



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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Volume 48, Number 30

July 25, 2014

Appeals Court Upholds FDA Action on Judicious Use of Antibiotics

The Second Circuit Court of Appeals issued a 2-1 decision in New York yesterday that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is not required to hold hearings concerning the safety of feeding antibiotics at subtherapeutic levels. The ruling overturns two district court rulings from 2012 in a case initially filed in 2011 by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Center for Science in the Public Interest, Food Animal Concerns Trust, Public Citizen and the Union of Concerned Scientists.

The groups argue that FDA is required by statute to hold hearings to determine whether to withdraw approval for the use of penicillin and tetracyclines in animal feed after the agency declared that the subtherapeutic use of the drugs in animal feed “has not been shown to be safe” in the late 1970s. Such hearings would require industry to prove that the use of these drugs, as approved, is safe.

FDA’s policy to pursue a collaborative stakeholder process to implement significant changes to antibiotic use rather than a regulatory action is supported by the Animal Health Institute (AHI), Centers for Disease Control and the President’s Council of Advisors on Science & Technology. All 26 companies affected by the policy have pledged to align their products with the effort, and changes have begun. The implementation of this policy means all medically important antibiotics used in food animals will be used to fight disease at the direction of a veterinarian.

The legal challenges and citizen’s petitions that are set aside by this decision have diverted agency resources from focusing on moving ahead with implementing the judicious use policy. AHI said it believes this decision will clear the way and allow FDA to focus on working with stakeholders to successfully implement this policy in a timely manner. Find the full story at <http://tinyurl.com/fda-court-antibiotic-use>.

EPA May Increase Ethanol Blend Levels in Final Rule

Following a meeting between Obama Administration officials and Senate Democrats on Thursday, Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) told *The Hill* that White House adviser John Podesta has indicated the administration plans to raise the amount of ethanol and other biofuels that must be blended into the nation’s fuel supply.

“I believe the numbers will be bigger, and that’s based not only on conversations with [Podesta] but my conversations with EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy,” Franken said. “He certainly led us to believe there will be higher numbers in each piece of it than was in the preliminary [Renewable Fuel Standard].”

Franken said Podesta told the senators that the release of the final rule “will be imminent.”

The Environmental Protection Agency’s proposed draft on blending volumes, which was released late last year, cut the amount of biofuels that refiners would need to mix into their fuels. The plan represented the first time the agency had lowered the target from the previous year. The proposal was supported by TCFA, NCBA, other livestock organizations, oil and gas organizations and other business groups.

Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/epa-may-increase-ethanol-blend>.

Senate Agriculture Committee Republicans Express WOTUS Concerns to EPA Administrator

Accepting an invitation issued in May by Sen. Thad Cochran (R-Miss.), Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy on Tuesday met with the Republican Members of the Senate Agriculture Committee to discuss their concerns about an assortment of environmental regulations planned by the Obama administration and their effects on agriculture production and rural economies.

Chief among the concerns raised by Senators representing rural communities and agriculture is the “waters of the United States” (WOTUS) rule, which could bring more waters under the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act making them subject to EPA permitting requirements, and the agriculture interpretive rule that outlines specific practices which qualify producers for exemptions from regulation if approved by U.S. Department of Agriculture. The public comment period ends Oct. 20, 2014, on the proposed WOTUS

regulations that were unveiled by the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers in March, and the comment period closed on July 7 for the agriculture interpretive rule.

“The waters of the United States proposal and the agriculture interpretive rule are a source of uncertainty, anxiety and distrust for people in rural areas. This is particularly true for states like Mississippi whose economies are built on agriculture production and where landowners want the peace of mind that what they are doing is not subject to ever more regulations,” said Cochran, who has sponsored legislative measures to stop or withdraw the WOTUS proposal.

“I appreciate Administrator McCarthy agreeing to hear our concerns, and I hope the concerns we shared on behalf of our constituents will prompt the EPA to engage with agriculture organizations and to abandon or at least rethink some of the regulations it wants to impose,” he said.

The joint EPA-Army Corps regulatory proposal was intended to clarify a so-called guidance document issued by the two agencies to expand the scope of the Clean Water Act. Since its rollout, however, concerns have grown that the WOTUS proposal would effectively expand provisions of the Clean Water Act. The new rule would greatly broaden government regulatory and permitting control to additional streams, creeks, wetlands, ponds and ditches.

Cornyn Introduces Bill to Boost Transparency of Endangered Species Listings

U.S. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) has introduced legislation to dramatically boost transparency of the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service’s listing process for endangered species. Sen. Cornyn’s legislation stands as the Senate companion to H.R. 4315, introduced by U.S. Rep. Doc Hastings (R-Wash.), Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee. The legislation would require the Secretaries of the Interior and Commerce departments to make the best scientific and commercial data publicly available on the Internet as it relates to future listings and de-listings under the Endangered Species Act.

“In Texas, we’ve seen firsthand what happens when the Administration overreaches and lists species as endangered or threatened without giving due consideration to the facts and input from those on the ground. Imprudent and unnecessary listings are a drain on local economies and an impediment to growth and job creation.

“With more than 700 species under review for listing, this bill would boost transparency and ensure Texans and citizens across the country have full access to the same data these agencies use to determine their listings.”

Sen. Cornyn’s legislation would:

- Amend Section 4(b) of the Endangered Species Act to require the Interior and Commerce Secretaries to make the best scientific and commercial data publicly available on the Internet as it relates to future listings and de-listings under the Endangered Species Act.
- Protect personal information, such as landowner information. The bill prohibits the Secretary from making information available where the State has determined public disclosure is prohibited by a law of that State to protect personal information.

House Members Request Report on Cost of Lesser Prairie Chicken Conservation

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas (R-Okla.), House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (R-Wash.) and 12 members of Congress recently sent a letter to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack asking for a copy of a report, as required by law, on the cost and effectiveness of the Department’s conservation measures for the Lesser Prairie Chicken.

The Agricultural Act Conference Report, passed by the House in January and signed by the President in February, requires USDA to submit the report within 90 days. More than 150 days have elapsed, and the Department has not provided a copy of the report to Congress.

“This report is perhaps even more important now, following the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (FWS) decision in March 2014 to list the Lesser Prairie Chicken as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In our view, it is unfortunate that this listing, driven by the Department of the Interior’s settlement deadline negotiated with certain groups, proceeded despite the FWS’ approval last fall of a comprehensive five-state rangewide plan that is already demonstrating positive results for the Lesser Prairie Chicken,” wrote the Members in the letter.

“We request that your Department provide this report immediately to appropriate committees as required by the law so that millions of private landowners, states and other stakeholders that are investing significant

resources for conservation of this species can ensure that the cost and effectiveness of federal programs are being properly accounted for, and to provide Congress information it requested prior to the listing.”

Read a full copy of the letter at <http://tinyurl.com/vilsack-lpc-letter>.

Genetic Influence on Beef’s Health Profile

Surveys show the health benefits of beef are quickly rising on the list of important traits to consider when making purchasing decisions. According to a *BEEF* magazine article, beef producers can improve the healthfulness of beef through genetic selection.

The ongoing research conducted by a multi-university effort shows that some of the important nutrients that comprise beef’s healthfulness profile, such as iron and zinc, have very good heritability.

Raluca Mateescu, a University of Florida geneticist, says in the article, “If we look at iron, we’ve got a serving of beef contributing about 8 to 18 percent of the recommended daily value, depending on whether we’re looking at women, elderly or men. The iron concentration in beef has very high heritability at 54 percent.

“Zinc follows, with a serving of beef contributing 26 percent of the recommended daily value. It has a lower heritability but not bad at 10 percent.” She says the data shows a very strong and positive correlation between the two nutrients. “So if we’re going to focus our efforts on iron and say that’s the one we want to increase, we are also going to benefit from an increase in zinc concentration.”

She goes on to say that iron concentrations in beef are also important to cattlemen from an economic aspect. “If we look at economically important traits, iron concentration is related to color stability and shelf life. And we also showed in our research that there is a strong and positive genetic correlation between iron concentration and beef flavor. We know that’s right at the top in terms of consumer preference.”

As the beef industry continues to make strides in getting closer to its consumers, beef nutrition may become an even larger factor in decision making at the market. “Research is very important, looking at how much we have of those components and what role they play in a healthy diet,” Mateescu says. “They’re novel and needed traits. We have an opportunity to really change the way beef is portrayed to the consumer.”

Find the full story at <http://tinyurl.com/genetics-beef-health-profile>.

No End in Sight for China’s Cattle Shortage

On the face of it, things look rather rosy for beef in China. Growth is dynamic – at least within the context of fresh food – driven by consumer demand for higher-quality meat. Beef’s growing popularity in China comes from its middle-class consumers looking to trade up to more “prestigious” protein. Beef is held in high regard by Chinese consumers for being higher quality, healthier and lower in fat than pork.

According to Euromonitor, over the 2008-2013 review period, beef and veal led the growth charts with a 30 percent volume gain, double that of pork and nine percentage points ahead of poultry. However, there are just not enough cattle being raised domestically to satisfy demand.

China’s Ministry of Agriculture reports that beef wholesale prices doubled between 2008 and 2013, and they are unlikely to come down anytime soon, considering their domestic herd has been on a steady decline. As prices spiral upwards, there is real danger of excluding a large number of Chinese consumers from buying beef on a regular basis, although most would switch a significant portion of their pork intake for beef in an instant if price points were not so prohibitive.

Find more on this story at <http://tinyurl.com/chinese-beef-demand>.

Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef Conference in Brazil

The Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB) announced Monday that it will host the first Global Conference on Sustainable Beef in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Nov. 2-5, 2014. At the conference, GRSB will release its long-anticipated definition of global sustainable beef and highlight new developments in beef sustainability.

“GRSB is a global, multi-stakeholder organization focused on improving the sustainability of the beef value chain. We view sustainability as a journey of continuous improvement where economic, societal and environmental factors are balanced to achieve sustainable outcomes,” says Cameron Bruett, president of GRSB and head of corporate affairs for JBS USA. “It is imperative that the board spectrum of stakeholders involved in the production, processing, distribution, sale and consumption of beef, as well as civil society

and allied industries, work together to develop a deeper understanding of sustainability and what it means to their sector, their operations, our society and our planet.”

Find GRBSB's news release announcing the conference at <http://tinyurl.com/grsb-brazil>.

Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course to Outline Strategies, Management for Producers

Record cattle prices are creating opportunities for producers to increase revenue, and several of these strategies will be discussed at the 60th Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course scheduled for Aug. 4-6 on the Texas A&M University campus in College Station.

Topics to be discussed include sustainability in the beef industry, winning and losing in the cattle business, future opportunities for beef producers, as well as a long-term weather outlook. The cattleman's college portion of the event allows participants to choose workshops based on their level of production experience and the needs. Topics include introductory cattle production, retiring to the ranch, forage management practices, nutrition and reproduction, record keeping, genetics, purebred cattle and landowner issues.

Registration is \$180 per person and includes educational materials, trade show admittance, admission to the prime rib dinner, lunches, breakfasts and daily refreshments. Registration information and a schedule can be found on the short course website at <http://beefcattleshortcourse.com>.

...Feeders and Feedyards in the News...

TCFA welcomes aboard new feedyard members:

Western Cattle Feeders, LLC of Friona, Texas, is owned by Bob Lofton and Scott Shill. The feedyard manager is Scott Shill.

Xcel Feedyard, LLC of Watonga, Okla., is owned by Bill Roser, Jarold Callahan, Bob Funk and Express Ranches. The feedyard manager is Bill Roser.

Sponsor Spotlight

TCFA is proud to recognize its top sponsors whose efforts help deliver top-notch service.

This week's spotlight shines on



Z Tags North America manufactures one- and two-piece animal ID tags for all species of livestock. They also have electronic ID tags available. Z Tags' customer focus is on the beef segment with the one-piece Z Tag design. The Z Tags applicator is fast and easy with improved operator safety. Z Tags cow and calf tags come in 9 different colors, and feedlot tags come in 13 different colors. Z Tags are manufactured in Fort Collins, Colo. They can be reached at the Phoenix office customer service line (800) 511-4744, or call your local rep, Ramey Kimbrough, (806) 577-5469 (Panhandle of Texas and Oklahoma), Darin Burns (830) 305-4443 (South Texas and East Oklahoma) or David Jameson (719) 947-2217.

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