Livestock, Juntura, OR**

Through disciplined management, strategic expansion and taking bold risks, Mike and Linda Bentz combined four separate ranches into one exceptional operation—notable for its size, productivity and continuity. V Box Land and Livestock encompasses nearly 28,000 private acres and 180,000 acres of public lands.

When Mike tragically passed in 2015, Linda and her five children continued the cow-calf operation. Through Linda's leadership, more than 6,000 acres of western juniper were removed, 16,000 acres of invasive annual grasses treated, 10,000 feet of riverbank restored, and nearly 4,000 willows and native shrubs planted.

These efforts improved water quality, enhanced sage grouse habitat, reduced wildfire risk and strengthened long-

term forage productivity. Today, the ranch is divided into separate operations for the next generation, and all five children and their families are ranching and carrying forward the conservation ethic instilled by their parents.

- **Region VI: Munns Flying M Ranch, Snowville, UT**

In the harsh high desert of northern Utah, Tim and Laurie Munns have developed a thriving ranching business through hard work and effective stewardship. Munns Flying M Ranch is a cow-calf operation encompassing 22,000 deeded acres and 5,000 acres of leased private land, in addition to grazing permits with government and tribal partners.

The family focuses on improving livestock watering systems to distribute water and improve cattle grazing, controlling noxious weeds and pests, controlling brush and weeds to increase the perennial grass forage base, and partnering with wildlife and land management agencies. Their commitment to continual learning and innovation has reduced winter feed costs, strengthened plant vigor and improved overall rangeland health, which benefits wildlife habitat as well as ranch profitability.

The Munns are also committed to sharing their story with fellow producers and educating consumers how cattle producers can be good stewards of the land.

- **Region VII: Stomprud Angus Ranch, Mud Butte, SD**

Established in 1909, Stom-

prud Angus Ranch is a multi-generation, family-owned Angus cow-calf operation located in the remote range of western South Dakota. Larry and his wife, Eileen, care for the operation alongside their son, Jay, and daughter-in-law, Jennifer, with support from their grandchildren.

Together, the third, fourth and fifth generations work side by side to care for the land entrusted to them by those who came before, ensuring it remains productive and resilient for generations to come. Sustainability is approached with a long-term, holistic mindset grounded in three core pillars of family, environment and financial viability.

Rotational grazing allows grasses to rest and rebuild strong root systems, while a deep well pipeline delivers clean water across the ranch, easing pressure on creeks and riparian areas. Wildlife-friendly fencing keeps antelope moving freely across the landscape, and a later calving season reduces stress, lowers feed needs and improves calf health. Together, these decisions protect habitat, conserve water and keep a working prairie functioning as it should.

Established in 1991 by the NCBA to recognize outstanding land stewards in the cattle industry, the ESAP award is generously sponsored by Corteva Agriscience and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For more information, visit environmentalstewardship.org. — **NCBA**

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ELWOOD BEDROCK 5455

CEU	BW	WW	YW	SB	SC
+5	+1.9	+93	+167	+238	+389
65%	65%	4%	3%	5%	3%

ELWOOD GRANT 5223

CEU	BW	WW	YW	SB	SC
+11	+6	+84	+144	+182	+329
15%	40%	15%	20%	30%	20%

ELWOOD NORTH STAR 5036

CEU	BW	WW	YW	SB	SC
+14	-1.4	+83	+147	+203	+367
5%	10%	20%	15%	15%	10%

Washington ranchers appeal jury trial ruling

A Washington ranching couple is appealing a court ruling that dismissed their challenge to the state's enforcement process, continuing their fight for a jury trial in a multimillion-dollar dispute about digging and maintaining stockwater ponds.

Judge Melissa K. Chlarson on Aug. 19 denied Wade and Teresa King's motion for partial summary judgment and dismissed their complaint against the state of Washington. The Kings, who operate King Ranch, had asked the court to declare that forcing their case through the Pollution Control Hearings Board violated their constitutional right to a jury trial and to stop the administrative proceeding.

Chlarson did not rule on the underlying jury trial question. Instead, she found the Kings improperly brought their lawsuit under the Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act because the Administrative Procedure Act governs challenges to state agency actions.

The judge also concluded the Kings had not exhausted their administrative remedies before turning to the Superior Court. As a result, she denied their motion and dismissed

the complaint.

The dispute dates to 2023, when the Washington State Department of Ecology accused the Kings of disturbing regulated wetlands on their ranch and assessed a \$267,540 penalty. The agency later ordered the family to complete a restoration project estimated to cost more than \$3.7 million.

The Kings dispute Ecology's wetlands determination, maintaining the stockwater ponds at issue have long been part of their ranching operation. Rather than first having a jury decide the dispute in court, the enforcement action is proceeding before the Pollution Control Hearings Board.

Pacific Legal Foundation, which represents the Kings, argues that the process improperly denies them the jury trial protections provided by the Washington Constitution.

"The Kings have been fighting for years to protect their property and their constitutional rights, and they are not giving up now," said Oliver J. Dunford, senior attorney at Pacific Legal Foundation. "Washington should not be able to impose millions of dollars in penalties and compliance costs while denying the Kings their right to have their

case heard in a court before a jury."

Dunford said the organization would continue pursuing the case to give the Kings that opportunity.

Attorneys for the Kings have asked the appellate court to expedite its review and pause the administrative proceeding,

arguing they should not be forced through a process they contend violates their right to a jury trial.

The Aug. 25 appeal keeps that question alive and shifts the dispute to Washington's appellate courts. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

HOOVES & HORNS BY A.W. ERWIN



"When '18 year old You' shows up at the party..... It's important that '60 year old You' heads on back to The Ranch!"

LEGAL LEDGER

DOJ expands beef price probe

The Department of Justice (DOJ) is expanding its investigation into beef affordability by adding eight of the largest retailers to its list of companies to investigate. The companies include Kroger, Publix, Walmart, Albertsons, Aldi, Ahold Delhaize USA, Costco and Amazon. In a Sept. 1 X post, the DOJ said its Antitrust Division has submitted letters to the companies regarding recent increases in the retail price of beef. "Beef prices are a critical concern to Americans, and a priority for this Justice Department," the post concluded. In May, the DOJ announced it was investigating the nation's largest meatpackers for potential antitrust violations.

Greens appeal Elk Ridge Complex decision

On Aug. 31, Western Watersheds Project filed a Notice of Appeal with the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals challenging a Wyoming district court's denial of the group's request to block cattle grazing on the Elk Ridge Complex of the Bridger-Teton National Forest. "The District Court declining to preserve the decade-long, grazing-free ecological recovery of the Elk Ridge Complex will have significant impacts to wildlife and their habitat," said Dagny Signorelli, Western Watersheds Project's Wyoming/Northern Utah director.

USDA outlines animal health plan for imports

The U.S. reopened the border to Mexico live cattle imports Aug. 24 at the Douglas, AZ, port of entry. Since then, the department has outlined its plan on heightened protections against New World screwworm (NWS) while importing cattle. USDA Acting U.S. Chief Veterinary Officer Alan Huddleston explained the protocol has three stages before cattle are authorized to be imported from Mexico. In the first stage, animals in Mexico are inspected by a veterinarian and treated with a tick treatment and a product that prevents and treats NWS infestations. In the second stage, a veterinarian does a second inspection 24 hours before movement to ensure no signs of NWS. Stage three involves cattle moved pre-import to USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) facilities in Mexico, where cattle are inspected by APHIS technicians. Detector dogs are also used to scent any suspicious wounds or NWS larvae. Finally, cattle swim through a vat of parasite treatment and are authorized to enter the port of Douglas. On Aug. 31, USDA announced the release of two NWS infested zones in Texas, which included Gillespie, Kerr, Kimble, La Salle and Webb counties. A day earlier, USDA announced the release of the only infested zone in New Mexico, Lea County.

FDA issues EUA for NWS prevention drug

The Food and Drug Administration on Aug. 27 issued an Emergency Use Authorization for Bimectin (ivermectin) injection for the prevention of New World screwworm (NWS) infestations in cattle. Bimectin injection is a generic version of Ivomec, which was authorized for use in February. The FDA previously approved Bimectin for the treatment and control of various parasites in cattle; the latest approval is only for the injection form and not other Bimectin dosage forms. The drug carries a 35-day slaughter withdrawal time and may not be used in lactating dairy cows or calves to be processed for veal. Bimectin injection is available over the counter without a prescription.

MCOOL coalition calls for beef labeling

The National MCOOL Coalition in early September launched a petition calling on the White House and Congress to restore mandatory country-of-origin labeling (MCOOL) for beef. The petition follows President Donald Trump's proclamation to increase the quota for lean beef trimmings by 300,000 metric tons. "American consumers have a right to know where the beef they purchase is produced, and American ranchers deserve the opportunity to distinguish their high-quality U.S. beef from lower-cost imported beef," the petition read. The coalition is asking cattle producers and consumers to sign and share the petition to urge leaders to enforce beef labeling. The coalition includes Farm Action Fund, Food & Water Watch, National Family Farm Coalition, Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA and others.

Interior streamlines migratory bird hunting

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is finalizing a process to streamline the authorization of seasonal migratory game bird hunting. The agency said the process will reduce unnecessary federal rulemaking and provide greater predictability for states, Tribes and hunters. Under the new process, USFWS will establish federal hunting season conditions through Migratory Game Bird Hunting memoranda rather than conducting annual federal rulemaking. "This commonsense change allows us to spend less time on repetitive administrative processes and more time working with our state and Tribal partners to manage migratory game birds," said USFWS Director Brian Nesvik. The final rule and memorandum will publish in the Federal Register in time for hunting season, the agency said.

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ND activates livestock drought assistance

North Dakota is making \$2 million available to help livestock producers secure water as worsening drought dries up stock dams and raises water-quality concerns. Gov. Kelly Armstrong (R), Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring and the State Water Commission approved activation of the Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Project Assistance Program. Producers can receive up to 65% of eligible costs, capped at \$10,000 per project for as many as three projects. Eligible improvements include wells, pipelines, pasture taps and rural water connections. Assistance is available in counties experiencing severe drought or worse, as well as adjacent counties and Tribal nations. The Agriculture Department also activated its Hay Hotline for producers seeking hay, pasture or hay land. Producers can call 701-328-5110 on weekdays.

CMC warns against inspection exemptions

The Canadian Meat Council (CMC) is warning that proposed changes allowing some provincially inspected meat to move between provinces could weaken Canada's food safety system and threaten export markets. While supporting efforts to reduce interprovincial trade barriers, CMC President and CEO Kyle Larkin said Canada should maintain consistent federal inspection standards rather than create a four-year exemption. About 95% of Canadian meat is processed at federally licensed facilities, which operate under Canadian Food Inspection Agency requirements. CMC estimates only about 0.5% of the industry would benefit from the proposed changes. Instead, the council is urging the federal government to help more provincially inspected facilities obtain federal certification, allowing them to expand into interprovincial markets while maintaining Canada's food safety standards and international reputation.

Cusack Meats in OK ends its 93-year run

After more than nine decades in business, Oklahoma-based Cusack Meats has ended its meat processing and manufacturing operations. The Cusack family announced the decision in an Aug. 11 Facebook post, saying operations would conclude Aug. 13 after 93 years serving customers in Oklahoma and across the country. The family thanked generations of customers, employees, suppliers and friends for supporting the company and helping build its reputation for quality and service. While manufacturing has ended, the family plans to retain the Cusack name and explore opportunities for the brand. "While our current manufacturing operations are ending, our gratitude and name certainly are not," the family said, adding that plans will remain rooted in the values that guided the business.

Tyson auctions equipment, disputes sales claim

Tyson Foods is auctioning equipment from its former Emporia, KS, beef plant while disputing Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins' claim that recently shuttered facilities would only be sold to American buyers. More than 600 items from the Emporia facility, which closed in February 2025, will be offered in an online auction Sept. 4-15, WATTPoultry reported. Operations were consolidated at Tyson's Holcomb, KS, plant. The closure is part of a restructuring that includes shuttering plants in Lexington, NE; Joslin, IL; and Eagle Mountain, UT, and selling a Pasco, WA, facility. Rollins told reporters at the Farm Progress Show that Tyson CEO Donnie King had verbally committed to selling plants to American-owned companies or producers. A Tyson spokesperson disputed that characterization, saying its position remains unchanged, and it will consider domestic or foreign buyers.

CPW monitoring four wolf packs

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is monitoring four reproducing gray wolf packs in northwest Colorado as pups begin moving beyond their den areas. At about four months old, the pups are traveling short distances with pack members and gathering at rendezvous sites where adults bring them food, the agency said. Biologists are using GPS collars and game cameras to track pack composition, movements and minimum pup numbers. CPW's August activity map shows collared wolves ranging across watersheds in northwest and north-central Colorado. However, the map only indicates that a collared wolf entered a watershed between July 21 and Aug. 25, not that wolves were present throughout the entire area.

TSCRA investigation leads to arrest

A Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) investigation has led to the arrest of a man accused of failing to pay nearly \$200,000 for cattle purchased at two livestock auctions. Payton Dean Carroll was arrested Aug. 21 in Chambers County on livestock theft warrants from Austin and Navarro counties. Authorities allege Carroll failed to pay \$58,857 for cattle in the Navarro County case and another \$133,591 for cattle purchased in Austin County in 2025. A grand jury indicted him in the Austin County case on Aug. 19. TSCRA special rangers worked with local authorities to arrest Carroll, who was booked into the Austin County Jail on two third-degree felony charges. Both investigations remain ongoing.

Grazing cattle on Alaska's Kodiak Island

Chris Flickinger is at least a fifth-generation rancher based on Kodiak Island, AK. His ancestors came to North America from Germany and Switzerland in the 16th century and ventured west to Colorado, where they became ranchers.

The four generations before Flickinger ranched in the Gunnison Valley of Colorado, primarily raising cattle. They added chickens and corn to make ends meet during the Great Depression.

Flickinger came to Kodiak Island in 1999 and purchased a 31,000-acre state grazing lease and ranch from a previous rancher, along with the cattle. He named it Pasagshak Ranch after the name of the bay on the grazing lease. The

name Pasagshak is derived from the Alutiiq place name “Pas’rsaq” which is believed to be a traditional term for the region.

Flickinger operates the ranch with seasonal help from his father, Don. The ranch is about 40 miles away from the town of Kodiak. It provides food security for Kodiak Island, which is critical since it's not connected to the contiguous U.S. road system and is vulnerable to supply chain disruptions.

The ranch provides quality beef to more than 80 families a year, harvesting roughly 80 steers annually.

Flickinger cares deeply about the health of his herd and the rangelands they graze. He has taken on mul-

tiple projects to improve and maintain resilient and sustainable rangeland.

Over the last 25 years, Flickinger has worked with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to improve grazing management on the leased rangelands. He installed fencing using the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to help him manage where the cattle graze to maintain healthy range conditions and forage quality.

He enrolled in the NRCS Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) to protect sensitive red salmon habitat by fencing out cattle from the riparian areas of Lake Rose Tead—an anadromous lake where thousands of red salmon

on spawn each year—which is located in his grazing lease.

"When I got here, there was overgrazing in many preferred areas due to unmanaged access by cattle and neighboring bison," Flickinger said. "By installing fence through EQIP and WHIP, I now have stands of grass for winter grazing, and I generally don't have to feed hay in the winter. Working with NRCS has been great."

When asked about what inspires or motivates him to continue ranching into the future, Flickinger replied, "I'll never get rich doing this, but I love working with the animals and I love being a rancher... doing the work of helping to feed people in Alaska." — **USDA NRCS**



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NUTRITION, FEED AND HEALTH

FEATURED SECTION

Pasture cropping may improve soil health and forage quality

Pasture cropping as a land management practice can pay off for producers on lands where environmental conditions are favorable, mainly dormant-season moisture, according to a Texas A&M AgriLife-led team of researchers.

For the past five years, a team led by Srimi Ale, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Research agrohydrologist and professor in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Vernon, has implemented the practice through the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant-funded project “Enhancing Soil Ecosystem Health and Resilience Through Pasture Cropping.”

The relatively new practice includes planting a small-grain crop into existing perennial warm-season grassland. Usually, only about 20-25% of the grassland is planted each year. The planted wheat or oat crop is then used for winter protein supplementation. In some years, it can be cut for grain.

Secondary benefits include competition with

weeds to reduce their numbers. The team also hopes to see some improvement in soil health indicators in the pasture-cropped plots after analysis this summer.

Other researchers completing the study with Ale were: Tim Steffens, Ph.D., formerly a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service range specialist and now professor at West Texas A&M University at Canyon; Paul DeLaune, Ph.D., former AgriLife Research environmental soil scientist at Vernon and now department head at the University of Arkansas Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Science; Nuria Gomez-Casanovas, Ph.D., AgriLife Research regenerative system ecologist at Vernon and assistant professor in the Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management; and Tong Wang, Ph.D., advanced production specialist at South Dakota State University.

Mixed results depend on moisture

Ale said their study was designed to get information on the best time to plant and terminate or harvest the

grain crop and how soil health benefits vary between wet, normal and dry years.

Pasture cropping experiments were conducted at two study ranches in Texas: the Pittman Ranch of the Dixon Water Foundation in Cook County and the Nance Ranch of the West Texas A&M University in Randall County.

At the Pittman Ranch, wheat germinated well in all years, but its establishment was poor in the first season due to unusually dry winter conditions that resulted in low soil moisture/temperature. Wheat establishment was better in the remaining three seasons, but it did not grow adequately for harvest or grazing. Additionally, competition from well-managed, vigorous native grasses has limited the productivity of wheat in these seasons.

Results on the Nance Ranch varied more due to lack of moisture. The crop in 2022 died due to drought, in 2023 and 2024 a good crop was established, and in 2025 no stand was established.

They determined where precipitation is adequate

and rotational grazing management is already in place, pasture cropping will likely offer a viable pathway to reduced input costs and improved operational profitability.

Early results from the study suggest pasture cropping is rebuilding the soil’s organic matter improving its structure, infiltration and water holding capacity. Final testing will be completed this summer.

Putting the practice into practice

When conditions and management result in a good stand, Steffens said, successful adoption of the practice can result in economic and agronomic benefits, including an extended grazing season, reduced hay and supplemental feed costs, improved cattle body condition and calf growth rates, better weed suppression and enhanced soil health.

But for many, success will be heavily dependent on timing. Annual crops must be sown while warm-season grasses are still dormant. If planting occurs when warm-season grasses

are still competitive, the competition for soil moisture and nutrients with warm-season grasses often results in poor crop performance.

The most critical factor for success in pasture cropping is dormant-period precipitation. The rainfall received between October and April plays a critical role in determining the success rate of pasture cropping.

In a survey of the limited U.S. adopters of the practice that was part of the study, areas receiving more than

6.7 inches of dormant-season precipitation achieved an average success rate of 82%, compared to only 25% for those in drier regions.

“We believe producers considering pasture cropping should carefully evaluate their dormant-season precipitation,” Ale said. “In areas with marginal precipitation, opportunistic planting tied to forecasted wet seasons or El Niño conditions may be a more prudent approach than committing to routine annual planting.” — **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**



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.

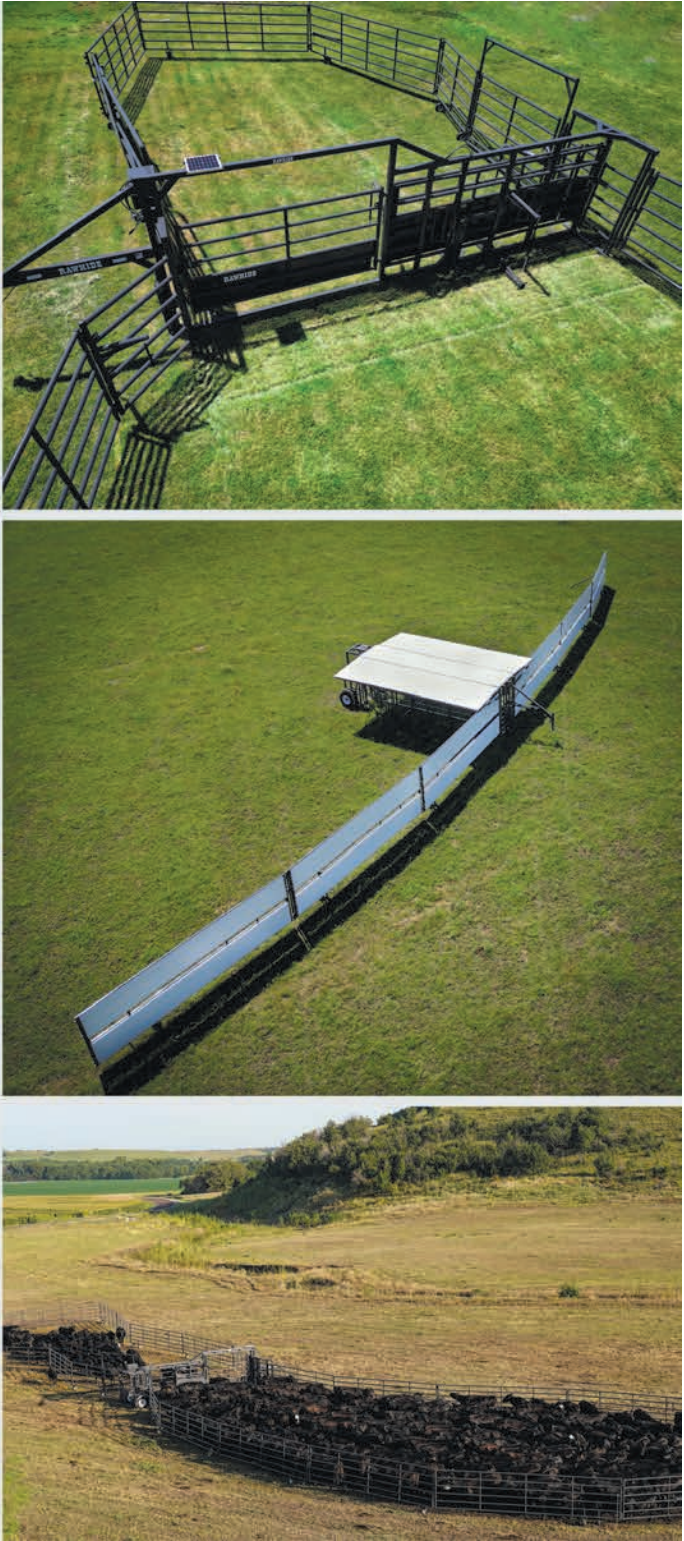
Oct. 9 – Applications are now being accepted for the final year of the W.D. Farr Scholarship program, which helps graduate students pursue careers in meat science, animal science and related fields. Application details: tinyurl.com/5n9ytxsh.

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NUTRITION, FEED AND HEALTH

FEATURED SECTION

Drought brings increased risk of livestock nitrate poisoning

As drought intensifies, many farmers are deciding to harvest drought-stressed crops for livestock forage. In some areas of the state, farmers have already harvested small grains as hay. While these crops can be a valuable resource for livestock producers short of forage, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension specialists warn that there is an increased risk of nitrate poisoning with many drought-stressed forages.

“Plant stresses such as drought can increase nitrate levels in plants,” said Miranda Meehan, NDSU Extension livestock environmental stewardship specialist.

Nitrate accumulation is influenced by various factors, such as moisture and soil conditions and plant type.

“Nitrate poisoning may occur if livestock eat drought-stressed crops and forages, which can accumulate nitrates,” said James Rogers, NDSU Extension forage crops production specialist. “Feeding drought-stressed forages from oats, barley and corn causes the majority of North Dakota’s nitrate poisoning cases.”

However, a number of other plants also can accumulate nitrate, including wheat, sudangrass, sorghum-sudan hybrids, turnips and pearl millet. If producers are considering utilizing low-yielding crops as livestock forage, they should be tested for nitrates before feeding.

Not all drought conditions cause high nitrate levels in plants. Some moisture must be present in the soil for the plant to absorb and accumulate nitrate. In plants that survive drought conditions, nitrate levels are often high for several days following the first rain. Severe drought-stressed areas—such as hilltops with very sandy soils—might have plants that look bad, but these plants may be so stressed that they are not accumulating much nitrate at all unless there is a recent rain event.

“Plants have to be in active growth stages to take up nitrogen from the soil,” Meehan said. “Nitrate hot spots in fields have had moisture, so although they are stunted in growth, they typically look very lush and green.”

Stress from the period from plant jointing to heading is associated with more nitrate accumulation. Fields that have nitrogen fertilizer applied are also more susceptible to accumulating nitrates.

Nitrate toxicity is not typically an issue on rangelands. However, pastures with nitrate-accumulating broadleaf plants such as kochia, pigweed and Russian thistle can be a problem because these plants usually are green, so livestock will consume them, Meehan said.

Plant parts closest to the ground contain the highest concentrations of nitrates. Leaves contain less than stalks or stems, while the seed and flower usually contain little or no nitrate.

“The risk of poisoning can be reduced during haying by raising the cutter bar above 6 inches or by monitoring grazing livestock and removing them when the plant stubble height is at 6 inches,” Rogers said.

Ruminant animals, such as cattle and sheep, are susceptible to nitrate poisoning

because their digestive process converts nitrate to nitrite, which in turn is converted to ammonia. When nitrate levels are high, the nitrite accumulates and is absorbed by red blood cells, reducing their ability to transport oxygen.

The same reaction takes place in horses’ hindgut. However, it occurs to a much lesser extent; thus, nitrate poisoning is very rare in horses.

Clinical signs of nitrate poisoning are related to the lack of oxygen in the blood. Acute poisoning usually occurs from a half hour to four hours after livestock consume toxic levels of nitrate. The onset of symptoms is rapid:

- Bluish/chocolate brown mucous membranes.
- Rapid, difficult or noisy breathing.
- Rapid pulse (150-plus beats per minute).
- Salivation, bloating, tremors, staggering.
- Dark chocolate-colored blood.
- Weakness, coma, death.

“If nitrate toxicity is suspected, avoid moving or stressing cattle, as their blood oxygen levels may be dangerously low,” said Dr. Jake Galbreath, NDSU Extension veterinarian. “Unfortunately, in most cases, dead animals will be the first sign, so it is important to contact your veterinarian to rule out other potential causes of sudden death.”

Pregnant females that survive nitrate poisoning may abort because of a lack of oxygen to the fetus. Abor-

tions generally occur approximately 10 to 14 days following exposure.

Laboratories can analyze suspected plants, but samples need to be representative of the field or bales in question. Samples should be packaged in a clean plastic bag and shipped to a laboratory. Contact an NDSU Extension agent for more information on nitrate testing.

The best way to prevent nitrate poisoning is to control the type and quantity of forage offered to livestock, Galbreath said. He recommends the following:

- Avoid forages with potentially toxic levels of nitrate, or at least diluting them with feeds low in nitrate.
- When grazing, feed dry roughage first to reduce the number of affected plants that hungry animals ingest.
- When feeding baled forages, be sure to take representative sample cores from bales that represent the entire field.

“Also, be sure you don’t overstock pastures when grazing high-nitrate forages,” Rogers said. Overstocking increases the amount of high-nitrate plant parts (stems and stalks) that are consumed by livestock.

Nitrate content of small grain forages can also be reduced by up to 50% by chopping and ensiling. Make sure the silage has time to ferment (21 days) and test it before feeding. Dilute with other feeds accordingly. — NDSU Extension



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CALENDAR

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.



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NUTRITION, FEED AND HEALTH

FEATURED SECTION

Bull selection, growth, feed efficiency and carcass outcomes

Bull selection is one of the most important long-term decisions in a cow-calf operation. Sires influence not only the next calf crop, but also the genetics of replacement females retained in the herd. For that reason, selection pressure should match the ranch's forage resources, cow herd goals and marketing endpoint.

Research funded by the USDA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Grant 2022-67016-36201 at Oklahoma State University (OSU) evaluated steer calves sired by Angus bulls selected for either high or moderate yearling weight EPD to produce calves with divergent post-weaning growth potential.

Steers were raised in OSU spring- and fall-calving cow herds, weaned, preconditioned for 60 days,

and then finished at the Willard Sparks Beef Research Center.

Weaning weights were not affected by the sire genetics, indicating that the extensive range environment was insufficient for full expression of the genetic potential for pre-weaning growth. As expected, calves from high-growth sires gained faster after weaning and were heavier at harvest, with fewer days on feed. This shows that when nutritional limitations are removed, the high-growth steers could really show their true potential.

The high-growth steers averaged 1,500 pounds at harvest compared with 1,428 lbs. for moderate-growth steers. Hot carcass weight averaged 911 lbs. for high-growth steers compared with 884 lbs. for

moderate-growth steers.

With the increased performance came greater feed intake. High-growth steers consumed more feed per day, averaging 31.5 lbs. dry matter per day compared with 27.5 lbs. dry matter/day for moderate-growth steers, resulting in reduced feed efficiency for high-growth steers. Residual feed intake, an efficiency metric that measures the amount of feed consumed above or below expectations based on the level of performance, favored the moderate-growth steers, indicating they consumed less feed than expected for their body weight and gain.

In contrast, residual average daily gain, an efficiency metric that measures the amount of gain above or below expectations based on the amount

of feed intake, tended to favor high-growth steers. This illustrates that different feed efficiency measurements describe different biological outcomes. More growth does not always mean better efficiency, but it depends on how you measure it.

Carcass quality also differed. Even though backfat thickness and yield grade were similar, moderate-growth steers had greater

percentages of carcasses grading Prime and high Choice. This may reflect differences in maturity pattern and nutrient partitioning, with moderate-growth cattle having more opportunity to deposit intramuscular fat when finished to a similar fat endpoint.

High-growth genetics can increase body weight, carcass weight and reduce days on feed. But they may also increase feed intake

and may not improve all measures of efficiency. Growth EPDs should be considered alongside mature size, feed intake, carcass merit, maternal traits, health and marketing goals. Increased performance is valuable only when it fits the production system's environment. — **Paul Beck, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle nutrition specialist**

Physicians group requests redo of Dietary Guidelines

LAWSUIT (from page 1)

court documents, the committee spent nearly two years reviewing the science through a public process that included seven open meetings. It released its final scientific report in December 2024 for additional public comment.

That committee recommended greater consumption of plant-based meals, placing beans and other plant proteins ahead of animal protein and making water rather than milk the preferred beverage, according to the Physicians Committee.

The lawsuit alleges USDA and HHS then assembled another nine-member group without public notice to reassess the advisory committee's work. The complaint argues that the group functioned as a federal advisory committee and therefore should have been subject to FACA re-

quirements governing public notice, meetings, records and participation.

Court documents allege the panel did not file a charter, provide notice of its meetings or give the public access to its meetings or records. The panel completed a 90-page report and 418-page appendix in three months, compared with about two years and eight months for the earlier public process.

The panel's existence and report were disclosed Jan. 7, the same day the Dietary Guidelines were released. According to the complaint, the new panel and final guidelines rejected 30 of the advisory committee's 56 recommendations.

Industry ties questioned

The lawsuit alleges that eight of the nine panel members had conflicts of interest involving livestock, dairy, egg and food interests.

Court documents identify financial or professional relationships involving organizations including the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Dairy Council, National Pork Board, American Egg Board, Dairy Management Inc. and Atkins-related organizations and companies.

The complaint further alleges more than half of the panel members had relationships with organizations associated with USDA checkoff programs. FACA requires federal advisory committees to be "fairly balanced" in the viewpoints represented and not be inappropriately influenced by the appointing authority or a special interest.

The Physicians Committee argues those alleged conflicts influenced recommendations favoring meat and full-fat dairy and promoting low-carbohydrate diets for some people with chronic diseases. The group contends the changes could have broad consequences because federal agencies are required to promote the Dietary Guidelines when administering federal food, nutrition and health programs.

The Physicians Committee is asking the court to declare the nine-member panel subject to FACA, require USDA and HHS to release their records and meeting minutes, and require the agencies to withdraw the 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines and develop replacement guidelines through a FACA-compliant public process. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

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NUTRITION, FEED AND HEALTH

FEATURED SECTION

Weaning calves during hot, dry weather

Many producers have considered starting to wean their calves early this year due to drought and declining forage quality. Early weaning is an effective drought-management tool to reduce the nutrient requirements of the cow herd, preserve cow body condition and reduce forage demand.

Weaning is a stressful event in a calf's life and we need to consider the added stress caused by hot weather. At weaning, calves are separated from their dams, moved to a pen from the pasture they have been in their entire lives, and presented with new unfamiliar feed and water sources.

Processing, vaccination, transportation and commingling occur at the same time. Adding severe heat stress to this list must be avoided. Our objective is not to just get the calves weaned, it is to get them weaned, eating, drinking and healthy during the most stressful period they will experience.

Heat-stressed cattle have reduced feed intake, spend more time standing and increase water consumption in an attempt to dissipate heat. As heat load increases, respiration rate increases and cattle begin panting.

More severe signs include drooling, open-mouth breathing, an extended tongue and isolation from the herd.

Water requirements increase greatly during heat stress, and bawling calves lose more water through the respiratory tract than normal. Newly weaned calves that are already eating and drinking less than normal have little margin for another environmental stressor.

Choose your weaning day carefully. Avoid beginning the weaning process immediately before a major heat event if possible. Heat load accumulates over several days, and when we have hot nights over 70 F, cattle are unable to dissipate the heat accumulated during the previous day. Cattle handling should be postponed when little nighttime cooling occurs. The Oklahoma Mesonet Cattle Comfort Advisor is a great resource to guide the decision for when to wean and process calves. It accounts for temperature, humidity, solar radiation and wind rather than relying only on the daytime high temperature.

Water is the top priority. Make sure calves can find a clean fresh water source quickly.

Calves that are bawling, walking fence lines searching for mom and unfamiliar with water sources are at the greatest risk for heat stress. Clean, cool water is particularly important because cattle drink less as water temperatures increase above about 80 F.

Shade is important. Natural or constructed shade reduces solar heat load and lowers respiration rate and body temperature. Shade around the receiving and weaning area is particularly

valuable when early weaning during hot weather in August and early September.

Keep cattle handling short and early. Get started with cattle processing early in the morning. Cattle are still carrying the greatest accumulated body heat load late in the day. Work calves in small groups, minimize time in holding pens and handle them quietly.

When severe heat is forecast, it is better to separate the parts of the weaning process over several days with

time for the calves to rest and cool down during the day.

- If possible, separate the calves from their dams and fence-line wean for a few days before hauling to another facility for processing.

- Haul in the early morning then let the calves rest.

- Conduct cattle processing early in the morning on another day.

- Process calves in small groups, keep cattle in holding areas for less than 30 minutes during processing.

- Return calves to pens

promptly after processing.

Hot weather does not necessarily mean we should delay a needed drought-management decision. It does mean we need to plan the weaning process carefully. Watch the forecast, provide abundant clean water, have adequate shade available, work calves early and quietly, and avoid stacking unnecessary stressors on the same day. — **Paul Beck, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle nutrition specialist**

USDA lifts restrictions on NM's only screwworm zone

USDA officials announced Aug. 31 that New Mexico no longer needs to maintain a restricted "infested zone" in the southeast corner of the state aimed at preventing a New World screwworm (NWS) outbreak.

State and federal officials demarcated the restricted zone, a circular area with a roughly 12-mile radius, on June 7 after state officials detected New Mexico's first NWS case in a pet dog.

The zone's purpose was to stem a potential outbreak of the parasitic fly, whose maggots feed on live tissue. Officials have warned a screwworm outbreak could be particularly devastating for livestock, and required any-

one within the zone wanting to move warm-blooded animals outside of it to first receive an inspection from the New Mexico Livestock Board.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service officials said New Mexico no longer requires the zone, which was removed Aug. 30, USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Dudley Hoskins said in a statement.

As justification, Hoskins noted that no additional infections have been detected in the state since the Lea County dog, and state officials have meanwhile worked closely with federal agencies and animal owners to prevent further infections.

"New Mexico's animal health officials have been exceptional partners throughout our response to New World screwworm," Hoskins said. "Their vigilance, expertise, and deep commitment to protecting livestock and wildlife exemplify the strong state-federal collaboration that makes our national safeguarding system work."

Hoskins added that the "milestone" in New Mexico proves that government officials can curb the New World screwworm early detection, rapid response and coordination between agencies.

In addition to the lack of new cases, the state also met

all of the requirements the USDA outlined in a playbook for states dealing with screwworm infections.

New Mexico State Veterinarian Samantha Holeck made the recommendation to the USDA that the zone be lifted, according to the USDA news release. In a presentation to state lawmakers earlier this month, she said the state's restricted zone was ensuring infections did not spread.

But she also predicted the state would see additional screwworm infections and asked for lawmakers' support in launching a program to train more livestock inspectors. — **Patrick Lohmann, Source New Mexico**

Weight loss drugs reshape beef demand

As people's use of GLP-1 weight-loss medications continues to rise, Kansas State (K-State) University experts say the conversation around nutrition, protein intake and beef's role in a healthy diet is evolving for both consumers and the cattle industry.

In a recent "Cattle Chat" podcast from the K-State Beef Cattle Institute, specialists discussed how these medications—designed to reduce appetite and promote weight loss—are changing how and what people eat.

"While overall calorie intake may decrease, maintaining proper nutrition remains a top priority," said Abby Heidari, a registered dietitian with the Kansas Beef Council.

Experts emphasized that beef continues to offer important nutritional value, particularly as a high-quality protein source that supports muscle maintenance during weight loss.

"As people eat less, every bite matters more," Heidari said. "Foods (like beef) that deliver essential nutrients—like protein, iron and vitamins—become even more important."

For consumers using GLP-1 medications, this shift means focusing on nutrient-dense foods in smaller por-

tions. Balanced diets that include appropriate servings of beef can help meet protein needs while aligning with updated dietary recommendations.

Experts noted that beef producers may benefit from understanding these shifting preferences and communicating beef's nutritional advantages more effectively. Transparency, education and alignment with consumer health goals will be key in maintaining trust and demand, they said.

The discussion also highlighted that dietary guidelines continue to support flexibility, allowing beef to be part of a healthy eating pattern when consumed in moderation and alongside other nutrient-rich foods.

Ultimately, specialists say the intersection of GLP-1 medications and dietary guidance underscores a broader trend: consumers are becoming more intentional about their food choices.

"Whether someone is using these medications or not, the focus is shifting toward nutrient density and overall diet quality," Heidari said. "That's an important message for both consumers and the beef industry moving forward." — **K-State Research and Extension**



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MARKET NEWS

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

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 9/3/2026	Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	217.91	▼	218.12
CME Feeder Index	329.18	▼	335.46
Boxed Beef Average	376.90	▼	385.13
Average Dressed Steers	345.27	▲	345.24
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,438	▲	1,437
Weekly Slaughter**	542,000	▲	523,000
Weekly Beef Production***	478.8	▲	461.8
Hide/Offal Value	14.93	▼	14.94
Corn Price	5.18	▲	5.17
*Average weight for previous week. **Total slaughter for previous week. ***Estimated year-to-date figure in million pounds for previous week.			

BEEF REPORT: Weekly Composite Boxed Beef											
WEEK ENDING	COMPREHENSIVE Loads/Price		PRIME Loads/Price		BRANDED Loads/Price		CHOICE Loads/Price		SELECT Loads/Price		UNGRADED Loads/Price
August 28	6,721	384.01	253	415.53	1,193	392.33	2,021	381.74	601	360.07	2,654 340.80
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
Coutouts						FED BOXED BEEF					
DATE	CHOICE		SELECT		COW BEEF COUTOUT		50% LEAN		90% LEAN		
September 3	376.90		350.72		344.19		N/A		440.50		
September 2	378.78		353.58		351.79		93.65		N/A		
September 1	379.75		360.45		351.08		110.60		N/A		
August 31	375.82		358.49		352.04		99.29		454.77		
August 28	376.23		361.08		352.13		N/A		N/A		

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle						
	8/28	8/31	9/1	9/2	9/3	High* Low*
Aug.	21925	22350	N/A	N/A	N/A	25873 16853
Oct.	21173	21350	21298	21345	21545	25598 16668
Dec.	21373	21558	21485	21478	21760	25120 17005
Feb.	21553	21730	21650	21625	22033	25093 18068

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle						
	8/28	8/31	9/1	9/2	9/3	High* Low*
Aug.	33280	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	38103 21920
Sep.	32090	32340	32200	32385	32775	38280 22268
Oct.	31653	31925	31725	31900	32348	38020 22460
Nov.	30993	31265	31073	31220	31775	37860 24118
*High and low figures are for the life of the contract.						

FED CATTLE TRADE	Head Count	Avg. Weight	Avg. Price
WEEKLY WEIGHTED AVERAGES			
Live FOB Steer	6,957	1,586	217.91
Live FOB Heifer	1,803	1,381	218.14
Dressed Del Steer	11,175	1,007	345.27
Dressed Del Heifer	2,127	895	345.20
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK			
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 YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	2,880	1,505	242.48
Live FOB Heifer	689	1,335	242.42
Dressed Del Steer	2,887	999	383.00
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: AUGUST 30, 2026		
	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	42,277	3,503
Formula	223,771	4,463
Negotiated Cash	76,024	51
Negotiated Grid	22,708	358
Packer Owned	6,521	N/A
Total	371,301	8,375

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month		Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,780
Aug. '26	148,961	Neg. Sales 21+ days	880
Sep. '26	86,180	Formula sales	3,861
Oct. '26	114,837	Forward contract sales	200
Nov. '26	109,440	Domestic sales	5,816
Dec. '26	92,659	NAFTA Exports	87

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		224.78 -5.28
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		223.33 -4.69
Ontario Auctions		
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		N/A N/A
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		236.05 N/A
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs		157.51 -9.80
*Price comparison from one week ago.		

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Tuesday, September 1, 2026			
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	N/A	514.29	461.29
601-700 lbs	N/A	455.06	428.89
701-800 lbs	383.77	407.32	375.86
801-900 lbs	349.07	N/A	342.32
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	N/A	N/A	424.77
501-600 lbs	N/A	N/A	420.54
601-700 lbs	387.76	400.67	371.26
701-800 lbs	346.44	369.85	332.10

USDA MEXICO TO U.S. WEEKLY LIVESTOCK IMPORTS				
Feeder cattle imports weekly and yearly volume.				
Species	Current Week	Previous Week	Current Year-to-date	Previous Year-to-date
	8/24/2026	8/17/2026		
Feeders	2,453	0	2,453	230,638

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE			
September 3, 2026			
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary			
Receipts EST: 100		Week Ago EST: 1,300	Year Ago Act: N/A
Santa Teresa, NM - No cattle crossed today.		Douglas, AZ - No cattle crossed today.	
Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	N/A
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	N/A
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	N/A
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2	
500-600 lbs	N/A	500-600 lbs	N/A
600-700 lbs	N/A	600-700 lbs	N/A
700-800 lbs	N/A	700-800 lbs	N/A

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

Selected Auctions Week Ending September 3, 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	
Noreport available Blackfoot, ID											
August 27	Burley, ID	370		427.50-522 412.50-455	389 370	352.50-389 349-354	307-332	301 277	133-169 175-196		
Noreport available Emmett, ID											
August 29	Eugene, OR	998	272-487* 250-427*	260-433* 280-395*	300-397* 230-330*	230-318* 200-271*	265-316* 200-258*	200-303* 204-242*	165-193 188-205	1,700-3,575 1,600-3,150	
August 31	Madras, OR	166						300-320 290-300	155-188 160-190		
August 26	Vale, OR	812		530-615 507-557	465-526 415-465	402-435 325-357	330-350	324-339 300-328	277-317	156-164.50 175-207	
September 2	Davenport, WA	149	285	240-350	345-375 250-370	325-390 300-355	324-347 300-320	230-307.50 220-270	236-306 251-295	50-265 150-200	4,000 2,900-3,200
August 27	Toppenish, WA	1,424		475* 455*	445* 410*		372* 307.50-318*	267.50-275* 296*	290*	151-162 160-222.50	

August 27	Orland, CA	1,161		350-450 330-446	325-450 305-420	300-369 380-359	300-349 280-337	250-327 255-288	165-191 145-222		
Noreport available Escalon, CA											
August 31	Famoso, CA	362		410-500 325-450	350-450 340-440	335-420 320-405	320-367 310-345	285-320	265-310 260-310	70-210 140-209	
Noreport available Galt, CA											
September 1	Turlock, CA	564		390-450	400-472.50 387-445	390-438 384-400	345-365 330-348	331-348 305-320	310-327.50 295-317	140-177 170-195	
Noreport available Salina, UT											

August 31	Iowa	7,545		430-456	363-405 334-379	345-406 312-369	320-363.50 284.50-394	277.50-340.25 259.50-316.25	135-207 150-234		
September 1	Miles City, MT	381	495-522.50				326	302-321 281-323.50	142-151 145-186		
September 2	Bassett, NE	1,780					355 314-333	330.50-362.50 279-319			
August 29	Ericson, NE	2,960			414-430 374.50	371-377.50 342.50-355	353-379 312.50-335.25	307-341.75 281-323.25			
Noreport available Imperial, NE											
Noreport available Kearney, NE											
Noreport available Lexington, NE											
September 3	Ogallala, NE	2,358		570 552.50	503-505 480-532.50	437.50	375-390 360-368	341-361 355-367	301-359.50 273-352		
August 27	Valentine, NE	3,635				396	402.50	352-368 329-363	319-354.50 291-337.50		
Noreport available Herreid, SD											
September 2	Torrington, WY	1,819		537-565 545-567	467-512 451-472	438	379-423 381	350-359 328.50-344.50	303-340.50 289-325.50		

August 27 Willcox, AZ	N/A	452.50-455	487-505 440-475	440-470 392-422.50	344-375 316-350	332-375 312-323			140-176.50 173-199	3,500-3,900 2,500-2,700
No report available Colorado										
August 26 La Junta, CO	685		465-565 417.50-515	410-462.50 362.50-435	360-402.50 302.50-340	355-377.50 307.50-340	307-332.50 284-302.50		150-171 181-198	
No report available Loma, CO										
September 2 Dodge City, KS	2,013		438 395-405	375-477.50 370-392.50	375-424 332-358	338-375 334-361.50	337-350 309-335	302.85-336.25 300-303.75	125-166 146-205	3,175 1,400-2,525
September 3 Pratt, KS	907		432.50-457.50	460-477.50 368-434	409-434 334-402.50	343-400 338-345.50	304.50-360.50 315-336	306-331.50 288-315	150-202 185-210	2,250-2,700
August 27 Salina, KS	2,745			429-455 365-415	365-435 352.50-395	350-387 335-364	327.50-353 315-335	284.50-341.50 290-314.50		
September 2 Clovis, NM	1,562	450-585	405-560 392-460	378-450 336-406	360-522 301-357	320-354 296-320	265-319 275-325.50	192-280 273-330		
September 2 El Reno, OK	3,866	480-520	470-540 400-440	400-430 345-400	365-415 315-355	345-380 300-340.50	310-334 297.50-320	264-322.50 235-300		
September 1 McAlester, OK	900		444-490 405-500	355-450 355-422	349-385 340-375	339-373 310-356	330-339 290-317	270-318 281	143-169 182-197	2,300-4,150 2,150-3,750
August 31 Oklahoma City, OK	3,589		420-475 392-455	395-457 352-420	350-415 329-366	330-383 301-355	310-350 312-328	265-339 262-306		
August 28 Cuero, TX	1,136	482-640 431-500	425-515 403-475	355-450 351-560	317-370 311-455	307-330 296-455	297-312 269-490		131-169 162-197	2,700-3,050 2,550-3,550
August 27 Dalhart, TX	1,624		455-550 415-477.50	425-462 320-371	380-405 320-350	276-367.50 305-335	320-330 309-312.50	297.50-336 212.50-292.50	133-179 155-203	2,000
August 27 San Angelo, TX	568		470 430-460		341-360 320-345	320-345 312.50	308-324	305-310 275	140-165 178-206	2,650
August 27 Tulia, TX	499	450		425-430 357-360		349-360 307-317			130-150 160-170	3,200 2,200

SOUTH CENTRAL

California Agricultural Leadership Foundation announces Class 56 Ag Leadership fellows

The California Agricultural Leadership Foundation (CALF) has selected Class 56 of the California Agricultural Leadership Program (CALP), bringing together 24 individuals from across California agriculture for the foundation's signature 17-month leadership development experience.

Now in its 56th year, the Ag Leadership Program continues to use a rigorous application process to identify individuals across California's agricultural industry who demonstrate exceptional promise as leaders and a strong commitment to the future of the state's farms, ranches and rural communities.

Through in-state leadership seminars held with CALF's five partner universities, national and inter-

national travel seminars, fellows strengthen their ability to navigate complexity, lead through change and make a lasting impact on their businesses, organizations, communities and California agriculture.

"Class 56 honors our founders' vision by strengthening the representation of production agriculture among our fellows," said Lesa Eidman, president and CEO of CALF. "It is especially meaningful that, for the first time in our history, women make up the majority of the class."

"These fellows represent the evolving face of California agriculture and embody the bold, capable and diverse leadership needed to navigate change and build a stronger future for

the industry and the communities they serve."

Class 56 represents a wide range of sectors within California agriculture, including farming and ranching, agricultural labor, crop inputs and services, water and natural resource management, conservation, state government, regulatory programs, agricultural technology and food production.

Class 56 fellows

- Amran Bath — Sunrise Ag Labor, Yuba City.
- Lindsay Cederquist — Diversified Land Management, Clovis.
- Brooks Craven — Wilbur-Ellis, Lemoore.
- Betsey Cunningham — WorkWise Strategic Solutions, Penngrove.

• Krystal Del Bosque — Del Bosque Farms, Los Banos.

• Nolon Doss — Doss Agricultural Services, Madera.

• Hector Hernandez — Reiter Affiliated Companies, Winnetka.

• Jenny Holtermann — Water Association of Kern County/H&H Family Farms, Shafter.

• Virginia Jameson — California Department of Food and Agriculture, Sacramento.

• Hannah Johnson — HJ&Co, Fresno.

• Gabrielle Katanic — Lundberg Family Farms, Sacramento.

• Ritta Martin — Glenn County RCD/Martin & Millsaps Ranch, Orland.

• Tawny Mata — California Department of Food

and Agriculture, Winters.

• Wyatt Maysey — Taylor Farms, Pacific Grove.

• Tamar Melkonian — Nichols Farms, Fresno.

• Julia Michaels — Native Seed Group, Sacramento.

• Jenna Morales — California Department of Water Resources, Folsom.

• Andrew Nickus — Rockwood Ag Services, El Centro.

• Daniel Ostrowski — Land IQ, Davis.

• Andrew Parolini — Monterey Pacific, Inc., Santa Rosa.

• Ruben Ramirez — Wonderful Citrus, Bakersfield.

• Alyssa Rolen — California Rangeland Trust, Colusa.

• Katharine Rosser — Montna Farms, Marysville.

• Mariah Taylor Garcia

— California Department of Pesticide Regulation, Clovis.

Founded in 1970, CALF has spent more than five decades growing leaders who go on to shape agricultural policy, strengthen their organizations, and serve their communities. Class 56 joins a network of more than 1,500 alumni who carry that mission forward across the state and globe.

Class 56 fellows will be formally welcomed at an inaugural ceremony on Oct. 2 in Fresno, CA. For more information about the Ag Leadership Program or to learn more about the class 56 fellows, visit agleaders.org. Tickets and additional event details are available at agleaders.org/events. — CALF

Packing plants to be dark for Labor Day

MARKETS (from page 1)

Boxed beef prices closed lower over the week. The Choice cutout lost about \$6 to close at \$376.90, and the Select cutout lost about \$8 to close at \$350.72.

"Further significant downside is anticipated this month," Fish said. "A slaughter this week of 530k or less is even more of a disappointment because next week is one of six major packing plant holidays and all will be dark on Monday."

The lean beef trim contracts continue to see little movement. The 50% lean trim September contract was unchanged at \$151 and the October contract at \$138.30. The 90% lean trim September contract was down \$5 to \$440 and the October contract gained a dollar to \$422.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures were able to gain back some of the previous week's losses. The September contract gained about \$6 to close at \$325.85 and the October contract gained about \$3 to close at \$321.10.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index lost about \$6 to close at \$329.18.

Corn futures traded sideways over the week. The September contract gained a penny to close at \$5.15, and the December contract gained 4 cents to close at \$5.40.

Iowa: Russell Livestock in Russell sold 1,883 head on Monday. An accurate trend could not be established due to a lack of a recent sale, but demand was very good. Benchmark

steers averaging 724 lbs. sold from \$343-375, averaging \$361.18.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 3,500 head on Monday. Compared to the previous auction, feeder steers under 750 lbs. sold \$10-15 lower, while heavier weights sold \$5 lower to \$5 higher. Feeder heifers sold from \$5 lower to \$5 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 772 lbs. sold from \$333-335, averaging \$333.58.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 3,700 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers and heifers were too lightly tested for a market direction. A significant number of unweaned calves appeared in the market and were trending lower in price. Benchmark steers averaging 718 lbs. sold from \$335-350, averaging \$339.33.

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Regional in Worthing sold 1,251 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, there were few comparable sales of yearling feeder steers. Heifers sold mostly \$5 lower. Benchmark steers averaging 793 lbs. sold for \$322.

Texas: Giddings Livestock in Giddings sold 946 head on Monday. Compared to the previous auction, feeder steers under 600 lbs. sold \$4-15 lower, while the heavier steers over 600 lbs. were \$2-6 higher. Feeder heifers under 500 lbs. sold \$8-15 lower, while heifers over 500 lbs. were \$2-5 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 709 lbs. sold from \$305-325, averaging \$314.79. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**

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Lot 12A: TR PRATISSIA P4708 3-31-2026
Sire: Boyd Bellringer 2010 - MGS: EXAR Fundamental 91868



Lot 50: TR MONUMENTAL 4426 3-16-2025
Sire: Traynhams Monumental 1773
MGS: AEG Schurrtop 2500 1301



Lot 13: TRAYNHAMS CLARET H1895 2-20-2020
Sire: Traynhams Loaded Up F988 - MGS: Mr HOC Broker
Lot 13A: TRAYNHAM CLARET P4780 5-4-2026
Sire: Traynhams Revival 1482 - MGS: Traynhams Loaded Up



Lot 61: TR RECKONING 4406 1-15-2025
Sire: Hill Valley Reckoning 931
MGS: Dameron First Class



Lot 63: TR VEGAS 4404 1-15-2025
Sire: Riverstone Vegas 49H
MGS: HA Cowboy Up 5405



Lot 91: TRAYNHAMS LOADED UP 4522 4-19-2025
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Judge halts data center construction on public land

A federal administrative court has temporarily revoked authorization to build a massive data center near Boulder City, NV, concluding the federal government likely erred when it approved the project construction on public land without a proper environmental analysis.

The Interior Board of Appeals ruled that the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) decision to approve the construction of the Townsite Data Center on public land using a prior unrelated environmental analysis likely violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Townsite Solar 2 LLC—the project developer—originally received federal approval in 2023 to build a solar power generation and battery storage facility on the 88.5-acre parcel, but requested an amended right-of-way grant in 2025 to build a data center instead.

Federal land managers did not study the effects of the

data center project in a new environmental analysis, and instead approved the change in July after determining the data center project “is essentially like” the solar plant project and that it would have “similar anticipated impacts.”

The order comes after the Center for Biological Diversity and Boulder City filed an appeal in July against the Townsite data center, which became the first data center approved on BLM land in the U.S.

An administrative judge determined there was persuasive evidence that BLM “acted arbitrarily or capriciously when it determined that the data center project is ‘substantially the same’ as the solar plant project for purposes of its NEPA analysis.”

The order prevents the data center project from moving forward while the Interior Board of Appeals considers legal challenges against the proposal.

“We’re thrilled that this

data center has been stopped dead in its tracks,” said Patrick Donnelly, Great Basin director at the Center for Biological Diversity in a statement. “The Trump administration is pulling out all the stops to let tech companies build massive data centers on our public lands. This tremendous victory proves communities have the power to fight back and win.”

The federal administrative court found that the appeal was likely to succeed on their claims that the BLM’s analysis of the solar plant project’s environmental effects was insufficient because the projects are not “substantially the same.”

The temporary pause was granted after the Center for Biological Diversity “demonstrated that permanent and irreparable harm is likely to occur” if construction of the data center continued before the appeal is settled, and that those “harms outweigh the temporary financial harm to

Townsite from the delay.”

Boulder City also filed an appeal and petitioned for a temporary pause on the project while their appeal makes its way through the federal process. However, the city’s petition was declared moot given the panel granted the Center for Biological Diversity petition seeking a pause.

In the order, the Interior Board of Appeals consolidated both appeals filed by Boulder City and the Center for Biological Diversity and expedited the appeals. The panel ordered BLM to respond by Sept. 21.

Construction of the Townsite Data Center could have major implications for public lands throughout the West, and especially in Nevada where about 80% of the land is managed by the federal government.

In July, the Boulder City Council unanimously voted to appeal the BLM approval for a data center on an 80-acre BLM-owned parcel about

three miles west of the city’s borders.

Nevada Rep. Dina Titus, who represents District 1 where the data center would be located, sent a letter to federal land managers demanding answers about how the agency is reviewing proposals for data centers on public land following the approval of the BLM’s amended plan.

Titus applauded the Interior Board of Land Appeals’ decision to halt the development of the Townsite Data Center.

“The judge ruled for transparency and public accountability in granting a stay based

on the BLM’s misuse of an environmental impact statement for a solar farm as justification for a data center. The two are vastly different,” Titus said in a statement. “I’ve said since day one that this was not only improper but illegal.”

Gov. Joe Lombardo (R), to whom Titus had also written seeking clarification about data centers on Nevada public land, and Townsite Solar 2 LLC did not immediately respond to requests of comment about the order. A spokesperson for the Interior said the department does not comment on litigation matters. — **Jeniffer Solis, Nevada Current**

Australia, Brazil could increase US dependency

BEEF SUPPLIES (from page 1)

However, Rabobank noted that ample frozen beef inventories gave wholesale buyers room to resist additional price increases, helping trigger an 8-16% cattle price correction. The report estimated the decline reduced producer revenues by roughly \$200-500 per head.

Imports continue to offset declining domestic production. Rabobank reported U.S. beef imports increased 11% from a year earlier during the first half of 2026 to a record 3.3 billion lbs., led by larger shipments from Australia, Mexico and Argentina. The report noted Australia and Brazil could become increasingly dependent on U.S. buyers as their access to China becomes more restricted.

Rabobank said U.S. cattle buyers are also preparing for the return of Mexican feeder cattle, with the prospect of additional supplies already weighing on market expectations. While initial shipments are expected to be limited, the reopening could gradually increase feeder cattle availability as trade returns to more normal levels.

Canada, Mexico navigate supplies

In Canada, Rabobank said cattle supplies are building. July 1 cattle-on-feed inventories reached a record for the month, as cattle imports from the U.S. have nearly doubled from a year earlier since August 2025. Meanwhile, first-half fed cattle marketings fell 6%, and steer carcass weights topped 920 lbs. in July.

The report said Canadian consumers are becoming more value conscious as retail beef prices remain near record levels. Export demand is providing some support, particularly after China restored access to Canadian beef in January. Rabobank said January-May beef exports increased 6% to 215,800 metric tons, with China accounting for most of the growth.

Rabobank described Mexico’s market as one of abundant domestic cattle supplies and noted a gradual return to U.S. exports following the New World screwworm-related

trade disruption.

The report estimated initial shipments through Sonora at about 11,000 head per month, with certification, inspection and logistical requirements limiting early volumes. Rabobank said Mexican feedlots remain well supplied, supported by stronger Central American cattle imports, improved pasture conditions and favorable feed costs.

Mexican beef production remains steady, but Rabobank said domestic demand faces pressure from abundant, competitively priced chicken and pork. Consumer pressure and less discretionary spending on higher-priced proteins are expected to limit beef consumption growth through year-end.

Inflation, weather and consumers

Rabobank’s North American Agribusiness Quarterly report described a mixed economic picture across the region. U.S. inflation appears to have peaked at 4.2% in May before easing to 3.4% in July, while employment growth has slowed. Inflation is also cooling in Mexico and Canada, with both countries reporting notable monthly price declines. However, Rabobank cautioned that geopolitical uncertainty and rising energy costs could put renewed pressure on inflation.

Rabobank said food-away-from-home inflation continues to outpace food-at-home inflation, supporting restaurant revenues but contributing to softer traffic. The report pointed to early signs of recovery among lower-income consumers, while stressing that restaurants will need to compete on value, consumer priorities and execution as diners remain sensitive to higher prices.

Weather remains another variable. Rabobank said El Niño is strengthening, with a 97% chance of persisting into early spring 2027. The report favors wetter fall conditions across the Midwest and South, while California could have its best opportunity in years for meaningful reservoir recharge this winter. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

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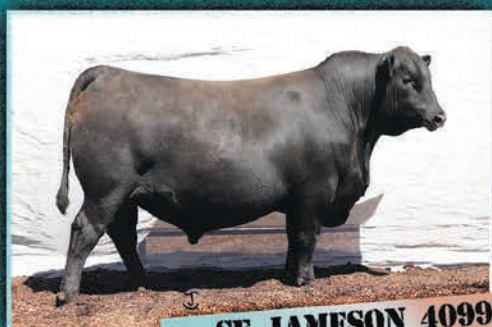


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OR's western state forests will see more conservation

Oregon forestry officials will need to manage hundreds of thousands of acres of western state forests to better support critical species, water and air quality and to decrease greenhouse gas emissions under a new management plan the Board of Forestry approved July 22.

The seven-member board voted 5-2 to pass the 168-page Western Oregon State Forests Management Plan. The new plan, which will guide the Oregon Department of Forestry's work in 640,000 acres of state forests in 14 counties and mostly in northwest Oregon over the next several decades, will take effect by July 1, 2027.

It lays out the priorities, goals and strategies for the department in those forests, which include supporting economies dependent on timber, forest products, agriculture and mining, and a slate of ecological priorities as well: ensuring clean air and water, adapting to and fighting climate change, and protecting wildlife habitat and plant diversity.

Between the new management plan and its older, bigger sibling—the Western State Forests Habitat Conservation Plan, a 2024 document outlining to the federal government how the state will commit to

saving 17 threatened and endangered species in Oregon's western state-owned forests to avoid losing them—timber volumes from those forests are expected to decline by about one-fifth in the next several decades. Oregon is waiting on final approval of its habitat conservation plan from federal science and wildlife agencies, expected later this fall or early winter.

Oregon's western state forests represent about 86% of the total acreage owned and managed by the state. The plan applies only to state-owned acres, not any private or federally managed forests.

Commission members Heath Curtiss, a lawyer and vice president for Hampton Lumber, and Joe Justice, director of the timber advocacy group Associated Oregon Loggers, voted in opposition. Both insisted that the Trump administration's recent changes to the federal Endangered Species Act, including rolling back protections for forests, wetlands, deserts and other critical species habitats, will leave Oregon vulnerable to lawsuits under the new plans. Conservation groups are challenging those changes in federal court.

The two management plans have been years in

the making, and drafts have received significant input, and ire, from the timber industry and from conservation groups over the years. But on July 22, it was clear conservation groups saw the final forest management plan and vote as a win.

"After decades of clear-cutting state forests and driving imperiled fish and wildlife to the brink of extinction, the Board of Forestry has finally taken a step forward to protect and improve essential habitat for their survival," Joe Liebezeit, conservation director of the Bird Alliance of Oregon, said in a statement.

New priorities

Together, the plans will restrict logging on about 50% of Oregon's western state forests, deeming them either off limits, inoperable or too expensive to harvest. Overall logging is projected to decline by 20% in western forests in 14 counties during the next 70 years.

The remainder of the acres face fewer restrictions, but about 40% will need to be maintained to support the migration and movement of the endangered Northern spotted owl, and for their potential to absorb and store planet-

warming carbon dioxide.

Among the new priorities laid out in the state's management plan is combating climate change and generating revenue by harnessing the carbon-storing power of trees via reduced logging, protecting old-growth and letting trees grow older. In exchange, the state could enter acreage into a voluntary carbon market generating credits bought by polluting industries hoping to reduce their own emissions by proxy.

The forests in Oregon's Coast Range absorb and store more carbon per acre than almost any other forests in the world—including the Amazon Rainforest, according to research by Bev Law, professor emeritus of forest ecology at Oregon State University and an expert on global forest

carbon storage.

The 83,000-acre Elliott State Forest near Coos Bay, which is managed by the Oregon Department of State Lands, is in the process of entering a voluntary carbon market for the next 40 years.

Kacey KC, Oregon's new state forester, offered her support for the management plan ahead of the board's vote. At the meeting, she said that while she acknowledged challenging federal headwinds and rules around endangered species protections, she understood that the board's job was, simply, to ensure the forestry department manages Oregon's resources for multiple benefits: economic, social and ecological.

"Not one is stated over another, and we have a re-

sponsibility to future generations to ensure that we are doing the best for the future. I think this plan is a good balance," she said. "We've come a long way in eight years, and I don't think because of a change that might happen at the federal level, or might not, we should completely throw that out in the moment."

Curtiss characterized the entire meeting and vote as an academic exercise, and said the management and habitat plans would likely be forced to fundamentally change in the near future.

"I think it would be a mistake to conclude that this story is over," he said. "And it's never actually over as it pertains to state lands." — **Alex Baumhardt, Oregon Capital Chronicle**



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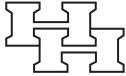
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Oct. 17 – Western Stockman's Market, Macfarland, CA

ANGUS

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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, Lone, 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 – Artzen 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

BRANGUS

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

HEREFORD

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Nov. 19 – Largent & Sons, Bull Sale, Kaycee, WY

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Nov. 16 – J&L Livestock, Female Sale, Billings, MT

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Sep. 20 – Balkenbush Quarter Horses, Dispersal Sale, Great Falls, MT
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USDA announces initiatives to rebuild the cow herd

BEEF IMPORTS (from page 1)

over current projections—an amount that will deliver economic relief to American consumers, will only compete with cull cow markets, and will not significantly impact the fed cattle market,” a proclamation fact sheet promises.

According to a Wall Street Journal report, shortly before Trump announced the import plan on social media, it is rumored that he met with JBS controller Joesley Batista to discuss lower import tariffs. The Brazilian government also said President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva spoke with Trump on Aug. 21 about tariffs and global conflicts.

The plan has faced push-back from industry groups, who argue that increasing beef imports will harm herd rebuilding efforts and undermine consumer confidence.

In response to the import plan, a coalition of groups launched an initiative for mandatory country-of-origin labeling (MCOOL) to distinguish imported beef from domestic supplies. The National MCOOL Coalition is calling on the White House and Congress to “Label Our Beef,” as the group’s petition is coined.

“Adversaries, foreign and domestic, have far too long prevented American cattlemen from promoting—and consumers from choosing—a true product of the USA.

MCOOL ends that,” said Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA President Dave Hyde, one of the groups behind the coalition.

Meat processing announcement

Just after announcing the proclamation to increase beef imports, Trump also posted on Truth Social about giving ranchers the ability to process their own food to challenge the Big Four’s processing control.

“In order to break this powerful monopoly, with much of its ownership based outside the U.S., I am authorizing legal documents to be drawn in order to allow Farmers and

Ranchers to be given the right to PROCESS THEIR OWN FOOD,” Trump wrote. “This should move quickly.”

Industry groups pushed back against the proposal. The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) said it supports eliminating unnecessary regulations, but weakening federal meat inspection and food safety standards is not the solution.

“Constant government interference creates uncertainty for producers making long-term decisions about their businesses and the future of the cattle herd,” the group said. “If the Administration wants to help cattle producers, it should focus on reducing legitimate regulatory burdens, lowering

fuel and fertilizer prices, protecting the U.S. cattle herd from foreign animal disease, and expanding opportunities for mid-size and regional cattle processors.”

The Meat Institute also expressed concern with the proposal.

“America’s farmers and ranchers already have multiple pathways to process and market the livestock they raise that can be leveraged to achieve the goals stated by the President today,” the group said. “Allowing uninspected meat to be sold to unwitting consumers is the wrong approach, and risks undermining this country’s reputation for producing the safest meat products in the world.”

policy would provide the difference.

• **Supporting small slaughter facilities.**

USDA is also creating a Strengthening Processing for U.S. Ranchers (SPUR) Guaranteed Loan Program to support regional processing. USDA will also establish a Regional Processor Continuity Effort to strengthen regional processing capacity.

• **Increasing federal procurement of U.S. beef.**

USDA will encourage the purchasing of locally processed American beef across federal and state institutions, including prisons, hospitals and related facilities. This builds on the department’s recently announced Harvest to Hallways announcement to bring more locally produced food into schools.

• **Supporting new farmers and ranchers.**

USDA will establish an initiative focused on Beginning and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Affairs. The department will also work with the departments of War and Veterans Affairs to use programs to recruit servicemembers into ranching and farming careers.

Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, USA (R-CALF) said the new initiative and the October plan fall short of reversing underlying policies that caused the erosion of the cattle industry.

“We look forward to working with the administration and Congress to reverse those policy-driven forces through such policy reforms as restoring mandatory country-of-origin labeling for beef, eliminating the beef packers’ anti-competitive buying practices, managing trade through effective import controls, and ending the massive beef checkoff program subsidy that perpetuates monopolistic control over America’s cattle industry,” said R-CALF CEO Bill Bullard. — **Anna Miller Fortozo, WLJ managing editor**

USDA initiatives

Shortly after Trump’s import plan was announced, the USDA released an initiative to help ranchers rebuild the beef herd. Titled the Ranchers First Initiative, the plan is a “sweeping package of actions to continue rebuilding the Great American Beef Herd and put America’s ranchers back at the center of our nation’s food supply,” according to USDA.

The initiative follows on the department’s October Plan to Fortify the American Beef Industry, a 12-page plan to tackle challenges within the beef industry.

The Ranchers First Initiative includes the following actions:

• **Supporting heifer retention.**

The Beef Retention and National Development (BRAND) endorsement for Livestock Risk Protection will allow producers to insure the economic value of retaining a heifer for breeding over a two-year period. The endorsement would establish a value based on the heifer’s expected slaughter value at the time of enrollment. If the heifer’s projected or realized slaughter value exceeds the value of retaining her as breeding stock, the



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Montana governor relaxes some road rules

Montana has temporarily relaxed some rules for the amount of time truck drivers can be on the road in an effort to help ranchers feed their cattle.

In a Aug. 31 executive order, Gov. Greg Gianforte (R) waived several motor carrier regulations including “hours of service” limits that dictate how much a driver can work and load size restrictions.

Montana has been battling dry and severely dry conditions for six years, said the executive order, under a separate 2021 drought declaration. The order is set to expire on Sept. 13.

Montana Department of Agriculture Director Jillien Streit said it was an effort to cut red tape.

“When our producers are facing tight supplies and economic pressures, they do not need to also battle regulatory provisions that can slow down the essential movement of feed,” Streit said in a press release. “I appreciate Governor Gianforte lifting service requirements around hay delivery ensuring that our farmers and ranchers can do more with their precious time as it can be

a bottleneck in volatile times like these.”

Hay is generally cut through the summer and into fall in Montana. Drought can adversely impact the amount of forage available to cattle throughout the summer and fall, leading ranchers to rely more heavily on bought feed, such as hay.

The press release from the Governor’s Office said the rules were relaxed for “certain carriers.” It’s not the first time Gianforte has suspended motor carrier regulations — Governor’s Office spokesperson Charlie Roth said he did so in 2021, 2024 and 2025 for various reasons, including fire response, another hay hauling and to support fuel delivery for heating.

“With the persistent drought, it was essential that we eliminate any roadblocks that threaten the viability of our producers and their operations,” Gianforte said in a press release. “Through this executive order, we will ease motor vehicle restrictions to help producers get hay where they need it to go.” — **Jordan Hansen, Daily Montanan**



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