



April 17, 2009

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### Upcoming Events & Meetings

#### Johnson County

April 17, 6:30 PM

Phelp's Charolais Ranch

#### Newton County

April 18, 9:30 AM

Joplin Regional Stockyards

## EPA, Cattle Material Prohibited in Animal Feed Not Hazardous Waste

*Released by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 4/16/09*

On April 25, 2008, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a final rule prohibiting the use of certain cattle parts in ALL animal feed, including pet food. The cattle parts that can no longer be used in animal feed, referred to as "cattle material prohibited in animal feed," or "CMPAF," consists primarily of brains and spinal cords from cattle 30 months of age or older, and the entire carcass of dead stock cattle, unless such cattle are shown to be less than 30 months of age or the brains and spinal cords are removed. The new regulation, which was to become effective on April 27, 2009, has been delayed for 60 days to June 26, 2009. After June 26, 2009, the CMPAF can no longer be rendered for animal feed use, and will have to be disposed of by other means (e.g., landfill, composting, incineration and possibly by disposal rendering). It is estimated that alternative disposal will be needed for between 300-350 thousand tons of cattle mortalities annually. In addition, the new rule is expected to divert approximately 15 thousand tons of slaughter by-products from being rendered for animal feed use.

As the effective date nears, questions are being raised by the rendering and waste management industries regarding the characterization and the regulatory status of the CMPAF. Under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), a waste is designated as hazardous or non-hazardous. In order for a solid waste to be a hazardous waste it must either be specifically listed or exhibit a characteristic (ignitable, corrosive, reactive, or toxic). Animal mortalities and wastes generated from the slaughter of animals, including CMPAF, are neither listed nor would they likely exhibit a characteristic. Therefore, the CMPAF material would not be a hazardous waste under RCRA, but a solid waste.

Under RCRA, the management of solid waste is under the jurisdiction of state and local governments. In response to the challenges being raised on the disposal of these wastes, the state agricultural agencies should work very closely with the state environmental/solid waste management agencies to ensure the most effective, environmentally safe, and economic disposal of these materials.

**ATTENTION: Junior Cattlemen**

### Maries-Osage Cattlemen

April 23, 6:30 PM

Cattlemen's Cafe, Vienna

### Tri-County Cattlemen

April 25, 6:00 PM

Shady Dell Park Community Center

### Moniteau County

April 28, 7:00 PM

Centennial Hall, Moniteau County Fairgrounds

All-Breeds Junior Show & Missouri Beef Leadership Conference around the corner

The **2009 MCA All-Breeds Junior Show** will take place June 12-14th at the Missouri State Fairgrounds in Sedalia. Registration information was mailed out this week so be looking out for it in your mail box and it is also available online at [www.mocattle.com/jrshow.htm](http://www.mocattle.com/jrshow.htm). Again this year we will be doing the "Design a T-shirt" contest where the winner of the contest will see their creativity on the shirts of all the exhibitors during the weekend.

The first **Missouri Beef Leadership Conference** is also scheduled for this coming June in Columbia, Missouri. There is still space available, so if you haven't signed up yet be sure to do so. This event will be full of educational, informational and fun events. This year's MBLC theme is "Show-Me Beef Leadership" and will be held on June 4-6. For more information visit

<http://mocattle.org/jrleadersconf.htm>.

## U.S.-EU Beef Deal seen unlikely by Thursday deadline

Written by Doug Palmer; Released by Reuters.com on 4/17/09

The United States and the European Union appear unlikely to resolve a two-decade-old beef dispute by an April 23 deadline, setting the stage for the United States to rotate \$116.8 million in retaliatory duties to a new set of EU products, a U.S. industry official said.

"At this point, we have not been able to reach an agreement ... So, all indications are that carousel (retaliation) will go into place on the 23rd," John Reddington, vice president for international trade at the American Meat Institute, told Reuters in an interview on Friday.

The beef dispute goes back to the late 1980s, when the EU banned beef from cattle raised with artificial growth hormones, a common industry practice in the United States and Canada.

The United States formally challenged the EU's ban in 1996 in one of the earliest cases it brought to the World Trade Organization. The WTO ruled in its favor and gave Washington the right to impose retaliatory duties on \$116.8 million of EU products until Brussels agreed to lift the ban.

Although the duties have a punishing effect on European exports, U.S. cattle producers have long complained their own industry has not benefited from its victory at the WTO.

As one of its last trade actions in office, the outgoing administration of President George W. Bush announced in January the United States would rotate the existing duties to a new set of EU products on March 23 in the hope of getting the EU back to the bargaining table.

The Obama administration agreed to extend the deadline to April 23 after talks between the United States and Brussels suggested a deal could be reached, which would give U.S. producers a larger quota to sell beef from naturally-raised cattle in the European market.

But once that delay was announced, "things just sort of slowed down

between the U.S. and the EU in terms of trying to reach an agreement," Reddington said.

"Between now and next Thursday, if the Europeans provide a deal to us that we can take a look at, certainly that carousel would not go into place. But at this point in time, they haven't offered anything," Reddington said.

## NCBA and PLC Participate in Animal ID Roundtable

Released by NCBA Cattlemen's Capitol Concerns 4/16/09

On Wednesday, National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Executive Director of Government Affairs Colin Woodall and Public Lands Council (PLC) Executive Director Jeff Eisenberg participated in a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) roundtable on the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). According to Secretary Vilsack, this was the first in a series of listening sessions that will take place over the coming months to engage stakeholders and producers in a dialogue about NAIS.

NCBA recognizes and supports the need for a National Animal Identification System for the purpose of enabling state and federal animal health officials to respond rapidly and effectively to animal health emergencies, such as foreign animal disease outbreaks or emerging domestic diseases. Many of NCBA's members already participate voluntarily in numerous animal identification programs as one of many tools to improve their herds, monitor disease, and better market their cattle.

"The private sector plays a tremendous role in the administration of these voluntary programs, and NCBA believes that private sector involvement and the resulting competitive market forces benefit producers while maintaining the objectives of the NAIS," said Woodall. "However, our members continue to have concerns with NAIS, which is why NCBA's policy supports a voluntary -- rather than a mandatory -- system."

NCBA members are particularly concerned about the protection of producers' confidential information, which would be housed in a USDA-maintained database. The federal government has not demonstrated a strong track-record when it comes to preventing the leak of private information, and USDA has not been able to guarantee that the information in a mandatory system would be protected from release under a Freedom of Information (FOIA) request. USDA's own Office of General Counsel has indicated that protection is different between a voluntary and mandatory system.

NCBA is also concerned about the system's ability to move at the speed of commerce. The working, processing, and marketing of cattle cannot slow down in order to be scanned and entered into the system.

It is also important to note that animal ID will not serve to enhance food safety, nor was it intended for this purpose.

"There are many firewalls and inspection procedures in place to keep our beef supply safe," Woodall said. "Animal ID does not prevent animal disease; it is merely a tool to respond to an animal health emergency."

In order to ensure the implementation of an animal identification system that is workable for both animal health and production agriculture, Eisenberg urged the Secretary to consider the following recommendations:

-The structure and requirements of a system should mirror the flow of

production and commerce.

-The collection of information about producers must be kept utterly confidential and released only in response to an animal disease outbreak and only to regulatory officials dealing with disease outbreak control and eradication.

-The cost to producers for participating in the system should be minimized to the greatest extent possible.

"We share the Secretary's strong interest in establishing a national identification system that will protect the livestock industry to the greatest extent possible in the event of the outbreak of disease," Eisenberg said. "We believe the most effective system is one that relies on incentives to encourage voluntary participation and that uses the state and private sectors to carry out the function to the greatest extent possible."

NCBA and PLC are committed to working with USDA in recommending continued refinements to NAIS, and we look forward to these discussions in the further development of a workable system.

## Exports Approach Pre-BSE Levels

Released by My Beef Checkoff (April 2009 News)

The value of U.S. beef exports in 2008 reached \$3.6 billion - or 94 percent of where they stood in 2003, prior to BSE found in the U.S. Exports to all leading markets were up for the year, by 28 percent in volume and 38 percent in value, according to the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF). That means 2009 likely will be the year that the U.S. surpasses the pre-BSE levels in terms of value, though it's likely to take another year or two to surpass pre-BSE volumes. "Next year, if we have a little luck with Japan, with Korea, we fully expect to eclipse the record export number we had in 2003," said USMEF President and CEO Phil Seng. "Right now, we estimate that about \$135 per head is the premium that you're getting from the international marketplace today." Toward a goal of accomplishing beef exports of 3 billion pounds in 2010 - up from 2.8 billion in 2003 - the checkoff is increasing company-specific focus in international markets in 2009; developing new sales channels; intensifying efforts to move value cuts; expanding sales-force training; and focusing on displacing share from competing companies.

In related news, the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Services reports that rising incomes have lead to greater overall meat consumption, with per capita consumption in China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, for example, surpassing a combined 64 pounds per person in 2008, up from just over 59 pounds in 2003. As consumer incomes in foreign markets, particularly in emerging market economies, continue to grow, the trend of increasing trade in red meats-and increasing interdependence between U.S. and foreign markets-will likely continue, USDA notes. For more information about factors affecting U.S. beef trade, go to [USDA Economic Research](#).

## U.S. Cattle Group Fights Recession with \$5 Steaks

Written by Bob Burgdorfer; Released by Reuters.com 3/16/09

As the recession discourages people from dining out, the U.S. beef industry is stepping up efforts to sell steaks through supermarkets to compensate for a slowdown in restaurant business, NCBA economist Gregg Doud said on Monday.

"On the steak side, you are seeing a lot of features for rib-eyes and T-bones at below \$5 a pound. That is some of the best featuring we have seen in many many years," said Doud.

The NCBA is the nation's largest cattle industry trade group, and Doud said the feedyard segment of the industry, which fattens cattle on grain, has lost about \$4 billion in equity over the last 15 months.

The losses are due in part to high grain costs and a slowdown in beef sales in restaurants and export markets, which have prevented cattle producers from getting the prices they need to cover costs.

In years past, about half of the U.S. beef has been consumed at restaurants and fast-food chains. But business is down in that segment as cost-conscious consumers eat at home.

"We are really focusing right now on one aspect of our industry -- the retail side," said Doud. "You are seeing some of the best value in grocery stores for steaks than what you have seen in an awfully long time."

The approaching of spring, when people begin grilling steaks and hamburgers outdoors, has also encouraged the NCBA to promote steaks and other beef products in supermarkets at lower than normal prices.

This focus on retail sales is also being pushed because of a mild slowdown in beef exports, said Doud. A strong dollar relative to other currencies has made beef more expensive to foreign buyers, which hurts sales.

While the low beef prices are designed to spark sales, they may be hurting cattle producers, who have been losing millions of dollars a week as cattle are selling at well below production costs.

Current beef prices are "not profitable" for the long term but are necessary to sell beef, said Doud.

The losses on cattle have led to producers raising fewer cattle, which could be mean less beef in 2010 and beyond.

While a smaller beef supply could mean higher prices then, Doud was reluctant to forecast beef prices that far out because many factors can affect prices, such as feed and fuel costs, weather conditions, and supplies of competing meats.

USDA estimates 2009 U.S. beef production at 26.477 billion lbs, down about 1 percent from 2008.

## Opportunity exists, so focus on a productive cowherd

Written by Jason K. Ahola, Extension beef specialist, University of Idaho;  
Released by BeefMagazine.com 4/16/09

After reaching a peak of over 33 million cows in 2006, the U.S. beef cowherd inventory has been declining by about 2% per year (Figure 1). In 2009, there are fewer than 32 million beef cows - the smallest inventory since 1964.

The recent decline has been the sharpest drop in beef cow numbers since the mid-1990s, when financial losses were widespread among cow/calf producers. Interestingly, the current beef cowherd is generating the smallest U.S. beef calf crop that has occurred in 5 decades, which will likely result in stagnant or reduced beef production as well.

#### **Is Opportunity Around the Corner?**

Thinking optimistically, it's a really good thing that the decline in beef cattle numbers coincided with the current economic recession and softened domestic demand. However, if looking at the situation as an opportunist, the next 2 to 5 years in this industry could offer a tremendous possibility for widespread profitability among cow/calf producers.

The recession will end at some point, and both U.S. and global beef consumers will increase their appetites for U.S. beef. Due to a shrinking U.S. beef cowherd and limited heifer retention, today's first- and second-calf cows could be producing calves at a time of tremendous beef demand and reduced supplies (i.e. 2010 and beyond?).

Most would agree that the middle- and late-aged cows in a cowherd "pay the bills" for the younger females (1st and 2nd calvers). The deadly combination of high heifer development costs and an increased chance of first-calf heifers not re-breeding due to inadequate body condition costs cow/calf producers substantially. However, producers that modify the management of young females during post-calving during 2009 could reduce the incidence of young open cows, and potentially also take advantage of higher calf prices 2 to 5 years from now.

A proven way to increase pregnancy rates in young beef females is to increase the number of females cycling at the start of the breeding season. Several strategies may improve short-term reproductive performance of young cows by increasing the percentage of cycling females.

#### **Monitor Body Condition**

According to USDA National Animal Health Monitoring Service (NAHMS) survey data, 42% of cows lost weight from just after calving (7 days after) until weaning time. This loss of body weight occurred primarily during the time of year when forages were most available and typically at their highest quality, which also occurred during the breeding season.

It is crucial for producers to monitor changes in both body weight and body condition score (BCS) in young females from calving through breeding to avoid weight loss during this time of elevated nutritional need. To avoid weight loss, supplemental energy and or protein should be provided. Use of the BCS tool has been shown to improve reproductive performance; however, less than 25% of all beef producers use this tool in order to manage the nutritional (and reproductive) status of their cows (Figure 2).

#### **Consider Weaning Earlier**

Weaning calves early from young females may have more of an effect on reproductive performance compared to all other strategies combined, due to its substantial effect on body condition. However, according to the most recent NAHMS survey, most beef producers decide their weaning time based on calf performance, and not on cow condition (Figure 3).

Long-term improvements to body condition and reproductive performance can be achieved if calves are weaned early from 1st calf heifers. Improved reproduction can result if calves are weaned at the start of the breeding season (e.g. 90-100 days of age) or early in the breeding season (e.g. 110-120 days of age). In one experiment, a long-term improvement in reproductive performance in cows was observed when early weaning was done when the females were 1st calf heifers. Consistent immediate benefits of early weaning have not been observed when calves were weaned late in the breeding season (e.g. 130-150 days of age).

Removal of calves reduces the nutritional requirements of 1st calf heifers by eliminating the energy demand from lactation. In addition, since suckling has an inherent negative effect on cyclicity after calving, females tend to begin cycling sooner if calves are weaned very early. Body weight and condition can also be added back to young cows during a time when forages are more readily available. However, there are several increased costs associated with early weaning, including: 1) facilities to handle early-weaned calves, 2) labor to manage younger calves, and 3) a feeding program to maintain optimum calf performance and health from the time of early weaning until they are sold.

#### **Develop and Use a Ration**

Due to elevated requirements, many young beef females would benefit from supplemental energy and/or protein from pre-calving through breeding since they become pregnant early in the breeding season. Further, producers using the BCS tool are able to quickly recognize that nutritional needs are not being met, and can modify their nutritional program.

About half of all operations with over 300 cows formulate a ration, but less than 25% of all beef cattle operations formulate a ration. Historically, ration formulation was slow and tedious; however, current computer-based ration formulation programs are easy and very low cost (several are free - check with your local University Extension). A properly formulated ration ensures that the nutritional needs of a female are met in order to optimize performance. A ration also helps to reduce feed costs by reducing the amount of overfeeding (especially protein). Ideally, a forage analysis should be completed prior to ration development to ensure that the calculated ration is accurate.

Young beef females typically need supplemental energy in order to maintain appropriate body weight and condition prior to breeding. Supplementation of fat - one of the most energy dense feedstuffs available - has resulted in a larger number of pregnant females if supplemented prior to calving in 2 experiments, but no difference in another. In contrast, consistent benefits of fat supplementation on mature beef cow reproduction have not been reported.

Several trace minerals are important for reproduction as well. Unfortunately, applied research into the effects of trace minerals on young beef cows is limited. There is strong evidence that supplementation of copper, zinc, and manganese can impact pregnancy rate early in the breeding season, compared to not supplementing these trace minerals.

#### **Use Bull Exposure**

The number of young females cycling at the start of the breeding season can be improved via exposure to vasectomized bulls. Exposing females to bulls beginning 30 to 45 days after calving can stimulate (or hasten) cyclicity in some females.

Similarly, the use of commercially-available hormones - such as melengestrol acetate (MGA) or controlled internal drug release (CIDR) devices - to increase the percent of young females cycling prior to breeding have also been evaluated. However, results have been inconsistent and the cost-benefit of using these products to stimulate cycling has not been addressed.

#### **The Bottom Line**

Young females need to be managed closely this spring and summer in order to: 1) avoid a large number of "money-losing" open females this fall, 2) reduce dependence on high cost bred replacements this fall, and 3) maximize the number of higher-priced calves that can be sold during 2010 and beyond.

Many management and nutritional options are available for producers to use on young females in order to increase conception early in the breeding

season. The cost-benefit of each strategy should be evaluated prior to incorporating it into an operation. However, based on USDA survey data, it appears that many producers could improve their reproductive performance via several simple management strategies (e.g. body condition scoring, ration development, etc.) that are not currently being utilized.

Link to NAHMS Study:  
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ceah/ncahs/nahms/>

Link to USDA Study:  
<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome>

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As always, MCA Membership is the key to the success of the organization. Without producers who back our association our voice is not as strong. Ask your friend, neighbor and fellow cattlemen to join the thousands of cattlemen in supporting the Missouri Cattlemen's Association.

**For more industry news visit:**

[Missouri Cattlemen's Association Website](#)

[Missouri's Cattlemen Foundation Website](#)

[Missouri Beef Industry Council Website](#)

[National Cattlemen's Beef Association Website](#)

[Missouri Department of Agriculture Website](#)

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