



April 23, 2009

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Upcoming Events & Meetings

Tri-County Cattlemen

April 25, 6:00 PM

Shady Dell Park Community Center

Benton County

April 27, 7:30 PM
Lincoln Cafeteria

FDA to Implement Feed Ban Despite Public Objections

Released by NCBA 4/22/09

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) criticized a decision by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to proceed with implementation of a new feed ban on April 27, 2009, despite numerous objections from farmers, ranchers, states, and members of Congress.

"This decision is extremely disappointing," says Dr. Elizabeth Parker, Chief Veterinarian for NCBA. "By going ahead with implementation of this unnecessary ban, the FDA is ignoring the substantial costs and environmental burdens it imposes on America's cattle producers."

For years, the livestock industry has made it clear to FDA and the Administration that this rule would exacerbate the problems producers are already facing regarding carcass disposal.

In fact, as early as December 2008, NCBA and producers across the country began voicing concerns about increased costs and disposal issues as many renderers discontinued their services in anticipation of this ban. "Unless FDA provides solutions for these problems, delaying the compliance date is an empty gesture," says Parker.

FDA is establishing a compliance date of October 26, 2009 to give renderers additional time to comply with the new regulations and allow producers more time to identify appropriate methods of disposal. However, they have not provided any means to resolve the disposal issues created by the rule.

"This amounts to an unfunded mandate," Parker continues. "FDA has acknowledged that this rule creates tremendous disposal issues for producers, yet they have not identified any viable solutions to that problem. Moving forward with implementation without addressing these concerns is irresponsible."

In a pre-publication of the final rule, FDA said that, "the underlying bases for these new measures were fully considered through the notice and rulemaking process." Yet the FDA never completed a risk assessment to determine the costs and benefits of the new feed ban.

"The rule creates significant costs and environmental problems, and has no

Moniteau County

April 28, 7:00 PM

Centennial Hall, Moniteau
County Fairgrounds

Boone County

May 4, 7:00 PM
MCA Building, Columbia

Southwest Cattlemen

May 5, 7:00 PM
Southwest Research Center,
Mt. Vernon

demonstrable benefit," Parker explains. "Our existing feed ban has proven highly successful in limiting bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in the U.S. herd."

Since 1997, the U.S. has prohibited ruminant feed from including parts of other ruminants. This proactive "ruminant to ruminant" feed ban, combined with other government and industry safeguards, is responsible for the extremely low level risk of BSE in the U.S. This was confirmed by years of robust USDA surveillance and reaffirmed by the U.S. "BSE Controlled Risk" designation by the OIE, the international animal health standard setting body.

ATTENTION: Junior Cattlemen

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. 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.

Deadline for pre-entry is May 15.

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>.

Vilsack Temporarily Suspends All Foreclosures within FSA Loan Program

Released by CattleNetwork.com 4/23/09

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack this week released a memorandum detailing an aggressive plan to promote civil rights and equal access at the United States Department of Agriculture.

In the memo, Vilsack announced the temporary suspension of all foreclosures within the Farm Service Agency's farm loan program, which will not only aid farmers facing economic hardship but will also provide the opportunity to review the loan granting process for possible discriminatory conduct.

"These are just the first actions in a continuing effort to ensure that the civil rights of USDA constituents and employees are respected and protected," said Vilsack. "This memorandum reflects my deep commitment to changing the direction of civil rights and program delivery in USDA by creating a comprehensive approach to guarantee fair treatment of all employees and applicants."

The Memo creates a Task force to conduct a review of a sample of program civil rights complaints that have been processed or that are currently being processed. The complaints and inquiries total over 14000, including over 3000 that have not been processed.

In outlining reforms already underway and additional measures to be implemented, Vilsack also granted greater authority to USDA's Office of Civil Rights. The Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights will collaborate with the other agencies to:

- develop and implement a proposal for data collection across USDA;
- make sure all complaints are incorporated as part of one data system; and
- develop USDA policy and training to ensure that all complaints are received and dealt with in a consistent manner within a specific timeframe.

Said Joe Leonard, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights: "The Department of Agriculture impacts all communities - whether through services to help black farmers thrive or by providing families with access to healthy foods. This renewed commitment to equal access is a step in the right direction and is a sign that in this Administration, no family will be left behind."

Cow genome unraveled in bid to improve meat, milk

Written by Randolph E. Schmid; Released by Washington Post 4/23/09

The cow is of the bovine ilk, one end is moo, the other, milk. Now science knows why which is which, they've read the genome, without a hitch. While poet Ogden Nash had cow basics down, it took 300 scientists six years to outline the genetic sequence of "L1 Dominette 01449," a Hereford cow living on a research farm near Miles City, Mont.

Researchers led by the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Agriculture report their findings in a herd of 20 papers appearing in Friday's edition of the journal Science and other journals including Genome Biology.

The researchers believe the findings will help improve the quality and safety of beef and dairy products and can be used to develop better ways of treating and preventing diseases that affect cattle.

Among their findings:

> Modern cattle developed from a diverse ancestral population from Africa, Asia and Europe, that has undergone a recent rapid decrease in population size, probably due to domestication.

> The genome of the domestic cattle contains approximately 22,000 genes, compared to 20,000 to 25,000 for humans.

> Cattle and humans have about 80 percent of their genes in common

> The organization of human chromosomes is closer to that of domestic cattle than to those of rats or mice, which are often used in lab tests of drugs intended for people.

> Cattle chromosomes, like those of humans and other mammals, contain segmental duplications, which are large, almost identical copies of DNA present in at least two locations in a genome.

They found that in domestic cattle, the duplications related to immunity, metabolism, digestion, reproduction and lactation. Such duplications in humans have been related to a variety of disorders.

A separate paper in Science reports that researchers have also compiled draft gene sequences from other types of cows for comparison. Those include the Holstein, Angus, Jersey, Limousin, Norwegian Red and Brahman breeds.

The sequencing project was coordinated by Richard Gibbs and George Weinstock of the Baylor College of Medicine; Chris Elsik of Georgetown University and Ross Tellam of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization of Australia.

The research was funded by the U.S. National Human Genome Research Institute, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the state of Texas, Genome Canada, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization of Australia, Agritech Investments Ltd., Dairy Insight, Inc., and AgResearch Ltd., all of New Zealand; the Research Council of Norway; the Kleberg Foundation, and the National, Texas, and South Dakota Beef Check-off Funds.

Keep An Eye On Water Quality

Released by BEEFMagazine.com 4/21/09

Water for stocker cattle is a whole lot like the snow and rain it comes from: as the adage goes, when you've got it, you can't imagine not having it, and vice versa.

For producers emerging from drought this spring, Bruce Anderson, University of Nebraska Extension forage specialist, says now's the time to ponder the possibilities of providing water to pasture cattle in tanks rather than ponds.

"Tank water can be healthier for cattle, and they usually prefer it to ponds or creeks," Anderson says. "It may be cooler and offer easier access. Plus, when cows walk into ponds and creeks, they stir mud and sediments into the water and often deposit animal wastes."

Before you dismiss the notion because of economics, Anderson explains, "Reports from Montana, Oregon, Canada and elsewhere show that the higher water quality found in tanks provides a boost in cattle gains. Calves can weigh an extra 50 lbs. at weaning when tank water is available instead of dirty ponds. Yearling steers can gain an extra 0.3-0.4 lb./day. With this much added performance, pumping water out of ponds, creeks or wells and into tanks can be paid off in just a few years."

Plus, Anderson points out, "Pumping water into tanks usually improves grazing distribution by attracting cattle to graze areas near the tanks instead of spending time standing in or around the ponds or creek. This can increase your pasture's carrying capacity or grazing season."

"Drinking water quality should be part of an evaluation when there is a problem with poor cattle performance. The only way to be sure if a problem exists is to test the water," say University of Georgia (UG) researchers. In "Water Requirements and Quality Issues for Cattle", Johnny Rossi, UG Extension animal scientist, and Mel Pence, veterinary field investigator, say these are some of the quality factors that should be evaluated:

- Dissolved solids - Water containing high levels of dissolved solids

(greater than 3,000 ppm) can lower feed intake and daily gains of beef cattle. Several studies show total dissolved solids in the 4,000-5,000 ppm range lowered stocker cattle gains. Water containing greater than 5,000 ppm should never be used for cattle.

- Nitrates - Recommended maximum levels of nitrates in the water for cattle is 450 ppm. When high-nitrate pasture or feed are fed, water contamination can become a serious problem. Death can occur when cattle consume water high in nitrates, but chronic toxicity, which causes the animal to eat less and lowers performance, is more common. Younger cattle are most susceptible to nitrate poisoning. Avoid digging ponds near areas where runoff from cropland or livestock facilities may occur.

- Mineral content - Sulfur, iron and manganese can also cause water-quality problems, decreasing water intake due to foul flavors and odor. Excessive levels of minerals also interfere with normal mineral absorption, which lead to deficiencies. This is most common with high iron and sulfate levels that bind and prevent the absorption of copper and zinc.

- Water temperature - Water temperature can affect cattle performance. Cool water helps cattle maintain proper body temperature and leads to increased water intake. Shallow ponds or small water troughs can heat up in the summer and lead to decreased water intake. Deep ponds and groundwater pumped into large water tanks don't generally heat up enough to affect water intake.

- Algae - Blue-green algae is a water-quality problem usually seen in surface water that is rich in nutrients. Blue-green algae are actually bacteria that, under the right conditions, can potentially produce toxins that can kill cattle. Toxicity problems usually occur when cattle consume large amounts of the algae in the summer or early fall following a rapid bloom of algae.

To control algae, eliminate the source of nutrients entering the water, aerate the water, or fence cattle away from the pond and pump water to a tank. If the intake pipe in the pond is at least 3 ft. below the surface, intake of blue-green algae toxins is minimal.

Moreover, Anderson explains, "Poor water distribution also transfers nitrogen, phosphorus and other nutrients as manure and urine are deposited near water sites or along the path to water. Nutrients in these deposits are concentrated and wasted in areas with little grass. A more even distribution of these deposits would grow more grass."

Though more ponds, windmills, wells and dugouts will help with distribution, Anderson notes they can get expensive, can only be placed in certain locations and aren't mobile.

"My preference often is to use a pipeline," Anderson says. "They can be put almost anywhere. And water lines are less expensive than you might think. Most folks can get pipe and frost-proof trenching for less than \$1/foot, especially if you can get cost-share funds. You also can leave your pipe on top of the ground, saving trenching costs, if you only need water during the growing season."

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 20, 2009. Registration will begin at 9:00 am and the tournament will have a shotgun start at 10:00 am. Entry fee is \$75 per person.

Foundation License Plates are still available for purchase.

For more details contact MCF office at (573) 499-9162.

Spotted Knapweed a Problem for Missouri Pastures

Spotted knapweed, a recently declared noxious weed in Missouri, is spreading through the state at an alarming rate. Introduced to the state as early as 1963, it is now confirmed in 41 counties. Knapweed is an extremely aggressive invader capable of forming dense monocultures and displacing desirable livestock forage. It has very low palatability and cattle will avoid it. Knapweed readily infests roadsides and other disturbed sites and then spreads into adjacent undisturbed pastures and open forests. Spotted knapweed is most common in southwest and south central Missouri, however it has been recorded as far north as Putnam county on the Iowa state line and as far east as Ralls, Pike, Lincoln and Jefferson Counties.

In 2008 knapweed biocontrol insects were released for the first time by the Missouri Department of Transportation. These insects were the knapweed flower weevil and the knapweed root weevil. These weevils are the natural predators of knapweed in Europe and Asia. They feed only on knapweed and will starve to death before they feed on any native plants or crops.

The flower weevil feeds on developing knapweed seeds, while the root weevil attacks the plant's roots, killing mature plants. Research by Montana State University has shown that when used together, these insects can reduce knapweed density by up to 99% over a period of several years.

A well known biocontrol success in Missouri is the musk thistle weevil, which reduced that noxious weed throughout Missouri as well as other parts of the United States. The concept of biocontrol in knapweed is the same as that behind the thistle weevil, natural predators feeding on the plant in an effort to reduce it's density and occurrence. As the knapweed population is reduced by the biocontrols, the insect's population also declines until the plant and the insects come into equilibrium at a low population level. Biocontrols will never eradicate the weed, but they will significantly reduce it's density and maintain it at a low level permanently.

University of Missouri Extension plans to make several releases of both the flower and root weevil in McDonald, Stone and Lawrence counties in the summer of 2009. These releases will spread and provide long term knapweed control in the areas where the releases are made.

Private landowners may apply for funding for biocontrol projects through the Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). Contact your local NRCS office for further information on applying for funding through these programs.

For further information on knapweed biological control you may wish to contact Bob Rich with Weedbusters Biocontrol at (406) 251-4261 or visit their website at www.weedbustersbiocontrol.com.

Like MySpace and Facebook but Only for Ranchers

Released by CattleGrower.com 4/21/09

It's common opinion that most ranchers are old school, set in their ways, and don't like change.

Perhaps this thinking is why the live stock Industry has traditionally been behind the curve in adapting to and using technology. Perhaps this is why most ranchers can only rely on their own close circle of contacts to promote and market their products to. Perhaps this is why many live stock producers fail to realize their full potential, or worse yet, fail altogether.

High in the plains of Wyoming, Chad Golladay and his family of six raise Lowline Angus and hay on their modest 300 acre ranch which they began building just three short years ago after being hooked in to the business through a 4-H project for his nine year old daughter.

Says Chad, "Despite the numerous fairs, stock shows, etc. that we've participated in, it was always a challenge to make new contacts in the Industry, or keep in touch with those we were able to meet. It seemed that if you weren't part of the 'good old boy' network that most doors and opportunities were very difficult to open."

"I think we've all met many fine people we'd like to discover more about and learn from. But if you're like me, too many result in lost contacts and lost business. With the advent of social networking sites like MySpace and FaceBook, I thought... 'Why not a social network just for ranchers and livestock producers?'" says Chad.

CattleGrower.com was born. A network community for livestock producers of all types and ages to connect, collaborate, and promote their operations.

Within only a few months of its creation, CattleGrower.com now boasts over 2,500 bovine, equine, sheep, goat, alpaca, and other livestock producers and enthusiasts who visit and contribute to the site regularly.

CattleGrower.com boasts a robust and powerful platform that allows its Members to:

- Create and develop new contacts
- Share and learn from each other
- Expand their marketing reach

While anyone is allowed to visit CattleGrower.com as a guest, Members are able to:

- Post Classifieds
- Share video and pictures
- Create and join events
- Create and participate in polls
- Have their own web page profile for marketing

Best of all perhaps is there is NO COST to become a Member.

Says Chad, "I believe we all want to do better by ourselves, our operations, and our families. CattleGrower.com provides that possibility - Simple to understand and easy to use, yet powerful enough to be limited

only by your imagination - best of all, it costs you nothing."

To learn more about visit www.CattleGrower.com.

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

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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If so, please contact Maureen Hamill at (573) 499-9162 (Ext. 233) or maureen@mocattle.com.