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Know when to hold'em

A measured approach to growth — and a careful touch to relationships — gives Caviness Beef Packers a winning hand

By TOM JOHNSON
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HEREFORD, Texas — What a canvas the rugged but relatively flat horizon West Texas makes.

In this dusty rural expanse, where open space gives room to breathe as much it takes it, grain silos amass in clusters like small cities; wind turbines hover like ghosts in an endless cemetery's haze until the sun burns though like a god, unobstructed and unrelenting; and cattle roam without visible boundary, like ants in the distance from open highways with speed limits taken more as suggestions than as restrictions.

The bare knuckles of earth's rock break through the farmed soil in unexpected spots — the fingerprints of the Palo Duro Canyon that, second only in size to the Grand Canyon, helps

sway this region's schizophrenic weather. The temperature can swing 50 degrees in a day as the morning's wintery cold jumps to the afternoon's pleasant warmth — all of it spoiled, either way, by winds that rumble like the Santa Fe freight trains running daily from Los Angeles to Kansas City.

It's here in Hereford (the "Beef Capital of the World") and in Amarillo that Caviness Beef Packers rooted a sturdy post — both in a tough landscape and in the turbulent dynamics of the beef industry. Deft control of that which is controllable has solidified, over decades of growth, a comfortable place among the nation's most successful mid-sized regional packers. A meat locker Pete Caviness bought in 1962 and began with a handful of cattle is now an interstate company run by his son Terry and grandsons Trevor and Regan. And it now harvests cattle in the thousands.

Even as cattle numbers hang in historic lows and packer margins remain in the red, there's no other place — figuratively and literally — the Cavinesses would rather be. Nonetheless, a



PACKER WITH A PLAN: Starting with one meat locker and a handful of cattle in 1962, Caviness Beef Packers has taken a measured approach to growth and has become one of the country's most successful mid-sized regional

packers. From left: Caviness Beef Packers President Trevor Caviness, CEO Terry Caviness, and Vice President Regan Caviness stand outside their Hereford, Texas, beef plant. (Photos by Nate Pfeil)

joint venture with J.R. Simplot (CS Beef Packers) in Kuna, Idaho, demonstrates one step-out opportunity made good — and there, as on their home turf, the purpose is as much serving the community as it is making money; the Texans put \$4 million into a local daycare center, making themselves right at home and feeling about as big as they need to be.

"We're a medium-size packer, and I feel like we're right-

sized right now for the industry," says Trevor Caviness, president of Caviness Beef Packers, during a late October visit. "Right now, we're not at capacity, and so there is no incentive to want to grow or increase our capacity. Right now, we're happy where we are. We feel like we can weather the storm well at both locations, here and in Idaho."

It's not always stormy in West Texas, though.

The story of Caviness Beef Packers is one of steady growth, certainly since Terry took over after graduating from Texas Tech in 1969. Having worked at Pete's locker plant for years while attending high school, starting with shoveling and hauling manure, the young man always saw opportunities to build the business.

"We started very small, har-

See CAVINESS, page 3

Workers vote to strike at JBS's Greeley, Colo. beef plant

Workers voted recently to authorize a strike at the JBS beef packing plant in Greeley, Colo.

The vote taken was "in response to the company's ongoing illegal conduct at the bargaining table and inside the plant," United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) Local 7 said. Members of the local chapter, which represents 3,800 laborers at the Greeley JBS plant, voted 99% in favor of a strike.

"This strike authorization is the direct result of JBS's unlawful and bad-faith conduct," Local 7 President Kim Cordova said.

"JBS is the world's largest protein producer. JBS has their corporate offices here, and the Greeley plant is their flagship location and largest feed-beef plant in the United States. It can afford to follow the law, respect its workforce and negotiate fairly."

Per the union local, which

represents 22,000 workers throughout Colorado and Wyoming, the strike decision is a result of myriad bad faith actions on the part of JBS, such as increasing production quotas while also curtailing hours, affecting not only what workers can earn but also increasing the chance of injuries. The company, the union alleges, also deducts unfairly from workers' paychecks.

"We have been bargaining for eight months, and JBS has prevented us from reaching a contract as a result of their unfair labor practices," Leticia Avalos, a JBS worker, said in a statement through Local 7. "They continue to increase chain speeds and create dangerous working conditions all while reducing hours for workers. At the same time, the company is insisting on being able to steal workers' pay through improper wage deductions. JBS has left us no alternative but to authorize a strike.

Enough is enough."

The union has been working without a contract since July 2025. The Greeley plant has been the target of previous labor complaints. In late 2025, a group of Haitian workers filed suit claiming the company misled them in the recruitment process

in regard to working conditions, training and housing, which they say was not only substandard but that they were overcharged for.

In a statement to Meatingplace, JBS said: "After months of good-faith negotiations with UFCW Local 7 in Greeley, JBS USA has presented

a comprehensive offer that reflects the national agreement reached with UFCW International and accepted at our other large processing facilities throughout the U.S."

The company reached a land-

See STRIKE, page 11

New trade arrangement opens Taiwan for pork, expands poultry, beef exports

A newly agreed Trump administration trade arrangement with Taiwan is meant to put U.S. pork on a level playing field in a major export market, and could open further opportunities for beef and poultry sales.

U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said that the agreement "will eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers facing U.S. exports to Taiwan, furthering opportunities for American farmers, ranchers, fishermen, workers,

small businesses, and manufacturers."

Taiwan is the fifth-largest destination for U.S. exports of both beef and poultry. Based on data through November 2025, beef exports last year were on track to reach at least 55,000 metric tons (mt) worth close to \$650 million dollars, while poultry exports likely topped 250,000 mt and \$350 million.

Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO)

in the United States, which is Taiwan's diplomatic mission in Washington, "through its Designated Representative, shall ensure that its sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures are science- and risk-based and do not operate as disguised restrictions on bilateral trade, and shall remove unjustified SPS barriers in areas that undermine reciprocity," according to the text of the deal.

See TAIWAN, page 11

UPCOMING SALES

- Tuesday, March 3 – High Noon Cow Sale
- Tuesday, March 10 – Feeder Special
- Friday, March 13 – Bradshaw Bull Sale
- Tuesday, March 17 – Regular Sale
- Saturday, March 21 – MVAA Sale
- Tuesday, March 24 – Feeder Special
- Saturday, March 28 – BCIA Bull Sale
- Tuesday, March 31 – Regular Sale
- Tuesday, April 7 – High Noon Cow Sale

Cattle Receiving Hours

- Sunday: 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Monday: 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
- Tuesday: All Day Sale Day



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Tim Lay Ewing, MO 573-248-4178	Quest Flesner Payson, IL 217-506-0064	Chris Ham Mt. Sterling, IL 217-430-4073

High Noon Cow Sales

High noon special cow sales are the first Tuesday of the month. Our February 3 cow sale not only saw record prices, but also record attendance. Home Bank sponsored a meal served between 250 and 300 people and the cow sale had a record number of buying numbers distributed before the sale. Price highlights include Morse Red Angus bred heifers at \$4500, Romine older dispersal cows at \$3200 and Rudy Pate young cows in the first period with fall calves from \$6000 up to \$6400.

We have already taken consignments for March, April and May high noon cow sales. If you have cows to consign for the next high noon cow sale or feed cattle, please give us a call.

– Justin Angell, F&T Field Representative

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Early Consignments

March 3

Bryan Evans – 40 black heifer pairs with AI calves at their side born at the end of January and early February. These heifers originate from the Goehring's 5G heifer development program in Southeast Iowa. We will have preview videos posted to the F&T Livestock website.

Alvin Miller – 12 black heifers. Seven of these are pairs with calves up to 450 pounds and are running back to a good black Angus bull. This is good opportunity for quality three in one's. Also 5 will be offered as dry cows in the first period that originally lost calves due to hot weather event or a freak farm accident.

Pending – Small cow herd dispersal after confirmation of this consignment we will post information on the F&T Livestock website.

Jack Curtis – 4 black and whiteface bred heifers. Bred to Tyler Haerr easy calving Angus bulls due to start calving the middle of March.

April 7

Joe Crigler – Five young Red Angus pairs with big buckskin calves by their side bred to either a black Simmental or Charolais bull.

Pending, but probable – Complete dispersal of 100 black fall calving cows bred to black bulls. 60 running aged home raised cows and 40 five-year-old cows. After confirmation of this consignment, we will post information on the F&T Livestock website.

May 5

Angell Livestock – 46- F1 black whiteface heifer pairs originating from SD as 811 pound calves, grazed in the creek bottoms east of Centralia Missouri and bred to either 2 Black Angus or 2 Black Simmental calving ease bulls.

Bryan Evans – 20 home raised heifer pairs. 7 black and 13 bwf or rwf with mostly February calves at their side. We will have preview videos posted to the F&T Livestock website.

Justin and Savannah Moore – 10 pairs of running age cows and 4 third period solid mouth cows with a tick of ear bred to black bulls.

Joe Crigler – 24 Black heifer pairs with black calves at their side born from Mid-February to March.

Jason Hedrick – 12 young black cows that have been running with a black bull. These are hotwire broke and very gentle and easy to handle.

If you have cows to consign for the next high noon cow sale or feed cattle, please give us a call.

www.ftlivestock.com

CAVINESS from page 1

vested just a few head the first day and then gradually grew it," recalls Terry, who took over a plant then harvesting about 150 head a day. "I could see we could grow it into, potentially, a large company."

The framework for growth was in diversifying services and honing operational efficiencies. Two years into Terry's tenure, he built a rendering plant for the company, and a few years after that, the business added deboning capabilities.

The growth in output and more varied products required growth in inputs, and that wouldn't have been possible without the Caviness family's foundation in cattle buying. Pete was a lifelong cattle buyer of all classes. Terry came of age in that world, and grew a great respect for the people in it. "I liked all the people we dealt with — the cattle people, the livestock people — and so it was something I was familiar with, and I enjoyed it," he says.

So began an evolution of further processing and specialization that continues today. By the early 2000s, the Caviness family grew the original plant to 50,000 square feet.

In 2005, four years after Trevor and Regan became partners in Caviness Beef Packers, the company completed the first phase of its new Hereford plant, the modern marvel of the beef packing industry at the time.

The company completed the CS Beef Packers facility in Idaho in 2017, another shining star that reflected a dozen years of learnings in Hereford, shown in features like a facility-long plant viewing corridor and state-of-the-art employee and animal welfare configurations.

In 2021, Caviness completed the latest phase of Hereford's modernization and added a second shift — more than tripling capacity to 2,900 head per day in 15 years' time. The company's new ground beef processing facility in Amarillo was completed in 2022 and is poised for decades of future growth.

Modern day

"We built the new [ground beef plant] to get the next 50, to 80, to 100 years down the road in further processing," Trevor explains of a can't-miss category the company increasingly serves in fresh and frozen product for retail, foodservice and institutions.

It helps that, especially as a longtime supplier to USDA's school lunch program, Caviness Beef Packers' facilities are accustomed to meeting high food safety standard that serves the company well in all areas of production. Not only are packers like Caviness investing more in testing to seek out and eliminate pathogens, but also beginning to use AI and other technological advances to collect and act on data.

"When I started full time in this business in 1998, our food safety bills were \$4,000 a month," Trevor recalls. "Today, they're in the hundreds of thousands. You test more, you find

more — and you do a better job at providing a cleaner product to the consumer."

The industry's best-selling product, ground beef continues — even at a record near \$7 per pound at retail — to present as a steal for consumers who can, for example, feed a family of four with four quarter-pound burgers for that price.

Caviness also is keying in on evolving consumer trends: Particularly with new diet trends, more people are looking for super-lean ground beef; those keen on quality are exploring primal grinds such as ground chuck, round and sirloin; and more are looking for beef from specific breed types like Angus and in different categories such as organic and natural.

Caviness Beef Packers continues to grow its fed beef programs for Prime, Choice and Select grade product that sells in brands such as Caviness Farm Fresh and Caviness Top Shelf, but its core business is still grounded in processing cows from ranches and dairies for its



WALKING THE FLOOR: Caviness Beef Packers President Trevor Caviness, CEO Terry Caviness, and Vice President Regan Caviness walk through lines of boxed beef inside their Hereford, Texas, beef plant. (Photo by Nate Pfeil)

Palo Duro brand, which also presents a variety of unique applications at retail and foodservice. Thinly sliced subprimals from those animals lend well to spicing, for example, that can suit ethnic tastes in ready-to-eat formats at retail and in food trucks.

"A lot of people think the whole cow goes to ground beef,"

Trevor says. "That's not true. They still [produce] 30%, 35% of primal and subprimals that are sold as whole muscle and then further processed or consumed in various ways. They're good value cuts."

Lean times

Continued consumer demand

for beef (at pretty much any price) presents a favorable position for the beef industry overall, but packers have long been managing through decreased capacity — with historic lows in cattle, the result of a good 10 years straight of drought — and trying to make the most out of it.

Aloft in an upper-level corner of the Hereford plant, butchers with electric trimmers are taking as much meat off the steady conveyance of already-boned primals and subprimals as possible, incentivized by the promise of bonuses based on yield. Yield is king in any plant at any time, but especially in one, as Regan Caviness explains, that was down a good 25% in harvest in late October.

"You become a better manager through it all," he says of current capacity challenges as he observes the busy, intentional work around him. "It's a time to save your nickels and dimes and become a more efficient producer."

See CAVINESS, page 11

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From the Publisher... Jon Angell



There is plenty of news to bring you for this month's issue, but first let me briefly look ahead. As we are finishing things up to send to the printer, news is breaking in the last few days about several fires Southwest of us in Texas, Oklahoma and parts of Kansas due to dry conditions and high winds. It sounds bad. Initially I am hearing several hundred thousands of acres have burned. I have seen an X post about a few injured firefighters and property damage. Corbitt Wall's Feeder Flash on 2/19 commentary talks of several thousand head of cattle and numerous homes lost. Out of Beaver County, a couple of young cowboys had put together over one hundred head of real fancy Gardner bred heifers, all lost. I'm sure there will be efforts for hay and fence supplies to be donated. I fully expect to cover some of this next month, but between now and then you might consider prayers and other supporting opportunities.

Let me highlight a few things in this month's issue. Up front, I'm running a story that I found interesting about a regional packer out of Texas. I can remember seeing an advertisement in nearly every issue of my dad's Livestock Weekly for Caviness Beef Packers. I remember it being a uniquely Texas logo featuring a proudly high headed Longhorn. Caviness has grown and prospered in a time when many others of the small regional packers failed. I think they have an interesting story.

Also on the front page is a story about the JBS's Greeley plant and their labor issues. This will be an unfolding story as we go to print. The closure of the Lexington, Neb. packing plant permanently took away some of our cattle harvest capacity. Which wasn't that big of a deal this time as a new state-of-the-art plant was in the process of opening an hour down the road. So, it was more of a shift in harvest capacity from one company to another.

With the shortage of cattle and demand for beef being so strong right now, there are only a few things that are sure to mess our deal up. One of those things is the sudden loss of harvest capacity. That can be through plant fires (which seems to happen too frequently), plant closure, or through labor strikes. With overcapacity in the mix, packers lose one of their key negotiation levers. If the fed cattle show lists and market ready fed cattle get backed up, cattle prices can head South fast.

Also, on page one and jumping to page 11 is a new trade deal with Taiwan which should be moderately beneficial. On page 7 is a story on a deal with Bangladeshi. I know many of us don't like the idea of tariffs, but the Trump Administration has used that trade negotiation tool very effectively.

But, as we are going to press, it seems the U.S. Supreme Court has rejected the Trump Administration's use of global tariffs under a 1977 law meant for emergencies. This could be a BIG problem. I understand the ruling, but the Congress can't follow regular order to do the most basic of their responsibilities such as make a budget! I'm not looking forward to unwinding this. It could turn out to be a big mess.

Trade deals go both ways. On page 16, is an article about Argentine beef trade and the expansion of more beef imported. The current administration is negotiating a lot of deals, and in the end, they seem beneficial and hold to their

"America first" mantra. In years past, long-time readers may remember me commenting on how I thought we often came up short in our trade negotiations. Thankfully I think this administration are reaping far better results, especially taken in context of the larger picture.

Some of us don't want any imported beef, period. I however believe that imported beef at a time of high demand and domestic supply shortages makes some good sense. In most cases, it is lower quality grinding meat that is being imported. We can't produce enough grinding meat for hamburger right now, and I am afraid if we don't accommodate a little price relief, particularly with hamburger, demand destruction will be an issue. I just wish they would label it accordingly. Let the consumer decide if they want \$10 per pound, grass fed, all natural, locally sourced hamburger, or if they want a commercially blended hamburger from USA and South American beef. Just properly label it. Don't try and deceive the consumer!

My fear is that if consumers don't get some options for price relief or feel that they are being deceived and taken advantage of by the packers and retailers, they will substitute with other protein choices. None of us want that.

Last month we did a fraud story that involved a couple that I thought was rather ambitious and brazen. This month on page 8, we have contenders in the competition for ambitious and brazen criminal activity. Five indicted, one from Missouri, Joshua Link, is still at large in a \$220 million cattle fraud. The cattle business is tough enough without the swindlers!

On a side note, I remember growing up looking through the wanted posters and the local US Post Office that the FBI would distribute and post. I went to the computer to see the modern FBI wanted list. My computer showed a list of 440 fugitives the FBI is looking for. The list is both scary and entertaining. If you are looking for an internet rabbit trail sometime, check it out. It convinced me that we need more agents!

Winding things up, I will point out EMCC in Bowling Green is hosting their Livestock Auctioneer Contest on March 13. This has been a very popular event for many of our readers. They do a very good job of organizing the event and attract some high caliber talent, and if you are into livestock auctions, this would be a good event to mark on your calendar to plan to attend.

Thank you for reading and your continued support of our efforts as well as your support to our many advertisers.

SCOTUS rules on Trump tariff power

The U.S. Supreme Court on February 20 ruled 6-3 that President Donald Trump lacked the authority to impose sweeping global tariffs under a 1977 emergency powers law, striking down one of his signature trade policies and reinforcing Congress' constitutional role over tariffs.

In a majority opinion written by Chief Justice John Roberts, the court held that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act does not grant the president unilateral authority to levy broad, indefinite tariffs on nearly all U.S. trading partners.

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"The Framers gave that power to 'Congress alone'—notwithstanding the obvious foreign affairs implications of tariffs," Roberts wrote. "And whatever may be said of other powers that implicate foreign affairs, we would not expect Congress to relinquish its tariff power through vague language, or without careful limits." Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Brett Kavanaugh dissented.

The case centered on Trump's use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, or IEEPA, to impose a 10% global tariff and higher "reciprocal" tariffs on certain nations after declaring the U.S. trade deficit a national emergency. The Constitution assigns the power to set tariffs to Congress, while IEEPA authorizes the president to "regulate" imports and exports in response to an "unusual and extraordinary threat."

The law does not specifically mention tariffs — an omission that proved central to the dispute.

Lower courts, including the U.S. Court of International Trade and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, had previously blocked the tariffs, finding that IEEPA did not provide "unbounded authority" for the executive branch to impose broad import duties.

During oral arguments in November, several justices, including some appointed by Trump, questioned whether the statute's reference to regulating importation extended to taxation powers such as tariffs and what limits, if any, would constrain the executive branch under the administration's interpretation. Administration lawyers argued that regulating importation was the "practical equivalent" of imposing tariffs and that persistent trade deficits constituted a qualifying national emergency. The ruling invalidates the tariffs imposed under IEEPA and limits the president's ability to use emergency powers to reshape U.S. trade policy without congressional approval.

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FARM & FOOD FILE

There's no heresy in the law of supply and demand

By ALAN GUEBERT
For The Cattleman's Advocate

If growing corn is a religion among Midwestern farmers, its Vatican is somewhere in central Iowa.

That fact was confirmed in late January when a Des Moines-based ag consulting firm released a report that predicted dire consequences for Iowa farmers, its ag economy, and the nation if Congress doesn't soon approve year-around E15 use.



E15, as you may know, is gasoline that contains 15 percent ethanol, or 50 percent more than today's federally-mandated E10, a 10 percent blend. While few Americans are clamoring for more ethanol, corn farmers are hollering themselves hoarse for it.

"Without year-round E15," the report predicted, by "2034 we could be facing ending stocks"—corn carried over from one year to the next—"nearly as large as a full year's worth of demand... similar to the 1980s farm crisis."

That's not an overstatement, noted Monte Shaw, executive director of the Iowa Renewable Fuels Association that, in conjunction with the Iowa Corn Growers Association, commissioned the report.

Shaw then offered a terrific example of overstatement: "I think E-15 is going to be the single most important ag-policy decision that's made this decade. It literally sets us up to move forward or to go into a very bad place."

Unsurprisingly, his paid-for report supports his heaven-or-

If growing corn is a religion among Midwestern farmers, its Vatican is somewhere in central Iowa.

hades forecast. "Historically, corn provides the largest share of farm revenue in Iowa..." Trendline yields, however, will "push... production to new record highs" requiring new "demand drivers... to support and sustain... corn production."

But "Lowering acreage by 10% as forecast by the USDA... will significantly weaken the rural economies that rely on the associated activities of corn production," including, presumably, ethanol manufacturing.

The report then dives into what it sees as several E15 benefits like sustainable aviation fuel, carbon pipelines, and carbon "conservation." Its thrust from start to finish is gin-clear: farmers need E15 to fulfill their mission to grow billions more bushels of corn.

Not mentioned, however, are the costs all this corn growing will have on Iowa. Presently, for example, the Iowa Cancer Registry notes that "Iowa has the 2nd highest cancer incidence—new cancer—rate in the U.S."

Also, "Iowa's overall cancer incidence rate is rising while the U.S. rate is falling. Only six states have rising incidence rates, but Iowa's is rising the fastest." So fast, in fact, that the American Cancer Society's advocacy arm calls it a "cancer crisis."

Researchers are now examining today's agriculture as a contributor to the rise; 31 million of Iowa's 35.7 million acres are intensively farmed.

Other anticipated E15 costs are known. For example, claims the report, a "potential" six bil-

lion gallons of "ultra-low-carbon ethanol"—created by simply capturing CO2 while making ethanol, then piping and storing it underground—could be sold by 2040.

The word "potential" does a lot of lifting here, however. First, Iowans, like residents of several other Midwestern states, have repeatedly told their state officials they want nothing to do with ethanol pipelines.

Second, current estimates peg federal subsidies tied to the not-yet built pipelines at \$10 billion and climbing. That open taxpayer checkbook for a controversial, unproven product is far from assured.

And, third, there is still a roaring debate over whether ethanol is even "green," or—at best—at least environmentally neutral, as its farm proponents preach. Opponents point to decades of independent studies that prove the exact opposite.

Most importantly, the report fails to mention the simplest solution to what it sees as the coming catastrophic "demand gap:" plant something else. After all, there's no rule, federal or otherwise, that requires farmers to grow corn.

That's not heresy; it is, in fact, a law. The law of supply and demand.

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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

Tyson beef losses widened in latest quarter report

Tight cattle supplies continued to weigh on Tyson Foods Inc. in the meat giant's earnings report Monday, with a loss of \$319 million in the beef segment.

For the company's fiscal first quarter, ended Dec. 27, the loss in Tyson's beef business compared to a loss of \$26 million in the year-ago quarter. The results do not reflect the closure of Tyson's Lexington, Neb., beef harvest plant, which ended production in mid-January, and elimination of second-shift slaughter in Amarillo, Texas.

The company's chicken segment delivered operating income of \$450 million, stable compared to \$460 million a year ago, while operating income in pork slipped from \$73 million to \$50 million. Tyson's prepared foods segment had operating income of \$322

million, compared to \$297 million in the first quarter of fiscal 2025, and the international business was level at \$41 million.

Overall, Tyson's first-quarter sales were up 5% to 14.3 billion. Operating income was \$302 million, down 48% from a year ago, while adjusted operating income fell 13% to \$572 million, with the results attributable to the cost of cattle.

The company noted that beef demand remains strong despite high prices. Tyson President Donnie King emphasized that the company's chicken volume beat year-ago levels for the fifth consecutive quarter.

"As protein demand continues to increase, our consistent share gains demonstrate we are well-positioned to capture this momentum," King said.

—Meatingplace.com

High beef price factors 'anything but one-dimensional'

Consumer demand for beef is a stronger driver of high beef prices at the grocery store than expected, Kansas State University agricultural economists suggest.

Brian Coffey and Glynn Tonsor analyzed retail beef price and consumption data from recent years to clarify supply-and-demand dynamics amidst the current cattle industry contraction that began in 2019. They found there's more driving high beef prices than the more frequently cited liquidation and tight supplies.

"[A] look at the data readily reveals that market changes observed in [the] past few years are anything but one-dimension-

al," they wrote in a new research paper. "One factor that has received less attention than others is the role of consumer demand for beef."

The strength of consumer demand was especially highlighted between 2023 and 2024.

Beef supplies at retail increased 3% in 2024, to 28.72 billion pounds at a price of 801.3 cents per pound. The researchers' analysis found that if demand were unchanged, that price would have been 726.7 cents per pound.

"The fact that consumers were willing to pay this price reflects substantial demand growth," they wrote.

—Meatingplace.com

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

- April issue Ad deadline: March 16
- May issue Ad deadline: April 13
- June issue Ad deadline: May 13



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Thoughts From Justin's Side of the Fence

By JUSTIN ANGELL

This week we are seeing range fires in the west due to high winds and dry conditions.

Here in Missouri, it's hard to imagine that kind of devastation, prayers are appropriate. South of us, my youngest daughter, Schyler, sent me a picture of the daffodils blooming at her Arkansas home. My oldest daughter, Sierra, in Lake Preston, South Dakota is expecting 2° on Saturday night. Here, we are caught in the middle and there's no telling what we're gonna end up with.

I will step out on a limb and make a weather prediction. On March 15, I'm expecting some type of winter weather event. That happens to be the day we (Savannah, Justin, and Cole) begin calving. Someday when I grow up, I'm going to have a herd of fall calving Red Angus cows with Charolais babies.

The cow complex has taken a few interesting turns lately. Omaha Steaks of Omaha, Nebraska, an excellent promoter of high-quality beef, has suspended deliveries to all of their local retail customers. They are maintaining mail order deliveries and supplying some of their largest retail customers. A little-known fact is that Omaha Steaks actually utilizes high grade feedlot finished cow meat. Since they've utilized young open cows for many years in their feeding program, I think we can assume the reason they are suspending local sales rather than merely raising price, is that the product is just not available.

I have had friends that have been able to buy young open cows out of the west for years by the thousands to bring to the Midwest to re-breed and sell. Even these seasoned cow buyers are having difficulty

buying young open cows. Although I believe there are extra heifers being set up for breeding in June, my hillbilly conclusion is in a practical sense, cow numbers are getting tighter. (even though the USDA inventory report shows a slight increase in cow inventory).

We see this at the high noon cow sale with the record number in attendance and lofty prices. I'm pretty sure we're safe for at least another year.

This would be a good opportunity to shamelessly plug the High Noon Cow Sale. The February sale went flawlessly. Romine Farms older bred cows brought either side \$3000 with any good young bred cows bringing over \$4000. Dan Bush bull bred heifers brought 4200 on the top end with Ron and Sherry Morse's Red Angus AI bred heifers bringing \$4500. The highlight for me was selling the Rudy Pate fall pairs, mostly bringing between \$6000 and \$6400. That's a new, big price, but in the long run may have been the best buy of the day. Good job, Debbie!

Looking forward, we already have consignments for the March, April, and May sales. Please read the cow sale advertising in this issue, and updated information is always available at FTLivestock.com.

Winding down the spring calf runs in the next few weeks, receipts were very good and I wonder if we were pulling some cattle marketings forward with record high prices. I cannot fault producers ringing the register the way things are, and I would never discourage anyone from selling and taking profits. This, however, might be hard for some people to take, but even if you get six dollars for a three-weight calf, I think you would be better off making them bigger. Bigger cat-



tle make a bigger check and, at these prices, a little bit bigger cattle make a lot bigger check. A 350-pound steer at \$6 is \$2100. Keep that steer and make him 120 days older and bigger that steer turns into a 590-pound steer that brings \$4.40 or \$2596! That is an increase of almost \$500 per head and we all know that most of us have sold calves for less than \$500.

Times like this are rare so I think we should make the most of it.

One last thing I wanted to draw attention to is not being discussed enough. Unless something changes, there is a widespread financial tidal wave about to hit midsized farmers. The last two years, low grain prices and rising inputs are severely squeezing a high percentage of America's farmers. I have talked about how diversified farms that have livestock – specifically cattle – are faring much better than grain-only farmers. Those of you reading this automatically think of Midwest corn and soybean producers, which would be correct, however the tidal wave I'm talking about will include southern cotton and rice farmers as well.

Ironically, many of these farmers that are in trouble were the first to sell grandpa's cow herd and bulldoze fence rows and cattle facilities. I will also concede, this has been a slow motion wreck starting decades ago. Many of the farmers facing this challenge didn't learn the lessons of the 1980s because many were not born yet.

I have a very good commodity guy that helps me think through the money and the risk management end of my cattle business. He's also very good at big picture thinking. I'm going to print a text conversation we held that I found was very enlightening, hoping it might be helpful or at least interesting to both my readers.

Here's my text to him:

Sorry so late. I'm finishing up my article for the newspaper before I leave tomorrow morning at 5 o'clock. Just thinking about things. We both have talked about and agreed that having cash in the bank would be poor business with inflation, melting the value of your cash holding like an ice cube.

My question to you; wouldn't grain in a bin be exactly the same thing? Wouldn't the value constantly be decreasing? Even if they hold grain for a year and get a little bit higher price, the value of the dollars he'd be receiving have been inflated away at roughly 6 to 12%?

Wouldn't it be better for any farmer with grain in the bin to sell even these low prices and invest in hard assets like ground, gold, silver... Maybe Bitcoin?

Colton's response:

Yes and no. It's hard for guys to take that risk and "cross hedge" their corn by buying silver. One from a risk standpoint, but also from a banker allowing it. Farmers with binned corn would be much better off finding a good basis for their physical and delivering it, taking cash and re-owning it via brokerage whether it's with calls or outright on the board if they believe the market is going higher. 5k bushels in the bin is worth roughly \$20k. If they re-own 5k bushels on the board, initial margin is \$1k.

Grains/Livestock prices are controlled by supply and demand and don't react to inflation the way most farmers think they should.

Also, when farmer bins corn w/these higher interest rates, the basis they need to achieve to offset interest starts to become unrealistic the longer they hold the physical.

Just food for thought.

And my final food for thought... maybe some good marital advice for you younger folks. If you read last month's column... let's just say it's probably a good idea not to compare your wife to a cranky, blue eyed cow with long toes...

That's all I got this month. Come see me at the auction.

Got an idea for a story you'd like to see in The Cattleman's Advocate? Drop us a line and let us know at: cattlemans@virtualimages.us

Here's a great gift for Spring!

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It's The Pitts...

Real Men

By LEE PITTS
For The Cattleman's Advocate

A real man doesn't moisturize. Nor does he go to a salon to get his haircut. He goes to a barber, not a stylist and would never wear hair gel like the Governor of California or some sissy poetry professor.

A real man is adventurous and likes to explore uncharted territory, like the kitchen. He can go to the hardware store without a support group.

He is knowledgeable and LOOKS at magazines like Bassmaster, Field and Stream and Playboy so he can discuss the content with other real men. Like, "Hey, did you catch the bazooms on Miss February?"

A real man is able to hit a certain white plumbing fixture while standing five feet away. He has also peed on his share of truck tires.

A real man's four food groups are meat, anything fried, Mexican food and beer, and he's been known to kill his own food and likes to barbecue.

A real man has never had a pedicure in his life. He cuts his nails with a pocket knife and files them with a horseshoer's rasp. And yes, he does carry a pocket knife which he uses to cut his meat at barbecues and brandings where plastic fork are provided, even if he used his knife the day before to castrate bulls.

He doesn't use lip balm, gloss or scented Chap Stick.

He knows the difference between a backhoe and a "ho".

A real man does not wear an earring, tongue stud or lip jewelry. He's never worn capri pants (whatever they are), a dress or

A real man's four food groups are meat, anything fried, Mexican food and beer, and he's been known to kill his own food and likes to barbecue.

leggings. None of his clothes are mauve, peach or pumpkin in color.

Real men listen to real music and that means country/western. He never heard of Bad Bunny until he performed at the Super Bowl, which he boycotted by going to the bathroom. Both stunk.

A real man knows the date of his anniversary, his wife's birthday and that she likes See's candy, which he gives her every year. But with a one pound box costing over \$27.00 she might have to start get to liking a Hershey candy bar from the Dollar Store instead.

He can't tell you the difference between Cappuccino or espresso or arugula and radicchio.

He thinks dogs can do no wrong but dislikes cats.

A real man NEVER cries during a movie not even when John Wayne's character got terminal cancer in his last movie. He may have shed a tiny tear a couple years later when The Duke did die of cancer for real.

A real man retains full control of the remote control (when his wife is not present.) HGTV puts him to sleep and The Housewives of Everywhere makes him puke.

A real man would NOT be caught dead in a tanning booth, a spa, Palm Beach or Palm Springs. He's never been to Monte Carlo, Victoria's Secret or a psychoanalyst.

A real man NEVER stops and asks for directions. Period!

His daily driver can be a pickup, a Peterbilt, a tractor or a

bucking bull but NEVER a Smart Car.

He doesn't eat quiche, plant burgers, vegetarian lasagna, mashed sweet potatoes or zucchini and lentil casserole.

A real man knows his way around a microwave and also knows the recipe for ice cubes. He can open any jar his wife hands him.

A real man can live out of the contents of one backpack for a month.

His all-time favorite actors are Jason Statham, Clint Eastwood, Mel Gibson and Bruce Willis.

He doesn't know what the letters LGBTQ-TA stand for and still thinks real men can't have babies.

A real man has a toolbox full of tools and knows how to use every one.

He's the only animal that will fight for something other than food and sex.

He's worn Carhartt® to a funeral but wouldn't be caught dead wearing a fanny pack. A real man wears a leather belt but he does not wear gloves unless he's roping or welding. He's never worn black socks and sandals together at the same time.

A real man likes football, baseball, basketball and NASCAR but hates soccer and cricket. He'd rather have three teeth pulled without the aid of anesthesia than watch the pairs skating at the Winter Olympics.

A real man doesn't know the first thing about how a woman thinks.

— www.LeePittsbooks.com

Trade deal opens Bangladeshi market to U.S. meat exports

A trade agreement announced this week by the White House touts "unprecedented" mutual market access including agricultural products and a potential opening to sell beef and poultry to one of the world's largest populations. Under the informal bilateral deal, Bangladesh "commits to provide significant preferential market access for U.S. industrial and agricultural goods" including beef and poultry, according to a joint statement.

With 174 million people,

Bangladesh is the world's eighth-most populous country. The economy at \$475 billion annually ranks 34th. With a fast-growing economy and growing population that is 91% Muslim, Bangladesh is a huge potential market for beef and poultry. U.S. meat exports to Bangladesh have been historically negligible, with \$164,000 worth of beef last year and no poultry since 2023. With U.S. beef exports to China largely halted since March 2025, Bangladesh

could present a valuable new target for previously China-bound exports of variety meats and less expensive cuts.

U.S. exports of all agricultural products to Bangladesh jumped 66% last year to a record \$1.13 billion dollars through November.

In the U.S. agreement, Bangladesh commits to "follow science and risk-based processes to allow the import of safe U.S. food and agricultural goods."

— Meatingplace.com

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Larry Clementz, Founder

We feed a lot of cattle from The Cattleman's Advocate coverage area, we know and like feeding those cattle. Folks can stop in or call anytime, we'd like to visit with them.

Adam Peterson
Manager of Beefland



Beefland is a part of the Irsik and Doll Company. Established in 1961, Irsik and Doll were pioneers in Kansas cattle feeding. Through conservative, yet a growth oriented philosophy, with dedicated employees and strong customer loyalty - our commitment to the cattle industry remains strong.

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Office Phone: 620-275-2030

Adam's cell: 620-255-5107

European capital becomes first to ban meat advertising

The Dutch capital city of Amsterdam has banned public advertising of meat products, various news sources have reported.

The new measure, passed by 27 of the 45 members of the Amsterdam Municipal Council, will take effect on May 1. It was proposed by the Party For Animals (Partij voor de Dieren), which holds three seats on the council, in tandem with the GreenLeft (GroenLinks) party, which holds 8 seats.

Amsterdam joins other Dutch cities such as Haarlem and Utrecht in enacting a censure on meat advertising.

Southwest Meat Association

The move is part of a larger nationwide effort to cut down on fossil fuel emissions to ward off the effects of climate change. The Amsterdam vote also banned advertising for gas-powered vehicles, air travel and cruise vacations.

A low lying country known for its canals and dyke systems, the Netherlands is especially susceptible to sea level rise, as reported by the World Bank.

"We know that most of the carbon emissions in the food system comes from meat production so it makes sense for Amsterdam to restrict the advertising of meat as part of its strategy to promote food system change," Joey Cramer, Director of ProVeg Netherlands, said in a press release.

The effort has encountered pushback in recent years. In 2022, a government proposal to buy up to 3,000 Dutch farms in order to curtail nitrogen run off was met by stiff opposition, with farmers blocking grocery centers with tractors.

The BoerBurgerBeweging party, or "Farmer-Citizen Movement" formed in reaction to the farming communities' concerns. It holds seats in both houses of parliament and is part of Holland's current coalition government.

— Meatingplace.com

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5 indicted for alleged \$220 million nationwide cattle fraud scheme

One is fugitive on FBI Wanted List

Five individuals were federally indicted February 11 for their roles in an alleged \$220 million nationwide fraud scheme involving purported cattle purchase contracts, announced United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas Ryan Raybould.

Those indicted by a Fort Worth federal grand jury were:

Jed Wood of Fort Worth, Texas, charged with three counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and one count of money laundering involving wiring more than \$63,000 to a lender for "Home Payoff"

Joshua Link of Strafford, Missouri, charged with ten counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and two counts of money laundering, including wiring more than \$527,000 to purchase real property

Tia Link of Smithton, Missouri, charged with three counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and one count of money laundering, including wiring more than \$527,000 to purchase real property

Taylor Bang of Killdeer, North Dakota, charged with eight counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and one count of money laundering

Royana Thomas of Arlington, Texas, charged with six counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and one count of money laundering.

Joshua Robert Link remains a fugitive. The FBI requests that the public contact the FBI with any information regarding Link's location.

Link is around 33 years old, 6'1", brown hair, blue eyes and reportedly has ties to Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Arkansas, Colorado, and Arizona.



Joshua Link... still at large on FBI's Wanted List

"Thousands of unwitting investors, ranchers, and others in the cattle industry nationwide were drawn in and victimized by the defendants' multi-million dollar scheme alleged in this indictment," said U.S. Attorney Ryan Raybould. "My office, in concert with our law enforcement partners, will hold these defendants accountable and pursue justice on behalf of the victims."

"The defendants allegedly used false promises to lure prospective clients into their scheme and then misappropriated client funds to enrich themselves. One individual, Joshua Robert Link, remains a fugitive. We are asking the public to contact the FBI if they have any information regarding Link's location," said FBI Dallas Special Agent in Charge R. Joseph Rothrock.

As alleged in the indictment,

each of the defendants were associated with Agridime LLC, a business headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas that offered cattle sales and meat processing and retail services to the public. Jed Wood served as the Operations Director. Joshua Link served as the Executive Director. Tia Link served as the Marketing Director.

Taylor Bang served as a cattle broker, and Royana Thomas served as the financial controller.

The indictment alleges that, from January 2021 through December 2023, the five defendants, acting through Agridime, perpetrated a fraud scheme in which they falsely represented to individual cattle purchasers, cat-

tle ranchers, and feedlots that Agridime would use their funds to purchase specific individual cattle for each victim, raise the cattle, and eventually sell the meat from the same specific individual cattle for a profit. In reality, as the indictment charges, the defendants did not use victim funds as promised and instead

used newer cattle purchaser funds to pay Agridime operating expenses, pay funds owed by Agridime to earlier cattle purchasers, pay personal expenses, and purchase real property.

As alleged, the defendants fraudulently collected more than

See FRAUD, page 18

21st Annual

SydGen Spring Influence Sale

Tuesday, April 14—6 p.m.

New Cambria Livestock, New Cambria, MO

**Selling: 41 Registered Angus Bulls, including 15 head over 16 months
4 Registered Open Heifers & 40 Commercial Two-Year-Old Spring Pairs**



SydGen Blueprint 18780636
The \$30,000 top-selling bull in our 2017 production sale, he continues to be in demand with EPDs in the top 10% or better for CEM, HP, Claw and \$M.



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The sire of several top bulls in last year's Influence Sale, and this year should be no exception. He's top 10% or better for CED, WW, YW, RADG, DOC, ANGLE, \$W, \$F, \$B and \$C.



De-su Volunteer B122 19806618
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Our goals from the beginning were to offer more Sydenstricker Genetics influenced bulls with added growth and stretch to commercial cattlemen, with a good, solid "country bull sale" and the results have been very satisfying. This twenty-first anniversary sale will showcase an outstanding offering.

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Registered females from **Blair Carney Angus** and commercial pairs from the 2019 Beef Improvement Federation Commercial Producer of the year, **Mershon Cattle LLC**, Buckner, MO

Call Farm Office for Catalog (573) 581-1225
Sale Broadcast online on DVAuction.com

Bulls and females will be at the sale site by noon on Tuesday, April 14. Because of varied locations, only some of the animals may have videos available prior to sale day. Check www.sydgen.com



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Livestock News & Notes.....

Costco hit with class action suit over alleged salmonella risks at facility

Costco Wholesale Corp. has been sued in federal court in Washington state in a proposed class action alleging the retailer misled consumers about the safety of its \$4.99 rotisserie chicken while its Nebraska poultry facility repeatedly failed federal Salmonella standards.

Plaintiff Lisa Taylor filed the complaint individually and on behalf of similarly situated consumers, alleging Costco aggressively marketed its rotisserie chicken as a safe, high-quality staple while omitting what the lawsuit describes as persistent contamination issues at Lincoln Premium Poultry, the company's vertically integrated processing complex in Nebraska.

According to the complaint, USDA inspection data show the facility received the agency's lowest food safety rating, Category 3, in roughly 92% of reporting periods since 2019, meaning it exceeded allowable Salmonella thresholds. The suit alleges the plant failed every monthly Salmonella performance standard from late 2023 through mid-2025.

The complaint cites reports from advocacy groups and Consumer Reports identifying the facility as among the most contaminated poultry plants in the country based on multi-year USDA data.

Costco declined to comment on the lawsuit when reached by Meatingplace.

Costco built the \$450 million Nebraska complex in 2019 to control its chicken supply chain and maintain its long-standing \$4.99 price point. The lawsuit alleges that by vertically integrating breeding, raising, processing and distribution, Costco assumed full responsibility for production practices that plaintiffs claim fostered elevated contamination risks.

The suit contends Costco promoted its rotisserie chicken as safe, USDA-inspected and consistent with the company's quality standards without disclosing the alleged Salmonella performance failures. It argues reasonable consumers would not expect a product widely marketed as a flagship value item to carry what plaintiffs characterize as a heightened contamination risk.

The complaint seeks damages and injunctive relief under consumer protection laws. Costco had not publicly responded to the lawsuit at the time of filing.

Yet another state pursues cultivated meat ban

South Dakota has joined the growing chorus of U.S. states to pursue bans of cultivated meat products.

According to a Washington Examiner report, the state's house of representatives passed a bill this week that prohibits the sale of "cultivated-protein food" and

"lab-grown meat" products. Under the bill's language, such products would be considered adulterated, and therefore in the same class as contaminated products.

Republican Rep. Julie Auch said the ban would protect ranchers from "a society that is more concerned with climate change and sustainability," while Rep. Tesa Schwans criticized food from "a petri dish that's full of hormones and sludge."

The bill now moves to the State Senate for consideration.

Although no cultivated meat products are available for sale in the U.S., the issue has been a lightning rod for state legislators, with Montana, Indiana, and Nebraska the most recent states to enact bans; meanwhile, legal battles have commenced in Texas and Florida.

USDA expands sterile fly dispersal capacity against screwworm

A dispersal facility for sterile New World Screwworm (NWS) male flies was completed this week at a USDA airfield in South Texas, giving the agency new capacity to fight the pest in northern Mexico and in the U.S. region most at risk.

The dispersal facility is on Moore Air Base, outside

Edinburg, Texas.

The USDA announced last month that its weekly dispersal of 100 million irradiated flies — which are left sterile, disrupting breeding by female screwworm flies — would shift as necessary to U.S.-adjacent parts of Mexico as well as South Texas. The dispersal decisions will be guided by monitoring of screwworm movements. Dispersal of the flies until now has been conducted from a USDA facility in Tampico in southern Mexico.

"While the sterile flies for this effort will initially be dispersed from the Tampico, Mexico facility, USDA is prepared to quickly and strategically shift operations to the new Texas facility should there be a change in the location or new concentration of NWS cases in north Mexico," the agency said.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) operates additional facilities to produce and disperse sterile flies in Central America. The pest, which threatens cattle, other livestock and warm-blooded wildlife, has escaped northward after decades of containment at the Isthmus of Panama.

"This sterile fly dispersal facility was a high priority project, and our team delivered it in record time," Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said. "This new facility is a monumental achievement for our domestic prepared-

ness efforts, but we are also diligently working to stop the spread of screwworm in Mexico, conduct extensive trapping and surveillance along the border, increase U.S. response capacity, and encourage innovative solutions."

NASDA advocates for expansion of state-inspected meat programs

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture has reiterated its commitment to expanding the marketplace for state-inspected meat facilities.

At its 2026 Winter Policy Conference, NASDA released the following policy amendment: "NASDA supports the modification of existing or addition of a new USDA-FSIS program allowing meat and poultry products processed at state-inspected meat and poultry processing facilities to enter interstate commerce, provided that the state inspection services meet 'at least equal to' FSIS inspection services at federally inspected facilities."

Two years ago, NASDA passed a similar resolution regarding the financing of state inspection programs.

In a statement, NASDA CEO Ted McKinney addressed the benefits of such an expansion.

"With states' ability to conduct

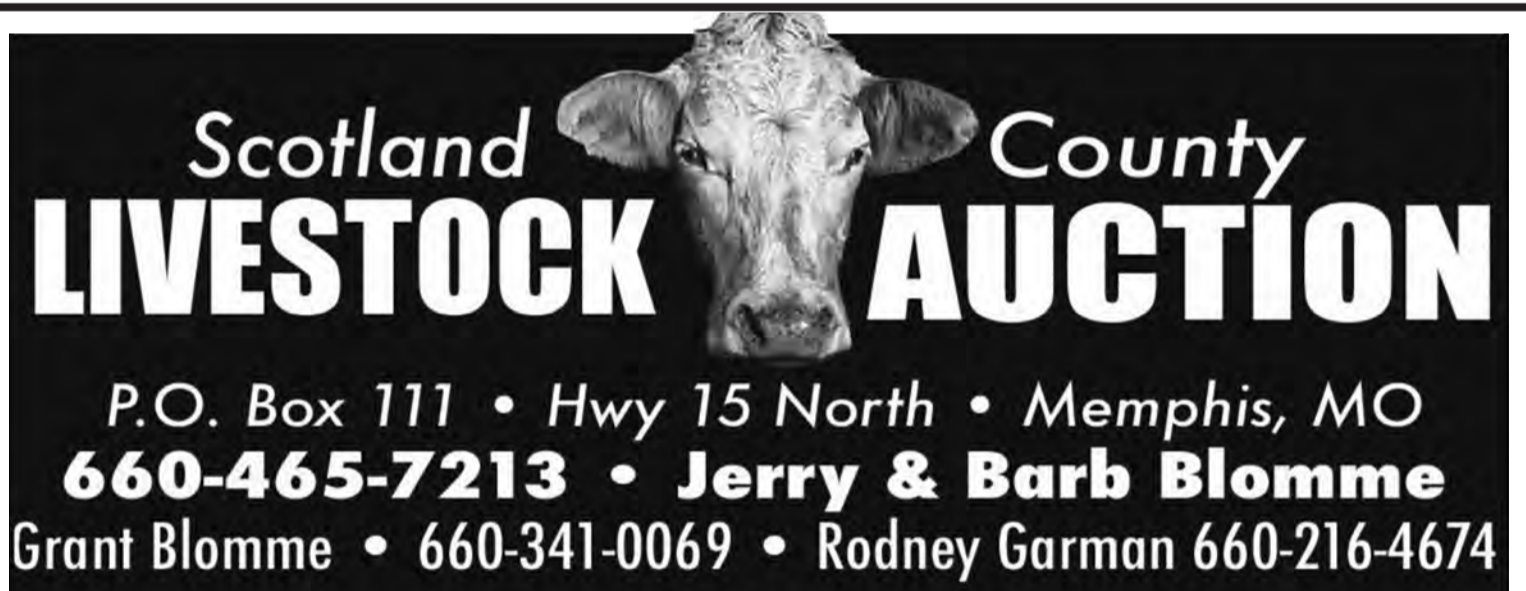
inspections on behalf of the federal government, saving federal resources, paired with states' close relationships with local processors, we have a unique opportunity to efficiently help small-medium sized processors expand their markets regionally," McKinney said. McKinney continued, "Allowing meat and poultry products from state-inspected meat processors to be sold in interstate commerce is a win-win for everyone, providing more market opportunities for small businesses, more options for consumers and saves federal resources."

Many of the preceding items were taken from Meatingplace.com

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All classes of cattle sold every Tuesday.

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Dairy Sale
Tuesday, March 10 @ 10:30 a.m.

Special Cattle Sale
Tuesday, March 17 @ 12:30 a.m.

Regular Cattle Sale
Tuesday, Feb. 24 @ 12:30 a.m.

Regular Cattle Sale with Hay Auction
Tuesday, March 31 @ 12:30 a.m.
Hay Sale @ 11:30

Ben Eggers receives MCA Pioneer Award

OSAGE BEACH – For his lasting contributions to Missouri's cattle industry, Ben Eggers, Mexico, Mo. received the Missouri Cattlemen's Association (MCA) Pioneer Award during the 58th Annual Missouri Cattle Industry Convention & Trade Show.

Eggers' leadership and life-long dedication to the beef industry reflect the spirit of the MCA Pioneer Award.

Raised in Southeast Missouri, he was active in 4-H and developed an early passion for cattle production. In 1964, Eggers purchased his first Angus heifer, a decision that marked the beginning of a career that would influence the Angus breed nationwide and the cattle industry as a whole.

In 1982, Eggers relocated to Mexico, MO. to work for Eddie Sydenstricker, spending more than 40 years building the operation now known as Sydenstricker Genetics into one of the world's

leading Angus seedstock programs.

Through decades of innovation, mentorship and leadership, Eggers has helped advance genetic progress and strengthen the future of the beef industry by keeping customers first, focusing on the small, critical improvements that drive significant genetic progress, as well as the long-term viability of the herd, one pedigree and one data point at a time.

His impact extends well beyond just one operation. Eggers has served in numerous leadership roles with the Missouri Cattlemen's Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, American Angus Association, ORIGIN, Inc., and the Beef Improvement Federation, including serving as Missouri Cattlemen's Association President in 1993; American Angus Association

President in 2006; and Beef Improvement Federation President in 2010.

Eggers' contributions have been recognized throughout his career. He was named MCA Cattleman of the Year in 2017, Missouri Angus Association Pioneer Breeder of the Year in 2022, and was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation in 2023 with his wife, Darla.

"A respected leader, supporter, and trailblazer, Ben Eggers' impact on the beef industry continues to benefit cattle producers across Missouri and beyond," said Missouri Angus Association Executive Director Julie Conover.

The 58th Annual Missouri Cattle Industry Convention & Trade Show was held January 21-23 at Margaritaville Lake Resort in Osage Beach, Mo.

– Missouri Cattlemen's Association



MCA PIONEER AWARD: Ben Eggers of Mexico was recently presented with the Missouri Cattlemen's Association Pioneer Award at the 58th annual Missouri Cattle Industry Convention & Trade Show. Pictured above are, left to right: Julie Conover, Missouri Angus Association Executive Director, Anita Vanderwert Missouri Cattlemen's Association President, Ben Eggers and Darla Eggers. (Courtesy photo)

Verde Farms expands ground beef selection

Verde Farms, the leading organic beef brand in the United States, announced Wednesday that it will expand its ground beef offerings at the Publix grocery chain.

With more than 1,400 stores — and nearly 900 of those in Florida — Lakeland, Fla.-based Publix is the largest grocery chain in the Southeast U.S.

Publix and Verde Farms began its partnership in 2025, with the Burlington, Mass.-based Verde initially providing its 85/15 ground beef for sale at Publix. The company will now add 93/7 and 80/20 organic, grass-fed ground beef to its Publix lineup.

"Better-for-you beef is no

longer about one claim," CEO of Verde Farms Brad Johnson said in a statement.

"It is about meeting a higher standard across the board, and that standard starts with organic. This expansion shows that retailers like Publix recognize where the category is headed. When families shop for beef, they want confidence in how it is raised, what is in it and where it comes from. That is exactly what Verde delivers. This is about raising the bar for the entire beef aisle."

Along with the three ground beef options, the expanded Verde lineup also includes premium steak cuts — ribeye, strip, sirloin and filet.

Verde was founded in 2005 with the mission of organic beef, 100% grass-fed and finished, humanely raised on verified regenerative farms, without antibiotics or added hormones. As of 2023, the company was sourcing 16 million pounds of beef a year, primarily from Uruguay and Australia.

– Meatingplace.com

Get a full year of home delivery of The Cattleman's Advocate for just \$20. See page 6 for details.

Open Cattle Meeting

Sponsored by Shelton Seed LLC

March 26th

Social 5:30 to 6:00 pm

Meal at 6:00 pm meeting to follow

Meet at the Cowboy Club (old Centralia Salebarn)

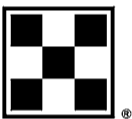
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Speakers: Ted Perry – Beef Technical Solutions (Purina Beef Specialist), Christina Given (Purina Animal Nutrition Area Sales Specialist)

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CAVINESS from page 1

For going on nearly two years, the Hereford plant has been running five days, versus the typical six days, and not even full five days. The Caviness clan goes by the mantra of buying right, processing right and selling right to withstand lean times.

"There's nothing we can do to change the dynamics of this commodity-driven market and the supply-and-demand situation," Trevor explains, "but we can do a good job with our relationships with suppliers. And that's been a strong point of ours over the years."

The experience of his grandfather Pete, father Terry and now brother Regan in cattle buying continues to be critical to the company's success. Sure, upwards of 2,000 gifts during the holidays is an expense to consider, but also a priceless gesture to the people who they call the "lifblood" of their business. "We're not at capacity or near capacity today, but those relationships give us the supply to be as efficient as anyone in the country," Trevor says.

Culture of community

As much as those supplier relationships have been critical to Caviness Beef Packers success, so have its relationships with employees and the community at large.

Leadership requirements have changed, even since the COVID pandemic, let alone when Caviness formed in the early 60s. As Trevor describes, empathy and understanding around the new generation of workers — or being "people-focused" — is essential today. "It's not the old days of 'Show up or you're fired' — it's working with people, it's finding their strengths ... and then aligning different folks' strengths with the right job," he says.

Like fellow beef packers across the country, Caviness'

Hereford, Texas, plant has been operating at reduced capacity due to low cattle supplies.

Caviness Beef Packers invested recently in third-party consultants to assess individuals and leaders in every department in order to ensure it has the right people in the right places, and aligned in the same goals.

"Without a positive culture, and giving everyone a platform to have a voice, and teaching each individual the 'why' that they're doing something, it's easy for folks — especially in this tight labor environment — to say, 'I'm going to go down the road and do something else where I am valued,'" Trevor assures.

Amanda Ruiz has worked for Caviness for 17 years, now as quality assurance supervisor in the harvest hide-on section of the Hereford plant. She affirms one reason she has stayed so long is the family atmosphere.

"They all treat you right, starting with the main boss," Ruiz says. "He goes out on the floor and says 'Hi,' treats you right. You can grow in the plant. There's chances to grow here ... and they practically treat you like family; they always say 'Hi.' That's what I like."

A critical extension of that culture is Caviness' connection with its local communities. The company began an earnest effort earlier this century to contribute continuous donations of food and money to local elementary schools, high schools and colleges, as well as local services from police to foster care.

For example, its CS Beef Packers unit in Idaho recently gave \$4 million to help the Boys and Girls Clubs in Kuna to help build an \$11 million facility with services including daycare for 400-500 kids. Caviness also donated \$2 million to name the Caviness Meat Science and Innovation Center at West Texas A&M University (WTAMU), as well as \$1.25 million toward

establishing the "Caviness Davis Distinguished Chair in Meat Science," and \$500,000 to support dependents of Caviness employees in higher education, among other contributions.

"Those kinds of things, we think, add value to the community, and we know the needs are real," Trevor says. "A high tide lifts all boats, and if we can help lead the community in an upward trajectory, it just makes for stronger employees, stronger family lives, stronger culture and stronger business in our region. That's important."

And the community loves 'em back. Terry Caviness recently received an honorary Ph.D. in agriculture business from WTAMU, one of the various schools that frequently sends animal science and microbiology students to Caviness plants to collaborate on projects and study in a real-world environment.

On the right track

Looking southeast from the plant's front lawn, across Highway 60, the freight trains continue to reliably run by. It's a sunny day in late October, barely a cloud in the sky, and the Caviness men are out front, comfortable as ever in their domain.

Just three miles east was the original Caviness plant. The figurative distance they've come in just the last 20 years — to say nothing of the last six decades — is a million miles further. And, as they own a combined 3,000 acres of land on both sides of Highway 60, they have plenty of room to grow.

Unlike those freight trains, though, they're in no rush.

"We'll view the landscape, as we always do, month to month and year to year," Trevor says. "If there's opportunities for acquisitions or future growth organically, we'll take a look at that. But right now, we're great where we are."



PLANT WORK: Above, workers break down carcasses in a cutting room. Below, there's plenty of room to grow around the Hereford, Texas, beef plant. (Photos by Nate Pfeil)



TAIWAN from page 1

Taiwan will now follow maximum residue levels (MRLs) for ractopamine in pork muscle and most other pork products Set by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, remove facility and product registration requirements, and accept pork from all USDA listed plants.

U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) President Dan Halstrom praised the agreement for "resolving Taiwan's tariff and non-tariff barriers on U.S. red meat." Pork exports in the last several years have been well behind beef and poultry in Taiwan, with last year's shipments approaching 7,000 mt worth around \$18.

"U.S. pork has been widely disadvantaged in Taiwan, and the EU and Canada dominate Taiwan's pork imports," Halstrom said. "USMEF is optimistic that reducing both tariffs and non-tariff barriers will help enable larger U.S. pork exports to Taiwan, as USMEF remains focused on regaining Taiwanese consumer trust in U.S. pork."

Taiwan's tariffs on pork are halved under the agreement, with

the tax on several key categories of pork, such as hams and bellies, at 12.5% as of Jan. 30.

National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) President Duane Stalder hailed the potential for greatly improved access to a "high-value market" in Taiwan.

The United States is the top source of imported beef in Taiwan. "But there is still potential for further growth with the increased access for all U.S. beef products, including those in high demand for yakiniku barbecue and trendy burger concepts," Halstrom said. "The elimination of tariffs on U.S. beef will definitely improve our competitiveness."

National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) President Gene Copenhaver said that tariff-free access for U.S. beef "improves competitiveness and provides long-term certainty for producers who depend on export markets to maximize the value of every animal."

The agreement drops tariffs on U.S. lamb and improves access for bison.

— Meatingplace.com

STRIKE from page 1

mark contract with UFCW in May for 26,000 workers at 14 JBS regional beef, fed beef, and pork processing facilities across the country. The Greeley facility was not part of that deal.

"Our priority has always been to reach a fair and consistent agreement that recognizes the important role our team members play while also supporting the long-term stability of our operations and the Greeley community," the JBS statement said. "We respect the collective bargaining process and remain hopeful that the local union will choose to move forward with this agreement so we can continue focusing on providing good-paying jobs, partnering with cattle producers in the region and serving our customers with high-quality food."

UFCW Local 7 said the timing of the strike would be determined at a later date.

Cordova told Meatingplace Thursday that the larger deal did not work for the Greeley work-

ers, because the cost of living is so much higher in Colorado than in other states. She said the agreed-to wage increases of .30-cents per hour, while perhaps sufficient for other local unions around the nation, was not practical for workers living in Colorado.

Cordova said the union had already heard back from JBS since the strike vote, with the company expressing desire to get back to the bargaining table. She said that if a resolution is not found, then the country would witness one of "the largest meat-

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The computing power of the brain

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

At this point, most all of us have some level of experience with a proposed AI Data Center in their area. The realization is really starting to hit home that the data centers are a serious drain on the local resources.

I am not just talking about water and electricity, but the fact that it generates zero positive economic impact to the local area after the construction phase is complete.

I conducted a search on the actual ownership of the push for AI technology and found some very interesting discussion points.

I will also mention that with every dump of new data from the Epstein files, it becomes more clear to me that beyond the sex slavery ring, there was underlying research about blending a computer and the human brain. Which one is actually superior?

Let's start with some information from the National Institutes of Health. I found this very interesting article called:

The computational power of the human brain.

However, more recently, digital and analog processes have been combined to implant human behavior in robots, endowing them with artificial intelligence (AI). Therefore, we think it is timely to compare mathematical models with the biology of computation in the brain. To this end, digital and analog processes clearly identified in cellular and molecular interactions in the Central Nervous System are highlighted.

In conclusion, brain computation is not only digital or analog, or a combination of both, but encompasses features in parallel, and of higher orders of complexity.

Check out this from Duke University:

Brain greatly exceeds digital computers in the computation per volume per watt

Biological brains involve different principles than digital computers and these principles are not yet understood so that it is difficult to compare directly



I don't need a computer or AI to research how folks born before the age of computers had healthier brains because they ate farm-fresh foods with healthy fats and got plenty of sunshine and exercise.

the computational capability of a human brain with a supercomputer. But some order-of-magnitude estimates suggest that human brains also carry out the equivalent of 100-1000 petaflops of information processing. (A petaflop is one quadrillion)

But consider the huge differences between the power and volume requirements of these two computing systems. A 100 petaflop supercomputer requires about 15,000,000 watts (enough power to support a city of about 10,000 homes), occupies an area of about an American football field of interconnected cabinets of CPUs, and requires a sophisticated and expensive cooling system to withdraw the large amount of heat produced. In contrast, your brain, even when solving a difficult physics problem, consumes about 15 watts (the power to keep lit a rather dim light bulb) and has a volume of about two fists.

WHOA! We have just arrived at the real core of this issue. I never thought about the energy required to fuel a computer versus that required to fuel the human brain. This is pretty much a no brainer; the concept here is to replace independent-minded, logical-thinking human beings with completely controlled computers.

When considering fuel for computation, what does fuel the brain? Fat and cholesterol are responsible for brain power rather than electricity. The brain comprises only 2% of human body weight but requires 20% of the daily energy intake. Dr. Georgia Ede has the best research that I am aware of about the dietary requirements to keep the brain properly fueled.

According to Dr. Ede, "Our brains are extremely rich in fat. About two-thirds of the human brain is fat, and a full 20% of that fat is a very special omega-

3 fatty acid called docosahexaenoic acid, or DHA.

DHA is critical to the development of the human cortex—the part of the brain responsible for higher-order thinking. Without DHA, the highly sophisticated connections necessary for sustained attention, decision-making, and complex problem-solving do not form properly.

For those who choose vegan diets, it is important to know that plant foods contain no DHA. It has been estimated that as many as 80% of Americans have suboptimal blood levels of DHA."

The great news is that by reducing vegetable oil consumption and increasing animal foods and animal fats in your diet, you can give your brain the DHA that it needs to function at its peak.

Here we are in 2026 with a government that suggests we restrict the consumption of animal fats and take cholesterol-blocking statin drugs, both of which minimize the capacity of our brains to function up to their full potential.

I don't need a computer or AI to research how folks born before the age of computers had healthier brains because they ate farm-fresh foods with healthy fats and got plenty of sunshine and exercise.

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.

FDA: Food coloring from natural sources no longer must be called artificial

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced that companies using food coloring derived from non-petroleum-based, natural sources may now legally claim their products contain no artificial colors.

Up until this decision, the FDA said, companies were basically not able to make such a claim unless their products had no added color whatsoever — whether derived from natural sources or otherwise.

"We acknowledge that calling colors derived from natural sources 'artificial' might be confusing for consumers and a hindrance for companies to explore alternative food coloring options," FDA Commissioner Marty Makary, M.D., M.P.H., said in a statement accompanying the announcement. "We're taking away that hindrance and making it easier for companies to use these colors in the foods our families eat every day."

While meat producers rely on a number of natural coloring options, such as paprika, they have also historically used Red Dye 40, which the administration seeks to abolish by the end of 2026.

FDA also approved beetroot

red as a new color option, as well as the expanded use of spirulina extract, a color additive derived from algae. These join Galdieria, butterfly pea, calcium phosphate, and gardenia to make a total of six new food color options approved by the Trump administration.

"This is real progress," Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. said in a statement. "We are making it easier for companies to move away from petroleum-based synthetic colors and adopt safer, naturally derived alternatives. This momentum advances our broader effort to help Americans eat real food and Make America Healthy Again."

The announcement marks the latest HHS and FDA action intended to encourage companies to phase out petroleum-based, synthetic coloring in food products and thus in the nation's food supply — all part of the Trump administration's broader "Make America Healthy Again" agenda. Efforts to remove petroleum-based colors from the food supply are being publicly tracked by the FDA at Tracking Food Industry Pledges to Remove Petroleum Based Food Dyes.

— Meatingplace.com

The Miller Family of rural Clark wishes to thank all those who responded to the house fire on January 31.

The Little Dixie Volunteer Fire Department, Madison and West Monroe Volunteer Fire Department, and Boone County Fire Departments all responded and it was very much appreciated. Greg Stowers and Wayne Cummings just to name a few, made extra effort to successfully save an adjoining home.

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BARNs OF PIKE COUNTY

Aberdeen: The estate of early Pike County pioneer Walker G. Meriwether

By CAROLYN ALLEN
Special to The Advocate

This barn in southeastern Pike County was once part of "Aberdeen" the vast estate of early Pike County pioneer Walker Gilmer Meriwether. The estate was so large (over 1,200 acres at one time) that it prompted a post office and toll gate by the same name. As many as 24 families were listed with Aberdeen addresses in 1892 and apparently received daily mail service!

People Places and Pikers reported that Albemarle County, Virginia natives and brothers Walker G. and Dr. Fontaine Meriwether came to Pike County in 1819 to look over their extensive government land claims (possibly around 50,000 acres). They returned in 1835 with their immediate families and a large group of relatives who carved out at least 8 large plantations in Southern Pike and Northern Lincoln Counties.

According to an article about Aberdeen written by local historian and Meriwether descendant Charlotte Griffith, the house was built around 1838 with handmade walnut weatherboarding, woodwork and shingles. Although the article didn't say when the barns were built, it mentioned a great horse barn, cattle barns, corn cribs and 12 tobacco barns. In addition, there were cabins, an icehouse and a brick building which served as wash house, smoke house, carriage house and office - all in one building. According to the 8 May 1958 Louisiana Press Journal, the 2-story combination carriage house, wash house and manager's office (built in 1838) was still in use at that time.

After Walker G. Meriwether's death in 1841, ownership of the farm eventually transferred to son-in-law Henry von Phul Block (called by the St. Louis Post Dispatch a "farmer and capitalist"). Apparently, Block tried



ABERDEEN: This barn in southeastern Pike County was once part of "Aberdeen" the 1,200-acre estate of early Pike County pioneer Walker Gilmer Meriwether. (Photos by Carolyn Allen)

to sell Aberdeen in 1872. An ad in the Louisiana Journal that year described it as an "unsurpassed grain or stock farm" with "stables, barns, granaries and smithshops and all needed conveniences for farming." He must not have gotten any serious interest because he and his wife celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary there in 1903 and H. V. P. Block still owned the estate at his death in 1915.

The 1880 agriculture census indicated that Aberdeen was home to 50 horses, 10 mules, 20 milk cows, 30 other cattle, 215 sheep, 200 hogs and 500 chickens/turkeys etc. Also listed in the 1880 census were 3,750 bushels of corn, 5,000 bushels of wheat, 15,000 lbs. of tobacco and 1,000 apple trees. Aberdeen was quite an operation!

During Block's ownership 1883 newspapers reported that one of the barns on the farm was struck by lightning and burned. The Bowling Green Times called it H. V. P. Block's "fine barn" at Aberdeen, but didn't identify it specifically. A note in 1907 newspapers reported that Claud Minor was building a barn and outbuildings on H.V. P. Block's farm, but it did not further specify location.

Block's 1915 obituary called him a very successful stock raiser. He won awards for his draft horses and advertised Shropshire sheep and Shorthorn cattle for sale. In addition to his agricultural pursuits, he was a director of the Bank of Louisiana for many

years and helped "inaugurate and build" a number of our gravel roads. He also played a large role in the Chicago Alton Railroad which runs through Pike County. In fact, the Clarksville Sentinel called him one of the most prominent characters in Pike County and went on to say that no one had contributed more to the history of our county.

Block's 1915 obituary also mentioned that he had done much to improve the quality of the horse population in Pike County by importing a fine heavy draft stallion. Later owner, Ira E. Wight did his part as well - advertising the Percheron stallion Venture who was making the 1944 season at Aberdeen. These horses would have undoubtedly been housed from time to time in one of the estate's barns.

Since Block's death in 1915, the farm has had several owners, including prominent St. Louisan Ira E. Wight and former Missouri governor Lloyd C. Stark. When they owned Aberdeen, it was well known for its Hereford cattle. I have also seen hogs mentioned in old

newspapers as well as at least one champion Saddlebred. An ad in the 1949 Bowling Green Times said that Stark's Rex Peavine, the 5-gaited stallion and reserve champion of the Kentucky State Fair, was making the season at Aberdeen.

The farm had a bit of bad luck in September of 1961 during Stark's ownership. Twenty-seven cows on the farm died of grass tetany. Newspapers of the time noted that Pike County was the furthest east the condition had ever developed and blamed it on heavy rains in July and August which brought on lush pastures.

On a happier note, Aberdeen was the scene of a wedding reception in 1958 as Governor Stark's daughter Katherine married Richard Bull. What a beautiful setting the farm offered wedding guests!

This little corn crib/barn still stands near Eolia on what was

known as the Louisiana and Prairieville Road. Although often referred to as a corn crib, it was built in bank style and still housed livestock on the bottom level some 50 years ago.

Farther up the picturesque lane leading to the house is another old barn, but they are the only barns remaining on this once magnificent farm.

A former neighbor of Aberdeen reported that one of the old barns had been huge. It was 3 stories high with a giant weathervane on top. Unfortunately, that barn - along with most of the others - are just memories.

The house that Walker Gilmer Meriwether built in 1838, however, is still standing and is still occupied.

Thankfully, these remaining buildings are there to give us a small glimpse into what was once a magnificent and thriving agricultural enterprise.

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Peel: What's driving cattle prices?

By DERRELL S. PEEL
Oklahoma State University
Extension Livestock
Marketing Specialist

This article first appeared in the Cow/Calf Corner Newsletter and is republished with the author's permission.

Cattle markets are strong in early February but are challenged to absorb and digest a wide range of news. A few of the diverse issues are summarized below.

Inventory Data

The USDA cattle report released in late January provides lots of data for market participants and analysts to digest over many days. The beef cow herd was down another 1%, extending the cattle cycle to at least a 12th year. A 0.9% increase in beef replacement heifers may indicate that the herd is stabilizing.

However, little or no growth in the cow herd is possible in 2026 and not much in 2027. Seven of the top 10 beef cow states saw a herd decrease in 2025, indicating that lingering drought and drought threats, along with financial challenges, continue to delay herd rebuilding.

Weather Issues

A variety of weather concerns are part of the cattle market dis-

cession. The drought map continues to deteriorate with growing concerns about the upcoming growing season.

The late January storms impacted beef cattle operations across a wide swath of the country and will have lingering impacts in the coming weeks. Storm impacts on feedlot cattle are likely to show up in carcass weights for a few weeks going forward. The delay in market-ready cattle has stimulated fed cattle markets into February. Some cow-calf producers were already calving during the storms, so longer term impacts on the calf crop are unknown at this time.

New World Screwworm (NWS) and the Mexican Border

The cattle industry continues to nervously anticipate another shoe — or maybe two shoes — to fall in awaiting a reopening of the Mexican border and the continuing threat of NWS arriving in the U.S. The market implications of both events are probably not as severe as the fear and uncertainty suggest, but both possibilities inject considerable potential volatility into cattle markets.

Other: International Trade

The latest release of monthly trade data catches up to the normal two-month delay with the release of data for November

2025. For the first 11 months of last year, beef exports were down 13.8%, mostly the result of exports to China down 95.8% year over year for November and down 64.8% for the year to date. Beef imports through November were up 18.3%.

Last week, a presidential executive order increased the 2026 tariff-rate quota (TRQ) for Argentina from 20,000 metric tons (mt) of beef to 100,000 mt. This could allow imports of Argentine beef to about double from 2025. Imports from Argentina were already exceeding the 20,000 mt limit.

It's not clear how much additional Argentine beef might actually be imported this year. Argentina consumes nearly three-quarters of beef production domestically. Of the roughly 24% of beef exported, exports to the U.S. are only about 7% of Argentine beef exports. Increased exports of beef to the U.S. will compete with domestic demand in Argentina as well as exports to other markets.

The impact in the U.S. is likely to be minimal. Beef imports from Argentina would only be about 4% of U.S. imports if the new quota is filled, and most likely an increase in imports from Argentina will simply displace imports from another country, not changing the total much, if any.

Trump loses vote against Canadian tariffs

The House of Representatives narrowly passed a resolution to end tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump on some Canadian products, with six Republicans joining the Democratic minority.

The 219-211 vote would end the national security emergency that Trump declared a year ago over alleged fentanyl trafficking, which he labeled an "unusual and extraordinary threat." The Trump administration used the purported emergency to slap a 35% tariff on Canadian imports that are not exempt under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

The emergency revocation was previously passed by the Senate, but Trump is expected to veto the measure to keep the emergency — and the tariffs — in place.

U.S. exports of beef, pork and poultry north of the border were worth \$2.3 billion in 2024, and data through November suggests last year's total was near that value. By value, Canada ranked second for poultry, fourth for pork and fifth for beef among U.S. export destinations in 2024.

In the highly integrated North American meat industry, which has developed over three decades since the North American Free Trade Agreement was implemented, Canada is also the number-one source of U.S. poultry and pork imports and second-largest source of beef.

Congressman Don Bacon (R-Neb.) was among the Republicans who broke with Trump on Wednesday. He wrote on social media this week that

the tariffs have been a "significant tax that American consumers, manufacturers, and farmers are paying," saying that Congress should "reclaim" its constitutional authority over such measures.

Wednesday's vote followed the defeat of an attempt to block any House consideration of tariff matters until July. House Speaker Mike Johnson used a similar procedural gambit to head off attempts last year in Congress to rein in Trump's widespread use of tariffs.

Rep. Angie Craig (D-Minn.), House Agriculture Committee ranking member, called Wednesday's vote "an opportunity to stabilize trade relationships with our Canadian trading

partners." She pointed out that the U.S. holds a 55% market share of Canada's ag imports.

"Trump's trade war with Canada is crushing our family farmers and working people in this country," Craig said.

Trump has claimed unprecedented, unfettered tariff power under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA).

In November, the Supreme Court heard a challenge to IEEPA those powers, in which plaintiffs argued that the law does not grant tariffs and that such a delegation to the president would violate the Constitution. A decision in the case is pending.

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USDA proposes higher line speeds for pork, poultry plants

The USDA will soon publish its proposed new line speed regulations for pork and poultry processing, Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said Tuesday.

The action comes 11 months after the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced that it had begun writing rules to permanently allow lines to run faster, along with extending waivers for poultry and pork facilities to run processing lines at higher speeds.

"These updates remove outdated bottlenecks so that we can lower production costs and create greater stability in our food system," Rollins said. "By bringing our regulations in line with proven, real-world capabilities, we are supporting a stronger supply chain, giving producers and processors the certainty they need, and helping keep groceries more affordable for every household."

The changes would allow eligible establishments to run higher line speeds within the bounds of their equipment and processing capabilities, while leaving inspectors with the authority to slow or halt operations when necessary for effective inspection.

"Together, these actions provide clarity and consistency for establishments that have operated for years under a patchwork of waivers, pilots, and temporary measures, replacing uncertainty with predictable, long-term rules," USDA said in a statement. "The updated regulations would also remove worker safety attestations that fall outside USDA's statutory authority, reducing redundant paperwork for industry."

Labor unions in the meat industry have opposed faster line speeds.

The proposed rules had not yet been published at www.regulations.gov or the Federal Register as of noon Tuesday in Washington, D.C.

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Prepping Missouri's next generation of farmers takes planning

Guest column by University of Missouri Extension agricultural business specialists Wesley Tucker, Denice Ferguson and Mary Sobba, and Robert Jones, director of Integrated Marketing Communications for MU Extension.

Every Missouri farmer understands a basic truth. A good harvest does not happen by chance. It takes planning, preparation and decisions made long before crops ever emerge from the soil. Farm succession works the same way.

Across Missouri, farm families are entering a season of transition that will shape not only individual operations but also the future of rural communities and the state's agricultural economy. For many families, the question is no longer if transition will happen, but how, and whether the next generation will be ready to step in when the time comes.

The urgency is real. An estimated 70% of U.S. farmland will change hands in the next 20 years. At the same time, agricultural census data show farmers age 65 and older are the fastest-growing segment of the farm population, now representing

nearly 40% of producers. Together, these trends make it clear why succession planning matters more now than ever.

More than a financial transaction

Farm succession is the process of preparing the next generation to step into farm management and ownership while helping senior operators move into new roles, either on or off the farm. It is often treated as a legal or financial exercise, but for most families it is much more personal and complex.

Families often struggle to find solutions that feel fair when some family members work in the operation and others do not. At the same time, there are real concerns about the long-term viability of the farm. While land values have increased significantly, farm income has not kept pace. In many cases, land no longer generates enough cash flow for a beginning farmer to purchase it outright, even when part of the operation is inherited.

Retiring farmers must balance retirement income needs, tax implications and the desire to keep the farm intact. Just as challenging are the emotional realities. For many producers, farm-

ing is more than a business. It is identity, purpose and daily rhythm. Letting go of control can feel like losing part of oneself, which is why planning is often delayed until illness, death or conflict forces decisions.

Like skipping field preparation and hoping for a good yield, avoiding these conversations rarely leads to a successful outcome.

Helping retiring farmers prepare for life after the farm

University of Missouri Extension helps retiring farmers navigate this transition by creating space for honest conversations and realistic planning. Specialists often serve as trusted third parties, helping families talk through sensitive issues that are easy to avoid. Because they are not part of the family or the operation, MU Extension staff can help keep discussions focused, productive and forward-looking.

MU Extension also encourages families to see succession as a gradual process rather than a single handoff. Transferring responsibility over time allows senior operators to step back at a manageable pace while building confidence in the next generation.

This approach reduces fear around letting go and creates clearer expectations for everyone involved.

Just as important, retiring farmers benefit from thinking intentionally about what comes next. Instead of viewing succession as walking away, many find meaning in mentoring or coaching successors. Others step fully away to focus on family, community involvement or personal interests. Planning for life after transition helps maintain a sense

of purpose while giving successors room to lead.

Preparing the next generation

MU Extension also works to prepare succeeding farmers for the realities of running an operation. Successful transition depends on long-term development. Skills, confidence and experience must be built well before formal succession planning begins.

That preparation often starts in youth. Programs such as 4-H help young people develop leadership, communication and problem-solving skills while exposing them to agriculture as a viable career path. These early experiences encourage entrepreneurial thinking and show that modern farming extends far beyond production.

On the farm, MU Extension promotes a gradual transfer of responsibility. Rather than treating successors only as hired labor, families are encouraged to assign management of specific enterprises or business functions. Managing a livestock enterprise, cropping system or marketing plan allows young farmers to make decisions, learn from mistakes and build confidence in real-world conditions.

MU Extension supports this process with research-based education in crop and livestock management. From agronomic decisions and animal health to risk management and marketing strategies, producers receive practical guidance that strengthens productivity and resilience as responsibilities grow.

Innovation also plays a growing role in long-term viability. MU Extension works with families exploring value-added enterprises such as specialty livestock, agritourism or on-farm

processing that can generate additional income and support multiple family members.

These opportunities help farms adapt in a changing agricultural economy.

Community matters

For many young Missourians, returning to the farm is about more than the operation itself. They want to know whether they can build a life in the surrounding community.

Reliable internet, health care, schools and social connections all influence that decision. MU Extension supports communities through work in broadband access, workforce development and local leadership. Reliable internet in particular helps families stay connected, pursue education and access remote work opportunities that can supplement farm income. These factors make rural life not just possible, but attractive.

Investing in a future harvest

Keeping family farms viable is about more than preserving tradition. It sustains Missouri's food system, strengthens rural economies and protects land that has been stewarded for generations. With so much farmland poised to change hands, the future depends on whether today's farmers plan ahead and whether tomorrow's farmers are prepared to lead.

Succession planning is not a single decision made at retirement. It is a long-term investment in people. Just as with any crop, the harvest depends on what is planted and tended today. By planning early and intentionally, Missouri farm families can help ensure their operations continue to grow for generations to come.

Cargill to close Wisconsin beef plant, cutting 221 jobs

Cargill said it will permanently close its Milwaukee ground beef processing facility this spring, a move that will eliminate about 221 positions as the company shifts production to other plants.

The facility primarily produces ground beef and is considered a value-added grind operation rather than a primary cattle harvest plant. Production is expected to stop on or around April 17, with the facility fully closing by May 31. The first employee separations are expected April 11.

"Cargill has made the difficult decision to close its Milwaukee ground beef facility to better align our portfolio with current customer demand and prioritize investments where they are needed most for the future," the company said in a statement. "We recognize the impact this decision has on our 221 employees, and our focus is on supporting them with respect, care and

assistance as they navigate this transition."

Cargill said it will shift ground beef production to other North American beef facilities, including its Butler, Wisconsin, plant. The company said the Milwaukee site is its smallest grind facility and that capacity can be absorbed elsewhere without affecting customer contracts.

Employees will receive at least 60 days of advance working notice and/or pay and will be eligible for severance. Workers may apply for other positions within Cargill and will have access to the company's Employee Assistance Program.

Cargill continues to operate seven facilities in Wisconsin.

The closure followed a review of beef market conditions, including volatility tied to supply, pricing and consumer demand, and was part of broader operational adjustments aimed at maintaining long-term resiliency.

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Argentine beef: Politics vs Reality

By FRANK FUHRIG
From Meatingplace.com

Donald Trump leaned against the doorway of his private suite on Air Force One, chatting over the hum of jet turbines in a news "gaggle" when one reporter asked about a possible "beef deal" to give inflation-battered shoppers relief at the grocery store.

"The only price we have that's high is beef, and we'll get that down," he replied during the Oct. 19 flight. "And one of the things we're thinking about doing is beef from Argentina. ... And if we buy some beef — I'm not talking about that much — from Argentina, it would help Argentina, which we consider a very good country, a very good ally."

Trump is personally aligned with the country's free-market firebrand President Javier Milei. But it remains unclear if Argentina will or even can drastically increase its exports to the United States, given existing production and trade flows.

The defiantly protectionist Trump's call for imports set off a storm of condemnation by farm belt legislators, including several from his own MAGA coalition. Even some of the commodity groups closely aligned with the White House had startlingly blunt reactions as cattle futures tumbled in the wake of Trump's comments.

Perhaps seeking to mend fences with ranchers, the White House soon turned on beef packers, as Trump ordered an antitrust investigation especially targeting foreign-owned firms. Only months earlier, Pilgrim's Pride, a subsidiary of Brazilian-owned Big Four packer JBS, had given \$5 million dollars to Trump's inauguration, the largest single donation to the organizing committee for the event.

U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs Pablo Quirno sign the United States-Argentina Agreement on Reciprocal Trade and Investment (USTR photo).

As the Trump administration tried to steer past the political potholes of conflicting coalition interests, the story culminated this month in an even larger than expected tariff-rate quota for Argentine beef in 2026.

The White House had first leaked its intentions in October to expand the annual tariff-rate quota (TRQ) for Argentine beef from 20,000 metric tons (mt) to 80,000 mt. After the coalition mutiny, the plan dropped off the radar.

New Year's Day came and went with no Federal Register publication implementing a change in how much tariff-free Argentine beef can enter U.S. ports. Meatingplace inquiries starting in January with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), which maintains trade rules, were ignored. The USDA referred inquiries to USTR. Even Argentina's embassy in Washington did not respond to questions about the possible TRQ. **The fog**

The fog lifted on Feb. 5, when U.S. Trade Representative

Jamieson Greer and Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs Pablo Quirno signed the United States-Argentina Agreement on Reciprocal Trade and Investment.

The Trump administration touted the deal for opening Argentina to agricultural exports including red meat and poultry, but as a major animal protein producer and exporter, Argentina is an unlikely export target. The text said U.S. imports of beef from Argentina "shall be free of duty in calendar year 2026, and shall not exceed 80,000 metric tons for that year."

A day later, Trump ordered a TRQ order that went even further, specifying an "additional 80,000 mt," limited to fresh, chilled or frozen boneless bovine meat. In practice, the new TRQ — divided into 20,000 mt tranches, available to the first arrivals at ports each quarter — means lean trim, bound in large part for blending with domestic fat from U.S. beef packers into ground beef. Much of it will become fast-food burgers.

In its own statement, the Argentine Foreign Ministry confirmed that the country's quota limit for beef exports to the United States now totals 100,000 mt. Trump's order only grants the additional 80,000 mt for 2026, with the future beyond this year uncertain.

Can they deliver?

U.S. beef imports from Argentina have steadily risen from nearly 21,000 mt in 2020 — just above the original quota — to more than 30,000 mt in 2024 and 38,357 mt through November 2025, as tight U.S. cattle supplies and tariff-related disruption of imports from Brazil boosted demand for lean trim from Argentina well past the TRQ.

Argentina's ability to deliver 100,000 mt tons of beef to the United States this year, though, is unclear.

With global beef prices setting records for much of 2025, Argentine exports jumped 22% by value last year to a record \$3.7 billion, according to the Economy Ministry in Buenos Aires. By volume, Argentina's three-year beef exports have averaged nearly 900,000 mt. Argentines per capita are among the world's biggest beef eaters, consuming about 75% of the country's production domestically.

Lance Zimmerman, Rabobank senior beef analyst for North America, offered these insights.

"The U.S. consumer essentially will need to bid that additional product away from some other market. Now that probably isn't too difficult, because the US consumer is the wealthiest beef buyer probably on the globe on a country basis," Lance Zimmerman, Rabobank senior beef analyst for North America, told Meatingplace. "But it isn't just the product cost. It's the logistics. It's the promised consistency of buying that product over time, because trade channels take time to develop. You can lose a trade market overnight, and it'll take months and years to rebuild."

'Beef is not just beef'

He emphasized that "beef is not just beef," a nuance lost on

politicians and even industry interests in debates over trade.

Imports could be variety meats, which the U.S. mostly exports to China and Mexico, trimmings that are increasingly imported, or whole muscle cuts beloved by American, Japanese and South Korean diners alike.

Global trade encompasses both frozen and chilled beef from cattle that can be grain fed, wholly grass fed, or finished on 100 days of grain.

"The U.S. consumer only wants a very specific set of items from Argentina. They don't want the whole animal," Zimmerman said. "And it's difficult to know what Argentina's production capabilities are to give us exactly what we want in the format US beef buyers and ultimately consumers want it."

Argentina's dominant existing customer, at about 60% of exports by volume, is China, the world's largest beef-eating population. Second place is Israel at about 5%. The U.S. and Russia have been taking about 4% of Argentina's beef exports, though shipments to Russia are much lower value. Germany, where Argentine-style steakhouses are popular, Hong Kong and diverse markets including Chile, Ghana, the Netherlands and Peru are other trading partners taking small percentages of Argentina's beef.

Zimmerman estimated that Argentina's beef sold to China averages about \$1.50 per pound, while exports to the United States are worth \$3 a pound, implying a significantly different product mix. Given that the new TRQ of 80,000 mt is only on the books for this year, Argentine exporters — if they have the lean trimmings to meet U.S. demand — will have to weigh potential short-term sales against much larger demand.

Keeping our roads safe

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

Last year in Tennessee, an illegal immigrant who didn't speak English was able to get a commercial driver's license (CDL) illegally in New York. He then got behind the wheel of a semi and caused a crash, killing one person. In another case, an illegal immigrant from India got a CDL in California and caused a crash in Oregon, killing two people. These are only a couple of tragic stories, but the list is getting longer every single day.

The Biden Administration's open border policy flooded our roads with illegal immigrants with CDLs, and the results have been deadly. There's absolutely no reason we should be handing out CDL's to unqualified drivers, many of whom can't even speak or read English.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) audited several states' CDL policies, and the results are astounding. In New York, the audit revealed that over half of the CDLs issued to foreign truck drivers were issued illegally. In California, they found 17,000 illegally issued CDLs. Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and at least 15 other states to date were also found to be in violation. This is a widespread issue with states exploiting loopholes to allow illegal immigrants and other unqualified foreign drivers on our roads. It's got to stop.

I'm grateful DOT Secretary Sean Duffy is cracking down on illegal CDL's. Just this week, Secretary Duffy closed two loopholes that these states took advantage of to issue illegal CDL's. One allowed State Driver's Licensing Agencies to issue CDLs to foreign drivers without verifying their driving history. The other allowed them to rely on Employment Authorization Documents, which do not screen for transportation safety. More than 30 states illegally issued tens of thousands of licenses to ineligible foreign drivers as a result. Those loopholes are now being closed.

We still have to get all the illegal and potentially dangerous foreign truck drivers off the road, and we're doing that now. Over just 3 days in January, targeted operations removed nearly 2,000 unqualified truck drivers and vehicles from our roadways. Almost 500 drivers were placed out of service for not meeting English proficiency standards.

This is about safety. If you're unqualified to drive in our country and can't speak, read, and write the English that our road and traffic signs are written in, you've got no business getting behind the wheel of an 18-wheeler and driving it across the country. I'm glad Secretary Duffy has made fixing this dangerous issue a priority, and I look forward to strengthening our laws in the Highway Bill that I'm currently writing. We've got to put a stop to this once and for all.

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Some affordability keys for President Trump

By STEVE DITTMER
Executive Vice President
Agribusiness Freedom Foundation



"Affordability" has been an overriding theme for President Trump for weeks. It's early, well before midterm elections for Democrat's to be writing off Trump's second term but there may be glimmerings of concern in the present strong economy, decreasing inflation numbers, increasing productivity and lowering energy prices. By summer, the Democrats could be in real political trouble.

But along the lines of affordability, increasing the supply of beef to moderate retail prices a bit should be near the top of Trump's list. The quickest way to do that would be opening the southern border for feeder cattle from Mexico. Cattlemen on the national level and those most affected along the southern border have confidence in the thorough inspection protocols, treatments and re-inspection of cattle coming in from Mexico.

Agriculture Secretary Rollins has done a good job of putting people, money and surveillance in place to re-gain control of the NSW in Mexico. USDA resurrected a fly dispersal facility in Texas just recently. Hopefully, construction on a planned facility to actually produce sterile flies will begin soon. Reports are that Mexico is providing all the manpower and money needed to get control of things, over time. They have a thousand people working on the problem and 4,000 monitoring traps all over the country.

As one cattleman with first-hand knowledge outlined, the trucks -- of feeder cattle only -- could be sealed at the border, destined only for feedyards and

come only through a couple of the most modern and well-maintained ports-of-entry.

But concerned cattlemen along the border are convinced that it is wildlife -- subject to no inspection, treatment or control -- that will bring the NWS fly across the border, not cattle. It was the wildlife hunting preserves and ranches that were devastated the most the last time the screwworm was on our side of the border.

Sources tell us that at USDA, it is Secretary Rollins who is dead set against re-opening the border. The only person above her is President Trump.

If the border situation is to be changed, someone must convince Trump that his affordability agenda needs it. Whether it's RFK Jr., Rollin's friend and colleague Larry Kudlow, border expert Stephen Miller or NCBA's key officers, someone needs to clarify the situation -- and affordability is a likely key.

1) We must get the Administration to understand the importance of getting more feeder cattle from our doorstep into the feedyards of the Southwest as the quickest way to increase the supply of beef, even though even it is not instantaneous; 2) The quickest way to wreck the beef industry and enrage the public on food prices is to cut off a large portion of our supply of lean beef for ground beef in this country by making it more difficult, expensive or impossible to import lean beef from other approved and reliable supplying countries.

We've been watching the effects of government policy on agriculture for many decades. The complexity can be daunting and critical.

There are other difficulties right now. The Trump administration's revocation of the Temporary Protected Status for Haitians due to expire soon is a bone of contention in the threatened strike of UFCW against JBS. There are reports that a significant portion of the work force there are Haitian natives.

RFK Jr. told cattlemen straight out at the convention that he wanted them to produce more beef. But he also said he didn't want to import beef. He needs to be informed about what would happen to the "affordability" of ground beef if 30 or 40 percent of the lean beef that comes from other countries was suddenly cut off.

Cattlemen's groups have had some heartburn on Trump's decisions on which countries, as long-term practices regarding the food safety and USDA or USDA-equivalent inspection of any imported beef has been strict for years and they want to keep it that way.

Cattlemen would sure like some relief on interest rates but it is a Republican who is threatening to block the confirmation of a new Fed chairman who is much more likely to be in favor of lower interest rates for the economy.

Some cattlemen have decried the Trump administration's pre-occupation with "foreign-owned beef packers," when multiple administrations have spent huge amounts of time and money on such cases and never been able

See AFFORDABILITY,
page 19

The Cattleman's Advocate is available free at the following area locations:

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Digging Deeper....

By JUSTIN ANGELL

I'm not sure if anybody really reads this hodgepodge of information and stories. Sometimes I just like to tell a good story and maybe give a travel update and other times I like to pass along information that I think would make an impactful amount of money. This month I'm gonna try and do all three. Let's start with the travel update.

In April, Kelly is dragging me to Italy for a week with mutual friends. After a week, the initial schedule was to come home, but I told her that if we go that far we should stay longer than a week. Agreeing, we talked about going through Switzerland and Germany, then maybe some eastern European countries, but April is still cold weather time for them. That's when I floated the idea of taking something off my bucket list that has been there for 43 years.

So, a long time ago in another life, I was a 20 year-old archaeology student who spent the summer working at an archaeological dig on the North Shore of the Sea of Galilee, specifically Capernaum. I did a lot of growing up that summer and I learned what being an American abroad both good and bad was all about.

Just to make the story more interesting, 1982 is when Israel invaded Lebanon the first time. We were only 55 miles from the front lines and leading up to the invasion, the Israeli F-16 fighter jets began using our dig site to practice their bombing runs. They'd fly over in pairs just a few yards above the lake screaming right over the top of us, then banking hard to the west to come back around in about 20 minutes. At one point, I was able to look up as the jet banked hard left, I could actually see the pilot's face.

A little-known fact, I eventually graduated with a minor in religious studies from Missouri State University, specifically Biblical archaeology.

Another interesting milestone (there were many that summer), was an invitation to me and my buddy Ron from an Israeli army

officer who was stationed at our youth hostel after the war broke out. The invitation was for fresh fish dinner after boating out on Lake Tiberius, also more popularly known as the Sea of Galilee. Little did I know that my buddy Ron and I would spend the afternoon water skiing on the sea of Galilee.

Obviously, there's a joke there somewhere about Jesus walked on the water but the Angell only waterskied?

My summer was filled with lessons of appreciation learned by being without things I had until then taken for granted. To that point of my life, I had never been anywhere at any time where I could not either go to the kitchen or get in my car and go down the road and get something to eat. Israel was the first time in my life I experienced hunger and there wasn't a damn thing I could do about it. I found that hunger is the international seasoning to make anything delicious.

Also, taken for granted was toilet paper. Where we were staying in Israel, toilet paper was rationed, 12 squares per restroom visit. There was also two very different kinds. One was a very rough toilet paper that I found somewhat similar to corn cobs. The other was more of a wax paper that we called "John Wayne paper" because it wasn't gonna take crap off of anybody.

Something else I learned was how much of a Christian I, as an American, was raised to be. I had the chance with the student group to visit the top of the Temple Mount where the El Aksa mosque is today. At the top of those stairs on that stone plaza, there was no Christianity, only Islam. I've seldom felt closer to God than at that point when I felt spiritually alone.

The trip was to conclude July 1 and traveling home on schedule I'd return to home and family just before July 4. It was about two days before we were scheduled to leave and some of the people that I was with opted to change their flights and stay another week. The extension was to travel to Egypt to see the pyramids. I was invited, but my little American heart ached to be home for July 4 cele-

brations. I told them that I was going to head on home, but I would come back next year to see Egypt and the pyramids.

That was 43 years ago. I look forward to the trip and scratching this off the bucket list. I'll keep you posted, and if you're really interested, hit me up to be Snapchat friends... I'm not a big tech guy, but snapping might be fun.

How about something that I've run across that I have found incredibly interesting. Has anyone ever heard of "graphene"?

First the chemistry lesson... Carbon is the most ubiquitous element on earth with nearly all life forms being carbon based. A diamond is pure carbon that has been pressed and heated, widely known to be the hardest substance on earth while the lead in a #2 pencil is also a pure carbon called graphite.

Also pure carbon, graphene's structure is a carbon lattice arrangement of carbon atoms only one atom thick that are bound extremely tightly to the point where this substance is stronger than steel, nearly as light as air, more conductive than copper, harder than diamonds and many, many other properties that make this a truly fascinating material whose future uses are really limitless.

What is truly fascinating is the number of uses and attributes this substance has, for example, copper infused with graphene is 400 times more conductive than pure copper.

Graphene can be mixed with various fibers to produce substances that make stealth aircraft stealthier, or perhaps even garments similar to a wetsuit or sport coat that are bulletproof. Graphene may truly be 007 and Mission Impossible stuff.

Although not new, being discovered at Kansas State University of all places in 2004 by Former Distinguished Professor Emeritus Dr. Chris Sorensen, originally pure graphene was difficult to impossible to produce in a pure form.

Dr. Sorensen's cell team serendipitously discovered that

acetylene mixed with oxygen in a closed combustion chamber when ignited produces a pure sheet of graphene.

I have recently been following a new company, Hydrograph, that has perfected the production process of pure sheets of graphene on an industrial scale. Hydrograph trades over-the-counter in Canada, but will soon be stepping up to the NASDAQ and moving headquarters from Canada to Austin, Texas with new production facilities near Houston. (*Publisher's note: this isn't investment advice but merely Justin providing information on how he is contemplating his next wild and possibly foolish speculation, for entertainment purposes only!*)

I have for a long time stated that the United States is poised for a huge economic boom. The reason I find companies like this so interesting is because their potential is unlimited, and these companies will open the door towards a future that sitting here today hard to imagine. What will they think of next ... I can't wait to see what the next 20 years brings.

Here are two interesting statistics that I've seen this month specifically from a Maria Bartiromo interview of Secretary of the Interior, Doug Bergman.

FRAUD from page 8

\$220 million from over 2,200 individual victims located throughout the United States due to fraudulent misrepresentations the defendants made in public and private advertising statements.

If convicted, the defendants face up to twenty years in federal prison on each wire fraud count for which they were indicted as well as twenty years' imprisonment for the charged wire fraud conspiracy. Additionally, the defendants face up to ten years' imprisonment for each money laundering count in which they are charged.

Tia Link and Taylor Bang appeared for arraignment before a United States Magistrate Judge in Fort Worth on February 12.

His opinion was that all types of mining have been neglected too long in this country and that a career in mining will be a prosperous one.

He noted that last year America's education system graduated 36,000 lawyers, but only 300 people with mining and metallurgical degrees. Similarly, Bergman revealed there are twice as many government workers than there are workers in manufacturing; 24 million versus 12 million. Regardless of your opinion of Donald Trump, I believe for our country to be economically successful, besides the leadership, it equally depends on the people around the President. The All-Star team Trump has put in place brings me a lot of reassurance.

A good example would be Chris Wright who is the head of the Department of Energy. I'm not sure if I've ever seen the head of the Department of Energy have a degree in nuclear physics. What makes Chris Wright's qualifications even more impressive is that he graduated from MIT with a nuclear physics degree when he was only 20 years old!

We have a few problems to solve, but for the most part, I believe we've got a lot of good people in the right place. I could go on, but I believe I'll leave it there.

Both were released under pretrial supervision. Both were released under pretrial supervision.

Jed Wood and Royana Thomas are set to appear for arraignment in Fort Worth before a United States Magistrate Judge on February 25, 2026.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Fort Worth Resident Agency conducted the investigation, with assistance from the USDA-OIG. Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark McDonald is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is merely an allegation of criminal conduct. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

— U.S. Department of Justice



Eastern Missouri Commission Company, Bowling Green
Market Report for Friday, February 13, 2026
Receipts: 2091 Week ago: 995 Year ago: 1707

Compared to last week, a much larger offering this week with steer calves under 550 lbs lightly tested with 450-500 lb selling with a firm to higher undertone, 550-600 lb steers sold 5.00-10.00 higher with 600-650 lb steers and 600-750 lb heifers all trading with a sharply higher undertone on limited supply from last week, feeder steers weighing 700-900 lbs sold with a firm to higher undertone. Heifer calves weighing 400-500 lbs sold steady to firm with 500-600 lb heifer calves selling 10.00-20.00 higher and two pot loads of 971 lb heifers off the same consignment as last week and weighing nearly the same sold near 4.00 lower. Demand was good on a moderate supply with the bulk of the feeder steers weighing 600-900 lbs with good overall quality as well on the heifers. Slaughter steers and heifers sold steady to firm with slaughter cows trading steady. Eastern MO Commission will hold their 3rd annual Border Wars Auctioneering Contest Friday March 13, 2026.

Feeder Steers: Medium and Large 1 – 450-500 lbs 507.50-

525.00; few 500-510 lbs 497.50-500.00, 550-600 lbs 440.00-482.50; 600-650 lbs 425.00-465.00, 650-700 lbs 400.00-407.50; 700-750 lbs 390.00-405.00, 750-800 lbs 360.50-382.00; 800-850 lbs 352.00-357.50, pot load 876 lbs 351.50; few 910-940 lbs 320.00-327.50.

Medium and Large 1-2 – 340-400 lbs 515.00-545.00; 450-500 lbs 460.00-482.50; 500-550 lbs 460.00-475.00, 550-600 lbs 375.00-415.00; 600-650 lbs 410.00-415.00, 650-700 lbs 360.00-387.50; 700-750 lbs 374.00-380.00, pkg fleshy 720 lbs 348.00; pkg 841 lbs 349.00, fleshy 811-886 lbs 334.75-339.00.

Large 1 – Lot 884 lbs 343.50. Medium and Large 2 535-548 lbs 380.00-415.00, lot 707 lbs 380.00.

Feeder Heifers: Medium and Large 1– 400-450 lbs 485.00-507.50, 450-500 lbs 465.00-487.50; 500-550 lbs 430.00-475.00, 550-600 lbs 412.50-445.00; 600-650 lbs 402.50-415.00, 650-700 lbs 362.50-384.00, lot fancy 654 lbs 412.50; 700-750 lbs 370.00-380.00; 750-800 lbs 334.00-362.50; 96 hd 971 lbs 299.25.

Large 1 – Pkg 831 lbs 316.00.
Medium and Large 1-2 – 350-400 lbs 450.00-457.50; 400-500 lbs 440.00-480.00; 500-600 lbs 370.00-400.00; pkg 620 lbs 387.50, 650-700 lbs 327.50-350.00.

Feeder Bulls: Medium and Large 1– Pkg 450 lbs 490.00; pkg 502 lbs 465.00; lot 555 lbs 427.50; 640-660 lbs 387.50-399.00; pkg 928 lbs 299.00.

Slaughter Cows: Premium White (65-70% lean) Average dressing, 168.00-176.00; high dressing, 187.50; and low dressing, 150.00-156.00.

Breakers (70-80% lean) Average dressing, 162.00-171.00; high dressing, 174.00-178.500; and low dressing, 150.00-157.00.

Boners (80-85% lean) Average dressing, 160.00-171.00; high dressing, 173.00-182.00; and low dressing, 145.00-157.00.

Lean (85-90% lean) Average dressing, 149.00-159.00; high dressing, 162.00-167.00; and low dressing, 135.00-145.00. Shelly 105.00-126.00.

Slaughter Bulls: Yield Grade 1-2 – 1300-2400 lbs, 190.00-205.00; 208.00-225.00.

Slaughter Steers and Heifers: (40 hd) Choice 2-3 – 1170-1500 lbs 235.00-240.00; Select and Choice 1-3 – 1270-1450 lbs 231.00-234.00.

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



Missouri farm auction draws 50 bidders, sells 1,042 acres for \$7.2 million

By BROOKE BOUMA KOHLSDORF
Contributing writer
at American Farmland Owner

A large northeast Missouri farm that offered a little bit of everything was sold recently at auction for a total of about \$7.2 million, or \$6,940 an acre. The 1,042-acre property included cropland, pasture, grass and hay ground, hunting land, and CRP contracts.

The property was separated into 14 tracts. The entire farm, with the exception of 81 acres, was contiguous land in Clark County, located about 10 miles south of Kahoka.

The other piece was located nearby on Mississippi River bottom land.

Monty McAfee, owner and operator of McAfee Auction Service, says the property generated a lot of interest from local and out-of-state buyers.

"It was a strong sale," he said. "Prices were stronger than what we originally thought it would bring. We had a real big finish on tracts 12, 13, and 14."

The auction was held in person, with no online or call-in bids allowed. McAfee estimated about 150 people gathered to

The land was owned by the Lois Mae McCollister Trust. McCollister and her husband, Fred, started farming after he returned from his service in World War II.

watch the auction, with around 50 registered bidders.

A total of nine buyers purchased portions of the farm. McAfee said seven were local farmers or investors, while the other two were from out of the area — one from New York and the other from the St. Louis area.

The land was owned by the Lois Mae McCollister Trust. McCollister and her husband, Fred, started farming after he returned from his service in World War II.

However, the land's history dates back even further. The original portion of the farm was purchased between 1880 and 1890 by Fred's grandfather, according to Brett Arnold, one of the trustees.

Arnold grew up around the McCollisters and still lives next to the farm. He said Fred's grandparents began buying land and farming it. Later, Fred's parents expanded the operation, and

eventually Fred and Lois purchased the family farm. Arnold said they primarily raised cattle and hogs and gradually bought additional land as it became available.

"It's hard to watch it get sold. It was a part of my life," Arnold said.

He worked on the McCollister farm starting in the 1980s and eventually rented property from them. The McCollisters never had children of their own, and Arnold said they were like family to him.

"When you start renting and taking care of a place, it's like your own," Arnold said. "I talked to Lois daily until she went to the nursing home. When Fred was alive, I saw him every day." Fred passed away in 2007 and Lois in October 2025.

Arnold said he purchased one of the tracts during the sale. Proceeds from the auction will be distributed among 12 beneficia-

ries.

Tract Combinations Sold

Tract 1: 81 acres sold for \$931,500 (\$11,500/acre).

Tracts 2 and 3: 101.3 acres sold for \$646,880 (\$6,385/acre).

Tracts 4, 5, 10, 12, and 13: 312.5 acres sold for \$2,164,350 (\$6,926/acre).

Tract 6: 97 acres sold for \$543,200 (\$5,600/acre).

Tract 7: 145.9 acres sold for \$875,400 (\$6,000/acre).

Tract 8: 105.9 acres sold for \$656,580 (\$6,200/acre).

Tract 9: 73.5 acres sold for \$426,300 (\$5,800/acre).

Tract 11: 59 acres sold for \$395,300 (\$6,700/acre).

Tract 14: 65.6 acres sold for \$590,400 (\$9,000/acre).

The University of Missouri Extension tracks land values through its Farmland Values Opinion Survey. The most recent report, released in July 2025, shows the average for non-irrigated good cropland in northeast Missouri was \$10,314 an acre. Good pastureland averaged \$6,167 an acre. Timberland and

hunting recreational land averaged \$5,372 and \$5,782 an acre, respectively. These figures reflect a slight increase or flat trend compared with the 2024 survey.

The McCollister farm sale was in line with — or even above — these averages. The overall average price per acre was \$6,940. A majority of the property consisted of pastureland and timberland rather than cropland.

McAfee said land sales over the past year dipped slightly but never took a major downturn.

"You see some dips in sales — not just us, but other companies too — but then you'll have a strong sale and bounce back. We're starting to try to find our new normal," McAfee said.

Timber ground, McAfee noted, has been the exception. He estimated the average sales price for recreational hunting land in his area has doubled since the pandemic in 2020.

"Deer hunting is popular, and a lot of people are looking to buy hunting land in the county, especially the northern part of the county," McAfee said.

AFFORDABILITY from page 17

to prove anything. Free markets, management moves dictated by cattle supplies and efforts to utilize incentives and disincentives to get enough supplies of high quality beef to satisfy consumers have usually been at the root of price fluctuations.

Interestingly enough, the recent ouster of Abigail (Gail) Slater came up Saturday on Larry Kudlow's radio show. Slater had been assistant attorney general for the anti-trust division at DOJ. She had reportedly not been aggressive enough in pursuing Trump's affordability agenda. Kudlow recounted how Slater had been a conservative, free market advocate when she came to work for him but later changed course and incurred dissatisfaction from Trump officials.

Ever the gentleman, Kudlow said "She was a nice, smart woman who changed ideas and stripes."

Trump had accused "foreign-owned meat packing cartels" of driving up beef prices. Was Slater ousted because she didn't pursue running down rabbit holes of multiple packer lawsuits that had never unearthed anything? Or because she was

pursuing them and not coming up with results that would bring down the price of beef? Trump has been critical of the main meat packers in both terms without coming up with any proof or resolution.

During the radio discussion, economist Steve Moore commented that being a big corporation is not necessarily bad and some conservatives want to break up all big technology companies, for example. The U.S. dominates big technology because it is big and successful, putting European countries at a disadvantage. Veteran political observer Liz Peek wondered out loud if Slater's leaving had something to do with her not pursuing anti-trust issues Trump wanted, like going after the big packers.

Slater had been overseeing the case involving Netflix' and Paramount's pursuit of Warner Bros. Discovery, a case that had drawn Trump's interest from the

very beginning and that may have had more to do with her leaving. Top officials had reportedly been displeased with some of her actions, stemming initially from her desire to block Hewlett-Packard's acquisition of Juniper Networks, only a few months after starting her job last spring. That case involved heated internal disagreements at Justice and two top anti-trust officials were fired then.

All is not quiet on the Washington front.

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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, February 2, 2026
Receipts: 750 Last month: 710 Year ago: 700**

Thursday evening February 12, with a nice offering of lambs weighing mostly 50-75 lbs and selling 10.00-40.00 higher than last month's auction. Demand was good on the slaughter lambs as they sold on an active market. Feeder Lambs and slaughter ewes both traded with a firm to higher undertone on a light offering. Kid goats on a nice offering sold with a sharply higher undertone with a very light offering from last month. 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 50-70 lbs 420.00-470.00, 70-75 lbs 415.00-417.50; few 80-100 lbs 370.00-400.00. Choice 1-2 360.00-405.00.

Feeder Lambs: Small and Medium 1-2 — Pkg 28 lbs 510.00, 40-46 lbs 405.00-430.00.

Slaughter Ewes: Utility and Good 1-2 — Few 100-150 lbs 135.00-160.00, few 170.00.

Replacement Ewes: Young 2-5 yrs Pkg 90 lbs w/20 lb lambs 280.00 pair.

GOATS: (prices per hundred weight)

Kid Goats: Selection 1 — 45-70 lbs 425.00-495.00, few 50-55 lbs fancy 505.00-520.00; Selection 1-2 — 50-90 lbs 352.50-405.00.

Feeder Kids: Selection 1-2 — Scarce

Nannies: Selection 1-2 — Scarce.

Nannies/Does: Selection 1-2 — Replacement young exposed 70-85 lbs 215.00-235.00 per head, pkg 75 lbs exposed young 290.00 per head; Families- 70-75 lbs 345.00-365.00 per family.

Source: MO Dept of Ag-USDA Market News Service, Montgomery City, MO, Greg Harrison, Market Reporter

MU Ag Lender School empowers early-career lenders with hands-on training

COLUMBIA, Mo. – Agricultural lenders looking to enhance their expertise can register for the University of Missouri Agricultural Lenders School, June 1-4 in Columbia.

This program, tailored for early-career lenders and those new to agricultural loan responsi-

bilities, aims to equip participants with the knowledge and confidence to effectively serve farm clients," said MU Extension agricultural economist Ryan Milhollin.

"The Agricultural Lenders School gives participants the tools they need to assess credit risks,

understand financial statements and navigate industry challenges," Milhollin said. "Lenders can walk away with insights and resources to improve their lending decisions."

The curriculum, taught by University of Missouri faculty, industry professionals, and finan-

cial experts, covers key areas of agricultural finance: agricultural financial statements and credit analysis; financial benchmarks and comparative data; effective communication with farm clients; loan structuring and risk management; legal considerations, lien documentation and servicing issues; emerging issues in agricultural finance; and USDA Farm Service Agency programs and perspectives.

Instructors use case studies, real-world exercises, presentations, and discussions. "Participants from the 2024 Agricultural Lenders School noted that the hands-on learning

and interactive nature of the training was particularly helpful in applying concepts in realistic scenarios," Milhollin said.

Since 2000, the school has trained more than 750 lenders nationwide. Space is limited, and early registration is encouraged. The deadline to register is May 11.

For more information and to register, visit <https://muext.us/aglender-school2026>. The program is sponsored by University of Missouri Extension, FCS Financial, Missouri Independent Bankers Association and Missouri Bankers Association.

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Laugh Tracks in the Dust.....

More livestock show shenanigans

By MILO YIELD
Special to The Advocate

When I started the livestock show shenanigans column theme two weeks ago, I didn't realize just how many strange and quirky show happenings I've either witnessed or been a part of. So, I'm on to part 3 of this series.

One that I vividly remember happened at a junior livestock show in Woodward, Okla. The show started in a terrible March blizzard, but since everyone wuz holed up in town becuz all the roads were closed, the show officials decided to continue the show.

I wuz taking pictures of the champions and breed winners at the end of the market hog show. A cute young 4-H'er had the champion Berkshire barrow. So, I had his parents get a feed pan and we coaxed the hog into a corner so I could get a good side picture.

Back in those days, I wuz using an old press camera and was using long outdated World War II surplus flash bulbs. Everything wuz set up picture perfect, but when I pressed the button to get the picture, the dangd flash bulb didn't just flash -- I loudly banged, exploded and blew shattered glass all over the poor kid and his hog.

Needless to say, everyone wuz startled. I wuz embarrassed beyond words. But, luckily the explosion didn't do any serious harm -- no cuts or bruises. But, I learned my lesson and complained to my flash bulb supplier about the liability we faced with the defective flash bulbs. From that date on, my flash bulbs were new.

At the open market steer show at the Tulsa State Fair, I once saw some Texas exhibitors thrown out of the beef show for forcing water into a critter's stomach so it would make the minimum weight for the show.

I once saw steer at an unnamed county fair get revenge on the beef judge that slapped it loudly on the rump to proclaim it the grand champion. It's revenge consisted of a reflex hind leg kick right into a tender spot on the judge's anatomy. I bet that judge wuz more careful at every show he judged after that one.

Back in the day, I was casual friends with two prominent beef cattle judges. One wuz a Limousin breeder from Welch, Okla., and the other wuz a Polled Hereford breeder from Larned, Kan. The pair became close friends because they often judged different beef breeds at the same livestock show.

I recall that they had a unique way of greeting each other when they first met at a beef show. When they first spotted each other, without saying a word, they immediately grinned widely and shook hands, each pulled a

quarter from his pocket, flipped the coins and called "odd or even." The coin toss loser paid the winner a \$10 bill. That greeting often took place in front of big crowds at the shows, but the close friends didn't give a hoot about appearances.

One of the saddest livestock show happenings didn't take place during the show, but at the lamb show pre weigh-in months before the show. The lambs were weighed in for two shows to be held 30 miles apart. A 4-H mother coaxed the weigh-in crew to let her weigh her kids' lambs first because she wuz on a tight schedule.

When the lambs were weighed and reloaded into her pickup truck's slide-in stock rack, she raced away to the second location. Sadly, on her way to the second weigh-in, the stock

rack slid back in the pickup and two of the lambs fell out and were dragged most of the trip. Of course, neither lamb survived.

From a personal stand point, when I wuz a 4-H'er, I had a Holstein heifer to show at the county fair. I read in a dairy showmanship booklet that grass stains on an entry's knees should be washed out. I took that advice to heart, but no matter how much soap and water I used, the stubborn stains on my heifer's white knees persisted. I remember being embarrassed about the knee-stains when I led the heifer into the show ring. And, when the heifer failed to place in the show, I blamed the stains as the reason. In hind sight, I'm sure the heifer didn't place in the class because she wuzn't a good enuf heifer and I wuzn't a good enuf showman.

At another county fair, I showed a Landrace barrow. It won the reserve grand championship. But, the fair's hog entry's were also entered in a carcass contest. My Landrace wuz so long and lean that I wuz sure it would win the carcass contest. Alas. my hog wuz not only long and lean, it also had a loin-eye much smaller than the grand-champion Duroc -- which, by the way, was shown by my life-long friend of Canby Handy.

I read the following chicken wing info about the Super Bowl. I have no idea if the info is true. But, here it is: "The National

Chicken Council projected Americans would eat 1.48 billion chicken wings during Super Bowl LX. To put that in perspective, if you lined up 1.48 billion wings end to end, they'd stretch from Boston to Seattle 27 times. They'd circle the entire planet almost three times. You'd need more than 3,400 semi-trucks to haul them all, creating a 40-mile convoy of nothing but chicken wings."

Words of wisdom for the week: "Television insults my intelligence. My computer rubs my ignorance in." Have a good 'un.

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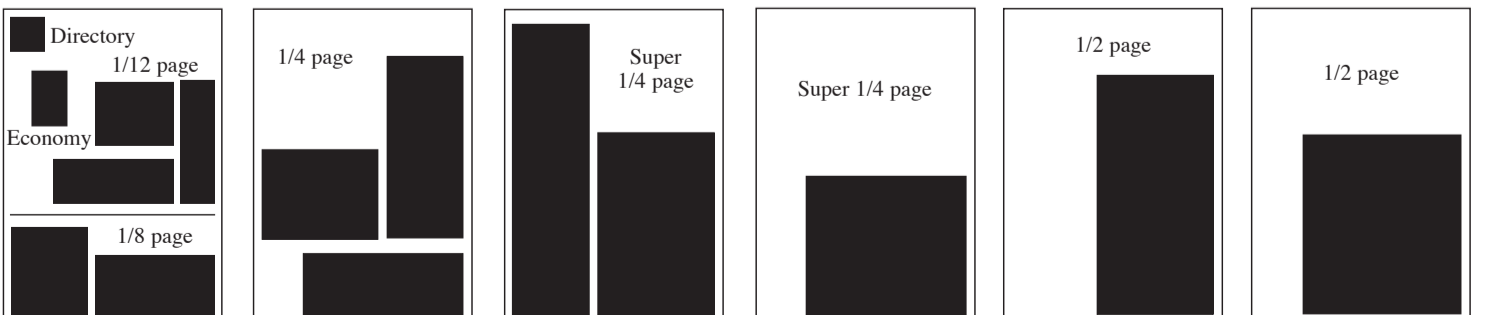
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For better or for worse, more beef imports are likely on the way

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

One of the most common questions from journalists and reporters today is why are beef prices so high? President Trump provided his answer to this question in his February 6, 2026 proclamation entitled, "Ensuring Affordable Beef for the American Consumer." The proclamation increases the in-quota quantity of lean beef trimmings that can be imported from Argentina by an additional 80,000 metric tons during the 2026 calendar year, which is in addition to the 20,000 metric ton annual in-quota quantity limit already applicable to Argentina.

The reasons cited by the President for his decision to increase Argentinian beef imports include the widespread drought that occurred in 2022, wildfires that have disrupted grazing and hay production, and the closure of the U.S.-Mexican border to live cattle imports due to Mexico's New World screwworm outbreak.

The President stated that the combination of these factors has reduced the supply of cattle in the United States, which has resulted in higher beef prices for U.S. consumers, including higher prices for ground beef.

He stated that ground beef prices reached \$6.69 per pound in December 2025, which was the highest ground beef price recorded since 1980.

He then stated that he has "a responsibility to ensure that hard-working Americans can afford to feed themselves and their families," and so he is "taking action to temporarily increase the quantity of in-quota imports of lean beef trimmings . . . to increase the supply of ground beef for United States consumers."

All of what the President said was true. The drought, the wildfires, and the closure of the Mexican border have all contributed to the downward trend of the U.S. cattle inventory.

But, and very importantly, those factors were not the initial cause of our downward trending cattle inventory, they merely accelerated and accentuated that downward trend that began a little over a generation ago.

Today's downward trending cattle inventory, along with today's downward trending inventory of American cattle farms and ranches, can be traced back to a monumental shift in national policy that occurred just over a generation ago.

This shift began in the 1980s and continues today. Here's what happened: The control over the largest segment of American agriculture – the live cattle industry, and its downstream beef industry – was handed over to a tight oligopoly (meaning a small group of firms that control the lion's share of the cattle and beef markets). That tight oligopoly consisting of global firms was then given unlimited access to inputs from around the world, enabling it to substitute domestic cattle and beef with foreign cattle and beef in whatever profit-maximizing ratio it chose.

And that's what it did. It leveraged its oligopolistic power to pay less than a competitive price for cattle and

During the ensuing decades, hundreds of thousands of cattle producers exited the industry and they took nearly 10 million of their mother cows to market.

leveraged its access to increasing volumes of price-depressing imports to reduce demand for domestic live cattle.

During the ensuing decades, hundreds of thousands of cattle producers exited the industry and they took nearly 10 million of their mother cows to market.

We have the smallest cow herd in 75 years because we waited too long to address the reasons that over half our cattle producers and over a quarter of our mother cows were disappearing.

But we can begin doing so now. We can urge the President to rigorously enforce antitrust laws and the Packers and Stockyards Act to restore competition to cattle markets, urge him to encourage Congress to enact manda-

tory country of origin labeling for beef so consumers can help build demand for U.S. cattle, and urge him to align our trade policy with the need to provide domestic producers relief from price-depressing imports so we can meet our food security objective of achieving self-sufficiency in beef production.

Despite record imports during the past three years, more imports are coming as a result of President Trump's proclamation. Historically, increased imports mean lower cattle prices, an extended liquidation phase of the cattle cycle, and fewer opportunities for aspiring farmers and ranchers to enter the industry.

But as to consumer beef prices, historically they've risen in concert with rising imports.

Cattle farmers and ranchers have no control over either wholesale or retail beef prices. But, because that control is vested with the dominant packers and dominant retailers, if those dominant players feel the need to please the President, we could conceivably see a decline in consumer ground beef prices.

We'll just have to wait and see.



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Meat giants urge Appeals Court to block state labeling claims

A federal appeals panel recently weighed whether states may pursue deceptive-labeling claims against major meat processors over "Product of the USA" claims, as companies including JBS Foods, Tyson Foods, Cargill and National Beef argued that federal law preempts such lawsuits.

Before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, attorney Aaron Van Oort, representing the processors, said the Federal Meat Inspection Act grants the U.S. secretary of agriculture exclusive authority to determine whether meat labeling is proper. Once a label is approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, he argued, states are barred from imposing requirements that are "different than, or in addition to" federal standards.

The case stems from a lower court ruling allowing South Dakota ranchers to pursue claims that processors misled consumers by labeling imported meat as "Product of the USA" when it was only processed domestically. Ranchers argued the labeling harmed domestic cattle prices by steering consumers toward what they believed was U.S.-sourced beef.

Under prior USDA policy, the label was permitted if meat was processed in the United States. A stricter rule took effect this year, but processors argued the new standard cannot be applied retroactively.

Van Oort warned that allowing states to enforce their own labeling interpretations would create a patchwork of regulations. "You still have a problem, potentially 50 state laws that have different definitions," Judge David Stras said during the hearing, raising concerns about inconsistent standards nationwide.

Judge James Loken questioned whether processors could face damages for following federal guidance. "We reasonably relied on the federal government's statement of what we could do, we did it," Loken said, noting that challenges to federal policy could be brought under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Blair Dunn, representing the ranchers, argued that compliance with USDA guidance does not necessarily shield companies from liability under federal law prohibiting deceptive labeling. "They're consistent with the guidance document, they are not consistent with the law," Dunn said.

The panel — Judges Stras, Loken and Lavenski Smith — also probed whether USDA guidance documents carry the force of law and how preemption would apply if a state acted before federal regulators issued definitive guidance.

— Meatingplace.com

USDA's \$452M 'America First' foreign food aid goes meatless

No meat purchases are planned as part of a \$452 million USDA plan to provide 215,000 metric tons of commodities to the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), according to documents describing the expenditures.

The USDA labeled the effort "America First international food assistance."

Under an "agreement in principle" signed last month by USDA and the WFP, the money is to be spent entirely on U.S. origin commodities: rice, cornmeal, sorghum, wheat, yellow split peas, vegetable oil and so-called specialized nutritious foods, which are high-calorie, nutrient dense processed products designed for malnourished infants, small children and pregnant or nursing mothers. The list of grains, legumes and other plant-derived commodities are typical of previous U.S. aid efforts.

The money comes from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which was largely dismantled last year during the early weeks of the Trump administration. Elon Musk, then-chief of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), said in February that his staff was "feeding USAID into the wood chipper."

The USDA is citing authority transferred from USAID under Title II of the 1954 Food for Peace Act. "The \$452 million is unspent FY 2025 carryover funds made available to USDA through an interagency agreement with USAID," a USDA spokesperson told Meatingplace.

The foodstuffs are aimed at the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Kenya and Rwanda.

The USDA-WFP agreement calls for "continued compliance with strict accountability measures" to prevent waste and fraud, while reducing "long-term dependency" on foreign aid. The carried over money is now to be spent before the end of 2026.

"America's farmers and ranchers are the best in the world and have a great bounty of high-quality products to share with the world. I am thrilled USDA can make that happen through America First international food assistance programs," USDA Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Luke Lindberg said. "Under USDA, the Food for Peace program will benefit American farmers and producers and help people in need around the world in a way that respects hardworking American taxpayers."

— Meatingplace.com

Try this Italian beef crock pot meal

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

Crock Pot Italian Beef Sandwiches

Iowa Girl Eats, adapted from Pioneer Woman

3 pound chuck roast, trimmed of large pieces of fat, then cut into large pieces

1 envelope Italian Salad dressing mix

8 ounce pepperoncini pepper slices plus a splash of juice

8 ounce Chicago-Style Giardiniera crunchy vegetables drained, plus extra for serving (used Italian Mix Giardiniera)

14.5 ounce can beef broth

Provolone cheese slices
 Buns

Place chuck roast into the bottom of a 6 quart crock pot then sprinkle with salad dressing mix. Add pepperoncini peppers plus a splash of juice, drained Giardiniera, and beef broth then lift up the chuck roast pieces to get broth underneath. Place a lid on top then cook on low for 9 hours, or until meat shreds easily with a fork.

Shred then place meat back into juices inside crock pot and cook on low for 1 more hour. Split buns in half then scoop the shredded meat mixture on top and add provolone cheese slices.

Top with additional pepperoncini peppers and giardiniera, if



desired, then serve.

Jon's Critique: The cook made this for a crock pot meal at work. It worked very well dished out for a crew and it was very good. Although several seconds were had, we had leftovers, and it heated up well later.

For one meal I heated a serving up in a bowl and threw some mozzarella cheese on top... It was good without the bread, too!

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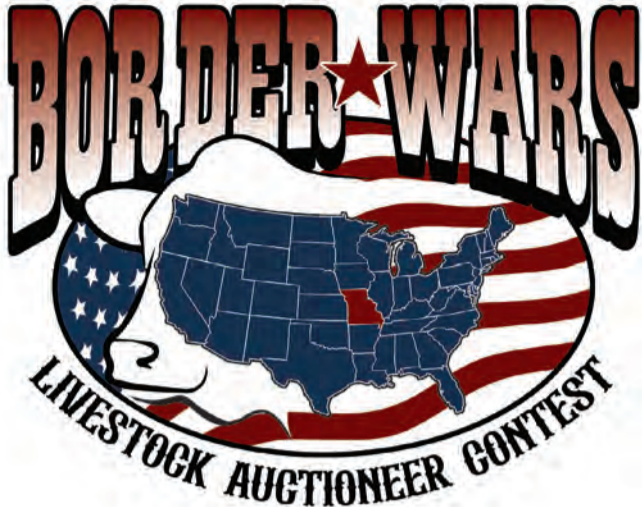
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February

Friday, February 27.....Special feeder sale with regular Friday sale

March

Friday, March 6.....Regular Friday sale

Friday, March 13.....Special feeder sale with regular Friday sale and Border Wars Auctioneer Contest

Friday, March 20Bred cow sale with regular Friday sale

Friday, March 27.....Special feeder sale with regular Friday sale



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