

SAGE SIGNALS

The Voice of the Nevada Livestock Industry

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NCA March Roundup

By: Martin Paris, Executive Director

Happy March everyone! March is one of my favorite times of year with lots of good college basketball and of course, the beginning of calving season for most. It's been a pretty warm winter thus far, but my fingers are still crossed for decent calving weather.

NCA leadership recently attended the National Cattlemen's Beef Association Convention in San Antonio, Texas. As always, there were plenty of issues discussed and a lot of good takeaways. The new Administration has thus far taken the phrase "hit the ground running" to a whole different level. As the Executive Orders and policy changes continue to roll out at a breakneck speed, there's a lot left to be determined as far as what it all means for livestock producers. By the time you read this, there should be cabinet level and other key leadership positions filled at the various federal agencies. These folks will be tasked with carrying out and implementing the Administration's vision and as they get settled in, we should start to see things take shape. Over the coming months there is likely to be the opportunity to address several issues and NCA is eager to engage on building a strong future for agricultural policy.

The things we do know at this point in time- the Bureau of Land Management's Public Lands Rule has been put on hold indefinitely. As a refresher, the Public Land Rule was made effective in the summer of last year and allowed third party entities to lease public land for up to 10 years for the purpose of restoration activities. The issue at heart is whether or not the BLM and the Rule considered livestock grazing to be compatible with these restoration efforts. Since the rule became effective, there has not been a restoration lease established on federal lands. NCA worked hard to secure representation on the BLM Public Lands Rule

Advisory Committee in the event the Rule were to continue forward, however, the committee's work has been indefinitely postponed along with the implementation of the Rule at this point in time. NCA stands at the ready to ensure livestock grazing is protected should the Rule be considered at a later point in time.

Also in the midst of the transition, NCA filed a protest against the latest edition of Sage Grouse Land Use Plan Amendments. NCA's protest cited a lack of coordination, rushed timeline, lack of consistency with the state's plan, inconsistencies with mapping and other data, amongst several other concerns. At the end of the day, the Record of Decision for the proposal was not signed for the Nevada/California plan amendments. This means that for now, Nevada is currently operating under the guidance of the 2015 Sage Grouse Plans. Newly appointed Secretary of the Interior, Doug Burgum, has released several Secretarial Orders in

"...there is likely to be the opportunity to address several issues and NCA is eager to engage on building a strong future for agricultural policy."

his first few weeks on the job. One of which dubbed "Unleashing American Energy", provides some much-needed regulatory relief. While the Order is primarily geared toward expanding domestic energy production, livestock grazers may find some solace in that the Order calls for revising all relevant drafts and finalized resource management plans involving sage grouse. This may provide the opportunity to provide some much-needed edits to the plan that will actually recognize the positive impact livestock grazing can have in sage grouse habitat.

On another front, the 83rd Session of the Nevada Legislature began in the first part of February. NCA has been hard at work reviewing each piece of legislation and its potential impact on agriculture throughout the state. Be sure to stay tuned for updates on the happenings at our State Legislature.

Until next time.

Environmental Stewardship Award Presented to Nevada Ranch

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (Feb. 4, 2025) – Cottonwood Ranch in Wells, Nevada, was recognized today by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) as a regional winner of the 2024 Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP). Seven regional awards were presented to recipients during CattleCon 2025 in San Antonio.

"Conservation practices of cattle farmers and ranchers across the country help to preserve natural resources and provide wildlife habitat," said NCBA President Mark Eisele. "The stewardship efforts of these award recipients confirm our industry's commitment to protecting the land and water for future generations."

Established in 1991, ESAP celebrates outstanding land stewards in the cattle industry. Regional ESAP winners come from every corner of the country and undertake stewardship efforts unique to their environment, landscape and resources. The 2024 Environmental Stewardship Award Program Regional winners are:

Region I: Angus Glen Farms, LLC, Watkins Glen, New York

Region II: Kempfer Cattle Company, Deer Park, Florida

Region III: Little Timber Farms, Blackduck, Minnesota

Region IV: Blue Ranch, Moore County, Texas

Region V: LeValley Ranch, Hotchkiss, Colorado

Region VI: Cottonwood Ranch, Wells, Nevada

Region VII: Downey Ranch, Wamego, Kansas

"Cottonwood Ranch has demonstrated for decades that they are exceptional stewards of the land," said Marissa Reed, acting field supervisor of the U.S. Department of the Interior Reno Fish and Wildlife Office. "The ranch's commitment to a collaborative approach for management of the private and permitted public lands has resulted in successful ecological and social outcomes."

Cottonwood Ranch is a six-generation cow-calf and horse operation in Wells, Nevada. The Smith and Molsbee families are at the forefront of sustainable cattle ranching, realizing that wildlife, healthy lands and livestock can coexist

— Cottonwood Ranch Continued on page 3 —

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

We would like to thank the following people for joining or renewing their membership with Nevada Cattlemen's Association between January 24 and February 24 2025.

(New members are in bold.)

- Amador Angus, Ed or Joshua Amador
- Baker Ranches Inc., Dave Baker, Tom Baker, Craig Baker, Clay Baker
- Bar S E Ranch, Jim & Suzy Estill
- Bar T Bar Ranch
- Bartell Ranch LLC, Edward & Darla Bartell
- RR Bass & Son, Richard Bass
- Battle Creek Ranch, Greg & Mary Ann Foster
- Bell Ranch, Woodie Bell, Dan & Theresa Bell
- Bench Creek Ranch, Paul Plouviez
- Bently Ranch, Matt McKinney, Tod Radelfinger
- Bieroth Ranch, Dennis & Marcia Bieroth
- Bottari Ranch LLC
- Bottari Realty Inc., Paul & Lori Bottari
- Henry L. Brown Family Trust, Donald Brown
- Bruce L. & Mary Branscomb
- John Bunyard
- Burrows Farms, Incorporated, Ron & Amanda Burrows
- Cabal Cattle Co., Duane Coombs
- Jared Card Hay & Jared Card Trucking
- W C Carpenter Red Angus, Kurt W. Carpenter
- Cockrell Ranch & High Desert Lodging, Will & Debra Cockrell
- Coleman Valley Ranch, Joe & Paula Kircher
- Chris Collis
- James E. & Janice Connelley
- Corty Real Estate, Tom Corty
- Cross 7 Livestock LLC, J. J. Goicoechea
- Cross Fence & Supply
- D. D. Ranch, James Feller
- Demar Dahl
- Damonte Ranch, Louis Damonte, Darrin Damonte, Steve Damonte
- DeLong Ranches Inc., Katie DeLong
- Depaoli O Lazy Trust, Ed Depaoli
- Diamond M Ranch, Manny & Ramona Oros
- Dodge Bros.
- Double Bar J Enterprises, Betsy Macfarlan and Jeff Weeks
- Dufurrena Bros. Cattle, Tim Dufurrena, Dan Dufurrena
- Dan & Joan, A.J. & Laura Duncan
- Duval Ranching
- Ebert Fiddes and Dorsa, Tom Ebert
- Egbert Livestock Limited Lblty. Co., F. Scot & Laurel S. Egbert
- El Tejon Sheep Co.
- John Ellison
- Ellison Ranching, Ira T. Wines
- Estill Ranches LLC, John Estill
- Filippini Ranching Co., Angie & Shawn Mariluch
- R. N. Fulstone Company, Steven A. Fulstone
- Gansberg Ranch, Chris & Faye Gansberg Jr.
- Genoa Livestock, Robert Coker
- W H Gibbs Company, William H. Gibbs, President
- Goemmer Ranches, Shawn & Mindy Goemmer
- Goicoechea Ranches, Pete, Gladys, & Jolene Goicoechea, JJ Goicoechea
- Gottschalk Ranch, Michael Gottschalk
- Rich Grant & Sons Ranching Company, LLC
- Great Basin Ranch, Bernard Petersen, Zane Marshall
- Greenway Seeds, Alan Greenway
- Betty Griggs
- Joseph Guild
- Halstead & Forsgren Ranches Inc., Amie Halstead
- Harry Ranch, LLC, Michael Harry
- Heguy Ranch, Mitch & Rhonda Heguy
- Holland Ranch LLC, Mitchell Goicoechea
- Hanes Holman
- Home Ranch, Lloyd Sherburn
- Mel Hummel Ranch, Mel Hummel
- Hussman Ranch, David Hussman
- I T Quarter Circle Ranch, Steve Russell
- Intermountain Beef, Cevin Jones
- Intermountain Farmers Association, Darla Barkdull, Matt Swan
- J & M Livestock LLC, Jason & McKenzie Molsbee
- J M Capriola Co., John & Susan Wright
- JHC Land & Cattle LLC, Ray Callahan
- Lance Johnson
- Kamtec, Inc., Matt Torley
- Keystone Ranch, Inc., Rolfe Schwartz DVM
- King Ranch, Jeanne King
- Kings River Ranch, James Buell DVM
- Knipe Land Company, John Knipe
- Dr. Bill Kvasnicka
- Laird Mfg., David McComb
- Lattin Livestock LLC, Pamela Lattin
- Lee Stock Horse, Kenny Lee
- List Cattle Company, Alan & Nancy List
- Little Valley Land Bovine B & B, Daniel Mori
- Nat & Karen Lommori
- Lucas Livestock
- Maggie Creek Ranch LP
- Joe Marvel
- Matt & Mary Marvel
- Mike Marvel Ranching, Mike Marvel
- Lawrence C. Masini Ranches (L-M), Larry Masini
- Maverick Ranch, Jack & Maria Martin
- McMullen McPhee & Co. LLC, Mark Paris, Kellie Nicola, Sara Walls, Jeannie Erickson
- Sam E. Monteleone
- Need More Sheep Co., Hank Vogler
- John E. Neff Co., John Neff, Sam Neff, Adam Neff
- Nevada Water Solutions LLC, Thomas Gallagher
- Nevada Section Society for Range Management
- Noll Cattle Company, LLC, Scott Noll
- O P I, Ted Zimmerman
- Bob Oakden
- Open Box Arrow Ranch, Joe Durant
- Palisade Ranch Inc., Rita Stitzel-Miller
- Paris Cattle Company, L.L.C., Bert Paris, Martin Paris
- Peavey & Hoots, Marti & Dan Hoots
- Pescio Bros. LLC, Joe Pescio
- Pine Forest Land & Stock Co., Mike Montero
- Pratt Home Builders, Nerren Pratt
- Producers Livestock Marketing Association, Steve Taylor, Manager
- Quality Tile & Marble Co. Inc., Wes & Linda Tews
- Rabbit Creek Ranch LLC, Jon Key, Kevin Key, John W. Ross
- Rafter Down A Ranch, C. Ralph Allen
- Rambling River Ranches, Norman & Joe Frey
- Rebel Creek Ranch LLC, Ron & Denise Cerri, Jeff Cerri, Dusty & Stacy Edwards
- Redd Summit Ranches, Steve Redd
- Renner Equipment Co., Trent Renner
- Dean Rhoads Ranch, Mr. & Mrs. Alvaro Rodriguez, Malacki McLain, Telden McLain
- Ritchie Industries, Robert Amundson
- Rocking TD Ranch, Anthony Stobiecki
- Salt Creek Industries, Kelly Peile
- Sarman Ranch, Ed Sarman
- Joe Saval Company LLC, Jerry Annis, Jane Trigerro
- Sawtooth Gelbvieh, Dick or Jean Williams, Darrell Williams
- Scales NW, Tyson Dunham
- Schroeder Law Offices P. C, Therese Ure Stix
- Scossa Ranch LLC, Russell Scossa, Jeremy & Nicole Scossa
- Leroy Sestanovich
- Sharp Ranch, Alan Sharp
- Sharp Ranch, Lanny & Pamela Morrison
- Silver Creek Ranch Inc., Pauline & Eveline Inchauspe
- Sharon Sherburn
- Silver State Beefmasters, Dalton Lowery
- Smiley Ranch, James & Edward Smiley, Tracie Smiley Fitzgerald
- Craig & Jean Spratling
- Star Hotel, Scott Ygoa
- Stix Cattle Company, Dave Stix, Dave Stix, Jr.
- Stonehouse Ranch, Patsy Tomera, Susan Tomera, Sabrina Reed
- Superior Livestock Auction, Allie Bear
- Superior Livestock Auction, Jim Davis
- T I Ranches LLC, Kenneth Jones, Marlow & Stephanie Dahl
- The Spanish Ranch, Pamela & Adrien Doiron
- Jake Tibbitts
- Ron Torell
- Robert & Cheryl Turner
- U. C. Cattle Co., Hank & Judy Kershner
- John Uhalde & Co., John Uhalde
- Uhart Home Ranch LLC, L. Domingo & Ruby L. Uhart
- UNR College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources, Dr. Bill Payne
- Van Norman Ranches, Robin & Diane Van Norman
- Venturacci Schuler Partners
- Vesco Ranch LLC, Vance & Seth Vesco
- Wes Viera
- Vipham Angus Ranch LLC, John & Marjorie Vipham
- Wells Rural Electric Company
- Western Nevada Cattle Feeders LLC
- Western Video Market
- Yelland Ranch, Art & Rae Andrae
- ZZand 30 Ranch, Steve Capurro



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Hanes Holman, President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association

Working in the Shadows

It's come to my attention lately that a lot of folks really don't know just what NCA does. I have had quite a few neighbors, friends, or even family ask me to enlighten them on the activities of our organization and when I start enlightening them, they are always surprised. Not only slightly surprised, very surprised! The level, frequency, and intensity that we work catch most people off guard. The common theme of "I didn't know you had that much impact" is most frequently the reply.

As this conversation is continuing to happen I feel compelled to touch on it in this month's article. We've been accused of being the "good ol boys club" sitting around drinking martinis. In all my time with NCA I still haven't been invited to a martini lunch! Ranchers typically have an introvert personality compiled with a recluse mentality. Self-promoting just isn't in their nature. A sale yard owner that likes to throw rocks from 100 miles away recently went

on a rant about a past president of NCA tearing him down saying he just works for a big pharma company insinuating that he doesn't care about the livestock business in Nevada. If you don't think Jon Griggs has done more good for the ranching industry in Nevada you need your head examined!!! The problem is he quietly does it in the shadows.

A hallway conversation with an Agency person, a quiet lunch with a Senator, or a vote at the NCBA convention that may or may not have went the way we would have liked it to go are just a part of what NCA does for its membership but no one ever sees. Our work in the shadows will probably never change but that doesn't mean we aren't doing it. Don't believe the rock throwers. If you have questions about what we do, feel free to ask us or better yet come to the meetings. Come to the Convention and get involved. Well enough rant from me this morning. I'm off to try to get something done in the shadows!

Cheers

NEVADA NEWS

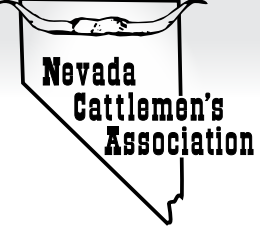
Cottonwood Ranch: *Continued from page 1*

and thrive together through managing both private and public lands as a whole. The ranch has an extensive history of working with federal and state partners to implement conservation practices and is a leader in utilizing virtual fencing for cattle. Cottonwood Ranch has implemented intensive grazing management strategies on their private land that have created more diverse meadows. Diversification has also played a role in the ranch's success, with the families expanding their business to include an events venue, hunting operation, veterans retreat and birding and wildlife learning center.

"I feel proud of what we have been able to accomplish," said

Agee Smith with Cottonwood Ranch. "We have been blessed to be caretakers of this land. It's deeper than just a business, the land just gets in your soul."

ESAP is generously sponsored by companies and federal agencies who share the cattle industry's commitment to caring for the environment and protecting natural resources. Sponsors including U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, Corteva Agriscience, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service partner with NCBA to promote environmental stewardship throughout the beef supply chain. For more information, visit www.environmentalstewardship.org.



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Hanes Holman, President | Dave Baker, Pres.-Elect | Marlow Dahl, 1st Vice Pres. | Wade Small, 2nd Vice Pres.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NCA Scholarships Application Deadline

— April 2, 2025 —

www.nevadacattlemen.org/scholarships

National Cattlemen's Beef Association/ Public Lands Council Region V & VI Legislative Conference

— April 7-9, 2025 —
Washington, DC

<https://web.cvent.com/event/22525213-27bc-4dde-a1b5-36c65b376e0e/summary>

NCA Teacher of the Year Nominations Due

— May 1, 2025 —

www.nevadacattlemen.org

National Cattlemen's Beef Association Summer Business Meeting

— July 7-9, 2025 —
San Diego, California

Hilton San Diego Bayfront
www.ncba.org/events/summer-business-meeting

Nevada Cattlemen's Association 90th Annual Convention & Trade Show

— November 13-15, 2025 —
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Happy Spring

By Keri Pommerening, NVCW President

I hope everyone is coming out of winter and starting a great spring, whether that means bull sales, calving, branding, feeding, or all of the above.

I'd like to take this month to highlight our Treasurer, Anna Dagenhart. As you know, the treasurer of any volunteer group, is one of the most important, yet thankless jobs on the board, so I personally want to thank Ana for all of her time.



My name is Ana Dagenhart and I was born and raised on my family's ranch in the beautiful Carson Valley. I also grew up working in my family's restaurant. Both of which have instilled in me my work ethic and passion for my community. My husband, Justin and I, alongside our two young children and our immediate family run a cow/calf operation, where we raise grass-fed beef and sell directly to customers in our area. In addition to continuing my family's ranching legacy, we also run a small mobile mechanic business.

I went to school in Reno and graduated with a general business degree. This has allowed me to run the bookkeeping for both businesses and stay home with my children, which I am extremely grateful for.

I came to this organization, being asked to fill a position and help. This will be my 6th year with Nevada Cattlewomen and my 4th as state treasurer. I was recruited by past president, Madison Bowers who is also a dear friend of mine. Since my time, not only



Ana Degenhart Family

Submitted Photo

have I done that, but I have been blessed to work with an amazing team of women, some to name a few: Keri, Charmi, Rosealee, Lacey, Julie, Maddi, Melinda, and Staci. Some I have known my whole life and been able to reconnect with, and others my first time meeting.

I have held many officer positions for multiple other organizations in my life, but none quite compare to this. Although I know we all have busy lives and busy schedules that every cattlegirl tends to, we still make time to come together for a greater cause. Each of us have our own unique passions for beef that bring us together, and it is a wonderful thing that we combine them, and help educate not only each other, but the public.

One of the things I have enjoyed most while attending events we hold is the Annual Winter Meeting, usually every November. We have great guest speakers attend during it, and I am always inspired when I leave. If I can suggest to any of our members to attend one event, it is our Winter Meeting. We would love to have as many members join us as possible! Thanks to all of you for keeping our Nevada Cattlewomen thriving.

I am truly grateful for my time here and working alongside these ladies. This organization gives me a reason to see them throughout the year which I look forward to at every outing. I couldn't ask for a better team and look forward to continuing to accomplish our goals we have set.

So, until we meet again, I hope this issue finds you healthy, happy, and enjoying your spring.

We work hard to put beef on the table so take the time to enjoy some of the good moments.

Cattlewomen – a voice from the past with a vision for the future.



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LOOKING TO BUY OR SELL AN AG PROPERTY?

Ranches that I've sold, or helped buy, in past 10 months:

<p>– Bar O Ranch – <i>Pilot Valley</i></p> <p>– Battle Mountain Farm – <i>Battle Mountain</i></p> <p>– Chicken Springs Ranch – <i>Wells</i></p>	<p>– Magnuson Farm/Ranch – <i>White Pine Co.</i></p> <p>– Pleasant Valley Ranch – <i>White Pine Co.</i></p> <p>– Morning Star Ranch – <i>Jackpot, Nevada</i></p>
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Nevada Beef Council Update – March 2025

Your Checkoff Dollars at Work

Courtesy of National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a Contractor to the Beef Checkoff

March is Nutrition Month: *Showcasing the Value of Beef*

March marks National Nutrition Month, a time dedicated to highlighting the importance of making informed food choices and developing healthy eating patterns. For Nevada's cattle ranchers, this month is a perfect opportunity to see how your Beef Checkoff investments are making a difference in promoting beef as a nutritious part of a balanced diet.

The Nevada Beef Council (NBC) is proud to represent the hard work and dedication of our state's producers by ensuring that beef's nutritional value is recognized when presented to Nevada consumers and supported by research. Through strategic initiatives, the NBC works to promote beef's nutritional benefits to consumers, health professionals, and thought leaders.

Investing in Nutrition Research

One of the primary ways your Beef Checkoff investments are put to work is through ongoing nutrition research. Recent studies funded by the Beef Checkoff, including the Beef WISE study conducted by the University of Colorado Anschutz Health and Wellness Center, show that lean beef can support heart health and help maintain muscle mass, both of which are vital components of a healthy lifestyle.¹ These findings are shared with dietitians, physicians, and fitness professionals, positioning beef as a trusted source of high-quality protein, iron, zinc, and B vitamins.

“The research supported by the Beef Checkoff emphasizes what ranchers have known for generations: beef is a nutrient power-

house,” said Nevada Beef Council Executive Director Bill Dale. “By sharing these findings with health professionals and the public, we're helping to ensure beef remains a trusted choice at the dinner table.”

Reaching Health Professionals Across the State

Kicking off 2025, the NBC is expanding its outreach to medical offices across the state to share the latest research on beef's nutritional benefits. By providing physicians and healthcare professionals with credible, research-backed information through beef toolkits, the NBC helps ensure beef remains a trusted source of protein for patients looking to maintain a balanced, nutrient-rich diet.

The NBC's efforts focus on key areas such as nutrition for infants, toddlers, and teens, as well as the role of lean beef in supporting heart health. By addressing these specific life stages and health priorities, the NBC highlights beef's versatility and importance in pro-



moting overall well-being.

Celebrating Producers' Impact

As a Nevada cattle rancher, you play an essential role in producing the high-quality beef that fuels these efforts. Your dedication to raising cattle is the foundation of every checkoff-funded initiative.

Together, we are ensuring that beef's nutritional benefits are recognized and celebrated, not just in March, but year-round.

1. Sayer DR, et al. Equivalent reductions in body weight during the Beef WISE Study: Beef's Role in Weight Improvement, Satisfaction, and Energy. *Obesity Science & Practice*. 2017; 298-310.

NEVADA BEEF COUNCIL

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FINDING THE BALANCE



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PLC President Testifies Before House Subcommittee on Wildfires and Multiple Use

WASHINGTON (February 11, 2024) – Today, Public Lands Council (PLC) President and Colorado grazing permittee Tim Canterbury testified before the U.S. House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands in support of the multiple use mandate and the benefits it brings to America’s rangelands.

“Over the last four years, there have been several policy changes that have eroded the careful balance of multiple use management and have threatened grazing’s place on the landscape. The Bureau of Land Management’s ill-conceived “Public Lands rule” upended the agency’s longstanding expectation of upholding the multiple use mandate and illegally prioritizes other single uses over grazing,” said PLC President Tim Canterbury. “The Biden Administration’s changes to NEPA and how they handled land management picked winners and losers among multiple uses, while at the same leaving public lands more vulnerable to catastrophic wildfires. Under the updated NEPA authorities, federal agencies elevated solar and wind energy goals as well as allotted staff time and funding to projects they deemed a priority – while other uses were deprioritized, delayed, and devalued. This illegal



Tim Canterbury *PLC Photo*

prioritization only exacerbated the impact of wildfires and left our nation’s treasured natural resources in worse condition.”

Canterbury went on to highlight ways Congress can exert their authority to make substantial and beneficial changes.

“Congress needs to work closely with the Trump Administration to increase grazing flexibility and modernize outdated laws that have been weaponized against ranchers. This means passing key legislation such as the Fix Our Forests Act and ensuring agencies understand that targeted grazing needs to happen on more than just grazing allotments. The greatest fire risks are in areas outside allotments, where fuel loads have been left untreated for years and are a threat to all the uses around them. NEPA and the Endangered Species Act need to be brought back to the 21st century. They do not move at the speed of commerce and get in the way of vital conservation work. There are permittees that have been waiting more than a decade on a single NEPA review, this is unacceptable in the digital age and is one of the biggest reasons wildfires have been raging in the West.” added Canterbury.

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Leading Together

By Buck Wehrbein, NCBA President

I am truly honored to serve as your new NCBA president. Your trust in me to lead this organization is humbling, and I thank you for that. As I step into this role, I do so with confidence, not because of anything I can accomplish alone, but because of the incredible people I stand alongside.

Your NCBA officer team is exceptional, and I am beyond impressed by their dedication, intelligence and leadership. The same can be said for our board and, of course, our outstanding staff. Most importantly, I recognize the true strength of this association lies in its members. You are the backbone of our industry, the driving force behind our advocacy, and the reason we continue to grow and evolve.

Your engagement, insights and commitment to our shared mission, to serve the cattle and beef industry by improving the business climate, growing beef demand, and increasing the world's access to U.S. beef, are what make this association so effective. As we navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead, I want you to know that your voices matter and we are doing everything we can to represent your interests. I encourage you to stay involved, share your perspectives, and work alongside us to shape the future of our industry.

I've been asked several times about my leadership style as I step into this role. While I've never been accused of having much style, I have spent a lot of time thinking about leadership and its importance in guiding our work. Here's what I believe in. I believe in honest conversations, in pushing each other to think critically, and in learning from how we engage with one another. But above all, I believe in listening and, more importantly, truly hearing you. I will be honest. I will treat every member of this association with respect. I very much look forward to meeting you and working with you in the coming year.

We are stepping into a year full of unknowns. When I first considered what this year might bring, I thought, "Maybe it'll be a quiet one." That lasted about five minutes. From emerging



"But above all, I believe in listening and, more importantly, truly hearing you."

threats like the New World screwworm to shifts in policy and leadership appointments, it's clear that we will have no shortage of things to tackle.

Looking ahead, I urge all of us to invest in the next generation of industry leaders. We need to encourage young producers to get involved in our association, just as past mentors have done for many of us. Programs like the Young Cattlemen's Conference are invaluable, and I can tell you firsthand that the talent and preparedness of today's young professionals is remarkable. They bring fresh perspectives, and it's our job to ensure they have the opportunity to lead. You'll hear me reference a commitment to young producers quite a bit in the coming year.

NCBA is also laser-focused on securing tax relief provisions and pushing back on regulatory overreach in the year ahead. And we can't forget about our consumer. We heard it time and again from economic and market research experts during our annual convention a few weeks ago; consumer demand is strong, and we need to keep it that way, and we will because we produce the best beef in the world.

As I embark on this year of service, I look forward to visiting as many of you as possible and working together to advance this great industry. NCBA is in a position of strength, and we can be proud of that, while also working together to improve upon it.

God bless, and happy trails.

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Dan Bell, ZZ Cattle Co. • Drew McGibbon, Santa Rita Ranch
The Future of Virtual Fence

Dave Daley, Ph.D. • Public Lands Council Board of Directors &
 5th Generation California Rancher
The Challenges and Opportunities of Public Land Grazing

Kent Anderson, Ph.D. • Zoetis
The Future of DNA and Economically Relevant Traits

Moderator: Lee Leachman • CEO, Leachman Cattle

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Mouth-Watering Success

By Colin Woodall, NCBA CEO

At what price does the consumer give up beef for other proteins? That was the subject of many conversations I had during CattleCon last month in San Antonio. Most everybody I talked to was astonished the consumer continues to pay the prices they do for our beef. It's a good conversation for the industry to have, but I don't think we need to be astonished. We produce the most consistent, highest quality beef eating experience we've ever provided to our consumer. Quite simply, we make mouths water, and they want more.

However, the question of consumer satisfaction remains relevant, and the old saying that you can't manage what you don't measure definitely applies here. In the past year or so, I've written several of my monthly articles on the importance of Checkoff-funded research. NCBA's Scientific Affairs team manages research on product quality, beef safety, nutrition and sustainability. We also conduct market research and intelligence. Our team of market research professionals work every day to measure consumer sentiment, and their information provides valuable insight into where beef stands.

It seems that since the COVID-19 pandemic hit five years ago, it has been nothing but a roller coaster ride for all of us. Pandemic uncertainty, global conflicts, contentious elections and inflation rates we haven't seen for decades have worried most people. Many Americans turn to food as a way to escape the stress of daily life and find a little pleasure and enjoyment. Our beef provides that pleasure and enjoyment in a way that gets our consumers excited for their next beef meal, and the market research and intelligence work we conduct provides the data to substantiate these assertions.

During the Checkoff-funded "Today's Beef Consumer" session at CattleCon, the Market Research team shared the information they've compiled in the past year. In 2024, fresh beef sales at retail grocery stores were up 9.7% above 2023 sales. Ten percent year over year sales growth is an impressive number, especially when the data shows our primary competitor, chicken, was only up 3.9%. Probably even more satisfying to many of you is learning that meat alternative sales were down more than 14%. You must make the consumers' mouths water, and meat alternatives just don't do that. That is why Beyond Meat's stock price is currently trading under \$3 a share versus almost \$235 a share at its peak.

Our team spends a lot of time digging into the grocery store meat case to see what choices the consumer makes. While the consumer can tell you what they might do in a survey, it is their actual purchases that give us data to gauge where we stand. Let's take a look at beef's market share of the meat case in terms of value. Last year, beef took 55% of the value while chicken only took 27%. Now, many people look at this and say it's because of beef's price compared to that of chicken. No doubt price plays into this, so let's see what beef's market share is in terms of volume or pounds of beef sold. The data shows we are neck and neck with chicken. Pounds of beef sold gives us a 36% market share while chicken has 38%. Our market share is strong, and we are focused on using Checkoff-funded research, education and promotion programs to fight for even more of our share of the grocery meat case.

Market share isn't all we look at. Our consumer data shows we beat chicken when it comes to being good for many types of meals. There are only so many ways you can prepare a boneless, skinless chicken breast. Beef, however, provides far more types of cuts and ways to prepare those cuts than any of our competitors. You can eat beef every day for months on end and never have the same dish. Thanks to cuts that vary, from brisket to tri-tip, sometimes deciding on which cut



you want is the hardest job. Once you pick your cut, there are numerous recipes from BeefIt'sWhat'sForDinner.com or any number of the social media influencers we partner with to create that perfect beef meal. In fact, when it comes to a pleasurable eating experience, the consumer is telling us that we beat chicken by almost 30%.

Consumers consistently rank us 15 percentage points ahead of chicken as a great source of protein. When we ask them which protein they believe is the most nutritious, we are currently their top pick, but we are still extremely close to chicken. We've come a long way since the dark days of the '80s and early '90s when chicken had us concerned about the future of our industry, which leads me to you. You are responsible for this success. When we ask the consumers if they have concerns with how cattle are raised for food, 66% say they have no concerns and they have a tremendous amount of trust in what you do. In addition, it is your commitment to investing in genetic improvement, new technologies, improved production practices and training such as BQA that has resulted in an increasing percentage of beef being graded USDA Choice or Prime. Continual improvement of our industry is giving us the advantage over our competition.

So, the next time you hear somebody say demand is dismal or we are losing to chicken, you now have the facts to fire back. As long as we stay focused on consumer satisfaction and demand, the future will be bright for all of us.

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CattleFax Forecasts Continued Strong Demand and High Price Outlook for Cattle Producers

By National Cattlemen's Beef Association

The popular CattleFax Outlook Seminar, held as part of CattleCon 2025 in San Antonio, Texas, shared expert market and weather analysis today.

The U.S. beef industry is poised for another year of strong market performance, driven by tight cattle supplies and robust consumer demand. As the beef cowherd enters a stabilization phase following years of contraction, the resulting supply constraints have shifted market leverage decisively in favor of cattle producers.

Weather conditions will remain a critical factor influencing grazing availability, herd expansion and cattle prices. Meteorologist Matt Makens said La Niña this winter brings rather volatile weather changes across North America with the majority of weather extremes affecting those in the Central to Eastern U.S. For Mexico and the Southwestern U.S., producers will see drought acreage increase as it has nationwide since June.

"Drought will likely increase across the Western U.S. this spring and into the Pacific Northwest, Northern Plains, and Canadian Prairies through this summer. To watch will be the North American monsoon and how much drought relief it

can provide to Mexico, the Southwest, and parts of the Plains," he said. "Current data show the monsoon is likely to produce more moisture this year than last. A strong enough monsoon can decrease precipitation across the central Corn Belt, watch July closely. Late in the year, the focus turns to the development of La Niña or El Niño."

Shifting the discussion to an outlook on the economy, energy and feed grains, Troy Bockelmann, CattleFax director of protein and grain analysis, noted that inflation eased in 2024, ending the year at 2.9%, a significant drop from the 9% peak in 2022 but still above the Federal Reserve's 2% target. To address this, the Fed cut interest rates three times in the latter half of the year, bringing the Prime bank loan rate to 7.5%.

The labor market remained strong, with unemployment briefly rising midyear before falling to 4.1% as job creation outpaced expectations. Combined with solid consumer spending and wage growth, the U.S. economy is expected to see healthy GDP growth of 2 to 2.5% in 2025.

"The Federal Reserve's rate cuts helped stabilize inflation and support economic growth, but we're still above target," Bockelmann said. "Despite economic headwinds, consumer confidence and spending have remained resilient. However, lingering inflation and potential trade uncertainties may limit the extent of further interest rate cuts this year and inflation remains a key factor to watch in 2025."

CattleFax shared that National Dec. 1 on-farm hay stocks were up 6.3% from a year-ago at 81.5 million tons with hay prices averaging \$175/ton in 2024. Corn stocks-to-use at just over 10% and should support the spot market towards \$5.00/bu. with a yearly average spot future price of \$4.40/bu. expected.

"An increase in corn supply for the new crop year is expected as smaller beginning stocks are offset by larger production levels due to corn regaining acres from soybeans. Stocks-to-use have the potential to be above 13 percent which implies a price range of \$3.75 to \$5.15/bu. for the 2025 market year,"

Bockelmann said. "There is a strong correlation between corn stocks-to-use and hay, and we expect hay prices to follow corn and trend a bit higher in the coming year.

On the energy front, he noted, for 2025, not much will change. Average crude oil prices are expected to be near steady with 2024 though risk remains for a reduced U.S. market share of global product due to potential trade policy impacts. He also expects ethanol production to continue to stay strong.

Kevin Good, vice president of market analysis at CattleFax, reported that U.S. beef cow herd is expected to see the cycle low to start 2025 at 28 million head, 150,000 head below last year and 3.5 million head from the 2019 cycle highs.

"We expect cow and bull slaughter to continue declining in 2025, with overall numbers down by about 300,000 head to 5.9 million head total. Feeder cattle and calf supplies outside of feedyards will also shrink by roughly 150,000 head, while cattle on feed inventories are starting the year slightly below 2024 levels at 11.9 million head," he said. "With a tighter feeder cattle supply, placement pace will be more constrained, leading to a projected 700,000-head drop in commercial fed slaughter to 24.9 million. After modest growth in 2024, beef production is expected to decline by about 600 million pounds to 26.3 billion in 2025, ultimately



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INDUSTRY NEWS

reducing net beef supply per person by 0.8 pounds.”

Beef prices continued their upward trend in 2024, averaging \$8.01/lb., the second-highest demand level in history. While demand may ease slightly in 2025, retail prices are still expected to rise to an average of \$8.25/lb. Wholesale prices will follow suit, with the cutout price projected to reach \$320/cwt

“Retail and wholesale margins are historically thin, making strong consumer demand essential to maintaining higher price levels,” said Good. “While opportunities for further leverage gains are limited, the market remains favorable for producers.”

Inflation remained moderate in 2024, but high consumer debt, elevated interest rates, and competition from more affordable protein options could impact purchasing decisions. However, foodservice demand showed resilience, ending the year stronger as same-store sales and customer traffic improved.

“Despite economic pressures, consumers continue to pay premiums for higher-quality beef,” Good added. “Choice grade or better remains in high demand, reinforcing the strength of the premium beef market.”

Turning to global protein demand, Good noted that the outlook for animal proteins remains strong, although U.S. beef exports are projected to decline by 5% in 2025 due to reduced production and higher prices. Conversely, U.S. beef imports are expected to grow as lean beef supplies tighten.

“The global outlook is currently an interesting scenario as trade policy developments, including potential tariffs, could pose risks to international markets. While growth is expected this year, it may be limited to global competition supply constraints and an uncertain tariff environment,” Good said.

Mike Murphy, CattleFax chief operating officer, forecasted the average 2025 fed steer price at \$198/cwt., up \$12/cwt. from 2024. All cattle classes are expected

to trade higher, and prices are expected to continue to trend upward. The 800-lb. steer price is expected to average \$270/cwt., and the 550-lb. steer price is expected to average \$340/cwt. Utility cows are expected to average \$140-/cwt., with bred cows at an average of \$3,200/cwt.

“While the cyclical upswing in cattle prices is expected to persist, the industry must prepare for market volatility and potential risks. Producers are encouraged to adopt risk management strategies and closely monitor developments in trade policy, drought conditions, and consumer demand,” Murphy said.

2025 USDA All-Fresh Retail Beef prices are expected to average \$8.25/pound and, which will continue the balancing act for retail between high prices and reduced supply. Murphy noted that the key is to avoid setting prices too high, especially in light of competition from more affordable proteins.

Randy Blach, CattleFax chief executive officer, concluded the session with an overall positive outlook, and noted that strong margins in the cow-calf sector have set the stage for cowherd expansion to begin, with heifer retention likely back near a more normal pace, relative to minimal retention in recent years. Drought and pasture conditions are now the key factors influencing the rate of expansion with a slower herd rebuild anticipated compared to the last cycle. This more measured expansion pace implies a positive outlook for producer returns over the next several years. Strong consumer demand also remains a bright spot for the industry.

“We have to remember where we came from,” Blach said. “Continued improvements in quality and meeting consumer expectations with a safe, nutritious product and a consistently good eating experience have had tremendous impacts on moving the needle for this industry. We’re moving in the right direction, and we need to keep paying attention to that signal.”

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