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Cattle Country

Ranches thrive
in largest beef
cattle-producing
county in the U.S.

By AMY HADACHEK
Reprinted courtesy
of The Fence Post

Cherry County, Nebraska, enjoys the distinguished title of being the largest beef cattle-producing county in the nation. In addition to having an extensive land mass, the county has the highest head count of livestock on that land.

"I can verify that yes, Cherry County, Nebraska, has the largest county beef cow total in the U.S. at 165,000 head as of Jan. 1, 2025. Cherry County accounts for 10.6% of Nebraska's beef cows. Then, for total cattle and calves, Cherry County ranks 16th in the U.S. with 320,000 head," said Nicholas Streff, regional director, Northern Plains Region of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service in Lincoln, Neb.

In a county where beef cattle ranching is the dominant industry, according to the 2024 Cherry County, Nebraska Comprehensive Plan, Cherry

County is the largest county in Nebraska with 3,828,500 acres and also the 44th largest county in the U.S. Established on April 4, 1883, it's located in north central Nebraska, along the Nebraska-South Dakota state line, and easily identifiable on a Nebraska map.

Eatinger Cattle Company

Wayne Eatinger of Eatinger Cattle Company, a multi-generational ranch, has a lively story that sounds like an episode of the popular TV show "Gunsmoke." Eatinger said his family's ranch is the oldest in the area to have maintained a continuous ranching business and is located 50 miles south of Valentine, Neb.

Eatinger, his wife Roxanne and their family, own a large commercial, spring-calving cow herd of 1,400 cows and calf pairs of Angus and some Hereford and Simmental crosses. They sell yearlings in the summer. His son Miles, who recently married, takes care of the haying.

Cherry County's dimensions are 96-miles-by-63-miles and it's the only Nebraska county dissected by two time zones. The natural environment of Cherry County is mostly Sandhills, with a few areas of tablelands in the northeastern and extreme west-central parts of the county. The Niobrara River Valley dissects the Sandhills from west to east

across the northern portion of the county. There are also narrow flood plains and stream terraces near numerous streams.

"Here in Cherry County we're out in the boonies... it's tallgrass prairie with wet meadows," Eatinger said.

Eatinger's ancestors open-ranged, and managed to put some land together. The land had belonged to the government, and his great-great-grandparents, who originated in Dundee, Ill., in the cheese-making business, heard about the open-range business.

"He struck out in 1878 and managed to purchase 1,000 head of southern steer, which is the Longhorns in the Abilene, Kan., area. The Longhorns originated clear down at the Gulf in south Texas. He had six Texans working for him, and they drove him west. His idea was to open range north of Ogallala, (Nebraska) in what is now Grant County. But he got north and was met by 14 riders who informed him he wasn't going to go that way, that the range was taken," Eatinger said. They and others along the way advised his great-great-grandfather to go east and north and that there would be spring holes where he could water the cattle. Meanwhile, he had to get back to

See **THRIVING RANCHES**,
page 3



LONG LINE: Gathering steers on the Eatinger Cattle Company ranch in Cherry County, Nebraska can string

cattle out for quite a distance through the grass prairie. (Courtesy photo Cherry County 2-RFP-070725)

Herd it through the grapevine: Cargill joins expansion chorus

Cargill has no plans to close any beef harvesting facilities despite the lingering historic low U.S. cattle herd numbers, Jarrod Gillig, senior vice president of Cargill's North American beef business, told the Reuters financial news service.

Packer margins plummeted for the week ending August 1 to an estimated loss of \$316.28 per head, the largest weekly loss since Sterling Marketing began tracking data in 1988. Reduced slaughter numbers — just 535,000 head processed — contributed to continued capacity concerns.

Despite the currently grim supply situation, Cargill is the latest beef industry major to flag hints of a herd turnaround, though the process will take years. In fact, Cargill announced plans in June to invest nearly \$90 million in automation and technology at its Fort Morgan,

Cargill announced plans in June to invest nearly \$90 million in automation and technology at its Fort Morgan, Colo., beef plant over the next several years.

Colo., beef plant over the next several years.

"It's not overwhelmingly glaring that, 'Hey we're starting to rebuild the cow herd,' but I think there are quite a few signals," Gillig told Reuters.

The comments follow last week's outright declaration by Tyson Foods President Donnie King, in a call with Wall Street analysts following the company's third-quarter earnings report: "We think that herd retention has begun."

King noted that first-half cow slaughter was down 16%. "That's an early indicator of heifer retention beginning," he said. "In terms of beyond that, we think herd rebuilding will begin in earnest in 2026."

But the process will drag through "the next couple of

Packer losses hit record high as cattle prices surge

The U.S. beef industry experienced a week of record-breaking prices and margins for the week ending August 1, shaking up every part of the supply chain, according to the Sterling Report distributed through Drovers.

Packers paid a record \$244.41 per hundredweight (cwt) for Choice steers, a \$48 jump compared to the same week last year, while the Comprehensive Cutout Value fell nearly \$5 to average \$364.54/cwt.

Packer margins plummeted to

years after that, ... let's call it 2028 is when we see herd rebuild." Tyson did pare back its beef capacity late last year.

In February, JBS USA announced plans to invest \$200 million in expansions of its beef production facilities in Cactus, Texas, and Greeley, Colo., while

an estimated loss of \$316.28 per head, the largest weekly loss since Sterling Marketing began tracking data in 1988. Reduced slaughter numbers — just 535,000 head processed — contributed to continued capacity concerns.

While packers took the hit, cattle feeders posted an estimated profit of \$788 per head, with feeder steers weighing 750-800 pounds selling for a record \$348.49/cwt. That set a new high for breakeven prices on place-

America's Heartland Packing began operations Thursday in April at a new, \$800 million beef plant in Warren County, Mo. A building permit was issued this month for Producer Owned Beef's planned \$253 million beef plant in Amarillo, Texas.

— **Meatingplace.com**

ments at \$228.53/cwt.

The latest Beef Profit Tracker data also showed fed plant capacity utilization at 74.5%, well below last year's 82.8%, and cow plant utilization at 58.6%.

Despite falling cutout values, carcass weights remained stable at 865 pounds. Industry analysts say that unless capacity constraints are addressed, pressure on packers may persist even as feedlot margins improve.

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THRIVING RANCHES from page 1

Illinois for his business, so a cowboy stayed behind to winter with his cattle.

While the ridges of the Sandhills were blowing sand because of frequent fires, the draws, valleys and meadows however, were productive.

“Our ancestors said you could track a grey wolf from the North Loup River to the Dismal River (a winding 71.9-mile-long river in Nebraska) and they also mentioned clouds of mosquitoes,” Eatinger said.

His great-great-grandfather started out with 1,000 head but there was a certain amount of winter kill.

“Indians came down from the reservation and were grateful for the fresh beef. All parts of the cows were used even the hide and hooves — they didn’t waste anything. There was lots of admiration for the Native Americans,” Eatinger told The Fence Post.

His great-great-grandfather got the cattle shipped, driving them down the Platte Valley and loading them. Although he lost half the herd, for one reason or another including winter kill, he initially bought them for \$5 each and sold them for \$25 each.

“My grandfather told me, his granddad felt that this was his most profitable transaction, that first herd. He made \$7,000 which was quite a lot of money then.”

They kept up that business, and managed to get to Ogallala. Then, another load of cattle came from Omaha that he ranged in Nebraska. The land all belonged to the government, although his great-great-grandfather knew what was going to happen with the settlers. He developed the grubstake (material assistance, like a loan to launch a business) and managed to put together land. He also talked people into coming there to also take out claims.

Hoffman Ranch

Another rancher in Cherry County, Jason Hoffman, of the Hoffman Ranch, lives in Thedford in nearby Thomas County, and leases 20,000 acres in Cherry County.

Hoffman and his family moved to northern Nebraska from northern California 17 years ago, where they lived in a small ranching community and sold bulls, and still have customers there.

“My dad was really intrigued by the Sandhills of Nebraska, and we knew if we were going to grow much in size, it probably wasn’t going to be where we were. It wasn’t as practical to run a cow as it is here in the center of the U.S.,” Hoffman said. Despite some windstorms that can blow the sand, Hoffman said, if the grass is managed right, it usually all works out.

It’s all about location and with so many cattle around, it fit their

business model well, in addition to other benefits including the grasslands, water and the people in northern Nebraska.

With 20,000 acres, Hoffman has a large herd. They sell Hereford and Angus bulls, hold two bull sales every year in November and February, and have a female sale. They grow their silage under pivots. The hills are strictly for the cows.

It’s a family operation with Hoffman, his wife and three children.

“It’s nonstop, and everything is targeted for those two sales. My folks, who are in their 70s, are very involved. They have a lot of say, and I’d say there’s no way we could do it without them,” Hoffman said.

Hoffman Ranch also has seven full-time employees who help with their three different ranches. They deliver bulls for free nationwide, they stand behind them, and have competitive guarantees on their bulls, with quality first, Hoffman said.

Hoffman’s dad started their herd with his love for the cattle he grew during 4-H. His wife’s side is their sixth generation of ranchers, and has family who live in northern Nebraska.

The family sells seedstock, conducts artificial insemination with their bulls, and helps market commercial cattle for customers. They also show bulls at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, as a way to promote cattle.

“My kids are into it, my son enjoys calving and the business and science part of it, they’re involved in 4-H and FFA, my two daughters like the horses and cattle, and showing the heifers,” Hoffman said. “I think it’s all a pretty good vehicle to teach them a work ethic.”

I like Cherry County, because it’s a good place to raise kids and cattle. The good definitely outweigh the bad days. I think it’s a good part of the world,” said Hoffman who was on a livestock judging team while attending Kansas State University.

No two days are ever the

same and late springtime is especially busy.

“I left at 5 this morning to get bulls taken care of, and now back at the ranch we’re going to sort a bunch of cows, and ship some cows, and sort tomorrow’s loads of bulls. We were also calving and branding calves, and synchronizing cows to breed again,” Hoffman said about how busy it is in late April.

It’s an enjoyable time of the year when the weather cooperates.

Cherry County ranchers have a special sense of pride, are steadfast and value the ranching lifestyle on their vast homes on the range.

“It’s cool to be in agriculture and there are so many jobs that

correlate to agriculture,” Hoffman said. “For the most part, my family doesn’t have a

whole lot of wants and needs to do much else, than what we’re doing,” he said.

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From the Publisher... Jon Angell

This has been the greenest summer anyone can remember. Well, at the end of August, I am finally done with my first-round hay cutting, just in time to prepare for silage cutting. I buy silage from my neighbor, and I have the expectation of the best silage ever. The plants are thin stalked and tall, with what is estimated to be over 200 bushels of grain per acre. It sounds great.

Every year is different and on my little ranch, no two days are the same. Different year, different problems. The problem I have been struggling with is the same as many others, I've got all kinds of great feed, what am I going to feed it too? The other problem: What is it going to cost to buy enough cattle to feed all this abundance?

Anything and everything will come with a hefty price tag, it looks like to me. Everyone is concerned about the inevitable price drop when we rebuild the herd. It looks like to me, building the domestic herd due to many factors will be a much slower process than in previous cattle cycles. Yes, a market price drop is a concern for the future, but not an immediate fear. I can't think of a time when there has ever been so much potential for profit on the gain. It is crazy good right now.

One of the most important news items for cattle producers will be on page 14. Savannah came out of retirement as a reporter/writer for us to bring us information on Theileria.

My opinion and speculation is that this disease is a bigger issue than what it has been given credit. I believe it has had a huge economic impact to cattle producers for several years.

Currently, many of our bureaucratic animal health professionals and politicians are hyper focused on NW Screwworm, which is still hundreds of miles away. Yes, screwworm is important, but not at the expense of other active disease problems setting us back here and now.

From the recent examples I have heard of producer impacts, especially at the price of cattle, Theileria should have more attention given to it. Hopefully Savannah can do a follow up. See our website for a map showing effected counties in Missouri.

I ran into a reader at the doctor's office. Wayne commented that he really liked it when we ran stories from the western ranches. Wayne will love this issue. On page 8 is a story of the sale of one of the country's largest ranches in New Mexico. Then, up front we have a story about ranching in Cherry County Nebraska. Some day I would like to visit that area.

My dad did once. He came away from that trip with a fun story about locking the keys in his car at the salebarn in Valentine.

When I finally get there to visit, take note I don't intend on the same stories as Dad. Let's just say, nobody in Cherry County locks their doors, there isn't a locksmith in the county, so, it may be the worst place in the country to lock your keys in the car.

I also had correspondence from a reader that said he missed the book reviews. To be responsive to the readership, on page 19 is a book review of my latest read. I will be interested in seeing the feedback from this review. Did you benefit from reading the review? Was the positive review effective in getting you to read the book? Let me know. If it is just me and the other guy interested, I'll save the ink and call him on the phone with book recommendations.

For nearly the whole time I have been publishing *The Cattleman's Advocate*, we have struggled in distributing it across our trade area. We have worked with many wonderful local USPS employees, many of whom have gone above and beyond to work with us. Most of us realize, the further you get away from your local postmaster, the less satisfactory the service performance.

On page 8, Rep. Sam Graves has an update on his efforts to reform and revitalize the USPS.

Is it even possible to fix at this point? I wish him the best of luck, but to truly fix the system we need a DOGE approach. Instead of a bunch of tech geek kids, how about a bunch of mature former private sector managers from UPS, FedEx, Amazon, and others? Having government bureaucrats and union officials trying to fix their own obviously hasn't worked out.

Of course, we have some great stories from our regular columnists.

I found Bill Bullard's column on page 15 particularly interesting. You have heard of America First policies. Bill describes what Australia First policies look like. He goes on to ask for you to reach out to Congress to support the American Beef Labeling Act, S421. I'd be interested in hearing how our readers felt on the issues he brings up.

I had a couple of comments on subscription renewals about appreciating some of the historic information that we present. History enthusiasts should appreciate Carolyn Allen's Barns of Pike County every month. This month features a truly handsome, well-kept barn. I really like seeing old barns being maintained with a new contemporary function and purpose. Bravo.

Starting on page 16, we are printing an interview done by Meatingplace.com from a former top USDA administrator. He is very critical of the Trump Administration. He brings up several interesting

points, that I am sure have plenty of validity. I am largely very supportive of downsizing and decentralizing government aggressively.

I read it and printed it in the pages specifically for a different perspective. I believe many of you might find it interesting as I did.

Lastly, I would draw readers' attention to supporting advertisers. We have several rock solid long-time and numerous new advertisers represented in these pages. If you get the opportunity, give them a shot at your business and whether a deal is done or not, if you get the chance, maybe let them know you read their ad and thank them for their support.

I know I appreciate them, and I know whether it is said or not, many of you do too.

This issue came together well, I hope you enjoy it. As always thanks for reading and your continued support of our efforts.



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Bowling Green Vet Clinic	page 7
Beeiland	page 7
Larry Clementz Real Estate	page 7
Audrain Building Supplies	page 8
Circle 5 Beef	page 8
Scotland Co. Livestock Auction	page 9
Eastern Mo. Cowboy Church	page 9
Bruce Fencing	page 9
Callaway Livestock Center	page 10
Angell-Thomas Charolais	page 10
Maxwell Trailers	page 11
Purina	page 11
Mo. Beef Industry Council	page 12
Girod Construction	page 12
Boyd Harris Companies	page 12
Cattle Visions	page 13
Meyers Truck Service	page 13
Zuroweste Welding	page 13
Angell's	pages 14, 15, 23
Ridgway Seed & Soil	page 14
Meyer Implement	page 14
J&L Farm	page 15
Reclaimed Stage	page 16
Angell Livestock	page 16
EMCC market report	page 18
Sheep & Goat market report	page 19
Callaway Youth Expo	page 19
Angell-Thomas Charolais	page 20
Angell's Western Wear	page 20
Albert's Shoe Repair	page 20
Cary Livestock	page 20
CYS Builders	page 20
Nation Polled Herefords	page 20
Shannon Farms	page 20
SHek Boutique	page 20
Mark Robertson	page 20
Savannah's Farm Fresh	page 20
Cattleman's Advocate ad rates	page 21
Eastern Mo. Comm. Co.	page 24

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FARM & FOOD FILE

We're rich enough to support both the poor and our farmers

By ALAN GUEBERT
For The Cattleman's Advocate

Five years ago I stopped a long tradition of turning this space over to readers who disagreed with me. Most of those columns, offered twice a year, featured correspondents who verbally took me to the woodshed.



I did it, as I explained in each of those "readers-write" columns, out of a sense of fairness; "I've had my say, you can have yours," I'd note.

The practice stopped after several readers urged me to drop any pretense of being fair. You write an opinion column, one explained, there's no expectation of fairness. "Accuracy and honesty are what you're offering," he explained, "keep doing that."

Excellent advice, but readers still write. I respond to most but I rarely reply to shouters. Some reader questions, however, are too informed to handle on the side. Those questions spur columns because they raise a important public issues.

For instance, last week's column on how our deeply partisan Congress removed all limits on federal farm subsidies while slashing USDA's food assistance programs moved a reader to ask: "What fraction of the food assis-

JBS to build its largest U.S. prepared bacon, sausage plant

JBS USA plans to purchase and renovate a former Hy-Vee production facility in Ankeny, Iowa, into the company's largest U.S. plant for ready-to-eat bacon and sausage, according to a release from the company.

The 186,000-square-foot site will be converted to produce fully cooked products, with operations expected to begin by mid-2026. The project is anticipated to create about 400 jobs once completed, with hiring priority given to former Hy-Vee employees who worked at the facility.

The company already operates plants in Council Bluffs, Marshalltown and Ottumwa, with a new fresh sausage facility planned for Perry, Iowa, that will supply raw material to the Ankeny plant.

JBS recently expanded a fully cooked bacon facility in Moberly, Mo., and says the Ankeny operation will benefit from regional supply synergies. The company will also extend its Hometown Strong rural investment program and Better Futures tuition-free college program to Ankeny employees.

— Meatingplace.com

That means that 80 percent of the nation's population, or about 275.5 million Americans, live on just three percent of the nation's land mass—cities.

tance to low-income families has been spent in red districts in the past and what fraction of the population is in red districts?"

Both answers can be found in the mountain of data gathered, stacked, and crunched by USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture).

According to USDA, 97 percent of the nation is geographically considered "rural" and 20 percent of all Americans, or about 68.4 million, live in rural areas. That means that 80 percent of the nation's population, or about 275.5 million Americans, live on just three percent of the nation's land mass—cities.

More to the point, 16 percent of the rural population, or about 11 million people, now use SNAP (USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) to purchase food. In metro America, 11 percent, or about 30 million people, use SNAP.

On the political side, 93 percent of geographic "rural America" voted for Donald J. Trump last November. At the same time, Democrats won 13 seats in congressional districts taken by Trump while Republicans claimed just three congressional seats in House districts won by then-Vice President Kamala Harris.

SNAP, however, is not used by every hungry American. Many who qualify may choose not to take government assistance while others perhaps believe they don't qualify and never sign up. Still others simply won't or can't do the hefty—and growing—paperwork.

It's not a small number. For

example, AARP, the group that caters to senior Americans, estimates at least 16 million citizens aged 50 and older qualify for SNAP but never sign up.

If accurate—and no one disagrees with AARP's estimate—SNAP's overall numbers would explode 40 percent if just those 50-plus-year-olds actually received their benefits. It also means that at least 3.2 million of these unsigned SNAP recipients live in rural America and many are "red," or Trump, voters.

Interestingly, however, seniors are the least numerous age group receiving SNAP benefits. According to USDA, 39 percent of all SNAP recipients are children under the age 18 and 42 percent of all beneficiaries are between the ages of 18 and 59. The remainder, 19 percent, are 60 years old or more.

Here are two more USDA numbers to keep in mind when judging SNAP's new "red" reality: Congress cut SNAP's budget by \$195 billion over the next 10 years while increasing farm program benefits by \$66 billion over the same period.

If that doesn't seem fair, it isn't. We're a rich enough nation to both feed our hungry and support our farmers. That's not an opinion; that's the honest truth.

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The Farm and Food File is published weekly throughout the U.S. and Canada. Past columns, supporting documents, and contact information are posted at farmandfoodfile.com

Fresh competition: Amazon widening perishable deliveries to 2,300 cities

Amazon.com Inc. is making same-day delivery on perishable groceries — including meat products — available in more than 2,300 communities across the United States by the end of 2025, in the e-commerce behemoth's most direct challenge yet to the grocery sector.

The move is "an important step forward in Amazon's broader strategy and should help the company capture incremental share in perishable categories where they have struggled historically," Wedbush Securities wrote in an analysis. "The reason this announcement is so significant is that Amazon has yet to displace incumbents in the grocery category, at least for perishables."

Amazon delivery for fresh grocery items is available now in more than 1,000 cities and towns.

The service is free for Amazon's Prime members on orders over \$25 in most cities, but fees apply for smaller orders or non-members.

Amazon will be bringing its heft to bear against both delivery services like Instacart and Uber and supermarkets. As the biggest

retail category, the grocery sector has helped big-box general merchandisers like Walmart, Target and Costco maintain store traffic to fend off internet competition, making fresh food a strategic lynchpin for Amazon.

"Along comes Amazon with an existing nationwide network of fulfillment centers and delivery trucks that seems to have finally figured out how to store and fulfill perishables in a way to support same-day efforts," Wedbush said.

The new service complements existing grocery delivery offerings through the company's Amazon Fresh and Whole Foods Market chains. Amazon has built out a temperature-controlled fulfillment network, and temperature-sensitive products are delivered in insulated bags.

"You can order cookware for Same-Day Delivery, but now you can add everything you need alongside it for grandma's chicken soup recipe — all the fresh veggies, broth, noodles, herbs, chicken and even bowls to serve it in," Worldwide Amazon Stores chief executive Doug Herrington said.

— Meatingplace.com

Here are the scheduled advertising deadlines for The Cattleman's Advocate through January 2026:

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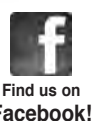


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Thoughts From Justin's Side of the Fence

By JUSTIN ANGELL

What a time to be in the cattle business! Everyone knows the feeder cattle market gets higher every week. I've been asked how high cattle can get and I've decided no one can tell.

In theory, like I've said in the past, the cattle cycle does not turn until replacement heifers are kept and put into production. I believe that may be happening now because so many of you have told me you're keeping heifers to breed. Taking these females out of the beef supply chain should intensify the beef shortage beginning sometime this fall through spring next year.

What makes this price rally different this time is it is driven by two different factors. One of course is the short supply of cattle, but the second is the incredibly abundant and cheap feed that is available. Cattle are well over \$2.40 per pound, choice box beef this week handily broke the \$4 barrier today standing at \$4.04. The costs of gain in the feed yards and grow yards are

plunging with cheaper corn and grazing cost are declining because of the abundance of grass due to the perpetually wet summer grazing season.

Combined, high fed cattle and very cheap feed have allowed feeder cattle and calf prices to rise into the stratosphere. Corbitt Wall talked about the relationship between expensive cattle and cheap corn this week. It now takes 53lb corn to buy a candy bar. One fat steer is worth more than a semi load of corn. The value of one load of 500 lb steer calves is equal to 71 semi-loads of corn.

Just when we think everything is going off without a hitch, we have a new cattle disease with which to deal.

Theileria is a protozoan based disease spread by the Asian longhorn tick. The reason I am bringing this to everyone's attention is the symptoms are very much resemble anaplasmosis. If you've had trouble with anaplasmosis without good treatment results, it may be Theileria.

I'm going to cite the August 7



Drovers's Journal article by Angie Stump Denton as currently the best one I've read.

I understand my daughter Savannah who is my almost veterinarian is also writing a story about this issue I'd encourage everyone to read.

I continue to receive supportive calls from people who agreed with my position that CRP [Conservation Reserve Program] should be ended. It was never intended to be a retirement program and it is

actually hindering entry into our business by young people. I'm open to ideas about how to pursue this. There's a great deal of grassroots support for ending CRP. Let me know what you think and who you think could initiate this.

Finally, I will relate that as good as our moisture is here that is not the case universally. Colorado is dry and cows are moving.

I have a new contact that has been able to buy two loads of solid mouth cows, bred back with big calves in the last two

weeks. I also have a line on a full load of bred heifers.

If this is something that would interest you, give me or brother Jon a call. I'd like to bring one load per week back to sell into our country. I think it's something that could make us some money and stimulate the cattle business in our area with volume.

I guess that is about all I have for this month. I would love to hear from you so give me a call or better yet come see me at the auction. Sale day is the best day of the week!

U.S., China extend trade war ceasefire for another 90 days

The United States and China staved off a resumption of their cycle of soaring retaliatory tariffs, issuing a joint statement late Monday extending current high-but-not-catastrophic tariff rates for another 90 days.

Trade disruptions this year have sharply curtailed U.S. beef exports to mainland China, which were worth nearly \$1.6 billion last year. Pork sales, worth \$1.1 billion in 2024, and poultry sales of \$481 million have also been hit hard since President Donald Trump began tariff escalations in February.

In early April, the tit-for-tat trade provocations over a period of a few days led to tariffs of 145% or more on Chinese goods and at least 125% on U.S. products, before Washington and Beijing agreed to a trade war ceasefire in May. That brought base rates back to 30% on China and 10% on the United States, extended in June and again before a Tuesday deadline.

April's 172% import tax on

U.S. pork has been 57% since May, and by June, pork export volume rebounded nearly to 2024 levels. For the first half of 2025, though, pork exports to China were down 19% by volume and 17% by value.

Beyond high tariffs, U.S. beef exports have been hit even harder, due largely to China's continued refusal to renew registrations for all but a few U.S. facilities. In June, exports to mainland China were down more than 77% by volume and nearly 81% by value, from a year ago.

The joint statement said that the extension was based on talks late last month in Stockholm. More negotiations are expected.

— Meatingplace.com

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It's The Pitts...

Between the SO and LD

By LEE PITTS
For The Cattleman's Advocate

I feel sorry for sale managers when they stop a sale and make a long speech telling the crowd the animal in the ring is the best bargain since the Dutch bought Manhattan from the Indians for some beads and \$24 in cash. Then after the momentum of the sale has come to a complete stop he'll hand it back to the auctioneer who, despite the speech, can't find another bid anywhere.

That's why it's important to have an auctioneer and a ring crew who know intuitively when a person is done bidding. If you watch a bull sale closely you'll see a ring man point to the out gate or shake his head meaning his bidder is done bidding. I used to use my flat hand in an underhand movement like I was pushing the animal out of the ring.

This is especially important in a video sale where the TV time can cost over three grand an hour and you want to sell as many lots as you can while still getting every dollar for the consignor. Now days where we often see bull sales with 500 bulls and a couple hundred females and you don't want to be wasting any time.

Years ago we were selling a high dollar bull and the auctioneer thought we'd gathered up all the money we were going to get and he said "SOLD" and slammed his gavel down right before a ring man turned in another bid. It was obvious to

A good ring man knows instinctively when a bidder is done bidding and conveys this information to an auctioneer who usually trusts his judgement.

everyone the bull had sold but the auctioneer made the mistake of saying, "You got me right between the SO and the LD" and he restarted selling the bull. The man who'd obviously already bought the bull once became very irritated and ended up buying the bull for \$30,000 more than he'd paid the first time. He told the owner he'd never buy another animal at his sale as long as he employed the same auctioneer.

Guess who got fired?

I was the announcer for a big video company for 20 years and we had six World Champion auctioneers and I was on the block 95% of the time. In all that time I can't remember two times that we had a similar incident because we had such good auctioneers and excellent ring men. We never wanted to sell a bidder out too soon but we didn't want to beg and plead all day either. A good ring man knows instinctively when a bidder is done bidding and conveys this information to an auctioneer who usually trusts his judgement.

I read one time that people who've had abusive childhoods make excellent ring men because they'd had to read the mind of the abusive parent to know when to steer clear. I think there's something to this theory because I learned to read my mean alcoholic father like a book to avoid a scolding, a swat or worse.

I enjoyed my 50 years as a

ring man and made a study of it. I read a book a long time ago that said only one third of communication takes place through the spoken word and the book explained how to read a person's tells and non-verbal behavior. If you watch car auctions on the Internet you'll see practically on every lot a bidder will tell the ring man he's through bidding but then goes on to bid several more times. To know when he or she really means it a ring man studies the bidder's posture, gestures, and movements. If the bidder tells you they're done while covering their mouth, scratching their nose, covering their ears or their eyes, or blinks a lot he or she will probably bid again. But if they offer you an open palm in the direction of the person they're bidding against he or she is DONE and you can convey this information to the auctioneer with confidence. The same with a man turning to his wife and saying, "I'm through."

He dang well better be.

Surprisingly when a bidder gets up and says, "I'M DONE!" while walking away that doesn't necessarily mean he is. I've seen countless times where the bidder will stop, turn around and bid again.

Working ring is a lot like playing poker in the wild, wild west only the ring man doesn't lose any money and no one gets shot. At least so far anyway.

– www.LeePittsbooks.com

Tariff on U.S. beef remains 21.6% under Japan trade deal

Japan's tariff on U.S. beef remains 21.6% under a framework trade arrangement announced last month, while most pork continues to face no tariff entering the country.

Both rates are on "a level playing field" with competing exporters in the Japanese market since a 2020 trade agreement negotiated during the first Trump administration, U.S. Meat Export Federation President Dan Halstrom said. Japan's chief trade negotiator was in Washington, D.C., last week seeking to iron out unresolved details in the U.S.-Japan

Trade and Investment Agreement, which was announced in July with few specifics.

Japan was the top destination for U.S. beef exports by volume last year, narrowly ahead of South Korea and Mexico. By value, Japan was the second-largest buyer of both pork at nearly \$1.4 billion and beef at almost \$1.9 billion.

Halstrom, who was in Tokyo when the U.S.-Japan agreement was announced, said that the earlier Japan deal in 2020 "was really key, because we were not

on a level playing field at that time with our global competitors."

The 21.6% tariff rate, the highest of any major market for U.S. beef, is scheduled to phase down to 9% by 2033.

"The fact that we got this [2025] deal done, at least at the minimum, maintains that level playing field," Halstrom said. "I think that's really important to remember, because it wasn't that long ago where we were at a severe disadvantage tariff wise."

– Meatingplace.com

\$253M producer-owned beef plant making progress

A massive beef facility in Amarillo inched forward to its 2027 completion. According to local media, the city issued a building permit for the \$253-million project; all work, up to this point, had been dirt work that did not require permitting.

Announced in 2022 by Texas Governor Greg Abbott, the facility will be co-owned by producers and employ 1,600 workers to process 3,000 head of cattle per day. It will sell beef and byproducts in and out of Texas, and received a \$12.2-million Texas Enterprise Fund grant.

"Producer Owned Beef's selection of Amarillo for its new beef processing plant further reinforces the Panhandle as a leader in U.S. beef and beef production," Abbott said in 2022.

Last September, the Amarillo City Council extended the facility's deadlines for permitting, financing and occupancy certification. Previously, the plant was expected to be completed and occupied by May 2027, but that was pushed to December 2027. The two-year schedule comes amid glimmers of a turnaround in the U.S. beef herd from current historic lows, with a yearslong rebuilding process. Amarillo already has one of North America's largest beef processing facilities, a Tyson Foods' plant employing more than 3,100 workers.

– Meatingplace.com

JBS posts big Q2 numbers despite market challenges

Despite losses in its U.S. beef unit, other proteins and markets helped Brazil's JBS S.A. boost its net profit by 60% in the second quarter.

The Sao Paulo-based meatpacking behemoth recorded net profit of \$528 million in the latest period, a positive debut for a company that began trading shares in June on the New York Stock Exchange, after working for years to clear regulatory hurdles to a U.S. listing.

JBS's U.S. chicken firm, Pilgrim's Pride Corp., helped especially with its record \$817.7 million in earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA), as did strong

performances in JBS Australia and Seara.

Those performances offset struggles in JBS's U.S. beef business, which posted EBITDA of negative \$233 million, compared with \$29 million in the year-earlier period, amid historically tight cattle supplies. Sales in the unit still rose 13.6% to \$6.8 billion in the quarter.

Overall JBS S.A. revenues totaled nearly \$21 billion, compared with about \$19.3 billion in the same quarter of 2024.

Shares of JBS were \$13.78, down a little more than 5%, in mid-day trading on the New York Stock Exchange.

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One of America's largest and most iconic New Mexico ranches changes hands

By AGDAILY Reporters
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The Great Western Ranch — stretching more than 500,000 acres across New Mexico, making it one of the largest ranches in the United States — has just been sold. This hope is that this transaction allows the ranch to remain a vital ecological corridor and a model for large-scale land conservation in the American West. The final sale price was not made public, but its real estate listing shows the previous owners were asking for \$115 million.

The Great Western Ranch is renowned for its abundant big game populations, attracting hunters globally, and holds significant historical and archaeological importance with sites dating back to the Anasazi and earlier periods. The property boasts functional improvements, including multiple residences and ranch outbuildings, and a well-developed internal road infrastructure.

The ranch is north of Quemado and south of Fence Lake, just a mile east of the Arizona state line. It encompasses 225,582 deeded acres complemented by extensive leased lands totaling about 504,801 acres (nearly 790 square miles). Its sheer scale and meticulously managed infrastructure includes

86 functional wells, numerous natural water sources, and 2,230 miles of fencing dividing 134 pastures. It is lauded as an example of efficient rotational grazing and sustainable land use.

"The sale of the Great Western Ranch represents a significant event in the world of large land holdings," said Dax Hayden, Managing Partner with Hayden Outdoors, who represented the buyer. "Our client is deeply committed to preserving the natural integrity and ecological health of this incredible property. The existing conservation efforts and the ranch's rich biodiversity were key attractions, and the new ownership looks forward to building upon that legacy."

The sale was brokered by Hall and Hall, an agricultural mortgage company founded in 1946 that has since grown into the largest full-service rural real estate firm in the Rocky Mountain West, Great Plains, and Southwest, and Southeast regions.

Jeff Buerger, partner with Hall and Hall, added, "This ranch is more than just land; it's a living testament to generations of thoughtful management. Its importance for wildlife, particularly bull elk, mule deer, and antelope, as well as its historical significance, cannot be overstated.

We are pleased to see it transition to owners who share a vision for its continued protection and responsible use."

The history of this land includes the Anasazi, an ancient culture of Pueblo peoples who lived in the American Southwest from roughly 1 A.D. to 1300 A.D., and continues into the arrival of Spanish explorers. That gave way to the early homesteaders and then the ranchers of today.

The ranch has historical and archaeological sites, including Anasazi petroglyphs, ruins, and the tumbled-down stone homes and corrals of New Mexico's earliest homesteaders.

The cow herd has been developed extensively over the years, offering good genetics and a proper understanding of the ecosystem. There are about 1,900 cow/calf pairs are currently being run on the ranch, and the previous owners has said that's purposefully understocked because they felt "2,000 pairs is an ethical and sustainable number of livestock to run on a 10-year average."

There are plans to sell approximately 1,000 head of cattle to Kansas in October, leaving about 900 at the ranch. In addition to the cows, the ranch owns 50 bulls and leases an additional 70 or so bulls.

Black holes: Investigating the postal distribution centers

By REP. SAM GRAVES
Congressman, 6th District of Missouri

It used to be that when you sent a letter to your neighbor down the road, it went to your local post office, got sorted, and delivered to your neighbor quickly. Sadly, that's just not the way it works anymore.

In the name of efficiency and cost cutting, the Postal Service over the years has consolidated mail sorting to huge processing centers, like the ones in Kansas City and St. Louis. That means that your letter gets picked up, shipped to one of these centers, sorted, returned to your local post office, and then delivered. At face value, that entire idea sounds crazy. How is it more efficient to truck stuff back and forth, rather than sorting it in the local post office?

Well, the idea is that the trucks have to run back and forth from the local post offices anyway and automating the process at larger facilities makes it more efficient. That's the idea, anyway. The problem is that these processing centers aren't exactly the poster child for efficiency and reliability—they've become unaccountable black holes where mail goes to get lost or ping-ponged to different facilities all over the country before making it where it needs to go.

As a result, we've seen ballots show up late, lifesaving prescriptions get lost, and I don't know how many folks I've heard from who had their property tax bills or payments go missing. The list of problems is nearly endless and it's unacceptable.

I called for an Inspector General investigation of the processing center in St. Louis to get to the bottom of these issues. That investigation finally took place over the last three months and it is stunning.

In just two days in June at the St. Louis distribution facility, almost 2.6 million pieces of mail were delayed. If that wasn't bad enough, they only reported around 1.5 million pieces as delayed. They weren't even reporting the missed mail correctly! On top of that, over 50 percent of all outbound mail trips from the STL processing facility from May 2024 - April 2025 were late or canceled. The Inspector General said this was one of the worst processing centers they'd seen—and that's saying something.

It turns out management was at fault. They simply weren't doing their jobs. They need to go, and we need to get new management in place at the St. Louis facility.

It's not just St. Louis though. We called for an audit in Kansas City, and that was completed last year. Their issues are similar. Late and canceled trips out of the processing center were above 50 percent as well at the time. We know what the problems are. Now it's time to fix them.

To be clear, this isn't on our local carriers. They do a great job but they can't deliver the mail if it doesn't get to them. That's completely unacceptable and not fair to them.

The Postal Service can no longer deny or downplay the horrific state of the mail in North Missouri. Something has got to change. It's time for an overhaul. We need the mail delivered once again, and on time, and USPS needs to make it happen sooner rather than later.

Company pleads guilty, pays \$1M for worker deaths

Vernon, Calif.-based California Ranch Foods pleaded guilty and paid a \$1-million criminal fine for charges in connection to two worker deaths in 2020.

A subsidiary of Golden West Food Group, the company was criminally charged with two misdemeanor counts after the workers were fatally exposed to nitrogen gas. The victims, Baldemar Gonsales and Maria Osyguss, died after a malfunction in the facility's nitrogen system led to a hazardous gas release on Dec. 1, 2020.

A Cal/OSHA's investigation found "critical failures in safety procedures and training related to

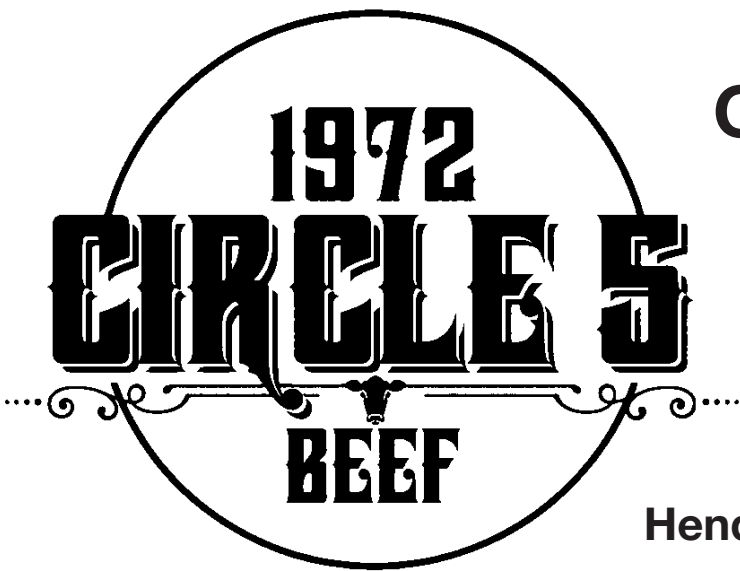
the handling of pressurized gas systems," according to a release, and the plea agreement demands the following from California Ranch Foods:

- Invest \$1.6 million in safety improvements at the facility
- Pay \$50,000 to BOI to support enforcement efforts
- Serve three years of probation
- Pay a \$1 million criminal fine
- Donate \$4 million to local food banks
- Acknowledge a \$35 million civil settlement with the victims' families

"When employers fail to protect their workers and it results in

a preventable death, California will hold them accountable," said Cal/OSHA Chief Debra Lee. "We will continue to use every tool available, including criminal referrals, to ensure justice is served, and that safety is never optional."

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Livestock News & Notes.....

Trump rescinds Biden-era competition, antitrust order

President Donald Trump on August 14 revoked Executive Order 14036, “Promoting Competition in the American Economy,” which was signed by President Joe Biden in July 2021, according to The White House.

The move marks a rollback of one of Biden’s signature economic policy initiatives, which had targeted consolidation in sectors such as meatpacking, rail and broadband, and had sought to strengthen antitrust enforcement.

The Biden directive had instructed federal agencies to take a wide range of actions aimed at boosting competition across industries, including agriculture, technology, and labor markets.

In his order, Trump did not outline new directives to replace the 2021 policy but specified that the revocation does not alter any legal authorities of federal agencies or the Office of Management and Budget. The order states that it creates no enforceable rights and that publication costs will be borne by the Justice Department.

The Justice Department’s Antitrust Division praised the decision, saying it will “recalibrate and modernize the federal approach to competition policy to suit the needs of our dynamic and innovative economy.” Assistant Attorney General Abigail Slater said the new “America First Antitrust” strategy focuses on empowering free markets, lowering regulatory burdens and removing barriers to innovation.

The division cited recent steps such as reinstating early termination in uncontroversial Hart-Scott-Rodino Act reviews and settling merger reviews with targeted consent decrees; both practices it said were avoided during the Biden administration. DOJ officials said they will continue pursuing “focused law enforcement that matches the complexity and pace of the modern economy.”

Trump takes notice of tariff challenge as new rates kick in

New tariff rates took effect August 7 on goods from about 90 countries as President Donald Trump took notice of a court case that could derail his frequent resetting of taxes on imports.

His executive order last week set rates agreed in framework arrangements with several countries, including the United Kingdom, where Trump won a larger quota for beef imports, though non-tariff barriers may remain.

Other deals are now implemented with Japan and South Korea, which are top destinations for U.S. meat exports, and

with Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines, which are potentially large export growth markets. Those agreements appeared to mostly eliminate tariffs on U.S. meat, but details remain scarce and may be left to be resolved in future talks.

“The few hastily negotiated deals the administration has announced are more show than substance and make promises that may not be kept,” House Agriculture Committee ranking member Angie Craig (D-Minn.) said.

She criticized Trump’s “chaotic tariff policy” and “worldwide trade wars” for raising consumer costs. “Farmers continue to face retaliatory tariffs on their exports and are losing export market share to our competitors,” Craig said.

In an all-caps post late Wednesday on social media, Trump celebrated: “Reciprocal tariffs take effect at midnight tonight! ... Billions of dollars ... will start flowing into the USA.”

Alluding to a pending appellate court decision due in the next several weeks, that could invalidate his global 10% rate and individual country tariffs, Trump wrote: “The only thing that can stop America’s greatness would be a radical left court that wants to see our country fail!”

The Budget Lab, an econom-

ics research center at Yale University, estimated that with Thursday’s newly set import duties, the average effective tariff rate for total U.S. imports is 18.6%, the highest since 1933. The same average was 2.8% in January. Even with predicted changes in buying patterns as businesses and consumers respond to resulting higher prices, the Budget Lab estimates an average tariff rate of 17.7%.

Court upholds EPA air emissions reporting exemption for livestock operations

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia upheld a 2019 Environmental Protection Agency rule exempting livestock and poultry farms from reporting routine air emissions from the natural breakdown of animal waste under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA).

The Thursday ruling affirmed EPA’s interpretation that EPCRA reporting is only required when reporting is also mandated under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Congress exempted farms from CERCLA reporting through the 2018 Farm Bill, also

known as the FARM Act.

The decision followed a challenge from environmental groups, including the Humane Society of the United States and Food and Water Watch, that argued EPA failed to follow EPCRA’s requirements and environmental justice considerations. The court sided with EPA and agricultural intervenors, including the National Pork Producers Council, National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, USPOULTRY, the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Turkey Federation.

Industry groups said the ruling ends decades of legal battles over whether farmers must report routine emissions, a fight dating back to the late 1990s. “This common-sense ruling settles an issue that has spanned more than 20 years and rightfully removes what would be nothing more than an unnecessary paperwork exercise,” said USPOULTRY President Nath Morris.

NCBA’s Kaitlynn Glover added the decision “affirms that family cattle producers should not have to file reports for a natural, biological process under a law meant for significant chemical contaminants.”

Many of the preceding items were taken from Meatingplace.com

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Special Cattle Sale Tuesday, Sept. 16 @ 12:30 a.m.

Regular Cattle Sale Tuesday, Sept. 23 @ 12:30 a.m.

Cow Sale with Hay Auction Tuesday, Sept. 30 @ 12:30 a.m. Hay @ 11:30

Grain Belt Express moves forward despite cancellation of federal funding

By SKY STRAUSS
Staff Writer, Mexico Ledger

Land owners in Audrain and several other counties in Missouri will continue to be confronted with lawsuits backed by eminent domain from Grain Belt Express despite the cancellation of \$4.9 billion in federal funding.

The Department of Energy announced the cancelation of the taxpayer-funded loan July 23 stating in a press release that the department found that the conditions necessary to issue the guarantee are unlikely to be met – therefore, it is not critical for the federal government to have a role in supporting the project.

Missouri Sen. Josh Hawley celebrated the termination of what he calls a “boondoggled loan.”

“The Grain Belt loan has been canceled and thank goodness for that,” Hawley said in a telephone interview with the Ledger, adding that this was exactly the right outcome.

Hawley said he doesn't think that Invenergy ever qualified under the terms of the loan.

“I think a private corporation taking individuals' land, taking citizens' land for their own profit is ridiculous and I think we gotta make sure that doesn't happen going forward,” Hawley said.

Despite the cancellation, a statement was issued by Grain Belt Express the same day claiming it will be America's largest power pipeline.

“While we are disappointed about the LPO loan guarantee, a privately financed Grain Belt Express transmission superhighway will advance President Trump's agenda of American

energy and technology dominance while delivering billions of dollars in energy cost savings, strengthening grid reliability and resiliency, and creating thousands of American jobs,” the release stated.

Looking through a local lens

The Invenergy project is seeking the construction of an 800-mile power pipeline that spans from Kansas, across Missouri, through Illinois and into Indiana.

In 2019, the Missouri Public Service Commission granted Grain Belt Express a certificate of convenience and necessity allowing the company to use eminent domain to seize parcels along the 241-mile approved route for the line consisting of high-voltage direct current technology in Missouri.

The agreement was amended in October 2023 to include an extension of the main line Grain Belt Express calls the Tiger Connector.

“This is no different than if a gas station decided that there were no gas stations in 40 miles around and went and got rights to go and take land from land owners because of that,” Audrain County Eastern District Associate Commissioner Leslie Meyer said.

Audrain County Commissioners are opposed to Grain Belt Express primarily due to the power it exercises as a private company through eminent domain.

“We think if they want a farmer's property, they should do like everyone else in the private sector and make them an offer high enough that the property owner is willing to listen,” Audrain County Presiding

Commissioner Alan Winders said.

The Audrain County Commissioners have attended hearings and public meetings to understand the perspectives of their constituents, but as it stands, there is not much they can do for landowners.

“The county is not going to stop this project because we can't,” Winders said. “It's not up to us.”

They currently have a road use agreement with Grain Belt Express that they hope will protect the infrastructure of Audrain County on hold as they see where

the project is going.

“My understanding is, every county involved in this, with the exception of Audrain and Callaway, have signed their road use agreement either because they thought it was a good idea or because the court told them they had to,” Winders said.



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How to rebound from an ICE raid: Glenn Valley Foods president

Two months after Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) agents detained half of its workforce, Glenn Valley Foods has made a staggering rebound.

The day after HSI's June 10 arrests of about 70 workers on suspicion of using fake IDs to gain employment at the Omaha, Neb., processor, operations ran at about 20% of capacity. Today, the plant is humming at more than 85% capacity.

In an interview with Meatingplace, Chad Hartmann, president of Glenn Valley Foods, admitted that media attention around the federal crackdown, ironically, helped the company recruit new hires.

Loss of Brazilian beef imports could delay U.S. herd rebuild

Imports of Brazilian beef were already in sharp decline after coming under the 10% U.S. "global" tariff in April, but the 50% tariff on Brazilian goods that President Trump imposed in August likely removes the number-two foreign source of lean trim from the American marketplace.

With supermarket ground beef already \$6 a pound and rising, every option is on the table to find lean trim to blend with American beef fat: even more from top import source Australia, substituting smaller South American exporters, and culling more cows that might otherwise produce calves.

"I think we're gonna see this pull more cull cows in from the U.S. That's the big question mark for me right now," Josh Maples, an extension economist and associate professor in Mississippi State University's Department of Agricultural Economics, told Meatingplace.

"We are already seeing \$1.80 [per pound] cull cow prices in some places. That's gonna change producers' math on — do I keep this cow around another year or not? All of the above is what's gonna have to happen to make up for losing Brazil as an import source. And a big chunk of that — or some of that anyways — could come from increased cow culling in the US."

A source to replace the Brazilian

Critically, Hartmann said, the company was able to replenish leadership at the quality assurance (QA) level. It's one thing to be short on product, which must be communicated honestly with customers; it's another to send what product you do have at compromised quality.

"So, you make products the right way, prioritize the products that you can produce, communicate with customers what you're capable of, train safely — and time is the other big component of this," he said. "You have to let time work for you, because that's not even a choice; it's going to tick."

Imports is "not obvious to me," Maples said. "The way the market's gonna sort this out is — we're gonna see higher trim prices, and those higher trim prices are going to begin to pull more trim from all of our import sources."

The jump in cull cow prices comes just as the beef industry is looking for early signs of a potential rebound in the depleted U.S. herd. Hints of heifer retention remain illusory.

"You gotta squint pretty hard to try to make something out of that," Maples said. "But the brighter spot for expansion prospects has been that cow slaughter has been down. Even compared to the number of cows that we have, it's been a lower percentage."

But the chance to liquidate stock at a high price now has to be weighed against uncertain future values.

Farmers are asking, as Maples put it: "Do I really wanna keep this cow around for another year? Or do I wanna go sell it for \$2 a pound? ... They've got to decide, I can sell her now for this, or I can carry her through the winter, which is not cheap. My expectation of her calf value next year has got to be sufficiently high to make me take on that, given that I could have this kind of sure thing now."

— Meatingplace.com

USDA announces \$750M Texas facility to combat screwworm threat

The USDA announced new efforts to combat the spread of New World Screwworm, including a \$750 million sterile fly production facility in Edinburg, Texas.

The plant will generate about 300 million sterile screwworm flies weekly to suppress the pest, which was recently detected in July about 370 miles south of the U.S.-Mexico border. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said the outbreak poses a "national security issue" that could destabilize beef prices nationwide.

The screwworm, eradicated in the U.S. in the 1960s, resurged north of the Panama Canal in 2023 and has been spreading through Mexico. If established in Texas, the fly could cost cattle producers \$2.1 billion and the state's hunting industry \$9 billion, according to USDA estimates.

The new facility will supplement an \$8.5 million dispersal site under construction at Moore Air Base in Edinburg. Until completion, USDA plans to spend \$100 million on rapid-response tools, including modular sterile fly units and new trapping technology.

Texas Farm Bureau President Russell Boening praised the project, calling the threat "real and urgent." Meanwhile, Gov. Greg Abbott said Texas' response team is coordinating with federal agencies to monitor the spread. USDA is training border patrol tick riders, expanding surveillance with Mexico, and deploying its Beagle

Brigade to detect infections.

— Meatingplace.com

Hartmann assured, however, that others in the industry won't be as lucky. "If raids like this happen [on a wider scale], what's going to happen is the news isn't going to be able to cover all of them, and some people are not going to get any attention, and they're going to be recruiting like they've never recruited before to try to replace people," he said.

The lessons that Glenn Valley Foods has learned about compliance are critical, especially as the Trump administration ramps up resources for similar crackdowns in rural communities.

Primarily, as Hartmann admits, Glenn Valley made the mistake of relying on E-Verify, which the company and others in the industry have learned can't always detect fake documentation — and will not stand as a defense in a federal investigation.

"If you don't have one, develop a pro-



ICE RAID: HSI officers arrest about 70 workers at the Glenn Valley Foods plant on suspicion of using fake IDs to gain employment. (Photo courtesy of The Department of Homeland Security)

gram or seek out a training program to help your lead HR associates understand all of the counterfeit measures that exist with each ID from each state," Hartmann implores.

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Ethanol non-sense forcing farmers out

By TRENT LOOS
Special to the Advocate
Courtesy of High Plains Journal

I have just attended a Sustainable Aviation Fuel (Fraud) conference which was strategically held at the SAC Museum near Ashland, Nebraska. If the pilots who flew the amazing aircraft on display at this tremendous facility had any idea of the Disney-style fairy tale that was being discussed in the name of aviation fuel, they must be questioning what their fight for freedom was all about. This movement to a fake sustainable fuel has nothing to do with Freedom and everything to do with lining the pockets of the rich!

Overwhelmingly, the message from all the presenters was, "this is great fuel technology; we just can't afford it yet. We need big government funds." Most concerning was the person who called for the meeting and kicked it off, Nebraska U.S. Representative Mike Flood, who plans to champion the authorization of more tax credits to make this happen. Keep in mind, he is supposed to represent the "conservative" side of the Congress and when you look at the vote on the Big Ugly (Beautiful) Bill, the concept of conservative no longer exists in policy making in D.C.

To put this into context, they suggested that 27 million gallons of SAF would be generated in 2025, a measly portion of what the entire airline travel industry uses at 126 BILLION gallon per year. Let me cut right to the chase, despite how they try to position this non-sense, it requires the farmer and ethanol plants to increase costs and comply with emission standards that allow the airline industry to offset these savings for their own emissions. No matter how you shake this moving target, that is what is planned. Let's not forget that this plan is 100% driven by TAX CREDITS, something only the wealthy care about, not the farmer who will be selling corn for \$2/bushel this year.

We can't blame just one agency for this situation. From the Dept. of Energy website, you will find this rhetoric:

The SAF Grand Challenge is the result of DOE, DOT, and USDA launching a government-wide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will attempt to reduce the cost, enhance energy security, and expand the production and use of SAF while meeting the following goals:

- A minimum of a 50% reduction in life cycle emissions compared to conventional fuel.
- 3 billion gallons per year of domestic SAF by 2030.
- 35 billion gallons of SAF to satisfy 100% of domestic demand by 2050.

In order for all of that to happen, the farmers and ethanol plants will need to comply with the 45ZCF-GREET model that has been adopted by the U.S. Treasury. I don't even know how many times presenters at this conference referenced that, "We are waiting on Treasury to give us guidance on this." This seems to be good time to remind folks that



Let me cut right to the chase, despite how they try to position this non-sense, it requires the farmer and ethanol plants to increase costs and comply with emission standards that allow the airline industry to offset these savings for their own emissions.

the Treasury Secretary is Scott Bessent, who is from the London banking world and was George Soros' right hand man for 12 years. Do you suppose that is why Trump seems to only be interested in Free Trade agreements with European Countries?

Once again looking at the Dept of Energy website, I encourage all of you that think this is good for the farmer to look at the freedoms you will lose should you choose to comply:

45ZCF-GREET is available at: <https://www.energy.gov/eere/GREET>.

The 45ZCF GREET model was developed as a specific version of the GREET model to determine emissions rates that also meet three key parameters: (1) user-friendliness and consistency, (2) technical robustness of the pathways represented, and (3) consistency with the requirements of section 45Z. The model includes transportation fuel production pathways that are of sufficient methodological certainty to be appropriate for determining eligibility for the 45Z tax credit.

Apparently, I am not the only one who is expressing great concern about SAF. I was told that at the Nebraska Governors conference last week, Nick Bowdish, President/CEO of Sioux Land Ethanol, shared his views about why it would not work. Additionally, within the last week, Southwest Airlines sold its investment in SAFFIRE Renewables, an SAF production facility in Liberal, KS.

At the end of the day, the story is the same as the Renewable Fuel Standard. The concept is correct but requires government involvement. In the same week that our national debt blows past \$38 trillion, we are talking about spending massive amounts for subsidies on another fraud. But the real gut punch, that is still not brought to light in these discussions, is the fact that the petroleum industry still controls distribution of all fuel. Why is NO ONE talking about the fact that E-15 is selling at the pump for 50 cents less than 100% gasoline? That is because the gasoline manufacturers are

making more per gallon of ethanol sold than the farmers who raise the grain.

If the farmer does not regain leverage in the marketplace and come up with a distribution system that does not including the Prince of Saudi Arabia, we will continue to lose farmers at an accelerated rate. No farmers, no food, no fuel! Share that with your friends, neighbors and policy-makers before it's too late!

Editor's note: Trent Loos is a sixth generation United States farmer, host of the daily radio show, Loos Tales, and founder of Faces of Agriculture, a non-profit organization putting the human element back into the production of food.

Get more information at www.LoosTales.com, or email Trent at trentloos@gmail.com.

Eleven states back ranchers in beef labeling lawsuit

A coalition of 11 state attorneys general filed an amicus brief supporting cattle ranchers in a lawsuit accusing major beef processors of misusing the "Product of USA" label on foreign-sourced beef.

The case, brought by South Dakota ranchers against JBS Foods, Tyson Foods, Cargill Meat Solutions and National Beef Packing Company, claims the companies wrongly labeled imported beef as domestic.

The U.S. District Court of South Dakota sided with the ranchers, but the ruling is now under review by the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. In their brief, the attorneys general argued the Department of Agriculture has acknowledged that applying the label to foreign beef conflicts with federal requirements, and they urged the court to order the companies to stop the practice.

The coalition includes Colorado, Kansas, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming.

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BARNs OF PIKE COUNTY

Hee! Haw! 110-year-old barn housed champion mules for 'Jack Man'

By CAROLYN ALLEN
Special to The Advocate

This pretty white barn in Calumet valley was built by William Henry Brown – also known as the “Jack Man.” He was a 3rd generation Pike County mule and livestock trader and farmer. His father (William L. Brown) was an early pioneer who came to Pike County from Kentucky with his parents around 1827. William L. grew up in Calumet Township and married Elizabeth Schooler in 1852. They moved to a farm just west of where their son William Henry would eventually settle. The 1883 History of Pike County noted that



‘JACK MAN’ BARN: These 110-year-old Pike County barn was built for champion mules and still has some of the stalls in place. (Photos by Carolyn Allen)



Calvin Crow had sold his fine farm near Dover to Wm. H. Brown for \$7,600.

The Pike County Assessors Office notes that the house was built in 1840, so it would’ve already been built when the Browns moved to the farm. If 1840 is the correct date, it must’ve been built by Calvin Crow’s father, Benjamin, another early pioneer who came to Missouri around 1830.

This barn, however, was built much later. A visitor to the farm in the 1970’s told present owners that he had lived there as a young teenager from around 1913 – 1917, and the barn was built during that time. His job was to drive a team pulling a spring wagon to the railroad station in Edgewood and bring back building materials. The Clarksville Sentinel narrowed the building date down further when it reported that W. H. Brown was building a new barn in September of 1915. The paper also noted that Brown’s neighbor Judge McIlroy said that the barn “covers the whole part of the country!”

In addition, the newspaper identified Lon Jewel as the builder.

Alonzo (Lon) Jewell married W. H. Brown’s cousin Lilian Schooler and lived on a neighboring farm at the time. He was listed as a carpenter in the 1920 and

1930 censuses, and by then he had moved from the farm. This barn was the only Pike County structure I could find that he built, but it was a good one!

The 1970s farm visitor also mentioned that the barn was originally built for mules. According to a 1910 ad for Calumet Valley Stock Farm, William H. Brown was known as the “Jack Man” and had “ten of the largest and best-bred native mammoth jacks.”

The Clarksville Piker reported that Brown’s Calumet Valley Stock Farm had a great showing at the Missouri State Fair in 1909, and in 1910 the farm’s 2-year-old jack, Missouri King, was the State Fair winner.

According to all the comings and goings reported in the newspapers of the time, Mr. Brown traveled a great deal buying, selling and delivering mules. He attended many stock shows and often exhibited stock - winning many prizes. In fact, in 1910, W. H. Brown won so much at the Illinois State Fair that the Clarksville Sentinel’s headline

was, “Hee Haw! Hee Haw! W. H. Brown Took Everything in Sight!”

In addition to mules, William H. Brown raised Percherons and fine Saddlebreds. He even had a son of the great Saddlebred Rex McDonald in his barn at one time. According to a 1918 Bowling Green Times ad for his jack and stallion sale Brown had an “entire herd of State Fair Winners”.

Not only did he raise champion mules and horses, but Mr. Brown was also an excellent corn farmer. In 1911, the Clarksville Piker reported that W. H. Brown had “held Pike County’s banner aloft at the state corn show in Columbia... winning 3 prizes out of 4 entries” and coming within ½ point of winning the grand championship.

Unfortunately, in 1830 - after about 36 years on the farm - Brown’s health forced him to sell it and move to St. Louis. After the Browns left, the farm had a series of owners – including A. D. Smith.

The 1960 Louisiana Press Journal reported a bit of excitement on the farm during the Smith family’s time there. A small plane with engine trouble landed in the Smith corn field just as A. D. and his son were planting. Not missing a beat, they reportedly towed the plane over to the fence to await repairs and continued planting.

Current owners purchased the farm in 1975 and have now owned it for 50 years. While no longer housing mules, the barn now serves as home base to a large herd of Red Angus cattle. The interior has been updated a bit, but the corncrib and many large stalls remain. They replaced some of the front siding (which was difficult to find) and recently rewired and repainted the barn.

The Jack Man’s farm is beautifully maintained, and his 110-year-old barn that “took up half the country” is still going strong. In fact, not long ago it served as the backdrop for a family wedding!



MAMMOTH JACKS: This 1910 sale poster promotes breeding stock of “Ten of the Largest and Best Bred Native Mammoth Jacks at One Stable in the State of Missouri.” (Photo by Carolyn Allen)

the farm was dense forest when they bought it, but became one of the best farms in the neighborhood under Mr. Brown’s stewardship.

Son William Henry (W. H.) married Mary Susan Worlledge in 1888, and they bought some of his father’s ground. Then in 1894 they bought Calvin Crow’s farm just to the east of that. The 1894 Clarksville Sentinel reported that

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Theileria: Insights on the tick-borne threat to Missouri cattle

By SAVANNAH MOORE
For The Advocate

Cattle producers are on the front lines of a new tick-borne disease spreading from the Eastern US across the Midwest. While we may have attributed a slipped calf to heat or an unthrifty cow to age, a new disease may have been causing producers more trouble than they realized.

Theileria and The Asian Long Horned Tick

Theileria orientalis (Ikeda genotype) is a new and growing concern for Missouri cattle producers. Producers are already familiar with the impact of parasites and tick-borne diseases like anaplasmosis; however, this illness raises concerns as it migrates across the state. Theileria is spread by the Asian longhorned tick. Asian longhorned ticks were first officially detected and monitored in the US starting in 2017 in New Jersey. However, they likely arrived in the US prior to that on domestic pets, horses, livestock, or people. Theileria was first discovered in a cow-calf herd in Virginia in 2017.

Asian Long Horned Ticks

ALHT are parthenogenetic, which means the females can lay eggs without mating, essentially cloning their genetics to create the next generation. A single female can produce 1,000 to 2,000 eggs at a time without mating- and a cow can host hundreds to thousands of ticks and experience severe blood loss. The ticks range in size from smaller than a sesame seed to roughly the size of a pea after feeding.

Diagnosis and Detection
Theileria causes red blood cell destruction and anemia. PCR testing is the current recommended method for confirming Theileria, however PCR testing does not indicate whether the animal is asymptomatic (a healthy carrier) or if they are in the acute stage of the illness. A PCR test is performed by collecting 2mL of blood which can then be submitted to the University of Missouri diagnostics lab for \$39 with a 1-3 business day turnaround time on results. Results can be used for informing herd management decisions.

Mortality rates are highest during the initial outbreak. Animals can relapse later in life during high stress or immune compromising events, but mortality is less common after the initial outbreak.

Clinical Signs
Theileria can impact all ages of cattle but is mainly in younger cattle and late gestation/early lac-

tation females. Pale gums due to anemia are a common symptom. Anaplasmosis has some overlapping symptoms, but is most common in older animals and membranes are more likely to be yellow. Cows with Anaplasmosis can be aggressive, so it's important to take care as producers try to distinguish and best treat their herds. Theileria can become more prevalent during times of stress like transportation or calving. Physical symptoms include pale gums, lethargy and weakness, decreased milk production, weight loss, third period abortions, and sudden death. It should be noted that some cattle become lifelong carriers without showing any noticeable symptoms.

Calves exposed in utero do not contract the disease but approximately 80% of calves in infected herds become positive by 3 months of age.

Most calves do not show clinical signs and Theileria appears to have minimal impact on weight gain and feedlot performance of

the calf crop.

Treatment and Prevention
There is no approved treatment in the US. The recommended focus for producers is tick control to reduce anemia risks from heavy tick loads, pasture and brush management to reduce tick and fly stress on cattle, and supportive care for cattle. Permethrin based fly controls and most deworming products are readily available and will keep ticks at bay. Studies have indicated that Theileria may be transmitted mechanically by needles or tattoo

equipment, etc. Low stress handling and proper nutrition can help keep the herd strong during an initial outbreak. Theileria will likely become endemic and stable over time- however there could be some pain and expense in the process of getting there. Producers, we are looking to hear from you for future articles on this topic. Are you monitoring for or experiencing Theileria in your area? Please email Savannah at vannahca@gmail.com if you would like to share your concerns, strategies or experiences.

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It's about time we put America's cattle producers first

Op-ed by BILL BULLARD
CEO, R-CALF USA

President Trump called out Australia for its policy of allowing imports of U.S. beef only if the beef came from cattle born and raised in the United States. In other words, Australia was allowing U.S. beef to be imported, but only if the beef was exclusively USA beef, not beef from cattle that had been imported from Mexico or Canada.

On average, Australia was importing about 1.8 million pounds of beef each year from the United States for the past 10 years, which is roughly the live cattle equivalent of about 2,250 head of cattle per year based on an 800 lb. carcass weight. So that must have been beef exclusively from USA cattle. So, what was the problem with that?

Well, the problem with that is the global packers did not appreciate Australia's restrictions because they wanted to ship beef from all cattle slaughtered in the United States, which included cattle imported from Mexico and Canada. So, it's most likely the global packers lobbied the president to lift Australia's restrictions. It's also likely that domestic cattle feeders whose business plans include feeding imported Mexican and Canadian cattle were siding with the global packers.

In response to President Trump calling them out on their restrictive import policy, Australia capitulated and removed the restriction, thus allowing global packers to ship beef from U.S., Mexican, and Canadian cattle to Australia.

Now, interestingly, an industry media report indicated that the major retailers in Australia, including McDonalds, didn't like their government's concession and several retailers have reportedly committed to continuing to source beef that is exclusively born and raised by Australia's cattle producers.

So, hold on here. It seems the Australian cattle and beef industries have an Australia First policy when it comes to beef imports.

Why is it, then, that America's cattle and beef industries don't have a comparable America First policy when it comes to imports? And why doesn't the United States have a mandatory country of origin labeling requirement on beef?

And it seems that Australians can make their own choice as to where they want their beef produced because Australia has a mandatory country of origin labeling (MCOOL) requirement for beef sold at retail.

Why is it, then, that America's cattle and beef industries don't have a comparable America First policy when it comes to imports? And why doesn't the United States have a mandatory country of origin labeling requirement on beef?

Here's the reason. It's because the global packers and their allies who were powerful enough to convince the President that Australia should buy whatever beef the global packers want to sell to them are the same political powerhouses that want to continue importing cheaper cattle and beef to sell to the American public without allowing the public to know where the beef they buy for their families is coming from.

The point here is not that the United States should be more like Australia. The point is that our Great Nation should have long been putting our domestic cattle producers and our citizens first. The United States should be allowing our domestic producers to compete in American grocery stores with the superior beef produced from their cattle and American shoppers should be accorded the right to choose from which country they want their beef produced.

The Australian example merely provides us with insight as to why America has not already done this. Mandatory country of origin labeling empowers independent producers to compete, but that very competition is contrary to the interests of the global packers who make more money when consumers know less about

what they're buying.

Fortunately, there are some leaders in Congress who are willing to stand up to MCOOL's powerful opponents. They have cosponsored the American Beef Labeling Act of 2025 (S.421) and they include Senators Thune and Rounds from South Dakota, Booker from New Jersey, Lummis from Wyoming,

Heinrich and Lujan from New Mexico, Hoeven from North Dakota, and Fetterman from Pennsylvania.

This is a bipartisan group of Senators, which proves mandatory country of origin labeling is neither a Republican nor Democrat issue. It is an American issue, with its supporters being America's cattle producers and citizens who are up against powerful globalists.

If America First is the goal, then the American Beef Labeling Act is an integral component. You simply can't say you're putting America first when you're catering to the self-interests of global corporations.

The quickest way to pass this important legislation is to include it in the Farm Bill. So, even if you've never called, emailed, or talked to your member of Congress on any other issue, now is the time to do so. Tell them to put America's cattle producers and citizens first by supporting and passing the American Beef Labeling Act, S. 421.

It's going to take all of us to get this much needed legislation across the finish line, and with your help, we will succeed!

To reach your members of Congress, call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for each of your members by name.

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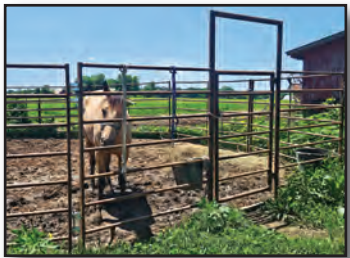
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Former USDA administrator sounds off on Trump administration

By PETER THOMAS RICCI
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After a four-decade career, former APHIS administrator Kevin Shea sounds off on the Trump administration's handling of USDA.

Kevin Shea is among the most respected and recognized civil servants in USDA's recent history. From 1978 to 2025, Shea served in numerous capacities at the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), including 10 years as administrator. He also received a variety of presidential decorations, including the Distinguished Service in 2004, the Meritorious Service in 2009, and the Presidential Rank Awards for Distinguished Service in 2012. All of which makes it all the more notable that the recently retired Shea — who concluded his career as the USDA agency transition director for President Trump — has become a public critic of the president's second administration and its management of USDA.

"My work on the transition — as the lead career person for the outgoing administration — was a smooth thing," Shea says. "I had every expectation that this was going to be a smooth transition, with people who understood what USDA did and appreciated its people; and so, I was very shocked at how it turned out not long afterwards."

Shea joined APHIS, he explains, because of its "almost biblically inspired" mission of "feeding and clothing the world, [which] was a very easy mission to get around." That mission, he continues, included two characteristics indelible to APHIS: a rigorous commitment to nonpartisanship; and complete cooperation with the state governments, ranchers and farmer organizations that technically fall under the agency's regulation. As Shea puts it, "We in APHIS will regulate the industry for its own sake, [so] that kind of cooperation is always necessary. We never want to make the cure worse than the disease on our regulatory work."

But that cure, in Shea's opinion, may indeed be worse than the disease because of recent changes at the federal level, and he explains why in an extensive interview with Meatingplace.

MEATINGPLACE: Reportedly, more than 15,000 USDA employees — 15% of its total workforce — accepted deferred resignations as part of the DOGE initiative. What about that workforce reduction concerns you?

SHEA: The pure numbers are alarming. Anyone who was at USDA would find it unbelievable that it was overstaffed by 15%. ... That is part of what's alarming about how they went about this. Clearly, they were just looking for numbers, and they did not do a program-by-program analysis of what that meant. The cuts were indiscriminate.

They weren't the result of a reasoned analytical process.

Many administrations have looked to reduce employment in the federal government. That's nothing new. I actually go back further from the Clinton administration and extend to the Carter administration. I remember, in the Clinton administration, there was a desire to reduce government employment, but it was handled in a very analytical, respectful way. In the Bush administration, there was a desire to reduce employment and to contract out more work. That was also done in a very analytical, respectful way. This wasn't. They just pick numbers out of the clear blue sky, and so we were reduced by this number.

They could have come in and made reasoned judgments. For example — and I'm not commenting on whether it's a good or bad thing to do this — they could have said, 'We're really philosophically opposed to the climate change work, and the kind of work that came out of the Inflation Reduction Act.' They could have said, 'We don't believe in this, we think this is wrong, and we are going to reduce these programs or eliminate them,' and chosen to eliminate positions associated with that work. That's not what they did. They just simply came in and said, 'We're going to reduce employment across the board.'

MEATINGPLACE: And there's more to it than simply a loss of numbers, correct?

SHEA: It's a loss of experience and expertise. In many ways, that's just as bad, or even worse. I know from the APHIS standpoint, and I know from the FSIS standpoint as well, so much of what we do is based on relationships and trust with the states, farmers and ranchers, international and domestic standard-setting organizations, producers, you name it. That's lost.

The people with that experience who spent decades building up that expertise and that trust relationship with the stakeholders, that can't be repaired. They are backing off on some of the cuts already, realizing, 'Oh, gee, maybe we shouldn't have cut that.' Even if they replace those folks in numbers with new people, it becomes almost a self-fulfilling prophecy for this administration that government's bad because they'll have inexperienced people with less expertise, and they're not going to be as good.

Hopefully they'll grow, they'll get experience, they'll learn more, and they'll rebuild. In the meantime, there's no way USDA, APHIS, FSIS, and any other part of USDA is going to operate as well when you've forced out so many people who know what the agency does, how it works, and know the stakeholders. All of those things concern me as much as just the fact that it's 15,000, which would be alarming enough.

"All those rules make it not like a business, and that's okay, because the government's sup-

posed to be a democracy in balancing all the people's interests."

MEATINGPLACE: More than 1,300 people left APHIS. What critical government services do such resignations risk?

SHEA: For APHIS, it's preventing pests and diseases from causing big problems in America. It's a system and continuum that starts overseas [and goes] all the way to the slaughterhouse. When you think about it, APHIS people need to know

the pest and disease situation around the world. That requires lots of monitoring, lots of relationships with other countries ... to determine which kinds of products can enter the U.S., and vice versa, and under what conditions to prevent pests and diseases from moving around. In the case of food safety, to make sure that any meat and poultry we might import is safe. The other countries, of course, naturally want the same thing.

People don't realize, in this administration, when they cut lots of folks and they say, 'Well,

we're not cutting any frontline folks.' Yes, that's fine and that's good, but there's work that has to happen before the frontline even kicks in.

Something else that APHIS [does] is dealing with birds around airports — Wildlife Services has that work. They keep birds away from airports to keep planes from crashing. There's so many things that go on that I don't think people are aware of that APHIS does, and

See SHEA ON USDA,
page 22

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Dealing with the Screwworm is a multi-faceted, multi-country issue

By STEVE DITTMER
Executive Vice President
Agribusiness Freedom Foundation



When it comes to the New World screwworm, there is some differing perceptions about what the future holds.

Some view screwworm efforts as intended to keep the fly out of the U.S. But NCBA is also taking the position of readiness for the possible incursion of New World screwworm.

It’s not that the protocols for inspecting Mexican cattle at the border is a problem. It is because there are wildlife carriers -- like birds, deer, feral hogs, even hawks -- that can’t be controlled that will bring it north. We’ve also seen stories about cattle that walk across the Rio Grande into a national park.

Barbara Jackson is chairman of NCBA’s Animal Health Committee and her explanation was this: if we thought closing the border would keep the screw-worm out, we would favor that. But there’s no way we can stop it, she said.

The big question, especially for Southwest cattle feeders, is when is the border going to reopen? After all, somewhere between a million and 1.5 million head of feeder cattle come from Mexico to American feedyards, especially in Texas, and they are feeling the pinch of those cattle not coming across the border.

NCBA CEO Colin Woodall said USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins said Friday that she is not going to reopen the border until she sees evidence that the Mexican government has been able to push the fly farther back into Mexico. That determination will depend not only on Mexico’s data but Rollins has committed to USDA personnel stationed in Mexico to monitor the progress. That way it will be information from both governments bolstering the progress of sending the fly back farther towards Panama.

Part of the problem with gearing up facilities to supply sterile male flies is that it requires a level 3 biosecurity containment lab to accomplish it and that isn’t

easy. There is a facility in Mexico that has been producing fruit flies but it will take at least until the middle of 2026 before that facility is converted to produce NSW sterile flies. The facility retrofit is a joint Mexican/American project, with Mexico putting up \$30 million and the U.S. \$21 million. When operational, it will produce 100 million flies/week to add to control efforts.

The longstanding plant in Panama is only producing 100 million flies/week when what’s really needed is 400 to 500 million/week. Part of the problem with increasing that volume, is that half of the flies produced are female and, therefore, worthless to the program. There is some research indicating sexing may be possible but it is not commercially available yet, facing some regulatory hurdles.

USDA’s biggest commitment is for construction of a \$750 million new plant to produce 300 million flies/week, to add substantial production capability in the U.S. But that will take time, at least a year to be operational.

USDA is committing an additional estimated \$8.5 million to ramping up construction of a distribution facility alongside that new sterile fly production facility at Moore Air base near Mission, Tx., in the southeastern tip of Texas.

NCBA was complimentary of USDA’s aggressive plan to use several factors to combat the spread of the fly.

One of those efforts involves committing \$100 million to researching additional new methods for combatting the fly, ramping up hiring additional tick riders to help in fly detection and boosting Mexico’s combat efforts. Much work is needed, as

the fly was discovered in southern Mexico just in November, 2024.

Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) was critical of Mexico’s slow response at the beginning. Several people have mentioned that earlier some USDA flights to disperse the sterile flies have sometimes had trouble with over-flight permissions and re-fueling permissions.

TSCRA noted that USDA estimates Texas cattlemen could face losses of over \$732 million a year, and added losses to the \$9.6 billion wildlife and hunting industry to deer, exotic animals and other native wildlife.

With the NWS held south of Panama, in the past 25 years, Mexico and the U.S. have conducted feeder cattle trade successfully, especially as the Mexican ranchers invested in better genetics and the USMCA agreement encouraged more trade.

All of the associations we have talked to are very glad USDA has stepped in to help with funding and manpower. USDA-APHIS has also hired more veterinarians and health inspectors at the border.

Texas Cattle Feeders Association (TCFA) was very complimentary of Rollins efforts to not only call Mexico on the carpet but to pitch in and then send five monitoring teams into Mexico to hold Mexican efforts accountable. The fly moved from 700 miles from our border to 370 miles away much more quickly than expected.

But stepped up efforts seemed to slow the advance and in the eight weeks ending in mid-July, seemed to have stalled. The next step is to push the line southward.

Brazil-Japan beef trade talks hit speed bump

Difficulties have arisen in negotiations to open the lucrative Japanese market to Brazilian beef.

Granting access to imports from Brazilian could represent a major threat to U.S. exporters in the Japanese market, which was the largest destination by volume for American beef in 2024.

According to new reporting from Reuters, Japanese concerns about foot-and-mouth disease may limit beef exports regionally to just three smaller Brazilian states that represent just 4% of

the country's beef trade. By contrast, the states of Sao Paulo, Mato Grosso, Para and Mato Grosso do Sul, which represent about 60% of Brazil's beef exports, may not be included in a trade deal.

Brazil's last foot-and-mouth outbreak was in 2006, and those three states of Rio Grande do Sul, Parana, and Santa Catarina eliminated the viral disease before the other states. In June, the World Organisation for Animal Health provided Brazil with "Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD)-Free

Country Without Vaccination" certification.

When news first broke of the Brazil-Japan trade talks in February, industry group Abiec President Roberto Perosa told Meatingplace that "the expectation is that this process will be completed by the end of 2025. ... The industry continues to work to meet the necessary sanitary and documentary requirements, and there is a favorable environment for concluding negotiations in the coming months."

– Meatingplace.com

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Livestock News & Notes.....

No way, mate: Australian grocers, restaurants snub newly available U.S. beef

Although the Australian market is now open to U.S. beef exports, local businesses Down Under are not on board with the change.

According to Aussie media, grocers Aldi, Woolworths and Coles will continue to sell 100% Australian beef, while McDonald's in Australia will also abstain from U.S. beef.

“We apply an Australia-first approach, and 100% of our fresh red meat is sourced directly from Australian farmers, with whom we have longstanding relationships,” a Woolworths spokesperson said. “We have no plans to change that approach.”

Such statements mirror the reactions of British retailers Tesco and Sainsbury's, which clarified after a U.S.-UK trade deal that they would continue to sell only Irish and British beef.

Last month, Australia removed biosecurity restrictions that allowed U.S. beef imports, including Canada- and Mexico-born cattle harvested into the U.S. supply chain, into the country for the first time in 20 years; as a result, President Trump limited tariffs on Australian goods to 10%.

Australia exports 70% of its beef production, and last year imported a mere \$10 million in beef, mostly from neighboring New Zealand or high-end Japanese specialty beef.

Bipartisan bill aims to expand meat processing options for small farms

Senators Angus King (I-Maine) and Rand Paul (R-Ky.) introduced a bipartisan bill that would allow states to approve the intrastate sale of custom-slaughtered meat, aiming to expand market access for small farms and ranches amid record-high beef prices.

The Processing Revival and Intrastate Meat Exemption (PRIME) Act would let states permit the sale of beef, pork, lamb and goat processed at cus-

tom slaughter facilities — which are annually inspected but currently limited to processing for private consumption — to consumers, restaurants, grocery stores and other local outlets.

“Maine farmers should not face redundant barriers when it comes to meeting increased demand for fresh, locally produced meats,” King said. “This bipartisan legislation is a solid step toward restoring a measure of common sense to the process.”

Under current law, meat must be processed at a USDA-certified facility to be sold commercially. With limited USDA-certified processors in states like Maine, the requirement can be costly and logistically difficult for small producers, according to the bill’s sponsors.

The legislation is cosponsored by Sens. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyo.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), John Hoeven (R-N.D.) and Mike Lee (R-Utah). A companion bill was introduced in the House by Reps. Chellie Pingree (D-Maine) and Thomas Massie (R-Ky.).

Beef prices soar beyond other proteins

New analysis from CattleFax underlines just how extraordinary the current beef market is.

Published first on Drovers, the analysis spotlights a number of striking statistics:

Year-over-year in July, the average price for fresh beef was up 9.2% to \$8.90 per pound.

For choice beef, the price was even higher at \$9.69 per pound, a 14.9% increase.

Meanwhile, ground beef rose 13.8% to \$6.25.

Fresh beef prices actually dipped slightly from April to May — from \$8.50 to \$8.41 — but have risen noticeably in the two months since. Compared to a five-year average, prices are up nearly 19%.

Those price increases are especially pronounced compared with other animal proteins. According to CattleFax, fresh pork prices are up just 1.8% from last year, with boneless

pork chops nearly flat at 0.8%. Fresh chicken, meanwhile, is up 2.9%, with whole chickens up 4.5% and boneless breasts up 6.5%.

Japan trade deal may boost US beef, pork growth: USMEF

The recently announced U.S.-Japan Trade and Investment Agreement should, at minimum, maintain U.S. pork and beef exports, according to U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) President and CEO Dan Halstrom.

Halstrom, who was in Tokyo when the White House announced the trade pact last month, noted that while the 2020 Phase One agreement established a level playing field, the new pact holds tariffs for U.S. beef, for example, at 21.6%.

“I think that’s really important to remember, because it wasn’t that long ago where we were at a severe disadvantage tariff wise,” Halstrom said in a USMEF weekly audio report. U.S. meat exporters had been concerned about retaliatory higher tariffs this year in the wake of potential actions on cars manufactured in Japan and shipped to U.S. markets, he added.

Japan is the second-largest export market in the world with sales of U.S. beef totaling \$1.9 billion and U.S. pork reaching \$1.4 billion in 2024, Halstrom added in the report. The new deal may open doors for even more U.S. beef and pork to move beyond the \$3.3 billion in annual total sales, which have been consistent in recent years, said Halstrom.

Cargill reaches settlement in beef price-fixing class action

Consumer indirect purchaser plaintiffs have reached a settlement with Cargill Inc. and Cargill Meat Solutions Corp. to resolve all claims in ongoing multidistrict litigation alleging a conspiracy to fix beef prices, according to a court filing.

The agreement, which covers

both Cargill entities, will require court approval under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23. Plaintiffs said they will soon move for preliminary and final approval of the deal, with details to be filed once the settlement terms are finalized.

The litigation, centralized under MDL No. 3031, accuses the nation’s largest beef packers — including Cargill, Tyson Foods, JBS USA and National Beef — of conspiring since at least 2015 to reduce cattle purchases and slaughter volumes, artificially inflate wholesale beef prices and suppress prices paid to cattle producers. Plaintiffs allege the scheme violated the Sherman Act and, in some cases, the Packers and Stockyards Act.

Federal investigations by the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Agriculture have examined similar allegations of anticompetitive conduct in the beef industry. Industry concentration is cited as a key factor in facilitating the alleged collusion, with the four largest processors controlling more than 80% of domestic fed cattle slaughter during the relevant period.

Terms of the Cargill settlement were not disclosed, and the case continues against the remaining defendants.

Beyond Meat sales fall again as company plans layoffs, name change

Beyond Meat reported a nearly 20% decline in net sales for its fiscal second quarter, with revenues falling to \$75 million — below its own projections — while net losses held steady at \$33.2 million. For the first half of the year, net revenues dropped 14.9% to \$143.7 million, with a net loss of \$86.1 million.

CEO Ethan Brown also announced a new round of layoffs affecting about 6% of Beyond’s global workforce, or roughly 44 employees. The company expects the move to save up to \$7 million over the next year while incurring up to \$1.3 million in one-time charges. It was unclear if this round of layoffs is separate from a similar announcement in February.

Brown said the cuts reflect persistent softness in the plant-based meat category, particularly in U.S. retail and international foodservice markets. He said Beyond is accelerating its cost-cutting strategy, focusing on core products and expanding margins.

The company also hired turnaround firm AlixPartners LLP and named one of its partners, John Boken, as interim chief transformation officer.

Meanwhile, Beyond confirmed it plans to drop “Meat” from its name and will shift focus from plant-based meat analogues to plant-forward products that don’t attempt to mimic animal proteins.

Man arrested with meat hoard after alleged \$32K theft

He was caught red-meat handed.

According to KRCR, Juan Yepez-Garcia of Paradise, Calif., was arrested for allegedly possessing nearly \$32,000 of ill-gotten wholesale meat products.

The products, from Sierra Meat & Seafood in Reno, Nev., were purchased with stolen credit cards, and stored at a Paradise property using multiple freezers; some of the meat, apparently, was still inside boxes with wholesale labels.

Yepez-Garcia told authorities he "suspected" the delivered items were stolen, and the delivery driver was unaware of the crime. Sierra Meat & Seafood is making arrangements to retrieve the stolen meat.

Many of the preceding items were taken from Meatingplace.com

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Eastern Missouri Commission Company, Bowling Green
Market Report for Friday, August 8, 2025
Receipts: 1,171 Two weeks ago: 385 Year ago: 1,037

Friday's auction had no recent comparison with calves and yearlings as going back 4 weeks ago weight ranges didn't match up well with this week's auction, with a much larger offering of yearlings, but the undertone was sharply higher on all weights that was offered. Demand was good on the calves and yearlings on a moderate supply. Several stick out sales included 90 Large Frame heifers weighing 1035 lbs at 267.75, 49 heifers weighing 638 lbs at 374.50, 41 hd of steers weighing 776 lbs at 360.25 and pot load steers weighing 863 lbs at 336.00. Slaughter cows on a lighter offering sold mostly steady with the bulk average dressing cows.

Feeder Steers: Medium and Large 1 – Few 400-500 lbs 458.00-483.00; few 500-550 lbs 431.00-460.00, 550-600 lbs 410.00-426.00; few 600-625 lbs 407.50-422.00, 650-700 lbs

365.00-381.50; part load 776 lbs 360.25; pot load 863 lbs 336.00.
Medium and Large 1-2 – Pkg 582 lbs 397.00, few 640-685 lbs 344.00-360.00; pot load 769 lbs 347.50, 825-882 lbs 320.00-327.50.
Large 1 – Lot 785 lbs 340.00, pkg 886 lbs 318.00.
Medium and Large 2 – 700-760 lbs 323.00-329.00.
Feeder Heifers: Medium and Large 1 – 310-375 lbs 482.00-513.00; few 415-425 lbs 442.00-461.00, 450-500 lbs 424.00-437.00; 500-550 lbs 400.00-425.00, pkg 593 lbs 361.00; 600-650 lbs 365.00-374.50, pkg 660 lbs 348.50; 770-800 lbs 321.00-333.00; pkg 834 lbs 323.00.
Large 1 – 90 hd 1035 lbs 267.75.00.
Medium and Large 1-2 – Pkg 398 lbs 437.00; pkg 453 lbs 374.00.
Feeder Bulls: Medium and Large 1 – Few 335-365 lbs 500.00-548.00; 43=20-465 lbs 425.00-438.00, lot thin/fancy 429 lbs 478.00; lot 572 lbs 384.00; 600-675 lbs 341.00-356.00, pkg thin 634 lbs 369.00.

Medium and Large 2 – Pkg 495 lbs 372.00.
Slaughter Cows: Premium White (65-70% lean) Average dressing, 170.00-171.50.
Breakers (70-80% lean) Average dressing, 165.00-177.00; and low dressing, 152.00-164.00.
Boners (80-85% lean) Average dressing, 165.00-175.00; and low dressing, 149.00-162.00.
Lean (85-90% lean) Average dressing, 150.00-162.00; high dressing, 168.00-176.00; and low dressing, 130.00-143.00.
Shelly 110.00-124.00.
Slaughter Bulls: Yield Grade 1-2 – 1300-2400 lbs, 195.00-207.00; 212.00-220.00; 180.00-189.00
Slaughter Steers and Heifers: Pkg High Choice – 1292 lbs, 248.00

Source: MO Dept of Ag-USDA Market News Service, Bowling Green, MO, Greg Harrison, Market Reporter 573-751-5618. 24 hour recorded report 1-573-522-9244 www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/JC_LS156.txt



Market Reports

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Butler –The Untold Story of the Near Assassination of Donald Trump and the Fight for America’s Heartland

226 pages, written by Salena Zito

A book review by JON ANGELL
Cattleman's Advocate Publisher

The author, Salena Zito, is a long-time journalist based in Western Pennsylvania, covering both local and national politics and maybe more importantly, culture. She has been associated with CNN as a political analyst, staff reporter and columnist for the Washington Examiner, a weekly columnist for the New York Post and has frequently contributed to The Wall Street Journal. I say this to point out that as a writer she is thoroughly accomplished.

There are a handful of contemporary writers that I gravitate too, Zito is one of them. Although she is most known for her political reporting, I find her take on reading people and of American culture unequalled. Her understanding of the Rust Belt and of Fly-Over-Country as she writes makes her uniquely insightful compared to coastal elite journalists that often cover politics and culture. In short: I am a fan. When I heard that she was writing a book on her experiences surrounding the near assassination attempt on Donald Trump in Butler I knew this was a book that I would buy and read.

I not only enjoyed reading it, I devoured it. The chapters were longer than I generally like, averaging around 18 pages per chapter including the Afterward. So, I had to plan for a few dedicated evenings and weekend time slots to reading. It contained many enjoyable stories that I was looking forward to, but it was more educational than I expected.

The book covers the day of the shooting, but it also covers the Trump campaign leading up to the shooting in Butler and following. Zito writes of behind the event details and context to the events: details that as it was happening in real time we would never have read or heard. Zito also offers many of her insights as to who, what, when, and why of this historic election cycle. Many of you may believe the book will be too heavy in politics for your liking. It is a bit heavy in politics, but Zito weaves a story that is easy to read and can be easily enjoyable reading for those of you that don't naturally gravitate to politics. After reading Butler, you will likely have a new understanding of the 2024 election cycle and its historical impact as explained in the book.

One highlight for me was that Zito explains how what she calls “place” has gained in importance to our culture and politics. “Place” is something that Zito often writes about because according to her “place matters.” What is “place”? Think of it as Rootedness. It has to do with where you are from and how it affects so many of us. I know I understand place. My place is my hometown of Centralia. I know firsthand many of you claim your places; Calhoun County, Pike County, Hannibal, Madison, etc...

Zito writes: “According to the U.S. Census data, seven in ten people in Pennsylvania live within just a few miles of where they grew up. The proximity to family, traditions, and a way of life were more important to them than upwardly and a nice bonus check.” To this I say; “guilty.” How about you?

She goes on to quote Tom Maraffa, a geography professor at Youngstown State University, “Most people in places across Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin, in small towns, rural areas, and some cities are tied to their places for generations.” I would go on to suggest that much of Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, and all kinds of “places” are similar. The discussions surrounding the idea of “place was well worth the time I spent reading. No doubt the exposure to these concepts of “place” and those that are “placeless” will benefit me and my thinking going forward.

Throughout the book, Zito, as a political reporter, does give some insight into the evolution of politics, campaigns, and voters.

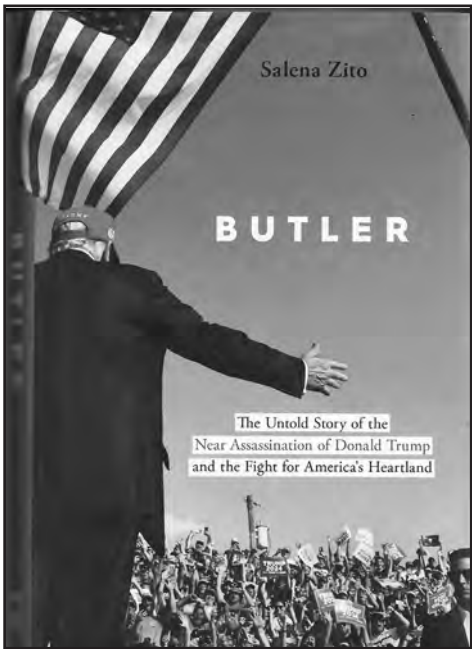
“There will never be another candidate for president of the United States like Trump,” Zito writes, “because it was what I heard from so many voters. For his detractors, that is a relief. However, they should understand that whether Trump wins or loses, these voters are here to stay. They have seen what the power of cultural curators in our country- in academia, media, Hollywood, institutions, corporations, and bureaucracies – has done to their lives, and they have rejected it. It took someone as brash, unconventional, strong, and cheeky as Trump to be the bull in the china shop. And his supporters wanted to see things upended. He wanted someone who, when shot, would stand up and say, ‘Fight, fight, fight!’ The elites had mocked them for too long. The elites tried to change their values, and their children’s values. The elite movies insulted them. The elite reporting was biased against them. The universities had lost credibility, and the corporations had decided to dump decades of loyalty to them to satisfy a narrow consumer base I reported on the final day. This will come as a surprise to some, but Trump did not create this coalition. He is the result of it. That is what the people who want the Republican Party to be the party of Dick Cheney again, do not understand. Both parties have changed. Republicans are now the party of working-class Americans and Democrats are the party of the elites.”

One thing that I wasn’t expecting from this book was the details and criticisms Zito goes into regarding her profession of journalism. Zito is very knowledgeable and qualified in her critique of the current state of journalism. Not only is she a professional journalist with extensive experience from local, regional and onto national levels, as if that wasn’t enough, she has

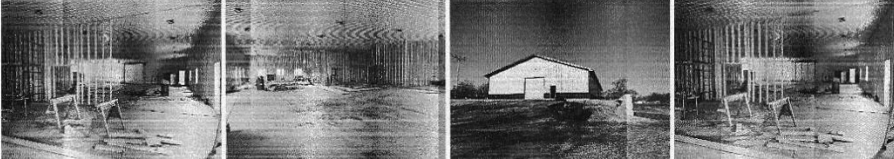
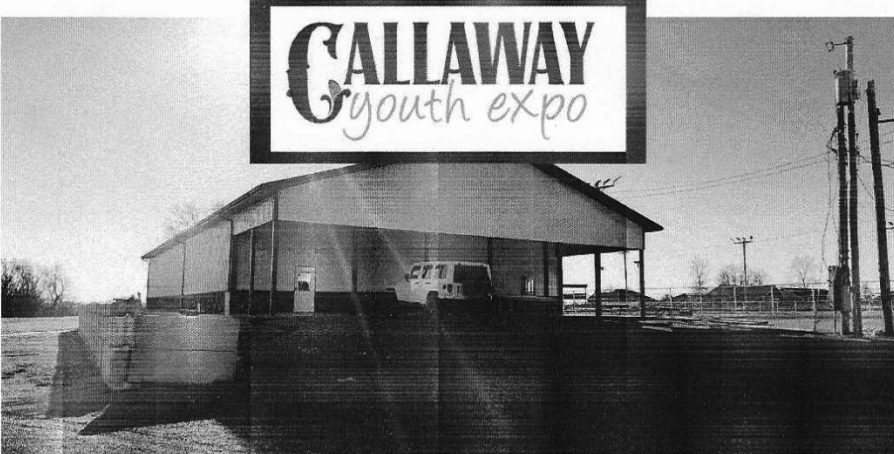
held teaching roles at several institutions, including Harvard Institute of Politics, Washington and Lee University and Hillsdale College.

Zito is very critical of how the elite national media covers politics specifically, and news generally. She expresses concern at the hollowing out of local newspapers and journalism. In the last couple of chapters, Zito emphasizes her thoughts on the media and the role it plays in our life.

Zito reports a 2024 Pew Research Center survey that showed that the news media is one of the least-trusted institutions in the United States, a sharp decline from the 1950s when it was among the most trusted institutions. This is a tragic situation because good journalism is especially important in our government/political systems as they play an important role for dissemination of information, but also as watchdog for accountability. The news media also plays an important role for our culture and in many social benefits. Zito can describe and express in writing what many of us



have been thinking on the subject. Overall, I am very happy to have invested my time in reading Butler. It is on my list to recommend, especially now as I think so much of the book is very timely to the events we are living today. I bought the book and marked several passages for future references. If you aren’t inclined to purchase books, ask for it at your public library.



SIDE BY SIDE RAFFLE

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Monthly Sheep & Goat Market Reports

Sponsored by The Bank of Missouri

Montgomery County Livestock Auction, Montgomery City
Market Report for Sheep & Goat Auction
Thursday, August 14, 2025
Receipts: 1,005 Last month: 798 Year ago: 705

Montgomery County Livestock held their Sheep and Goat sale Thursday evening July 14, with a large offering of lambs. Slaughter lambs weighing mostly 50-75 lbs sold steady to 5.00 higher, spots 10.00 higher than last month. Feeder Lambs traded steady to firm on a nice offering as did slaughter ewes. Kid goats were lightly tested and traded steady to firm. Demand was moderate to good on a large offering. Montgomery County holds their Sheep and Goat sale the 2nd

Thursday of each month. All prices are per CWT unless otherwise noted.

SHEEP (prices per hundredweight)
Slaughter Lambs: Choice-few Prime 1-3 – Mostly hair lambs 50-75 lbs 230.00-257.50; wool 90-150 lbs 195.00-210.00.
Choice 1-2 – 50-75 lbs 210.00-235.00.
Feeder Lambs: Small and Medium 1-2 – 20-25 lbs few 315.00; 30-55 lbs 245.00-285.00.
Slaughter Ewes: Utility and Good 1-2 – 90-150 lbs 125.00-135.00, pkg Good 1-2 160 lbs 155.00; Utility 1-2 100-150 lbs 100.00-115.00.

Replacement Ewes: Mostly young to solid mouth exposed 90-120 lbs 165.00-200.00 cwt, pkg solid mouth 110 lbs 145.00 cwt.
GOATS: (prices per hundred weight)
Kid Goats: Selection 1 – 50-110 lbs 310.00-355.00.
Feeder Kids: Selection 1 – Scarce.
Nannies: Selection 1-2 – 75-150 lbs 150.00-210.00 cwt.

Source: MO Dept of Ag-USDA Market News Service, Montgomery City, MO, Greg Harrison, Market Reporter, 573-751-5618. 24 hour recorded report 573-522-9244

Food safety groups weigh in on USDA plan for union inspectors

A coalition of consumer, public health, researcher and labor organizations are expressing concern over USDA plans to terminate contracts covering thousands of employees who conduct inspections nationwide. USDA announced in mid

August that the Trump administration plans to end union contracts covering about 6,500 employees at the agency's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and nearly 150 plant health inspectors at the Animal and Plant Health Inspection

Service (APHIS). The effort implements President Trump's executive order to exclude some federal employees from collective bargaining because their employers have missions related to national security, the Safe Food Coalition said in a news

release. Organization members are alarmed that the strategy could affect the ability of government inspectors to hold meatpacking and agribusiness companies accountable for overall food safety. "This is not complicated: this union protects the workers who protect the food we put on our plates," said Sarah Sorscher, Director of Regulatory Affairs at Center for Science in the Public Interest. "Stripping food safety inspectors of their collective bargaining rights is one more step in

a series of actions to bully and intimidate the federal public health workforce. The ultimate victim will be the American consumer, because when public health workers don't feel safe, the public is not safe," she added. The move already is being challenged in a lawsuit filed in a federal court by the National Association of Agriculture Employees (NAEE), which contends that the action is unlawful and unrelated to national security. - Meatingplace.com

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The publishers reserve the right, at their discretion to decline advertisements deemed in conflict with the publication's goals or those of our other interest - commercial cattle marketing.

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale

For Sale: 5 bar and 6 bar continuous panels, posts, free standing panels, corral panels etc. @ Joni E Yoder's, 2665 Audrain Rd 154 Clark MO. You will like the products and the competitive prices. Neighbors phone, 573-397-1092.

Reclaimed barn wood, lumber and tin salvaged from vintage barns. Various lengths, weathered red/gray and white. Priced to move. Salt River Salvage Co., Paris, MO. 573-721-1111.

For Sale: Cattle dog puppies. Border collie and hanging tree. Working parents. Black and whites and Merle. 573-406-4928.

For Sale

FOR SALE: About 100 sheets of locally salvaged vintage 5-V tin ranging in size from 7' up to 11'. Some with patina, all good shape. 24" wide. Asking \$1.25 a running foot. Located in Paris, MO. Chuck Herron, 573-721-1111.

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Laugh Tracks in the Dust.....

Popcorn people

By MILO YIELD
Special to The Advocate

After the sale concluded, two middle-aged ranchers were chewing the fat in the livestock auction cafe. They knew each other, but hadn't had the opportunity to really have a relaxed con-fab for years.

The extraordinary cattle prices were the first topic. The weather was a natural second topic. Crop status had to be covered. And, finally, their conversation came down to discussing their families -- and both cattlemen had sizable families -- with all their offspring on the own life trajectories.

As they sipped their iced teas, each began telling the stories of his children and how they arrived at their current careers, where they lived, their marital status and grand-children produced.

After they'd completed their respective family rundowns, one rancher sighs and says, "One of the mysteries of life to me is how all my children took different life paths, were raised the same way, and still ended up in a close-knit family."

The other rancher sagely replied, "Perhaps our kids are like kernels of popcorn. They have the same parents and grew up the same way. And, they are all prepared in the same pot, in the same heat, in the same oil. But, the kernels do not all pop at the same time. Some early. Some late. Every kernel is different. Yet, the vast majority turn out just like expected. There are few duds. So, it doesn't make sense to compare your children to one another. They each got to where they are in their own personal way."

I think there's an important moral to that story.

.....

An elderly farm wife went to a big city with her bowling team. She drove alone on the trip. Her only companion was her fluffy little pet dog.

She checked into her motel and decided to take "Fluffy" outdoors to answer a nature call. On the way into the lobby she'd seen the sign that the motel had a designated "Doggie Lawn," and that motel patrons were welcome to take their dogs to the area, but were also expected to pick up after them.

So, the lady put Fluffy on his leash, grabbed her purse, and headed to the "Doggie Lawn." In short order, Fluffy used the facility and the pair headed back to the lobby,

But, as she was crossing the driveway, a punk kid stepped out from behind a car, grabbed her purse, and ran off with a laugh.

A witness to the purse snatching ran over and asked if the lady

was okay.

She laughed loudly and said, "It's no big deal. I always carry a ratty old purse to put my Fluffy's do-do in until I get home. I hope the kid enjoys his heist."

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My good Missouri buddy, Willie Jay, continues sending me his personal humorous stories that are worthy of retelling.

Willie is in his 90s and his old hands, like so many of us oldsters, just don't work as well as they used to. This is a story about Willie and his arthritic hands.

He says his fingers just aren't nimble enuf anymore to efficiently find the pull-tab on the zipper of his overalls or jeans. To solve that problem, he bored a tiny hole in a penny then wired the penny to the zipper-tab tightly. His old fingers can fine the penny just fine.

Well, he said he wuz at a swap

meet, when an observant lady discretely asked him, "Sir, what's with the penny?"

Without missing such a straight line, Willie replied, "Why, ma'am, that's a penny for your thought."

That abruptly ended their conversation.

.....

Willie has a knack for solving simple little life problems in novel ways.

After reading about my practical joke herding houseflies, Willie emailed me that he recently had a spate with nuisance flies and gnats in his kitchen.

Here's how he solved that problem: He put a mixture of a little molasses, wine, lemon and grape juice in a saucer. Then he put the saucer into his microwave and left the door open.

He watched and waited until a

lot of flies and gnats were sipping from the saucer and then he slammed the microwave door shut. He said it takes less than five seconds to nuke the flying pests to death. And, he said it's easy to clean up because the dead are in the saucer and he just dumps it outdoors.

.....

Willie also said, with tongue in cheek, that his dad killed flies even simpler. He put some of his homemade wine in a saucer with some sand. He said the flies got drunk and stoned themselves to death.

.....

Readers might be ready to stone me after that fantasy joke.

I've got a casualty report from my ongoing masked bandit war. The first sweet-corn robbing raccoon caught itself in a live trap. But, it was a live traps for only a short time.

Nevah and I froze for the winter sweet corn and peaches we bought. We've also canned green bean and tomato juice and whole tomatoes. Plus, we've given away a lot of zucchinis and potatoes.

.....

Words of wisdom for the week: "You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only option you have!"

Have a good 'un.

.....

Do you know of someone who would make a great story for The Advocate? Email us at: cattlemans@virtualimages.us or call 660.327.1009

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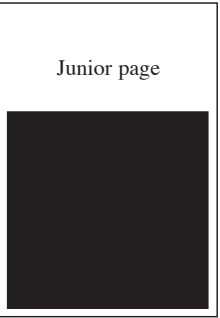
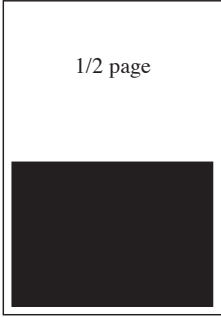
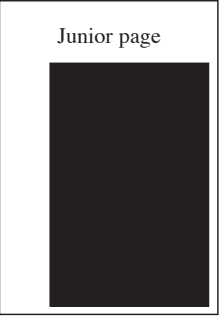
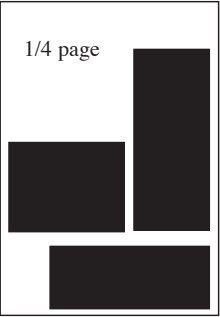
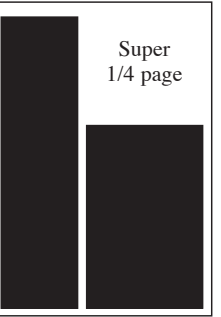
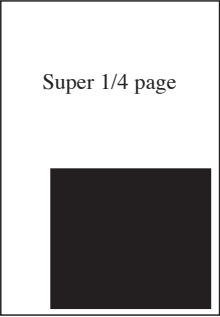
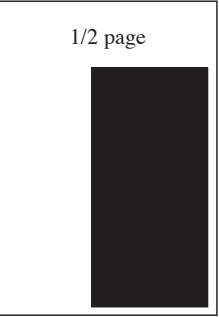
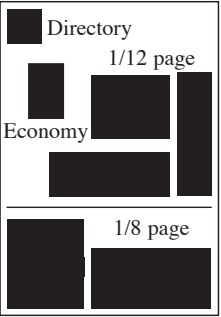
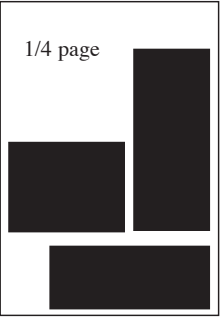
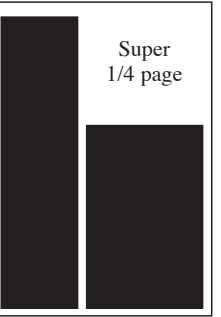
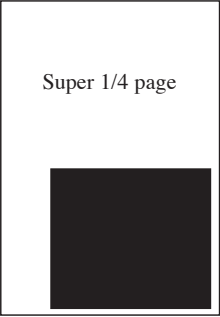
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Try this summer recipe for steak tacos served with sweet and spicy pickled onions

Made and reviewed
by CHARLOTTE ANGELL
Rated by JON ANGELL
For The Advocate

Jon's Critique: This recipe was plated up on a hot August day. Of course, the sliced steak for these tacos was great.

As many of you know, I am not an onion fan. These pickled onions weren't too offensive, and even for me was fine when diluted with plenty of steak.

It was a quick and not too heavy a lunch time meal. I can see how many of our readers would really enjoy this one. As for me I would certainly enjoy eating it again if offered but I don't see myself asking for this one again. I liked the idea... but I am still not an onion fan, even pickled.

Interestingly, I couldn't keep my fork out of the serving bowl with the sliced steak pieces. They didn't need any accompaniment... after eating a few of these tacos I filled up on the steak alone. Ooops.

Steak Tacos

Cook's Illustrated Meat Book

Serve with Sweet and Spicy Pickled Onions

Perdue subsidiary opens renovated pork plant in Iowa

Perdue Premium Meat Company (PPMC) announced on Thursday, August 14 the official opening of a renovated 225,000-square-foot case-ready pork plant in Sioux City, Iowa.

The \$60 million investment will allow PPMC, a subsidiary of Perdue Farms, to better serve customers across the country with its Niman Ranch and Coleman All Natural Meats products, as well as private label products, while also creating more than 100 new jobs.

"This is more than a renovated facility — it's a long-term investment in the people, economy and future of Sioux City," Gary Malenke, PPMC's senior vice president of operations, said in a news release.

Malenke said the facility is equipped to produce four different case-ready packaging formats to meet consumer demand for convenience, versatility, consistent quality and enhanced shelf life.

The operation can blend trim, debone ham and loins, and absorb case-ready production now taking place at sister facilities in Iowa.

He touted advanced safety technology for food and work safety, noting no reportable safety incidents since a soft launch in April.

In addition to Niman Ranch and Coleman Natural, Perdue's premium portfolio includes its flagship Perdue brand, along with Pasturebird and Yummy.

— Meatingplace.com

Herb Paste

½ cup fresh cilantro leaves (two Tbsp. dried)
3 scallions, chopped coarse
1 jalapeno chile, stemmed, seeds reserved, and chopped coarse
3 garlic cloves, chopped coarse
½ tsp. ground cumin
¼ cup vegetable oil
1 Tbsp. lime juice

Steak

1 (1 ½-to 1 ¾ -pound) flank steak, trimmed and sliced lengthwise (with the grain) into 4 equal pieces(I used skirt steak)
1 Tbsp. kosher salt
½ tsp. sugar
½ tsp. pepper
2 Tbsp. vegetable oil

Tacos

12 6-inch corn tortillas, warmed
Sweet and spicy pickled onions
1 red onion, sliced this
1 cup red wine vinegar
1/3 cup sugar
2 jalapeno chiles, stemmed, seeds reserved, and cut into thin rings
¼ tsp. salt

Place onion in medium heat-proof bowl. Bring vinegar, sugar, jalapenos, and salt to a simmer in a small saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves. Pour vinegar mixture over onion, cover loosely, and let cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes. Once cool, drain and discard liquid. (Pickled onions can be refrigerated in airtight container for up to 1 week)

For the Paste: Pulse cilantro, scallions, jalapeno, garlic and cumin in a food processor until finely chopped, 10 to 12 pulses, scraping down sides of bowl as necessary. Add oil and process until mixture is smooth and resembles pesto, about 15 seconds, scraping down sides of bowl as necessary. Transfer 2 tablespoons herb paste to medium bowl; whisk in lime juice and set aside.

For the Steak: Using a dinner fork, poke each piece of steak 10 to 12 times on each side. Place in a large baking dish; rub all sides of steak pieces evenly with salt and then coat with remaining herb paste. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 30

minutes or up to 1 hour.

Scrape herb paste off steak and sprinkle all side of pieces evenly with sugar and pepper. Heat the oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking.

Place steak in skillet and cook until well browned, about 3 minutes. Flip steak and sear until second side is well browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Using tongs, stand each piece on a cut side and cook, turning as necessary, until all cut sides are well browned and meat registers 125 to 130 degrees, 2 to 7 minutes. Transfer steak to a carving board and let rest for 5 minutes.

For the Tacos: Slice steak pieces thin against the grain. Transfer sliced steak to a bowl with herb paste-lime juice mixture and toss to coat. Season with salt to taste. Spoon small amount of sliced steak into center of each



warm tortilla and serve, passing toppings separately.

Warm corn tortillas: Toast tortillas in a dry skillet over medium-high heat until softened and speckled with brown spots, 20 to 30 seconds per side.

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