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PAGE 2, SEPTEMBER 2014, THE VIRGINIA CATTLEMAN

Opportunities

Jason Carter
Executive Secretary

Over the past year I have been asked almost on a daily basis how much higher is the cattle market going to go or how long can these prices last. Well, by the time this is published, we may have confirmation that the cattle market has indeed peaked and is in search of a new normal range for trade. If you take a look at recent history, it isn’t hard to find some breathtaking perspective for where we have come. May 31, 2013 saw the Chicago Mercantile Exchange Feeder Cattle Index at $130.81 which turned out to be the finale of a small downtrend from the market fl irtling with several record highs from the turn of the previous year. On August 4, 2014 the CME Feeder Index reached $225.68 which is a $95/cwt turn. In other words the Feeder Cattle Index and Fed Cattle futures went down in a hurry. In fact limit down several days that week. Over the course of the coming days a drop of $8-10/cwt meant some buyers were no longer shopping for loads of Virginia cattle. Basis has seemingly become simply the cost of transportation now and the availability of Virginia calves and yearlings, even with freight added on, has made our cattle competitive on a cash basis with Midwestern cattle. However when the market starts to correct itself after it has trended upward so high and for so long, then little things start to become opportunities for cattle feeders to get back to break even on oversold cattle. So back to my theory of relativities. Relatively speaking, every producer in Virginia is making a whole lot more money on feeder cattle than ever before. A fluctuation in the market causing a comparatively less value of $40-50 per head is signifi cant, but there have been times when that was all the added value in program cattle like VQA. This year that is 15% of how much more they are bringing than last. I saw a load of VQA cattle sell in Harrisonburg recently for $83 per hundred weight more than last year. Same producers from the same program.

Here’s where I slip the old Extension hat back on again. Stick ing with a program that builds reputation consistently wins. The Virginia Quality Assured feeder cattle program is a vessel that has allowed producers working hard at management to benefit from building a collective reputation. It’s true no matter where in Virginia you are. Sticking with a program adds value even in a high market where everyone is getting paid well. It has been well documented over the past nine months that infl uencers such as dwindling beef and other protein supplies, global and domestic beef demand and tight fed cattle numbers have ralied the market to unprecedented levels. Now as the reality of better than expected protein supplies, increased female retention and abundant corn are seeping into the market, the drop in market value is a natural settling into a new range of trade for cattle. The big question now is from building a collective reputation consistently wins. The Virginia Quality Assured feeder cattle program is a vessel that has allowed producers working hard at management to benefit from building a collective reputation. It’s true no matter where in Virginia you are. Sticking with a program adds value even in a high market where everyone is getting paid well. It has been well documented over the past nine months that infl uencers such as dwindling beef and other protein supplies, global and domestic beef demand and tight fed cattle numbers have ralied the market to unprecedented levels. Now as the reality of better than expected protein supplies, increased female retention and abundant corn are seeping into the market, the drop in market value is a natural settling into a new range of trade for cattle. The big question now is how much more they are bringing than last year. Same producers from the same program.

We’re turning new ground now and it should remain quite proifi table for a good long while to come.

All of you know that the world we operate in has become equally important to how we market. As frustrating as it is to hear the word sustainability thrown around in the context of so many agendas, it is still a fact that simply being able to operate is a critical step. The regulatory side of the agricultural world is concerning and particularly in the environmental arena. Many of you have heard about the proposed Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule published by EPA with an intent to “clarify” the existing Clean Water Act law that gives them scope and regulation over existing navigable water ways and water quality related to them. The Clean Water Act has been effective for 40 years giving both EPA and individual states power to identify and resolve issues that relate to protecting both the continued accessibility and quality of important primary surface waters. However the philosophical theme of the current administration in Washington is that our federal government knows best and it has methodically sought to usurp the power of states to self-govern on issues ranging from health care to...
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Opportunities

Continued from Page 2

environmental protection. WOTUS is not a law, but a 600-page “clarification” to an existing law that will effectively give EPA regulatory authority over nearly every waterway, intermittent and perennial, in the country. The selling point for them is more fluid oversight of assuring water quality controls across the board. The troubling feature of the rule, aside from its lack of clarity, is the blank check of interpretation WOTUS allows EPA to decide what water it chooses to regulate. Giving the federal government blanket ability to dictate land use adjacent to any water feature allows for future regulation concerning livestock production particularly to be in peril. Imagine a world where cattle are suddenly considered point sources of pollution similar to municipal waste treatment plants. Then, regulation becomes geared towards changing the entire farm versus improving one aspect that directly affects water quality and just like selling cattle, there is strength in numbers, and we can show our collective strength as the Virginia Cattleman’s Association by being a part of the process to protect ourselves. We have some great allies in Congress in Goodlate, Hurt and Griffith. We have a great Secretary of Agriculture in Virginia in Todd Haymore and a new Commissioner of VDACS in Brian Adam that are supportive of agriculture and listen to the commodity groups’ opinions and needs. Virginia Cattleman’s Association, by action of its membership in March, has empowered itself to act in the best interests of our collective industry with a unified voice and as THE cattle producer organization in the state. Get involved by staying on top of issues that affect our business. The Policy & Industry Advocacy side of VCA will evolve with time and opportunities for you to participate as members will grow in turn. Being involved now only strengthens us down the road. Our reputation is in our membership, and just like marketing, loyalty to our brand always wins in the long run.
A productive of the embryo program by the Pathfinder Sire 54W Net Worth 4200 from Sedgwicks Barbara 2996. Due 1-29-2015 to AAR Ten X 7008 SA.

A special feature by the Pathfinder Sire Whitestone Widespread MB from the now deceased Sinclair Lady 2961 4465. Due 1-29-2015 to AAR Ten X 7008 SA.
Phony Fears On Trans-Atlantic Trade

Wall Street Journal

How do you derail a free-trade agreement between Europe and the U.S. that could boost growth on both sides of the Atlantic by an estimated $100 billion annually? Well, fear-mongering might work. And that’s the path taken by sundry environmentalists regarding the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. So three cheers for Anthony Gardner, the U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, who last week delivered a sharp rebuke to the greens who say that implementing TTIP would mean forcing Europeans to eat American beef, poultry and other food products. “The debate has been mischaracterized by the enemies of this agreement,” Mr. Gardner told the website Euractiv. “They are accusing us of trying to force European consumers to eat products that they do not want. That is false.”

He was referring to the notion that regulatory harmonization between the U.S. and EU under TTIP would somehow threaten consumer health by lowering barriers to entry for American food products. Such claims have been made by mainstream center-left parties as well as the usual coalition of protectionists, environmentalists and anti-biotechnology cranks. “Cloned, hormone-treated, or genetically modified meat, or meat from the USA that has been cleaned using chlorine lye, must not be allowed to find its way into the EU,” says a position paper of the European Parliament’s Socialists & Democrats voting bloc, which in theory supports the TTIP. “US agribusiness is now targeting Europe’s [genetically modified organisms] safeguards,” claims the Friends of Earth Europe. The TTIP, says the Sierra Club, could “have devastating consequences for communities and the environment.”

Mr. Gardner blasted these arguments. “We want Europe to follow its own scientific advice, whether on biotechnology or clones,” he said. “There are no health issues involved in hormone-treated beef.” Enemies of this agreement are latching on to this issue (biotechnology or clones) “as ways to miscast what this is about. We should be talking about why Europe ignores the scientific advice from its own agencies.” On chlorinated chickens, for example, the European Food Safety Authority has concluded that “treatment with trisodium phosphate, acidified sodium chlorite, chlorine dioxide, or peroxyacid solutions . . . would be of no safety concern.” Likewise, the safety authority has repeatedly found that various genetically modified species of soybean, maize and cotton are as safe as their conventional counterparts.

The issue of hormone-treated beef is more complicated. Hormone-treated U.S. beef has been banned in Europe since the trans-Atlantic beef wars first erupted in the late 1980s. Yet the safety authority’s most recent study (from 2007), while declining to revise its earlier conclusions, found that “it is not possible to assess the significance of the large scale use of hormones in relation to many epidemiological studies that indicate a correlation between eating red meat and certain hormone-dependent cancers.”

And then there’s the simple fact that if European consumers don’t want to eat hormone-treated beef or any other foodstuff of which they disapprove, they don’t have to buy it. For too long, Europe has used scientifically unsound arguments to close off its food market to competition. The TTIP could change this, giving the Continent’s half a billion consumers access to less expensive food products. As Mr. Gardner asked: “Why don’t you believe your own science?”

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Darrell Peel, Oklahoma State University

The latest USDA data provides some indication that herd expansion may be beginning but more clearly shows that herd rebuilding will be a long process and a slow one, at least initially. Not surprisingly, the July Cattle report shows estimates of herd inventories that are down in most all categories compared to the last report in 2012. Since no 2013 report is available for comparison, it is not clear whether inventories are higher or lower than last year for the various categories but it is likely that most are lower. However, it does seem that the beef cow herd is stabilizing and is likely only slightly lower than last year.

The July 1 estimate of beef replacement heifers was down from July 2012 despite the fact that January 1 estimates of beef replacement heifers increased each of the past three years. The ratio of the July 1 beef replacement heifers to the January inventory of replacement heifers is the lowest since the July estimates began in 1973. This ratio typically rises during herd expansion and decreases during liquidations. This indication of additional herd liquidation is somewhat in contrast to the heifers on feed in the July Cattle on Feed report, which is down 4.6 percent from year earlier levels. The year over year decrease in July 1 heifers on feed is consistent with modest levels of initial herd expansion. Quarterly estimates of heifers on feed have posted year over year decreases for the past 8 quarters with an average decrease of 6.8 percent. So far this year, heifer slaughter is down 7.9 percent; a significantly larger decrease than steer slaughter, which is down 2.9 percent for the year to date. Beef cow slaughter is down 16.4 percent so far this year compared to the same period last year. These decreases in female slaughter strongly suggest that herd expansion is beginning.

Aggregate herd balance numbers suggest that the capacity for herd expansion is greater than what is observed thus far. There are several factors that may be limiting herd expansion in these early stages. The record high feeder cattle prices that will eventually stimulate herd expansion may, in the short run, increase the temptation to sell heifers rather than retain them for breeding. This is particularly true for producers still recovering financially from drought and other economic difficulties.

For some older producers who are considering retirement, current market prices may provide the incentive to sell out and exit the industry. While new producers will, in most cases, replace the older producers, there may be a lag in herd growth during the transition. Additionally, the record high prices that cattle sellers currently enjoy also imply high prices for breeding females that may be a deterrent to expansion, at least initially, for some producers. Regional factors may be moderating herd expansion as well. Much of the eastern half of the country has lost pasture and hay acreage as crop production has expanded in recent years and less herd rebuilding is expected in this area. In much of the Plains and Western regions, where proportionately more herd expansion is likely eventually, drought conditions persist in some areas and herd rebuilding may be moderated for several months to several years to allow recovery of pasture and range.

The biology of cattle production under the best of circumstances. It appears that herd expansion is being further restricted at this time in some regions due to producer age and expectations; financial limitations; regional shifts in cow-calf production; continuing drought conditions; and recovering pasture/range conditions.
New Zilmax Studies Find No Ill Effects

At the same time, Merck announced a Five-Step Plan to Ensuring Responsible Beef, which includes forming an independent advisory board, conducting new scientific studies and re-certifying feedyards for proper use of the product. Last week, during the Cattle Feeders Business Summit in Denver, Merck Animal Health technical services specialist John Hutcheson, PhD, updated cattle feeders on progress and results of studies carried out over the past year.

At the time of the suspension last August and September, Merck immediately began a large-scale audit of cattle in feedyards and upon arrival at packing plants. Trained observers collected mobility scores on over 60,000 head of cattle either at feedyards shortly before shipping or upon arrival at packing plants, or in some cases, at both stages. The vast majority of cattle in this audit — about 98 percent — were graded in a normal mobility score of “1,” meaning normal mobility and no sign of lameness. A small percentage had a “2” mobility score indicating slight discomfort and just a few graded “3,” indicating moderate lameness. Mobility scores of 2 or 3 were somewhat more common at the packing plants than at the feedyard, including among those sets of cattle monitored at both locations, suggesting a association between transport and loss of mobility. They found, however, no differences in mobility scores between cattle that received Zilmax and those receiving no beta agonist.

Next, the company helped support a variety of controlled, scientific studies in cooperation with the University of Georgia, New Mexico State University, Oklahoma State University, Texas Tech, USDA and other research institutions. These trials involved a variety of cattle, including various beef breeds, culled dairy cows and calf-fed Holstein steers, fed in a variety of environments and seasons including during the heat of summer. The trials evaluated behavior and locomotion at feedyards, during loading and unloading at the packing plant and through processing.

One trial used pedometers to track the number of steps cattle took each day. In one trial, researchers fed Holstein steers for as long as 12 months, to finished weights as heavy as 1,900 pounds, to provide comparisons among extremely heavy cattle. None of these trials found any significant differences in lameness or other negative outcomes between cattle treated with Zilmax, untreated cattle or those treated with Optaflexx, the other FDA-approved beta agonist used in finishing cattle.

Several large trials included metabolic studies involving evaluation of blood metabolites, stress hormones, blood gases, pH and lactate levels. Researchers also used infrared thermography to evaluate heat stress, monitored respiration rates and body temperatures and studied histology on tissues and compared organ weights at slaughter. Researchers found slightly higher respiration rates among Zilmax cattle compared to controls, which Hutcheson says were in an expected range. Results of these trials and others were reported at the recent American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) annual meeting, and those reports are available online.

Several cattle feeders in the audience expressed frustration that the product, which can significantly improve the value of finished cattle, remains off the market. Merck representatives emphasized they are doing all they can to compile scientific data supporting its safety and to present those data to packers, retailers and other stakeholders. They maintain there is a path forward for restoring the product to the market, and that the company will, at that time, carefully control who uses the product and how they use it, through their feedyard certification process.

no significant differences in levels of stress hormones or body temperatures and blood chemistry measures were in a normal range among treated and control cattle. Hutcheson says in these trials, Zilmax did not detrimentally alter the ability of cattle to respond to stress.

At Texas Tech University, researchers actually conducted magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans on the feet of control and treated cattle at slaughter weight. These examinations evaluated the lamellae, digital phalanges, deep digital flexor tendons and other components in the lateral and medial claws. Almost all of the feet evaluated with MRI technology were normal, and there were no significant differences between treated and control cattle.

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John Maday, Managing Editor, Drovers CattleNetwork

It was just one year ago when concerns surfaced over possible adverse effects of the beta agonist Zilmax on feedyard cattle. Following a special session preceding the 2013 NCBA summer conference in Denver, where experts discussed concerns with lameness and other animal health and welfare issues, Tyson Foods announced a moratorium on purchasing Zilmax-fed cattle. Shortly after that, Merck Animal Health temporarily suspended sales of the product in the United States, a policy that remains in place today.
A Dirt Road Dairy Colors
Steve Lucas

If you’d known Harry and Larry when they were growing up, you’d never have guessed they were brothers. Larry took after his mother, tall, big boned, loud and outgoing. Harry was like his father, thin and bespectacled, shy and quiet. Larry was on the football team; Harry sat in the stands calculating the probability of making 40-yard field goals. Dad was respected in the community as a knowledgeable cattleman, and he encouraged, but did not insist that his sons return to the family business. He did insist that whatever they decided to do, they do with passion.

Larry went to college on a football scholarship, married the captain of the cheerleading squad, and came home to teach PE at the high school. Harry got his MBA, returned to the area to manage the manufacturing plant and married his high school sweetheart.

At each son’s homecoming, Dad helped them get started in the cattle business by buying them six bred heifers of their choice. Larry came home first and chose a fine group of purebreds of impeccable lineage. He and his wife built a new house on a hill overlooking a bottomland pasture where they now entertain fellow seed stock producers. They sit on the deck with their friends talking the merits of bulls with names like Beastmaster and Lightning Legacy. All the farming equipment is the same color, and his truck and car came new from the same dealership in town.

Harry, on the other hand, looked around and found six crossbred heifers with a mixture of colors and markings. He fixed up one of the old houses on the farm that sits off the road in a patch of woods. He and his wife seldom have company; his farm equipment is a mixture of several different brands and colors. He drives an imported Ford; her car is American made.

At family gatherings, the brothers spar good-naturedly about the merits of buyer’s preference for hide color versus hybrid vigor. They will argue for hours over the advantages and disadvantages of a ZX5200 turbo fired engine on a 9300 combine. Each one knows he will never convince the other. Both of them are right in what they believe. It’s not about color, it’s about passion.

Beef: It Could Be More Expensive For Dinner Due To Drought

Rising beef prices are forcing restaurants to choose between raising prices, or chopping items from menus.

A drought in the central United States has reduced hay production, cattle’s main meal. With less to feed them, ranchers are cutting back, too. Cattle production is down to a level not seen since the 1950s. Taylor’s Market butcher Danny Johnson says this combination is driving all beef prices upward.

“I’ve seen spikes and it comes back down but this has been pretty steady,” he said. “There is always a rise during barbecue season, but this year was more significant. And even all the grind meats, the shoulder meats—all that stuff is going up too.”

Across the country, Costco and Chipotle have already raised their prices, and local stores like Taylor’s Market in Land Park have followed. Johnson says his meats are 60 cents a pound higher than they were last winter.

But customers we spoke to aren’t ready to give up on buying steak yet. “It hasn’t necessarily driven us there,” said Darren Bouten. “We don’t necessarily eat a lot of beef anyway so when we do eat it I don’t worry about price points.”

But some restaurants worry sales will drop soon if prices keep going higher. At that point, many of them say they will be forced to cut back on the beef cuts they sell, or get rid of the dishes.

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THE VIRGINIA CATTLEMAN, SEPTEMBER 2014, PAGE 9
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Virginia Angus Association
Calendar of Events

Sept. 26- Oct. 5
Virginia State Fair, Doswell, VA

October 11
Northern VA Fall Female Classic and On Stage Sale
@ Woodside Farm, Berryville, VA

October 18
SWVAA More for Your Money Sale,
Wytheville, VA

October 18
Whitestone Brand of Quality Sale,
Aldie, VA

October 25
Lazy Acres Angus Customer Appreciation & Open House, Rocky Mount, VA

October 31
Virginia Tech 20th Annual Hokie Harvest Sale, Blacksburg, VA

October 31
Quaker Hill Fall Bull and Female Sale, Louisa, VA
Health Group ‘Superbugged’ By Antibiotic Misuse

Tim Devaney, The Hill

Editor’s Note: The article below is a great example of how, in modern media and journalism, tidbits of facts are blended with sensational sounding partial truths to create stories. The term for this second rate reporting at one time was “red herring”. However in an effort for all media outlets to compete for an ever decreasing American attention span and willingness to see the bigger picture, this sensationalism of news has now become the standard for many in the popular press.

This article correctly identifies the Centers for Disease Control advocacy for decreased antibiotic use however it does not qualify the incorrect assortment that livestock utilize 80% of all antibiotic drugs that also have human medicine usefulness. In fact the overwhelming majority of live-stock antibiotics sold are classified as coccidostats or antimicrobials that enhance feed efficiency by improving the rumen microbial flora health and killing harmful parasites in the gut. These antimicrobial drugs have no place in human medicine and that fact, combined with livestock drugs are sold and administered largely by weight, skews the truth when reported as simply 80% of all antibiotics sold are sent to the food animal industry.

Our goals at Virginia Cattlemen’s Association is to provide marketing, representation and educational services for our members and the industry at large. Responsible management of cattle, including veterinary drug use, is clearly promoted for in the principals of the producer funded Beef Quality Assurance Program.

Virginia Cattlemen supports BQA and encourages all cattle producers to seek and maintain this important certification for the benefit of their operation and our industry.

Responsible advocacy for our business begins with education. Education has to be sought and you must also seek perspective to actually be educated rather than simply memorize facts that blur with time. Consider our reprinting of this article as contributing to your perspective as well as a nod to the urgency that we all remember the interconnectedness of our farms and businesses within the greater cattle industry.

A health group is renewing its push for stricter Food and Drug Administration regulations that would prohibit farmers from giving antibiotics to livestock to compensate for poor living conditions and help them grow faster. The group warns that antibiotics may be less effective on people who are sick because they are being overused on farm animals, which gives bacteria more opportunities to learn how to defeat the antibiotic, creating what is known as a “superbug.”

In fact, 80 percent of the antibiotics used in the U.S. are given to livestock, rather than people. Continued on Page 34
Ground Beef Regulations May Soon Change

With information from Kansas State Univ.

The USDA has proposed new regulations that will require stores to better trace ground beef.

“Currently there’s no regulations that require those retailers to track what products and the amounts and the sources of those products that actually go into their store-ground product,” said Travis O’Quinn, Kansas State University Meat Specialist.

Most stores combine meat products to create the ground beef found on shelves. The USDA wants them to keep records of what meat is used and where it came from. That would make it easier and faster to trace back contaminated beef, hopefully before many people eat it. The proposed regulation could lead to stores buying more pre-packaged ground beef.

“We may see more of a shift toward products coming in foam trays that are already packaged as opposed to being ground on site, just to eliminate the extra record keeping that would be require for retailers,” O’Quinn said.

The proposal is currently open for public comment. Among the changes are requirements that the beef component used in each lot (in pounds), the date and time each lot of raw ground beef product was produced, and the date and time when grinding equipment and other related food-contact surfaces were cleaned and sanitized be disclosed.

Official establishments and retail stores would also have to comply with the proposed record keeping requirements with respect to raw beef products that are ground at an individual customer’s request.

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Virginia Simmental Association

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located at
Echo Ridge Farm, Atkins, VA
See Page 19 for more information about the sale.

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Steve Strauss

Labels can inform or mislead. Our marketplace is literally drowning in labels, most of which have little meaning except to promote the sales of some products over others. What consumers want is labels that are reliable and meaningful, not more labels that do not accurately inform about health and environment.

We have a labeling law. The Food and Drug Administration requires foods that are “materially” different in nutrition or safety, positive or negative, to be labeled as such today. The focus is on the product, not the method. This “product not process” approach has been agreed to by numerous high-level scientific and government agencies around the world, including our own National Academy of Science, the Ecological Society of America, and the American Medical Association. A measure to label all products of the GMO process as though they were universally harmful goes against this internationally agreed scientific principle.

GMO crops are getting more diverse every year; a single label for all of them is misleading. Some of the major crops have enabled huge reductions of pesticide use; others offer improved drought tolerance and healthfulness of derived oils; still others include staples such as potato and corn with reduced natural toxins, and there are many in the science or development pipelines that are enriched in critical nutrients or have reduced allergens.

Even the herbicide-tolerant crops cited by Donohoe and Seidler have provided large environmental benefits by promoting low tillage farming. Tillage is perhaps the largest single environmental harm humans do to this planet, mainly by accelerating soil erosion and climate change. What is needed are smarter ways to manage these crops for long term benefit, which the Environmental Protection Agency has now started to require of companies and farmers.

The “mounting evidence” of harm is the result of a small number of highly contested papers from vocal anti-GMO activists. One highly publicized paper was so egregious it was declared irrelevant by the European Food Safety Authority and was retracted by the journal that originally published it. There are literally hundreds of high quality scientific papers, many with no involvement of biotech companies, that have supported the safety of current food with biotech ingredients. The finding of safety is also supported by intensive reviews by scientific and regulatory agencies worldwide, including the World Health Organization, the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge (commonly known as the Royal Society, or Royal Academy of Sciences) and our own FDA and EPA. Should there someday be sound science that shows harm, the EPA retains legal authority to revoke or restrict the licenses for crop or pesticide use.

Mandatory GMO labels typically reduce rather than increase consumer choice, as we have seen in Europe. Labels that might stigmatize brands are often avoided by companies, thus lower priced foods with GMO ingredients are often removed from the marketplace entirely. The separate harvest, storage, shipping and monitoring systems required by stringent labeling laws like the Oregon ballot measure would impose large costs upon the food system that consumers would ultimately pay. The brunt of this increase in food cost is of course

Continued on Page 33

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USDA Updates 2015 Meat Supply Outlook

USDA updated its supply/demand forecasts for beef, pork and poultry on August 13th as part of its monthly WASDE report. The chart to the right shows the key changes that were made to the forecasts and also the degree to which output and availability is expected to change next year. Meat prices have increased dramatically this year and there is plenty of anxiety among US retail and foodservice operators as to what kind of inflationary environment they should expect in 2015. The main takeaway from the latest USDA report is that while beef supplies and availability will continue to decline in 2015, pork and chicken supplies will be higher, which could help bring prices lower from current record levels. USDA made very modest adjustments to its beef production forecast for next year and at 24,396 billion pounds, production is now expected to be down 1% from 2014 levels. This forecasts likely may strike some analysts as a bit too optimistic given reports of low heifer retention numbers in the July report and steady declines in the calf crop during the past few years. Cowl slaughter this year has been down sharply, which has contributed to the lower beef supplies but it is unlikely that we will see a flood of cull cows come to market next year given the size of the beef cow herd in the US. In our view, there is a good chance that the beef production forecasts will be revised lower as we go forward. USDA also shows beef imports rising another 0.6% next year after jumping some 334 million pounds (+13%) this year. The increase in imports this year was due to record grinding beef prices in the US but also high slaughter numbers in Australia. Australia numbers will decline as imported beef, we could see beef imports lower next year.

Pork production for 2015 is currently pegged at 23.293 billion pounds, up about 2.2% from the 2014 estimate but only slightly higher than the production levels we saw in 2013. Traders of lean hog futures appear to be even more bearish in their assessment of lean hog supplies for next year, with futures prices for next year down in double digits from the levels we saw this year. Somehow, it seems that market thinks all the supply shortages we experienced this year are over and so are the risk premiums built onto those future contracts. The main risk to the USDA supply forecast is that we see a return of PEDv this fall and winter, not to the same extent as this past year but significant enough to limit growth. Pork exports next year are projected to be 5.145 billion pounds, revised higher from the July forecast and up 1.6% than this year. Demand for US pork continues to grow, however, and we think the current forecast remains conservative.

Russia’s Trade Restrictions Not As Extensive For Virginia As Feared

Russia’s ban on food and agriculture products exported from the United States won’t impact Virginia quite as severely as first feared, state agriculture officials said recently. The ban was imposed on Aug. 7 to counter U.S. and European sanctions against Russia over its actions in Ukraine. It does not include the largest single agricultural export from Virginia to Russia — soybeans. Nor does it include grains. However, another major export from Virginia to Russia — pork products — is included in the ban. So are processed meats, fish, vegetables and dairy products.

While the ban does not affect every export from Virginia, “obviously we remain concerned,” said Todd P. Haymore, Virginia’s secretary of agriculture and forestry. “Anytime any product or commodity is restricted or banned completely, it has a negative economic impact on the company that is exporting.” “That being said, this could be a lot worse,” Haymore said. “We are grateful it is not a complete ban on products from Virginia to Russia, because Russia is a very important customer of the commonwealth.”

About $117 million worth of agricultural products were exported from Virginia to Russia in calendar year 2013, ranking Russia No. 4 as an export destination behind China (at $580 million), Canada ($259 million) and Switzerland ($190 million). In the first six months of this calendar year, Virginia farm exports to Russia were valued at $79 million. Of that total, soybeans represent about $60 million, while pork is about $14 million. The restrictions exclude feed products, such as grains, because Russia needs to feed its own livestock. While the ban includes processed poultry products, it does not include live poultry or cattle, Haymore said.

In 2012, Virginia officials announced a trade deal to export Holstein bulls to Russia, though the exact number of bulls to be exported was kept secret. Russia wanted to buy U.S.-bred bulls in order to improve the genetics of its herds.
ROI Study Shows $11.20 Return On Checkoff

Feedstuffs

In the most comprehensive study ever rendered about the Return on Investment (ROI) of beef checkoff assessments, Dr. Harry Kaiser of Cornell University concludes that each dollar invested in the Beef Checkoff Program between 2006 and 2013 returned about $11.20 to the beef industry. The news for beef checkoff investors couldn’t be better,” said Kaiser, the Gellert Family professor of applied economics and management at Cornell and director of the Cornell Commodity Promotion Research Program, who is sharing study results this week at the 2014 Cattle Industry Summer Conference. “It is clear to me that activities funded through the Beef Board budget have a substantial impact on beef demand in the U.S. and in foreign markets. The return on producers’ and importers investments into this program is vastly greater than the cost of the program.”

Commissioned through the checkoff’s Joint Evaluation Committee, this new ROI study could be a useful tool for producers who make decisions about how to invest checkoff dollars.

“This really tells us that we’re on the right track with how we plan our checkoff programs,” said cattlemans Ted Greidanus of California, who chairs the checkoff’s Evaluation Committee. “We are accountable to beef producers and importers who fund the work we do with checkoff dollars, so we wanted to know how much difference we were really making in the marketplace, good or bad — and I must say that I am quite pleased at how well the news really is.”

Some additional key findings in Kaiser’s benefits-cost analysis include:

- Had there not been any CBB-funded marketing between 2006 and 2013, total domestic beef demand would have totaled 15.7 billion pounds – or 11.3 percent less than it was with the checkoff programs in place. Holding the effects of all other demand drivers constant, the activities funded by the CBB resulted in an increase in beef demand of 2.1 billion pounds per year.
- Had the national Beef Checkoff Program not invested in foreign-market development between 2006 and 2013, foreign demand for U.S. beef would have been 6.4 percent lower.
- The statistical results indicate that all eight CBB demand-enhancing activities – generic beef advertising; channels marketing; industry information; new-product development; public relations; nutrition research; beef-safety research and product-enhancement research – have a positive and statistically significant impact on increasing per capita beef demand.
- At the bottom line, the increase in beef demand due to CBB-funded marketing efforts resulted in higher prices for beef producers and importers, which means higher net revenue than they would have experienced without those checkoff programs. Given the tremendous budget challenges of the checkoff in recent years, the Cattlemen’s Beef Board commissioner the all-encompassing study to provide a more thorough evaluation possible of checkoff activities than it traditionally has. As a result, this new study presents a more complete and accurate picture of checkoff returns and provides a new benchmark. “Let me caution against trying to compare the results of this study with the 2009 study, which reported a return of $8.65 on each checkoff dollar,” Dr. Kaiser said. “This time around, the Beef Board asked for a more comprehensive study than ever before, so I evaluated all commercial beef disappearance, including retail, foodservice, and international data over eight years, whereas the 2009 study looked solely at domestic retail data for a five-year period.

“Furthermore,” Dr. Kaiser continued, “my study analyzed individual categories of point of purchase categories separately, and then brought the categories together to identify an overall beef checkoff return on investment. In 2009, the Beef Board commissioned a study analyzing only the checkoff as a whole.” Greidanus said he is quite confident in the study results. “As chairman of the Evaluation Committee, I know that Dr. Kaiser’s research methods are well-respected, so we are very confident about the analysis and very pleased with the results,” Greidanus said. “And this tells us that the benefits of all CBB programs are 11.2 times more valuable than their costs. As a cattleman who pays into the program, it’s invigorating to know that my investment is making a difference.”

Kaiser, who has performed similar analyses for other checkoff programs, said the results should be encouraging to the country’s beef producers and importers. “If I was investing my hard-earned dollars into the checkoff, as beef

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Will Public Research Keep Up With Demands On Agriculture?

Robert Giblin

Opportunities, challenges and visibility for how agriculture will meet future needs for food, fiber and energy are greater than ever, yet public funding for ag research may not be keeping up. The abundance, efficiencies of production, safety and quality of food in the U.S. are direct results of agricultural research conducted during the last 150 years. The Morrill Act of 1862 established land-grant universities to educate citizens about agriculture, home economics and other professions. In 1887, the Hatch Act established funding to support land-grant universities and promote the advancement of U.S. agriculture. In 1914, the Smith-Lever Act created Cooperative Extension.

Private industry, and other academic institutions and federal agencies, land-grant universities and Extension are all critical partners in ag research. Publicly funded ag research experienced sustained growth from the 1930s until 1980. In 1980 private investment in ag research and development surpassed public funding. Most private research funds are channeled to applied research or commercialization of product, with a strong emphasis on crop seeds and biotech, farm machinery, and animal breeding and genetics. Private research on crop protection and chemicals has declined and there is evidence that animal health research funding may be shrinking. Public research typically is focused on “basic” research or the fundamental sciences, as well as food safety, resource conservation, farming practices or other areas that either serve as the launching pads for applied research or address needs where there are no direct private incentives.

Agriculture Department research funding flows through a few key channels, including: the Agricultural Research Service, which conducts in-house or intramural research projects within USDA; the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, which funds extramural research at the state level through land-grant universities and the State Agricultural Research Stations; the Economic Research Service; and the Forest Service. States partner with the federal government to fund research. Universities and veterinary colleges also receive money from state legislatures, private contributors and other federal agencies.

However, public spending on agricultural research is stable to declining. From 2000 through 2015 (projected), USDA budget authority for ag research will have declined 4.6 percent, with ARS losing nearly 28 percent, in 1914 constant dollars. Though actual research dollars increased, USDA research budget authority has been declining from its high in 2003, and fell nearly 16 percent from 1976 to 2015 (projected levels) in 1914 constant dollars.

Norman Borlaug often is credited with being the father of the first Green Revolution, which increased agricultural production worldwide from the 1940s to late 1960s, through research, development and technology. Before his death at 95 years of age, in 2009, Norman Borlaug called for a second Green Revolution. Citing the need to produce as much food in the next 50 years as we produced in the last 10,000 years, Borlaug said the Green Revolution hasn’t been won and the successes of the first revolution may have led to a false sense of security about our ability to bring worldwide food security. During the first Green Revolution, the United States was a primary beneficiary and emerged as a global agricultural leader, with U.S. consumers benefiting. From 1948-2012, U.S. household disposable income spent on food declined from nearly 25 percent to 10 percent. Those in other nations typically spend much more.

The need to increase funding for agricultural research is gaining recognition. For example, a President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology report issued in December 2012 identified seven key areas driving research needs: managing new pests, pathogens and invasive plants; increasing the efficiency of water use; reducing the environmental footprint of agriculture; growing food in a changing climate; managing the production of bioenergy; producing safe and nutritious food; and assisting with global food security and maintaining abundant yields. Numerous organizations are calling for increased research spending in anticipation of meeting the food needs for an additional 2 to 3 billion people–9.1 billion by 2050. Of that, about 7.5 billion–our current world’s population–will live in urban areas. The number of farmers and land available for farming will decline, while pressure to minimize the environmental footprint of agriculture and meet increasing social pressures will increase.

With per-capita income increases and a growing middle class worldwide that has an increased appetite for proteins and high-quality food, the amount of food available to meet future needs must be two to three times what it is now. While the needs and demands placed on agriculture are greater than ever, meeting all of these needs will require both new approaches and significant investments in agricultural research.

Robert Giblin consults, writes and speaks about agriculture and food industry issues and trends.
Gary Johnson

Daniel Adams was good. In fact he was very good. He started out feeding cattle and raising crops. Over time, his operation had grown and changed. He now had almost 2,000 acres. Dan had four hog buildings where he finished his own pigs and also had a 200-head cow/calf operation. Dan, or “Lucky” as he was called by his neighbors, had three sons. The oldest son followed in Dan’s footsteps and was independent from his father. His third son was never interested in the farming operation. He went to medical school and now was a family practice doctor in their area.

Dan was very focused in all that he did. His crops not only looked good, but so did his fence rows and waterways. The building sites he rented were always neatly mowed and cared for. Dan was also an excellent marketer. He followed the trends and was aware of the trends. When things were going up, Dan was selling. When things were going down, Dan was out of the market. Dan also seemed to know the best time to buy land. Dan’s oldest and youngest sons were both very successful. They seemed to be carbon copies of Dan. The second son was a different story.

He struggled to get things done on time. He was always backwards in his marketing. After the market fell, he still had grain bins full of corn. His son seemed like a nice enough guy. Dan gave great thought to his second son. He decided he would help him out. Dan had always been reluctant to give too much advice, but now the time seemed right. He had put together a plan in his own mind. When he saw something wrong with what the second son was doing, he would simply tell him.

The first opportunity to put his plan into action occurred the very next day. It was late in the spring and Dan and his father had just finished planting. He stopped at the second son’s house and told him he was late. He needed to pick up the pace and finish planting his beans. He left the farmstead feeling like he had done his son a great favor. A few days later, as he drove around inspecting his fields he saw that the second son had weeds coming up in the corn. So he drove to the second son’s house and told him he needed to get out there and spray. Later that same day, he felt this would be a good time to be marketing corn. He stopped at the son’s house and told him he should be selling part of this corn for November delivery. And so it continued. Dan would see something or know something and then he would stop at his son’s house and tell him what he needed to do.

For the first few months, the plan seemed to go very well. The second son seemed to appreciate Dan’s advice and counsel. As the summer and early fall passed by, Dan continued to find opportunities to tell his son what to do. Sometimes he stopped and sometimes he called. In an effort to become more efficient, he even started texting his son three or four times a week with helpful hints and sometimes outright commands. Strangely, the second son seemed less excited to have his father drive into the yard. By harvest, the son seemed reluctant to talk to Dan. Perhaps his son did not understand how Dan was trying to help him. He decided to pick up the pace of advice and counsel. He decided at least once a day he would stop at his son’s house and review with him areas in which he needed to improve. At this point, Dan’s son seemed almost belligerent and offended. Dan was confused. All he wanted to do was help his son. He reviewed his advice in his mind. Was it not correct? The answer was yes.

Everything he told his son was true. If his son would simply follow his advice he would do better. He decided to continue his advice-giving and perhaps add explanations pointing out the errors. By Christmas time, things had grown worse. Dan’s son wanted nothing to do with him. He seemed to be rude to his dad. Dan was discouraged and had no idea why his son was so unhappy with him. While Dan was extremely capable, knowledgeable and a moneymaker he did not understand how to deal with people. Giving advice, whether it be to family members or strangers, can be very tricky.

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September Beef Herd Management Advisor

Scott P. Greiner &
Mark A. McCann
Extension Beef Specialists,
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September typically marks the beginning of the busiest calf-marketing time of the year. This year excitement is at an all-time high as a result of summer calf prices and the fall price forecast. Cow-calf producers are likely to enjoy substantial profits this fall, with the most important consideration being how to best utilize these returns from your cattle enterprise. First, make record of this moment for your personal time capsule. Secondly, assess your debt along with critical areas on the farm which require capital to improve. Fences, facilities and other equipment frequently make the list. As you weigh reinvestment options in your operation consider those which most impact your herd’s productivity. Correcting soil fertility and pH, weed control and overseeding legumes are all options which provide returns on your investment. Upgrading facilities provides opportunities for enhanced management strategies which provide return on investment. Examples include appropriate facilities to wean, feed, and precondition calves post-weaning. Additionally, working facilities which accommodate an AI program can provide a significant upgrade to herd genetics. These are rare times in the cattle business, be sure that you prepare yourself for whenever the leaner times return.

Spring Calving Herds (January-March)

General
• Finalize plans for marketing of calf crop. Coordinate and time weaning, vaccination program, and weaning-time management in concert with marketing plans. Calculate break-evens on various marketing options and consider risk management strategies.
• Schedule and conduct pregnancy diagnosis with veterinarian 45-60 days following breeding season. Plan a marketing strategy for open cows.
• Plan for winter by evaluating feed and forage supplies and options, including conducting forage tests to determine nutritional content of hay on hand.

Nutrition and Forages
• Body Condition Score cows at weaning and separate thin cows
• Use palatable feeds and high quality hay to background calves.
• Continue stockpiling
• Continue to manage first-calf heifers separately; give them the best forage. Thin mature cows could be added to this group.
• Continue to feed high Se trace mineral salt. A forage analysis can reveal what other minerals should be supplemented.
• Continue to manage growth of warm season grass pastures by rotational grazing. As warm season pastures approach dormancy continue to use rotational grazing to manage residue.
• Store your high quality hay in the dry.
• Collect and submit forage samples for nutrient analysis.

Herd Health
• In consultation with your veterinarian, finalize vaccination and preconditioning protocol for calf crop. Administer pre-weaning vaccinations.

Reproduction
• Make plans to pregnancy check heifers as soon as possible after bull removal. This will allow options in marketing open heifers.
• Remove bulls after 60 days for controlled calving season
• Schedule pregnancy check of cow herd with veterinarian

Genetics
• Collect 205-day weights on calf crop at appropriate time (AHIR age range 120-280 days), along with cow weights, hip heights and body condition scores (cow mature size data taken within 45 days of calf weaning measure).
• Identify replacement heifers. Utilize available tools including genetics, dam performance, individual performance, and phenotype. Restrict replacement heifer pool to those born in defined calving season.

Fall Calving Herds (September-November)

General
• Secure necessary supplies for calving season (ob equipment, tube feeder, colostrum supplement, ear tags, animal health products, calving book, etc.)
• Move pregnant heifers and early calving cows to calving area about 2 weeks before due date
• Check cows frequently during calving season. Optimal interval is to check calving females is every 4 hours. Address calving problems early.
• Utilize calving area that is clean and well drained. Reduce exposure to scours by moving 2-3 day old pairs out of calving area to separate pasture (reduce commingling of newborn calves with older calves).
• Identify calvers promptly at birth. Record birth weight, calving ease score, teat/udder score, and mothering ability of cow.
• Plan for winter by evaluating feed and forage supplies and options, including conducting forage tests to determine nutritional content of hay on hand.

Nutrition and Forages
• Evaluate growth of yearling heifers with goal of reaching 60-65% of mature weight by breeding. Depending on forage quality, supplementation may be needed to meet weight gain target.
• Continue to feed high Se trace mineral salt.
• Reserve high quality hay and pasture area for cows post-calving.
• Use strip grazing management to control the residue of warm season pastures as they approach dormancy. Use strip grazing as a tool to increase efficiency of utilization of cool season pastures as they approach dormancy. Use strip grazing as a tool to increase the efficiency of utilization of cool season pastures by cows post-calving.
• Store your high quality hay in the dry.
• Collect and submit forage samples for nutrient analysis.

Herd Health
• Ensure colostrum intake first few hours of life in newborn calves. Supplement if necessary. Newborn calves need 10% of body weight in colostrum first 24 hours of life.
• Provide selenium and vitamin A & D injections to newborn calves.
• Castrate commercial calves at birth
• Monitor calves closely for scour and pneumonia, have treatment supplies on hand.

Genetics
• Collect yearling performance data (weight, height, scrotal, ultrasound) in seedstock herds.
• Evaluate bull battery and begin planning for the breeding season by evaluating herd goals and objectives.

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Reps. Costa And Crawford Prepare For WTO Ruling On Cool Rule

Editor’s Note: The Congressional letter referred to in this article below was signed on to by several Virginia Congressmen as well at the urging of Virginia Cattlemen’s Association. The Country Of Origin Labeling rule, in its current form, has and will prove to be detrimental to the Virginia feeder cattle business. The rule has no label for cattle born in the United States, fed in Canada and returned to the United States, and has been a stumbling block in our relationship with Canadian feeders as they have purchased hundreds of trailer loads of our graded feeder cattle where they could profit from our superior carcass genetics and sell these cattle for slaughter in the USA where they could be paid for yield and grade. Since the end of 2013, with the likely ruling that COOL is unfair for trade, these feeder have backed off significantly from purchasing our feeder calves. Ultimately, COOL must be withdrawn by USDA to normalize this great partnership we have developed and avoid costly retaliatory tariffs on other goods by Canada and Mexico.

Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA) and Rep. Rick Crawford (R-AR), ranking member and chairman of the Subcommittee on Livestock, Rural Development, and Credit respectively, were joined recently by 110 members of Congress in sending a letter to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Michael Froman regarding the impending compliance ruling by the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the U.S. Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) rule. Should the WTO rule against the United States, the members of Congress are requesting the Secretary of Agriculture rescind the final ruling, while Congress works to permanently resolve the issue.

“Congress may be prepared to act and find a solution that maintains a healthy relationship with our trading partners and protects the American economy.”

The WTO is deciding on whether the current COOL rule is, in fact, non-compliant with U.S. trade obligations involving its two largest trading partners, Canada and Mexico. In the initial complaint brought against the United States by Canada and Mexico, the WTO determined the previous COOL rule was not compliant with WTO obligations. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) then attempted to bring the rule into compliance in the final rule May 24, 2013, but Canada and Mexico charged that this rule was more restrictive and would cause further harm to their industries.

“This letter represents broad concern from across the country about the harmful effects that retaliatory tariffs would have on our economy,” said Rep. Crawford. “I appreciate the leadership of my colleague, Representative Costa, in joining me on this letter that is signed by well over one hundred of our fellow members of the House, expressing concern from across the country about the outcome of the WTO ruling. Should the ruling come back and find we are not in compliance, I will work closely with Rep. Costa and others so that we can ensure our country is not unduly burdened by these increased tariffs on American exports.”

2014 Junior Beef Leadership Academy visiting Capitol Front Row: (left to right) Helena St. Clair, Berryville; Caroline Maxey, Chatham; Cassie Long, Phenix; Dottie Long, Phenix; Back Row: (left to right) Heath Sutphin, Dublin; Cody Boden, Clearbrook; Hunter Watkins, Louisa; Matthew Trible, Blue Grass; Jake McCall, Greenville; Phillip Saunders, Piney River; and Jacob Pratt, Draper.

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2014 Virginia Youth Beef Leadership Academy Provides Youth With Insight To Industry

Emma Helm, VCE Intern, and Dr. Paige Pratt, Youth Livestock Extension Specialist

The 2014 Virginia Youth Beef Leadership Academy was held August 5-7, 2014. Eleven youth ranging from rising high school sophomores through recent high school graduates participated in the program that was designed to help participants develop industry knowledge, develop leadership skills, and learn to be better advocates for the industry. The three day program consisted of industry tours, a trip to the nation’s capitol, and group presentations on current beef topics. Academy participants learned about the precautions taken at every step to ensure a safe product for consumers. The second stop of the tour was Maple Springs Farm in Weyers Cave. Jeff Slaven, Maple Springs Farm, talked to the group about the cattle operation at his farm, how they ensure things are done safely and efficiently. The next stop was at Glennary Farms, LLC, in Rapidan. Kim Nixon talked to the group about how the farm ensures their elite genetics. The last stop of the day was with Ms. Carrie Meadows, the Chief of Staff for U.S. Representative Bob Goodlatte. She discussed what issues the congressman is dealing with on the agricultural side of things, and how they work with agricultural interests. Afterwards, the participants went to the NCBA office to meet with their staff. Mr. Colin Woodall, Mr. Kent Baucus and Ms. Kristina Butts met with the group over lunch to talk about their career paths, the legislative priorities of the NCBA, and how to be a more successful advocate for the beef industry.

On the third and final day of the academy, the group went to Harrisonburg. The first stop was at Rockingham Livingston Sales to tour the sale barn and discuss wholesale cuts of meat from a beef carcass, and broke those wholesale cuts into common retail cuts emphasizing newer cuts of meat that are now in demand. Students were introduced to careers in the meats industry, and learned about the precautions taken at every step to ensure a safe product for consumers. The second stop of the tour was Maple Springs Farm in Wevers Cave. Jeff Slaven took the group on a tour of the farm and discussed decisions that have allowed their operation to diversify and become more profitable. In addition, Luke Talley talked to the group about the operations at Maple Springs Farm as well as his own club calf operation. The second day of the academy started bright and early with a trip to Washington D.C. The first visit was with Ms. Carrie Meadows, the Chief of Staff for U.S. Representative Bob Goodlatte. She discussed what issues the congressman is dealing with on the agricultural side of things, and how they work with agricultural interests. Afterwards, the participants went to the NCBA office to meet with their staff. Mr. Colin Woodall, Mr. Kent Baucus and Ms. Kristina Butts met with the group over lunch to talk about their career paths, the legislative priorities of the NCBA, and how to be a more successful advocate for the beef industry.

After the trip to Washington D.C., the group traveled to Aldie to visit Whitestone Farms. Mr. Mark Duf-fett, the general manager of the farm, talked to the group about how their operation and strategies they use to maintain their elite genetics. The last stop of the day was with Ms. Carrie Meadows, the Chief of Staff for U.S. Representative Bob Goodlatte. She discussed what issues the congressman is dealing with on the agricultural side of things, and how they work with agricultural interests. Afterwards, the participants went to the NCBA office to meet with their staff. Mr. Colin Woodall, Mr. Kent Baucus and Ms. Kristina Butts met with the group over lunch to talk about their career paths, the legislative priorities of the NCBA, and how to be a more successful advocate for the beef industry. The final event was for the groups to give presentations. The groups were given an issue in the beef industry, and found a news article to refute. By finding facts to help rebut these articles, the participants gained knowledge that will aid them in advocating for the industry in the future.

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2014 Junior Beef Leadership Academy visiting Maple Springs Farm Front Row: (left to right) Jacob Pratt, Draper; Caroline Maxey, Chatham; Helena St. Clair, Berryville; Dottie Long, Phoenix; Cassie Long, Phoenix; and Emma Helm, VCE Intern. Middle row: (left to right) Jason Carter, Virginia Cattlemen’s Association; Phillip Saunders, Piney River; Heath Sutphin, Dublin; Jake McCall, Greenville; Hunter Watkins, Louisa; Matthew Tribble, Blue Grass; and Cody Boden, Clearbrook; Back Row: Jeff Slaven, Maple Springs Farm.
In The Spot Light
Brothers Through Thick And Thin!

Allison Osborne

Randy and Billy Lawson located in Chilhowie, Virginia, grew up with a passion for farming and the desire to be successful. Born in 1977 and 1980, they have been right by each other’s side through it all. They helped their grandfather farm while he taught them all about equipment and respect. Then as they became older they worked on their uncle’s operation as it grew from feeding cattle before school to working in the hay fields.

Both boys out of high school took jobs off the farm doing various things from factory work to construction, then in 1999 they began to farm for themselves on the side with a small cow calf operation and raising tobacco. In 2003 they purchased their first farm. Starting from the ground up farming in very difficult in today’s times but they are determined to grow their operation and leave something for their children. Self-made men as others have called them.

In 2000 they started the now popular fencing business known as L&L Fencing to continue their passion in agriculture. Their grandfather’s work ethic has shone through in the hard work and many hours invested into doing a good job for their customers. Building agriculture fence and putting in water systems keep them very busy. L&L Fencing INC has been named Conservationist of the Year in Smyth and Tazewell Counties in honor of the quality work they do. Most recently they were honored as recipients of the Smyth County Family Farm of the Year Award from the Smyth County Chamber of Commerce.

The part time farmers have grown their herd to 300 momma cows and 550 stockers each year they now run over 2000 acres. Taking pride in improving the quality of the land, to be more beneficial to their operation, they work long hours to make the most of it. Like many cattle producers leasing land over a wide area, they are stretched out over Smyth, Wythe and Washington counties, they are determined to make it work.

Randy Lawson and Billy Lawson have stuck together through thick and thin while sharing a common work ethic and determination to succeed in things they care about.

Randy and Billy Lawson
Managing Price Risk In A Volatile Market

David Cuddy

The last couple of years have been nothing short of amazing as cattle prices climbed steeply and rapidly. This could well end up being one of those “once-in-a-generation markets” that people will reminisce about years from now. The problem with a couple years of good times, especially when they’re as good as this year has been, is that it can sort of lull us into a fog, subconsciously causing us to let our guard down a little. We’ve not had to try to make money lately. If we could gather up some cattle and keep them upright, we probably made a lot of money.

As we’ve progressed through August, though, prices for both fats and feeders have taken a sharp drop. There are still plenty of factors providing support for prices. Cattle numbers remain low and recovery of the beef herd will take time. The feed markets have provided room for feeders to move higher and recovery of the beef herd will take time. The feed markets have provided room for feeders to move higher and recovery of the beef herd will take time.

A good risk management plan can help you make sure you stay profitable as the markets sort themselves out. The term “risk management” plan is just a fancy term for making sure you don’t go broke. Simply put, the key objective is simple: “Take emotion out of the decision-making process.” Decisions driven more by emotion than facts are rarely good. Our goal should be to spend the time making decisions before we’re forced to, which will usually lead to greater success in the long run.

We need to make sure we can get a price for our cattle that covers purchase and input costs, and leaves some money in the bank. The practice of risk management can help us do that. This is where many of us start to get a little glassy-eyed. The good news is, with a little work and some good advice, there are many alternatives available for protecting your bottom line at sale time. If you’ve been hesitant to think about this stuff because it hurts your head and crosses your eyes, hopefully you’ll learn just enough in the following lines to take the edge off and begin to dig into what could be a key factor in keeping your operation profitable over the next few months.

We’ll look at three basic strategies to help protect you from price risk: 1) Forward contracting; 2) LRP Insurance; and, 3) Futures and options markets.

First, is probably the simplest way to know what you can expect at sale time – Referred to as forward contracting. This is an agreement between a buyer and a producer to purchase your cattle at a given time and for a set price. Important considerations for forward contracting are fairly straightforward:

- You need to have a level of knowledge and trust with the buyer, so that you can expect them to follow through on the agreement if events move against their position.
- The contract should be in writing. This protects both you and the buyer and defines the terms of the agreement so there’s no question later.
- You need to make sure you have some idea of what a fair price is. Relationships and reputation are key here, on both sides. If there’s a down-side for the seller with this method, it’s that you can’t take advantage of the upside if markets rise, so you need to honor your commitment, too.

Secondly, a federally subsidized insurance program, called Livestock Risk Protection, or LRP insurance, is a fairly simple way to put a floor price on your cattle. While not intended to lock in a big profit, this is a good way, particularly for smaller producers, to protect against excessive losses. There are two big positives with this program. First of all, you don’t have to deal in a load-lot product, which is a good way, particularly for smaller producers, to protect against excessive losses.

The program works similarly to a put option, in that you determine a strike price or level of protection, based on the futures market at or near the time you expect to sell. A premium is calculated, based on the level of protection you choose. Generally, the closer to the actual future prices you get, the more expensive the insurance is. A portion of the premium is subsidized by the federal government, reducing the cost to producers. This program allows a producer to place a floor price on their cattle, while maintaining the ability to take advantage of a rise in the markets prior to sale date. Additional information on LRP insurance can be found through your local USDA office – or usda.gov; several insurance companies, including Farm Bureau; and your local Farm Credit office.

Finally, we’ll take a very brief look at the futures and options market. Time and complexity necessitates that this discussion remain extremely basic, but we’ll hopefully provide some food for thought. The two most basic tools useful to sellers are purchase of a put option or sale of a futures contract. A put option works similarly to the LRP insurance described above. The seller pays a premium based on a certain price level or strike price, which sets a floor price, by giving you the option to sell a futures contract, at your strike price, if the market falls below that price. The higher the strike price, relative to the futures market, the more expensive the put will be.

The goal here is not to make money, so much as to control loss in a major market decline. The futures contract, or hedge, involves selling of a contract at the futures price for the month your cattle are expected to be marketed. If the market declines prior to sale, the contract will make up the difference. When you enter into the futures market, you’re required to deposit a set amount of money into a margin account. To vastly oversimplify the concept, margin is required to cover your exposure on a futures contract generally works as follows. When you sell a futures contract, you are taking a position expecting the market to go down, referred to as shorting the market. If the value does
Why Tweeting Matters

Valerie Vandyke

In the June/July issue of Virginia Cattlemen's, I wrote an article about Millennials. It's possible that after reading how quickly a company must spark entertain- ment to grab Millennials' attention, you may feel daunted by the task of having a meaningful impact sharing the story about beef. Well, this month I am here to quell your fears.

Here are two of my favorite stories to share when someone tells me that Twitter for business is pointless. The first occurred one morning when I woke up grumpy because my phone's automatic nighttime ringtone silencer had failed, and I had been awaken by a friend's call at 3am before an important business meeting. Wanting my displeasure known, I posted on Twitter about it, but did not address my tweet at the company directly. Within an hour or two, the company responded to me saying, “I'm sorry the setting didn't work & woke you. Can you tell us more so we can troubleshoot with you?” I tweeted, “Not sure if museums to a west-coast friend visiting DC. I posted on Twitter about it, but did not address my tweet at the company directly. Within an hour or two, the company responded to me saying, “I'm sorry the setting didn't work & woke you. Can you tell us more so we can troubleshoot with you?”

The second instance I realized Twitter matters for companies is while making a recommendation to a west-coast friend visiting DC. I tweeted, “Not sure if museums are too nerdy for you, but the International Spy Museum is actually pretty cool”. Again, I did not tag the company in my post. Within a day, they wrote to both of us professionally asking, “Where did you hear about it? … It's What's for Dinner” banner. The benefits of adding a state level is to further the social connection and personalize the messaging. For example, we have found through our analysis that people come to our page seeking production information and Virginia-specific facts. Knowing this, we can now hook into state-specific events or trends, such as DC Restaurant Week, to inspire beef purchases and be available to answer customers' questions about the dishes they try during this week-long promotion.

We’re also able to connect consumers with the producers they are seeking to hear from. We recently had a vegetarian post some concerns about killing animals for food. We were pleasantly surprised to see a producer seize this opportunity to comment about why she chose to eat meat and raise animals for food. These smaller interactions can build onto our larger advertisements and messages, and we hope that VBIC's social media platforms can have the same effects as discussed.

BEEFY SWEET POTATO HASH

INGREDIENTS

1. 12 ounces cooked beef (such as steak, roast or pot roast), cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 2-1/2 cups)
2. 1 large sweet potato, unpeeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
3. 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
4. 1 tablespoon taco seasoning mix
5. 1/4 cup water
6. 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
7. 2 tablespoons reduced-fat or regular dairy sour cream
8. 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
9. Chopped fresh cilantro

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BEEFY SWEET POTATO HASH

1. Combine sweet potatoes, onion and taco seasoning in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add water. Cover and cook 8 to 10 minutes or until crisp-tender and water has almost evaporated, stirring once. Stir in oil; continue cooking, uncovered, 4 to 6 minutes or until potatoes are tender and begin to brown, stirring occasionally.
3. Add beef to potato mixture. Continue to cook 5 minutes or until beef is heated through, stirring occasionally, adding 1 to 2 tablespoons water, if needed to avoid sticking.
4. Garnish with cilantro, as desired. Serve with sour cream mixture.

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BEEFY SWEET POTATO HASH

The perfect way to give leftover steak or roast new life, this hash is made with sweet potatoes and taco seasoning.

- Total Recipe Time: 35 to 40 minutes
- Makes 4 servings

1. 12 ounces cooked beef (such as steak, roast or pot roast), cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 2-1/2 cups)
2. 1 large sweet potato, unpeeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
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4. Garnish with cilantro, as desired. Serve with sour cream mixture.
Market
Continued from Page 26
Indeed go down, the value of your contract will increase relative to the market, and funds will be deposited into your margin account according to the level of movement in the price of the contract you’ve sold. Conversely, if the price of the contract rises, you’ll be required to deposit money into the margin account, as the value of your contract decreases, relative to the current price of that contract. This can seem quite complicated, but the simple rule to remember, is that when you sell a futures contract, you run the risk that if the market rises, you’ll have to send a check to your broker. The more the market rises, the more you’ll have to send. As long as you’ve got the cattle, and you sell them at the higher market, you won’t actually lose that money (you’ll make it back when you sell the cattle), but you still have to have access to it, and very quickly, if and when it’s needed. If liquidity is a problem for you to begin with, this could cause serious issues.

There are distinct advantages and disadvantages to a futures contract vs. a put option. In a nut shell, though, futures contracts work best for sellers in a declining market. Put options are a great tool to protect downside risk if prices are steady to rising, and a key advantage of options is that they do not expose you to margin calls unless you exercise the option and sell the contract.

The key to success in using futures and options is to find a broker you can trust and who will help you develop a specific strategy for your operation. In addition to those described above, there are several other products or combinations of products that can work extremely well depending on the circumstances, but without the advice of a good broker, it could be dangerous for an inexperienced trader to rely on these products as an effective strategy. Another key person to have a discussion with is your lender. If you’ll need to use funds from a line of credit to meet margin calls, you’ll need to make sure your lender is on board before you commit yourself to funding the account. This discussion of futures and options assumes that you have cattle to offset any position you may take. When you enter the market without the cattle to offset the position, you become a speculator, and this can be a very dangerous game. As a lender, I would never advise you to speculate in the markets, particularly with borrowed funds.

Each of the tools discussed above, whether simple or complex has distinct advantages and disadvantages, and there’s no one-size-fits all tool. Any of these tools could work very well alone or in combination, depending on your operation and market conditions. I’ve hardly done justice to either LRP or the futures and options market, and I hope those of you who are well versed in the options market, and I hope those who are well versed in the subjects will grant me pardon. My goal has not been to provide an in-depth education on these tools, but to plant a seed for thought and further discussion.

The large amount of capital required now means that if we’re not prepared if the market moves against us, the losses we incur could be much more damaging than ever before. With the investment of a little time and some good advice, though, there’s a lot you can do to protect your bottom line and your business. Those who are the most successful over the long run don’t allow themselves to get caught up in the emotion of the markets or the size of the number in the calculator. Instead, they focus on making good decisions, before they are forced to, take emotions out of the equation. Managing risk will sometimes result in some money left on the table when the dust settles, and we have to accept that as the trade-off for the times that it keeps us in the black, rather than drowning in red ink. Our goals should center on consistent profitability, so that we’re in the game for the long run, rather than a flash in the pan.

Here’s to the best year in the cattle business most of us may ever see, and many more good years to come.

David Cuddy is a Commercial Agriculture Loan Officer with Farm Credit of the Virginias, based in the Abingdon Branch. He can be reached at (276) 628-5191 or dcuddy@fcvirginias.com.
The consignment form for our Fall Sale has been sent out. The purebred Charolais you consign should be of a quality to promote your herd and the Charolais breed as well. Our members, past consigners and new Charolais breeders are invited to enter cattle in the sale. With our new association rules, a consigner can consign one breeding age bull per each female lot. All breeding age bulls must pass a complete fertility exam.

Our sales manager for this sale is Robert Morton of Bob Morton Marketing.

If you would like to consign Charolais cattle to our sale and did not receive a consignment form, please contact one of the persons below at once: Mr. Morton at mortonfarms1234@att.net or phone 931-842-1234. You may also contact Bill Thompson at mountainmeadows@highlandcomputers.com or 540-968-1987.

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Rob Farmer – Past President
8030 Greenwich Road
Catlett, VA 20119
540-270-3886

Chad Joines – Southwest Director
Virginia Tech
Dept of Animal & Poultry Science
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540-557-7263

We would like to invite anyone interested in becoming a member of our association to call one of the officers listed above.

Bill Thompson – President
1295 Park Avenue
Clifton Forge, VA 24422
540-968-1987

Kaitlin Smith – Vice President
454 Old Farm Road
Lexington, VA 24450
540-463-6778

Deidre Harmon – Secretary
1445 Pipers Gap Road
Galax, VA 24333
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Cheeseburgers Won’t Melt The Polar Ice Caps

Jayson Lusk, Oklahoma State University

The documentary film “Cowspiracy,” released this week in select cities, builds on the growing cultural notion that the single greatest environmental threat to the planet is the hamburger you had for lunch the other day. As director Kip Andersen recently told the Source magazine: “A lot of us are waking up and realizing we can choose to either support all life on this planet or kill all life on this planet, simply by virtue of what we eat day in and day out. One way to eat takes life, while another spares as many lives (plant, animal and otherwise) as possible.”

James McWilliams, vegan author of the 2013 book “The Politics of the Pasture,” argues that modern agricultural, and the cattle industry in particular, are part of a global food-supply system so damaging that the only moral solution is to give up eating meat entirely.

Each to his own, you might say. But these ideas are working their way into government policy proposals. For example, Angela Tagtow, a self-described “environmental nutritionist” formerly with the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, was recently tapped to head the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s effort to revise federal dietary guidelines. This is a sign that the new recommendations are likely to go beyond nutritional science to incorporate environmental considerations. Many observers believe that meat will be specifically targeted for scrutiny.

Environmental nutritionists argue that the social and environmental costs of meat production—obesity, chronic disease, the production of greenhouse gases such as methane, etc.—are not reflected in prices at the grocery store or restaurant. “The big-ticket externalities are carbon generation and obesity,” New York Times columnist Mark Bittman recently wrote. He argues that beef prices don’t reflect these externalities and that “industrial food has made the concept of externalities when applied to food is nebulous. At a recent Institute of Medicine meeting I attended, a room full of Ph.D.s struggled to understand the concept of externalities when

blame. It is unclear how high prices must rise to overcome the view that meat is “too cheap.” Some industry critics have even called for new “meat taxes” to discourage consumption.

Those who promote sustainable agriculture often push for more “natural” production systems such as grass fed, local, or organic beef. But these result in lower productivity, greater water and land use, and higher carbon footprints. More broadly, the argument that modern agriculture is a leading cause of global warming is tenuous at best.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that U.S. agriculture, including livestock production, accounts for only about 8% of total greenhouse-gas emissions in the country. Livestock in the U.S. have lower greenhouse-gas footprints than in other parts of the world. This is partly because American producers generally use higher-quality feeds, higher-yielding breeds, and more productivity-enhancing technologies such as probiotics, vaccines and growth hormones. Future improvements in feed and animal genetics could further reduce animal-agriculture’s impact. As economists have shown, one should not underestimate the ability of innovation, markets, the courts and private negotiation to resolve the adverse effects of externalities. Moreover, the concept of externalities when applied to food is nebulous. At a recent Institute of Medicine meeting I attended, a room full of Ph.D.s struggled to understand exactly what to measure.

We would never trust a group of experts to set the price of beef, milk or automobiles. We rely on a decentralized marketplace to aggregate disparate information. Continued on Page 33

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<td>HICKORY SPRINGS FARM</td>
<td>JOHN BRASUK</td>
<td>RT. 2 BOX 211-A, FAIRMONT, W.VA. 26554</td>
<td>304-363-5918</td>
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<td>BAY BROOK FARM</td>
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<td>4277 FACTORY MILL ROAD, DABNEYS, VA 23102</td>
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<td>DUNROVIN</td>
<td>DON &amp; SHEILA RICHARDSON</td>
<td>3473 DUNROVIN FARM, CROZET, VA 22932</td>
<td>344-823-4438</td>
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<tr>
<td>WILLINGHAM FARM</td>
<td>Daron Culbertson</td>
<td>P.O. Box 91, Remington, VA 22734</td>
<td>540-270-2185</td>
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The table of adjustment factors to be used to estimate across-breed expected progeny differences (AB-EPDs) for eighteen breeds was released at the Beef Improvement Federation Annual Meeting in Lincoln, NE on June 20 (see Table 1). Across-breed adjustment factors have been calculated for growth traits and maternal milk since 1993. Adjustment factors for carcass traits have been calculated since 2009; to be included, breeds must have carcass data in the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) database and report their carcass EPDs on an actual carcass basis using an age-adjusted endpoint. Bulls of different breeds can be compared on the same EPD scale by adding the appropriate adjustment factor to the EPDs produced in the most recent genetic evaluations for each of the eighteen breeds. The AB-EPDs are most useful to commercial producers purchasing semen from different breeds cannot be compared because most breed associations compute their EPDs in separate analyses and each breed has a different base point. The across-breed adjustment factors allow producers to compare the EPDs for animals from different breeds for these traits; these factors reflect both the current breed difference (for animals born in 2012) and differences in the breed base point. They should only be used with EPDs current as of June 2014 because of potential changes in EPD calculations from year-to-year.

It is important to note that the table factors (Table 1) do not represent a direct comparison among the different breeds because of base differences between the breeds. They should only be used to compare the EPDs (AB-EPDs) of animals in different breeds. The adjustment factors in Table 1 were updated using EPDs from the most recent national cattle evaluations conducted by each of the eighteen breed associations (current as of March 2014).
Continued from Page 15

most strongly felt by the poor. Is that an ethical action that Oregonians want to take? We have choice in the market now in the form of widely available organic food, which must be grown without GMO varieties. Voluntary GMO-free labeling is increasing daily, as well. The marketplace is offering a choice for those who are wary. It does not seem that a government program is needed for those with concerns over GMOs. I fully support efforts to educate Oregonians about their food and its safety and health and have been active doing that in teaching and outreach for many years. However, this punitive labeling measure would further confuse, reduce choice and add to food costs. It will mislead rather than enlighten. Steve Strauss is a distinguished professor at Oregon State University, former director of the OSU program on outreach in biotechnology and a member of the governor’s task force on GMO crops.

Cheesburgers

Continued from Page 30

unknown to any single person or expert committee. And yet there is a belief among some that public-health experts can accurately divine a single true and just cost for a hamburger that will help prevent the melting of the polar ice caps and save millions of lives and billions of dollars in health-care costs. Never mind that the nutritional composition of beef provides much-needed protein, vitamins and iron. Studies have shown that higher beef prices lead to iron deficiency and more cases of anemia. It is hard to project the unintended consequences of policy-induced reductions in meat consumption, but they are likely to include reduced incomes for family farmers and rural communities and cast uncertainty over the use of millions of acres of grassland that currently support cattle producers. Let us also not gloss over what is beef’s most obvious benefit: Livestock take inedible grasses and untasty grains and convert them into a protein-packed food most humans love to eat. We may be able to reduce our impact on the environment by eating less meat, but we can also do the same by using science to make livestock more productive and environmentally friendly.
Health group
Continued from Page 11

According to Food Policy Action, “Each year, more than 20,000 people die and 2 million people are sickened as a result of infections resistant to antibiotics,” the group said. More than 128,000 people have signed its petition calling for legislation that would prevent farmers from using antibiotics on their livestock for any purpose other than to treat a sick animal. This comes after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned last month that antibiotics may no longer be effective enough to save lives in the near future if the government doesn’t do something to fix the problem. “Every day we delay it becomes harder and more expensive to fix this problem,” Director Thomas Frieden said.

Democrats are pushing the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act in the House and a similar bill in the Senate to end the large-scale use of antibiotics in livestock production. The health group says it would like these bills passed, but neither one has advanced beyond the committee level since they were introduced last year. “These drugs should be used to treat illnesses, not to compensate for unsanitary conditions,” Food Policy Action wrote. “If we don’t take action, the steady stream of low-dose antibiotics in factory farms could create the next drug-resistant superbug.”

Virginia Cattlemen supports BQA and encourages all cattle producers to seek and maintain this important certification for the benefit of their operation and our industry.

Responsible advocacy for our business begins with education. Education has to be sought and you must also seek perspective to actually be educated rather than simply memorize facts that blur with time. Consider our re-printing of this article as contributing to your perspective as well as a nod to the urgency that we all remember the interconnectedness of our farms and businesses within the greater cattle industry.

A health group is renewing its push for stricter Food and Drug Administration regulations that would prohibit farmers from using antibiotics on their livestock for any purpose other than to treat a sick animal. This comes after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned last month that antibiotics may no longer be effective enough to save lives in the near future if the government doesn’t do something to fix the problem. “Every day we delay it becomes harder and more expensive to fix this problem,” Director Thomas Frieden said.

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Dear EPA: Is That Puddle Navigable?

The title here highlights just how far the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has pushed its authority under the Clean Water Act (CWA). The EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) are taking public comments on a proposed regulation that would expand the federal government’s authority over waters; private property rights might be damned. This article provide farmers and ranchers with a taste of the proposed expansion and the devastating impacts it could have on their operations.

When passed in 1972, the CWA created a regulatory permitting system to control discharges (discharge includes dirt, manure, fertilizer, litter, pesticides, etc.) into “navigable waters.” The term “navigable waters” is defined in the CWA as “waters of the United States” and nothing more. This absurdly vague definition has provided the implementing federal agencies (namely the EPA and the Corps) with the loophole they needed to systematically gain more and more regulatory authority over smaller and less significant “bodies of water” (a term used loosely) over the past 40 years. Despite Supreme Court rulings striking down broad interpretations of their authority over isolated waters the agencies keep trying to expand federal jurisdiction over ditches, ponds and puddles. The agencies latest attempt is the most brazen, and according to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy is “cleverly written,” leading industry to believe the proposal is intended to be an end-run around Congress and the Supreme Court. Many in the agricultural community have called this proposal the largest land grab in history, and I don’t think that is far off the mark, if at all. If landowners are required to get a CWA permit for spraying pesticides, applying manure, or simply grazing their cattle, there is no way to describe it but “landuse planning.” Once a responsibility of city and county governments, the federal agencies will now have the power to either give you a permit or not and thereby dictate what activities you can perform on your own property.

How did they do it? Through vague terms such as “neighborhood,” ill-defined terms like “tributary,” and expansive definitions such as “tributary.” Not to mention the agencies extremely broad definition of what is considered a “significant” among other isolated waters and downstream waters. The agencies also leave most of these important key terms up to the “best professional judgment” of the federal regulator. These legal terms give the regulatory agencies the loopholes they need to find your pond, puddle or ditch to be a “water of the U.S.” and leave landowners with more confusion than ever before.

EPA and Corps have even drug the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) into the regulatory game. After including a non-binding, “interpretive rule” in which a few select NRCS conservation practice standards are required regardless of whether the landowner is under a contract with USDA-NRCS…it does not matter. If a farmer or rancher is putting in a fence that does not meet every aspect of the NRCS requirements for Fencing you are likely to be in violation of the CWA, despite whether you are fencing cattle out of stream or riparian area which would benefit water quality. This regulatory requirement (meeting the NRCS standard specifications) is required regardless of whether the landowner is under a contract with USDA-NRCS…it does not matter. If a farmer or rancher is putting in a voluntary conservation practice, but it does not meet the NRCS “gold standard” you are likely violating the CWA unless you had applied for a voluntary permit. If a farmer or rancher is putting in a fence that does not meet every aspect of the NRCS requirements for Fencing you are likely to be in violation of the CWA, despite whether you are fencing cattle out of stream or riparian area which would benefit water quality. This regulatory requirement (meeting the NRCS standard specifications) is required regardless of whether the landowner is under a contract with USDA-NRCS…it does not matter. If a farmer or rancher is putting in a voluntary conservation practice.

Tell the agencies to Ditch The Rule.
take advantage of high powered performance
breed changers

DEER VALLEY ALL IN
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Ten X x Upward

With one of the strongest EPD profiles in AI and a standout pedigree, All In has experienced heavy use in a long list of progressive Angus programs this year. Designed to take advantage of performance in ALL areas, All In consistently produces high-quality semen—and now has sexed female and male semen available. All In has sired a striking set of calves with his first crop and is poised to be a breed changer.

EPOs as of 7/25/2014

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SANDPOINT BUTKUS X797
7AN398 • 16829413
Final Answer x Grid Maker

Butkus offers an impressive spread from CED to growth along with a pedigree designed for cow power, combining Final Answer and Grid Maker. Ranking in the Top 1% of the Angus breed for 6 traits, Butkus displays extreme figures for rapid early growth and added pounds along with genetics for easily-born calves. A striking individual, Butkus is big-bellied and sound with added length and shape. Use him to generate additional payweight and daughters that impress.

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