



May 16, 2008

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Farm Bill Passes in House and Senate!

On Wednesday, May 14th the House passed the 2007 Farm Bill Conference Committee Report by a vote of 318-106. To override the expected veto from the President, it would take a vote count of 286. Also, during the debates, several members said that they were voting against the Conference Report but would vote to override the veto.

The House Agriculture Committee held a press conference at 4:30 pm on Wednesday, May 14th to discuss the Conference Report and its passage on the floor. To listen to the results of the press conference, please visit: <http://agriculture.house.gov/hearings/audio.html>

The Senate passed the 2007 Farm Bill Conference Report on Thursday, May 15th with a vote of 81-15. The report now heads to the President where he is expected to veto the Conference Report. In both the House and the Senate, the bill passed by a veto proof margin and it is expected that they will override the President's veto during votes next week.

In both the House and Senate, a one week extension to the 2002 Farm Bill was passed by unanimous consent.

-- released by Elizabeth Bostdorff, NCBA

MCA Scores Major Victory in Legislative Session

The Missouri Cattlemen's Association and all of agriculture scored a big victory with passage of the Omnibus Ag Bill. Components of the bill included five major pieces of legislation affecting Missouri's cattle producers. MCA had made this legislation their #1 priority during the 2008 Legislative session.

"This was a tremendous win for agriculture at a time when producers need help with high input costs." - David "Blue" Geier, President, Missouri Cattlemen's Association.

Maintaining a voluntary animal identification system under the National Animal Identification System was an issue of great concern among producers. Despite lobbying

efforts by those opposed to any voluntary premise registration program, the legislative body voted overwhelmingly to support the producer's choice to participate. This measure works to protect the health of Missouri's livestock industry and includes a safety net in the event of a disruption of marketing during a disease outbreak.

"Voluntary Animal ID has been a very contentious issue for the past two years and it is great we have resolved the issue," said Geier. "We thank Rep. Munzlinger, Rep. John Quinn and others for their persistent effort to get this legislation passed."

MCA has always promoted a voluntary system for producers who want to register their premise. This system enables quick notification to those registered in the event of a disease outbreak and maintains a freedom of choice for producers to participate in source and age marketing programs.

Another positive feature of the bill is a sales tax exemption for the purchase of fencing materials and fuel when used for agricultural purposes. A section of the bill concerning Large Animal Veterinary Students states that current students eligible for veterinary school at the University of Missouri may be awarded up to \$80,000 in student loads specifically for veterinary school. The act specifies that no more than \$20,000 may be allotted per academic year and does not allow the loans to be awarded retroactively. The bill also includes legislation to develop and implement a Livestock Feed and Crop Input Loan Guarantee Program under the MASBDA, which shall provide loan guarantees for up to 50% of the amount of a loan on a declining principal basis.

Missouri's dairy industry will also benefit from the bill. New provisions include payment of the first full year of interest on any applicable Missouri linked deposit program loan, provided the loan pertains to the acquisition of dairy cows. In addition, existing or start-up dairy operations in Missouri are now eligible to apply for Dairy Business Planning Grants, provided the operations are at least 51% owned by Missouri residents. The grants may be written for up to \$5,000 or no greater than 90% of the cost of the plan, whichever is less.

The Omnibus Ag Bill was one of the few pieces of legislation to pass in this legislative session. The bill will now go to the Governor for his signature. The Governor is expected to sign the bill which would take effect in late August.

Cattlemen in Newton County Seek Assistance

On Saturday, May 10th at around 6:00 pm tornados struck Newton County, MO leaving numerous members of the Newton County Cattlemen's Association in need.

We encourage cattlemen from surrounding counties and across the state to assist our fellow cattlemen. Volunteers are needed to help round up cattle. Any donated supplies are greatly appreciated. The most needed items are panels, fencing materials, and feed.

If you would like to help or would like more information please contact Estella Osborn, Newton County Cattlemen's President at (417) 624-0415 or Newton County Extension Agent Dave Whitson at (417) 455-9500.

ABC Reports on Beef and Climate Change

[ABC's "World News"](#) aired a story Tuesday night about beef and climate change. The broadcast featured Michael Pollan, author of "In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto," and suggested "two simple steps for climate change." One of the suggestions was to eat less beef. The broadcast encouraged consumers to reduce meat consumption by 20 percent to help the environment and their health.

We were contacted by the reporter on very short notice but were able to provide a telephone interview and brief media statement from John Maas, DVM, beef producer and professor at the University of California-Davis. However, ABC chose not to include the information in their segment.

The broadcast may peak media interest about beef and the environment in local media markets. As a reminder, a number of environmental resources including a fact sheet about the environment are available on www.BeefFromPastureToPlate.org under the "Beef Production Facts" heading. Additionally, environment key messages and template response letters are available on your [State Extranet Resource](#) under: Issues & Media Response > Environment. The media statement issued to ABC "World News" is copied below.

**National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Statement on Beef Production and the Environment**

John Maas, DVM
University of California - Davis
Clarksburg, California

"Eating beef contributes positively to the environment. Cattle are net recyclers of carbon dioxide, which means they actually consume more CO₂ than they release. Cattle are essential to a functioning carbon cycle. Cattle do this by eating grass. If cattle don't eat grass, the grass will burn and release all the carbon dioxide. Cattlemen are America's original environmentalists.

"Multiple sources of U.S. data suggest livestock production contributes negligibly to total greenhouse gas emissions in the United States."

Funded by The Beef Checkoff - released by Melissa Tessitore, NCBA

MCA Members Receive Discount at Dungarees.net

MCA members will receive a 5% discount on all online purchases. Dungarees.net offers a wide variety of Carhartt and Filson products. To take advantage of this membership benefit visit www.dungarees.net, add your order to the cart and when proceeding through check out process there is a "Comments" box under the "Bill to" information. In the "Comments" box be sure to note: *5% discount per Missouri Cattlemen's Association membership along with your membership number*. You must provide your membership number to receive the discount.



Checking in on the Checkoff



FUEL FOR THE FINISH

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Learn more at www.mobeeff.org
or email john@mobeeff.com

Opportunity for Calf Buyers

If the forecasts of many market analysts are correct, this fall's calf prices will be lower. The high cost of corn and other feed grains has pushed feedyard costs of gain higher, making placement of heavier cattle more appealing to cattle feeders. Feedyard economics favor shorter feeding periods associated with cattle weighing 700 pounds or more, rather than lighter calves requiring more days on feed.

A previous article discussed potential challenges to cow-calf producers that traditionally sell calves in the fall, and possible alternatives. For a variety of reasons, however, many producers will market calves during the usual time frame. If predictions for lower prices hold true, there may be opportunity for calf buyers. Perhaps backgrounders and stocker operators will face less competition for high-quality calves.

South Dakota State University Animal Scientist Kelly Bruns says it's hard to predict with certainty, but feedyard cost factors suggest suppression of prices for 500- to 600-pound calves. That might favor producers with sufficient grazing or harvested forage resources to grow purchased calves to heavier weights, for re-sale, or to place in finishing yards later. However, prices of all feedstuffs have responded to that of corn. There is no such thing as "cheap feed," so producers that grow calves will still be under pressure to trim costs wherever possible.

Watching costs is a good thing, but Bruns advises quality-focused producers to take care. The warning applies whether the goal is selling heavier cattle to feeders aiming for high-quality beef markets, or capturing quality-based premiums by owning the cattle all the

way to harvest. If high-quality beef is the ultimate goal, care should be taken when procuring calves and managing them during a growing period.

"Buying from one source is ideal. At least, try to buy from as few different sources as possible," recommends Bruns. "Buying small, put-together drafts of calves and co-mingling them over a period of weeks or months can be counter-productive to quality grade goals."

Cattle from different sources typically represent greater genetic differences, and different planes of nutrition. Health protocols and implant regimes also differ, says Bruns. "The differences make it harder to put cattle together and manage as one group."

It's often a common practice, when a producer buys calves over an extended period of time, to keep early-bought calves on a diet targeting maintenance or very slow growth until desired numbers calves are purchased. This too can jeopardize the animals' genetic potential for quality grade.

"Producers dealing with really green calves may count on compensatory gain - rapid growth achieved when the cattle are eventually put on a higher plane of nutrition. They often put on external fat fairly rapidly too, but our research shows intramuscular fat (marbling) doesn't improve at a similar rate. So, those cattle may need more days on feed to achieve marbling potential," explains Bruns.

Since taking calves to a weight suitable for placement in a finishing yard is the objective, Bruns expects more producers to use of growth implants in growing cattle. Proper implant strategies will be important to achieving quality grade potential. Implant potency should match the diet, says Bruns, adding that low-potency implants should be used for cattle on diets with low caloric content.

"With feed costs being what they are, there is less room for error," states Bruns. "Knowing the history of purchased calves is even more important. Knowing the genetic background, their age, if they were creep-fed, and what kind of health program was applied - all are important. It all affects how the calves should be managed during the growing and finishing periods."

John Haverhals agrees, saying the 60- to 90-day growing period is just as important as the finishing period. Based on his years of experience, both in buying calves and feeding calves backgrounded by others, the Hudson, South Dakota, cattle feeder says maintaining the integrity of cattle is critical to quality-focused management. In either case, he prefers

cattle accompanied by a system of source- and age-identification.

"Health history, including vaccinations and treatments, should be documented by a system that's transferable, from one owner to the next, or the growing yard to the finishing yard," insists Haverhals. "I want to know the genetics behind the cattle - more than just the seedstock operation the calves' sires came from. Knowing the sire bloodline will influence how we manage the cattle.


Haverhals also warns buyers of non-implanted calves against implanting at receiving time. Wait until purchasing is complete, he advises, and implant the whole group at the same time.

"Improper implant management can mess up a calf's potential to grade, and you can't fix it," states Haverhals. "Have a time-line for buying calves for management groups. Have a plan and stick to it. It can be done."

As an example, Haverhals cites efforts by producers in southeastern states. The difference between prices paid for that region's cattle and Midwestern cattle has narrowed significantly. In no small part, says Haverhals, it's due to collective producer efforts aimed at improving genetics and overall management.

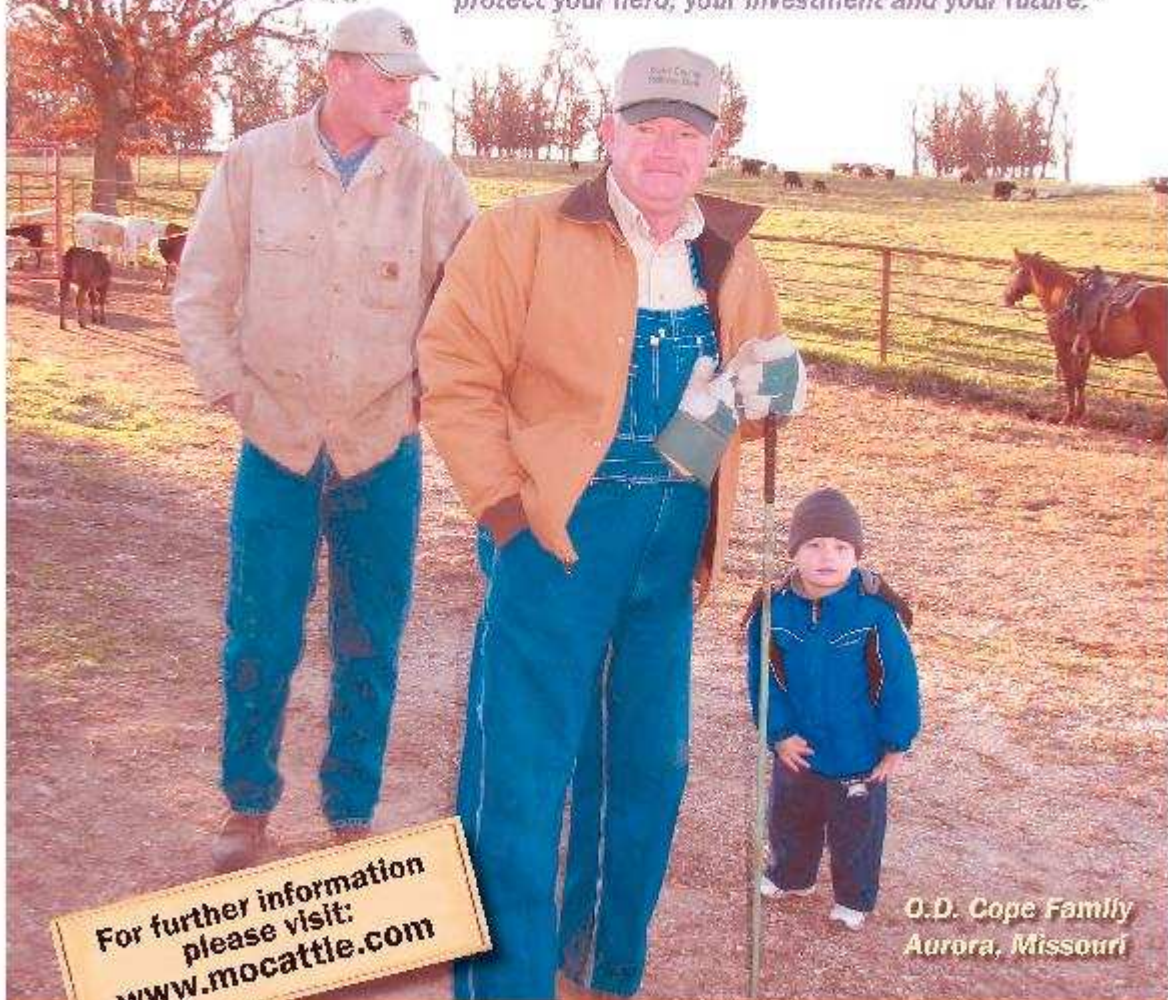
"They have improved the integrity of their feeder cattle and maintained it, by following protocols for health, thorough documentation and smarter marketing," he says. Their cattle bring a better price, because they have protected potential added value at harvest. That's really important in a time of razor-thin margins."

-by Troy Smith, released by Beef Quality Connection



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"In the event of an animal disease outbreak or crisis situation, this easy registry gets you the information to protect your herd, your investment and your future."



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please visit:
www.mocattle.com

*O.D. Cope Family
Aurora, Missouri*

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Missouri Beef Industry Council Director Election Legal Notice

Notice is hereby given that the Director of Agriculture will be conducting an election to fill three positions on the Missouri Beef Industry Council Board of Directors. One regional council member is to be elected in each of Regions 2, 3 and 4. Terms of office are three years.

Any cattle producer within the specified regions of the State of Missouri who is producing cattle for market and the legal owner of one or more head of cattle becomes eligible to vote in the election by registering at his/her respective Farm Service Agency (FSA) office prior to July 18, 2008. It is not necessary to register if you have participated in MBIC elections within the previous five years.

The Missouri Department of Agriculture will mail ballots to registered producers by August 15, 2008. Ballots must be postmarked no later than August 29, 2008, to be valid.

Any qualified producer may be nominated and have his/her name placed on the ballot provided the independent nomination is accompanied by petition of not fewer than 100 producers in the nominee's region and written permission of the candidate. Petitions must be delivered to the Director of Agriculture on or before July 18, 2008. Petition forms are available from the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

Nominees include:

<i>Region 2 (Northeast)</i>	<i>Region 3 (Southeast)</i>	<i>Region 4 (Southwest)</i>
Blue Geier (incumbent)	Jim Freeman (incumbent)	Jay Stahl (incumbent)
Sally Angel	Mike Kasten	Howard Hardecke
		Chris Cloud

Contact Dawn Thurnau at dawn@mobeef.com or (573) 817-0899 ext. 223 with questions.

Beef Quality Assurance

Beef Quality Assurance is every cattle producer's responsibility.

For more information on Beef Quality Assurance, visit:

<http://mocattle.com/BQA/bqa.htm>

or <http://www.bqa.org/>

To get certified online, visit:

<http://mocattle.com/BQA?certification.htm>

Interested in a county meeting program? Try MCA's Beef Quality Assurance program!

Contact Ken Disselhorst at (573) 822-3850.

County Cattlemen's Meetings

May 19 - Benton County

Shriner's Pavilion, Warsaw - 7:00 pm

June 5 - MCA Board of Directors

Beef House, Missouri State Fairgrounds - 10:00 am

Looking for a program to present to your members during a county meeting?
MCA provides Beef Quality Assurance training programs for county cattlemen. More more information contact (573) 499-9162.

MCA Summer Events

MCF Golf Tournament

The Missouri Cattlemen's Foundation will host their annual golf tournament at Railwood Golf Course in Holts Summit, MO on Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at 10:00 am. Entry fee is \$75 per team. For more details contact Darla Eggers at (573) 499-9162 or darla@mocattle.com.

Past President's Steak Fry

MCA will host the Past President's Steak Fry on June 5th. As in the past the Steak Fry will be held in the Missouri Beef House at the Missouri State Fairgrounds. The steak fry will be preceded by a MCA Board of Directors meeting that will take place the morning of the 5th. Also, as in previous years we ask that each county association donate an item for the auction that will take place that evening.

MCA All-Breeds Junior Show

The 2008 Missouri Cattlemen's All-Breeds Junior Show will be held June 13-15th at the Missouri State Fairgrounds in Sedalia. Registration information went out last week, so you should have received your packet. Be sure to check out our new event for this years junior show; the Design a T-shirt Contest. Please note the schedule changes from in previous years. ***Also, the entry fees are listed incorrectly in the Angus Journal. **The entry fee is \$15 per head (\$30 for late entry).*** For more information on the MCA All-Breeds Junior Show please visit the Junior page on the [MCA website](#) or call the office.

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Do you have questions, comments, or suggestions?

Would you like to advertise in our newsletter?

If so, please contact Rachel Bartholomew at (573) 499-9162 or intern@mocattle.com