



# SAGE SIGNALS

*The Voice of the Nevada Livestock Industry*

Volume L, #4 | March 2026

PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE NCA MEMBERSHIP

## NCA March Roundup

*By Martin Paris, Executive Director, NV Cattlemen's Association*

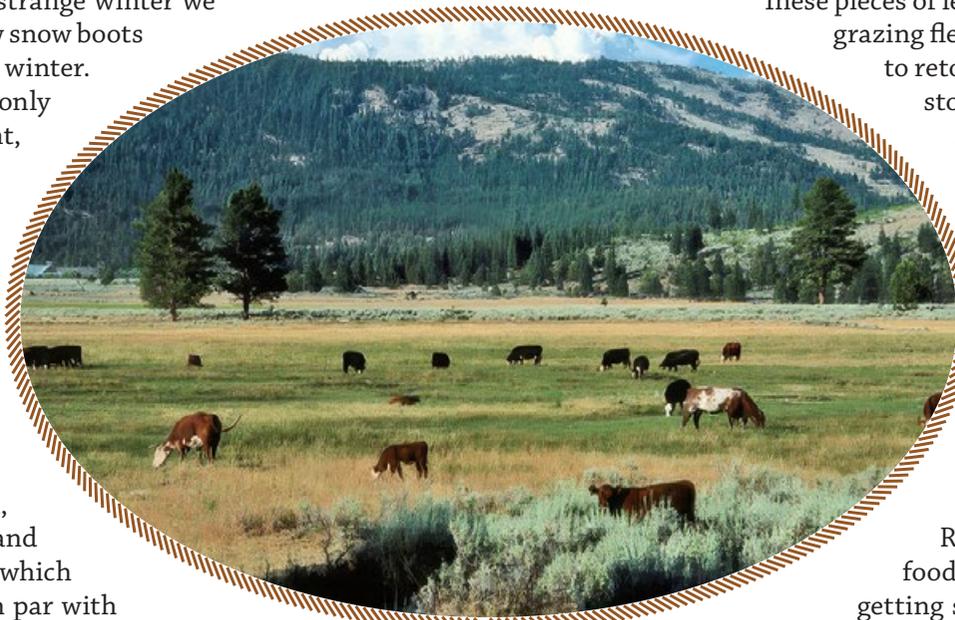
Happy March, everyone! What a strange winter we have had so far. Those brand-new snow boots may have to stay in the closet until next winter. The most recent Drought Monitor has only about 2% of Nevada in a severe drought, but those mountains sure could use a fresh coat of white stuff.

NCA leadership recently attended the National Cattlemen's Beef Association Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. As always, there were plenty of issues discussed and a lot of good takeaways. I'd like to reflect on some of the wins the cattle industry is racking up.

Starting on the public lands front, we successfully ended the Bureau of Land Management's Public Lands Rule, which would have placed conservation use on par with other multiple uses. We also saw the U.S. Forest Service's "Roadless Rule" be upended in Congress, which will now allow greater access for permittees to reach portions of their allotments and enable firefighters to get where they need to go to protect critical resources.

New grazing regulations out of the Bureau of Land Management are on their way that will allow greater flexibility in grazing management. Dozens of new categorical exclusions have come online that will allow permittees to construct common sense range improvements without layers of environmental review and bureaucratic red tape. Both the BLM and U.S. Forest Service are also aggressively working on re-permitting vacant grazing allotments across the West.

There are nine separate pieces of legislation currently introduced in Congress that the NCA is working hard to get across the finish line.



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These pieces of legislation include everything from additional grazing flexibilities and Endangered Species Act reform to retooling the Equal Access to Justice Act to put a stop to the endless litigation from radical environmental groups aiming to destroy animal agriculture. Please stay tuned throughout the year as we hope these proposals begin to move forward.

In other areas of the cattle industry, March is National Nutrition Month and what a better way to celebrate than with a new inverted food pyramid featuring a big ol' ribeye and package of ground beef at the very top. There is no doubt that a concerted effort is underway to get Americans to eat real food instead of what Robert Kennedy Jr. refers to as "nutrient-free" food. It's nice to see what we already know finally getting some recognition: beef is one of the healthiest, nutrient dense, and real foods out there.

But the wins don't stop there. Did you know that 84% of fed cattle are grading Choice or higher, and 12% are grading Prime? At this rate, we are getting close to phasing out Select grades altogether. The quality of beef being produced is a testament to the work that all of you do on your operations and is a major reason why beef demand continues to climb off the charts. All of this is topped off by record-breaking cattle markets and what appears to be a shift to El Niño and wetter weather at some point this year.

While there are still plenty of things to work on and fix, it would be a pretty half-glass-full attitude not to acknowledge some very important things happening within our industry that recognizes the work you all do, as well as cattle's positive impact on our diets and environment. Until next time.

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# 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 25, 2026.*

*(New members are in bold.)*

- 7th Canyon Ranch, Joe DeBraga
- 8 Mile Farms, LLC, Bevan Lister
- A V Land & Livestock, Justin J. Ely
- Amador Angus, Ed or Joshua Amador
- Baker Ranches Inc., Dave Baker, Tom Baker, Craig Baker, Clay Baker
- Bar T Bar Ranch
- Anthony Barnes
- Barnes Ranches Inc., Harvey & Suzy Barnes, Tom & Kelly Barnes
- Bartell Ranch, LLC, Edward & Darla Bartell
- R R Bass & Son, Richard Bass
- Bear Engineering Inc., John Langford
- Bell Ranch, Woodie Bell, Dan & Theresa Bell
- Bently Ranch, Matt McKinney
- Bieroth Ranch, Dennis & Marcia Bieroth
- Big R Stores
- Boss Tanks
- Bottari Ranch LLC
- Bottari Realty Inc., Paul & Lori Bottari
- James Boyer & Traci Bracco
- Ira & Kim Brackett
- 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
- D Bar M Western Store, Jack Bassett
- D. D. Ranch, James Feller
- Demar H. Dahl
- Dalton Livestock LLC, Brad & Dani Dalton, Vernon & Joanne Dalton, Jay Dalton, Cameron Dalton
- Damonte Ranch, Louis, Darrin & Steve Damonte
- DeLong Ranches Inc., Katie DeLong, Billy DeLong
- Robert Depaoli, Robert Depaoli Jr., Robert Depaoli III
- Devil's Gate Ranch, Jeffrey Knight, Ken Bowler
- Diamond Cattle Co. LLC, Mark & Martin Etcheverry
- Scott & Kailen Dickson
- Dufurrena Bros. Cattle, Tim Dufurrena
- Dan & Joan, A.J. & Laura Duncan
- Duval Ranching, Don Duval
- Edward Jones, Tim Hatch
- Edward Jones Investments, Jason B. Land
- El Tejon Sheep Co.
- Estill Ranches LLC
- R. N. Fulstone Company, Steven & Emily Fulstone
- Gallagher Ford, Casey Gallagher
- 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
- Rich Grant & Sons Ranching Company, LLC
- Great Basin Ranch, Bernard Petersen, Zane Marshall
- Greenway Seeds, Alan Greenway
- Joseph Guild
- H Bar C Cattle Company, Dick & Linda, Ashley Huntsberger
- Halstead & Forsgren Ranches Inc., Amie Halstead, Edna Forsgren
- Hapgood Ranch, Norma Hapgood, John Equiaga
- Harry Ranch, LLC, Michael Harry
- Heguy Ranch, Mitch & Rhonda Heguy
- Hanes Holman
- Mel Hummel Ranch, Mel Hummel
- I T Quarter Circle Ranch, Steve Russell
- Intermountain Beef, Cevin Jones
- Intermountain Farmers Association, Darla Barkdull, Matt Swan
- JHC Land & Cattle LLC, Ray Callahan
- Edward Jones, Tim Hatch
- J & M Cattle Co., Jimmy Jordan
- J. M. Capriola Co., John & Susan Wright
- K-Cubed, LLC, William D. Kennedy
- Key-Lix Supplements, Jed Archibald
- Keystone Ranch Inc., Rolfe Schwartz DVM
- Kings River Ranch, James Buell DVM
- Knipe Land Company, John Knipe
- Lazy G Ranch, Joseph Golonka
- Stella Lee
- Stix Lee
- Lee Stock Horse, Kenny Lee
- Lekumberry L & L, Lisa Lekumberry
- List Cattle Company, Alan & Nancy List
- Lucas Livestock
- M W I Animal Health & Micro Technologies, Tracy Ross
- Maggie Creek Ranch LP, Jon Griggs
- Joe Marvel
- Matt & Mary Marvel
- Maverick Ranch, Jack & Maria Martin
- McMullen McPhee & Co. LLC, Mark Paris, Sara Walls, Jeannie Erickson
- Modoc Co. Cattleman's
- Moly Mfg., Inc./Silencer, Lacey Mollhagen
- Need More Sheep Co., Hank Vogler
- NV Agricultural Foundation, Catharine Guild, Executive Director; Erica Freese, President
- O P I, Ted Zimmerman
- Bob Oakden
- Open Box Arrow Ranch, Joe Durant
- Pacific Intermountain Mortgage, Lisa Howarth
- Paine Livestock, LLC, Ernest, Robin, & Russell D. Paine
- Pescio Bros LLC, Joe Pescio
- Palisade Ranch Inc., Rita Stitzel-Miller
- Paris Cattle Company, LLC, Bert & Martin Paris
- Petan Company of NV
- Producers Livestock Marketing Association, Steve Taylor, Manager
- Rabbit Creek Ranch LLC, Jon Key, Kevin J. Key, John W. Ross
- Rambling River Ranches, Norman & Joe Frey
- Rebel Creek Ranch LLC, Ron & Denise Cerri, Jeff Cerri, Dusty & Stacy Edwards
- Renner Equipment Co., Trent Renner
- Ritchie Industries, Robert Amundson
- River Ranch, Ross & Dodie Zimmerman
- Rockin' TD Ranch, Anthony Stobiecki
- S & L Trailers LLC, Davy Stix
- Salt Creek Industries, Kelly Peile
- Sarman Ranch, Ed Sarman
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- Schroeder Law Offices P. C., Therese Ure Stix
- Scossa Ranch LLC, Russell Scossa, Jeremy & Nicole Scossa
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- John Uhalde & Company, John Uhalde
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- UNR College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources, Dr. Bill Payne
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- Willow Creek Ranch, Russell & David Fitzwater
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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

*Dave Baker, President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association*

## National Cattlemen's Beef Association Convention

**H**ello, I have just returned from Nashville and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) convention. I am aware that not everyone reading this is a supporter of NCBA, but it remains an effective avenue to influence what happens in Washington.

Starting with the D.C. update – Head of NCBA Ethan Lane, along with NCBA and Public Lands Council (PLC) staff talked about Farm Bill priorities that were included in the Big Beautiful Bill (BBB). They discussed the increase in protein and whole food that was a major part of the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans and NCBA's contribution to that effort. I thought that they spent way too much time talking about the Fair Label Act and fake meat, because it has become obvious that no one wants to eat that stuff, but I have to agree that it is important to accurately and clearly label it so that no one believes that they

are getting real meat if they buy it. Next, they updated us on the progress being made to protect the US cattle herd from the New World Screw Worm and the efforts in Mexico to push it back South. Another improvement with respect to taxes includes changes to the Estate Tax and depreciation.

In the Public Lands arena, important improvements have been made in the following areas: NEPA, WOTUS, ESA, Grazing Permits, Roadless Rule & Fire. There have been many regulatory rollbacks and more than a dozen grazing specific bills. NCBA staff is working hard to ensure that these changes last beyond the Trump Administration.

Next, we participated in a PLC sponsored roundtable discussion with senior staff at BLM and US Forest Service. We talked about the increased ability to use categorical exclusions to allow projects like building fences and water improvements on allotments. In most cases, these projects can now move forward without lengthy environmental reviews.

After the PLC roundtable, we attended the NCBA Region VI meeting. Region VI includes CA, NV, UT, AZ, NM, and HI. Jeff Young from Ensign Ranches is the representative for Region VI, and I have no doubt that he will do a good job and be open to any input that we might have. The meeting included updates on local issues from each state.

A resolution was passed in the Live Cattle Marketing Committee meeting to include breeding and cull cattle in the

A resolution was passed in the Live Cattle Marketing Committee meeting to include breeding and cull cattle in the Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) program.

Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) program. It will be interesting to see how that works if it comes to fruition. I can see using such a tool to manage risk in those years when we have extra feed and we're feeding open cows until early spring.

As always, the CattleFax update was well attended and interesting. Cattle and beef supplies will be smaller in 2026, particularly in the first half of the year, but they expect expansion to begin in 2027. Expansion is expected to be slow, and prices are expected to remain strong for at least

a couple more years. However, they believe that prices are at or near cyclical highs. The market is expected to remain volatile, and the Mexican border situation is a wildcard. Meteorologist Matt Makens expects to return to El Niño by summer, increasing the odds of a wet summer for our region.

Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr. was interviewed during one of the General Sessions. He

spoke about the chronic disease epidemic of Americans and the toxic food environment that has contributed to it. He strongly believes that the new food pyramid, which prioritizes proteins and whole foods, is the key to improving the health of Americans. According to him, it is backed by the best available science.

Another item of interest is that 93% of the candidates supported by the NCBA Political Action Committee (PAC) won their races. This undoubtedly creates significant influence. Candidates from both parties who are friendly to the cattle industry are included. When the political pendulum swings (and we all know that it will) NCBA will have less political influence, but it will still have enough to make a significant difference.

With respect to the leadership at NCBA, Gene Copenhaver is the new president, and the two people next in line are ranchers from Oregon and Idaho. Gene was at our 2024 Nevada Cattlemen's Convention in Fallon and I'm sure many of you had a chance to visit with him. He has a stocker cattle operation in western Virginia and has a background in Ag Finance. I have visited with Gene on multiple occasions and am confident that he will hear and consider our input.

That's more than enough for now.

*Thanks,  
Dave*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NCA Scholarship Applications Due

— April 1, 2026 —

[www.nevadacattlemen.org/scholarships](http://www.nevadacattlemen.org/scholarships)

### NCBA/PLC Legislative Conference

— April 20–24, 2026 —

Washington DC  
Washington Marriott  
at Metro Center

### NCA Teacher of the Year Nominations Due

— May 6, 2026 —

[www.nevadacattlemen.org](http://www.nevadacattlemen.org)

### NCBA Cattle Industry Summer Business Meeting

— July 12–14, 2026 —

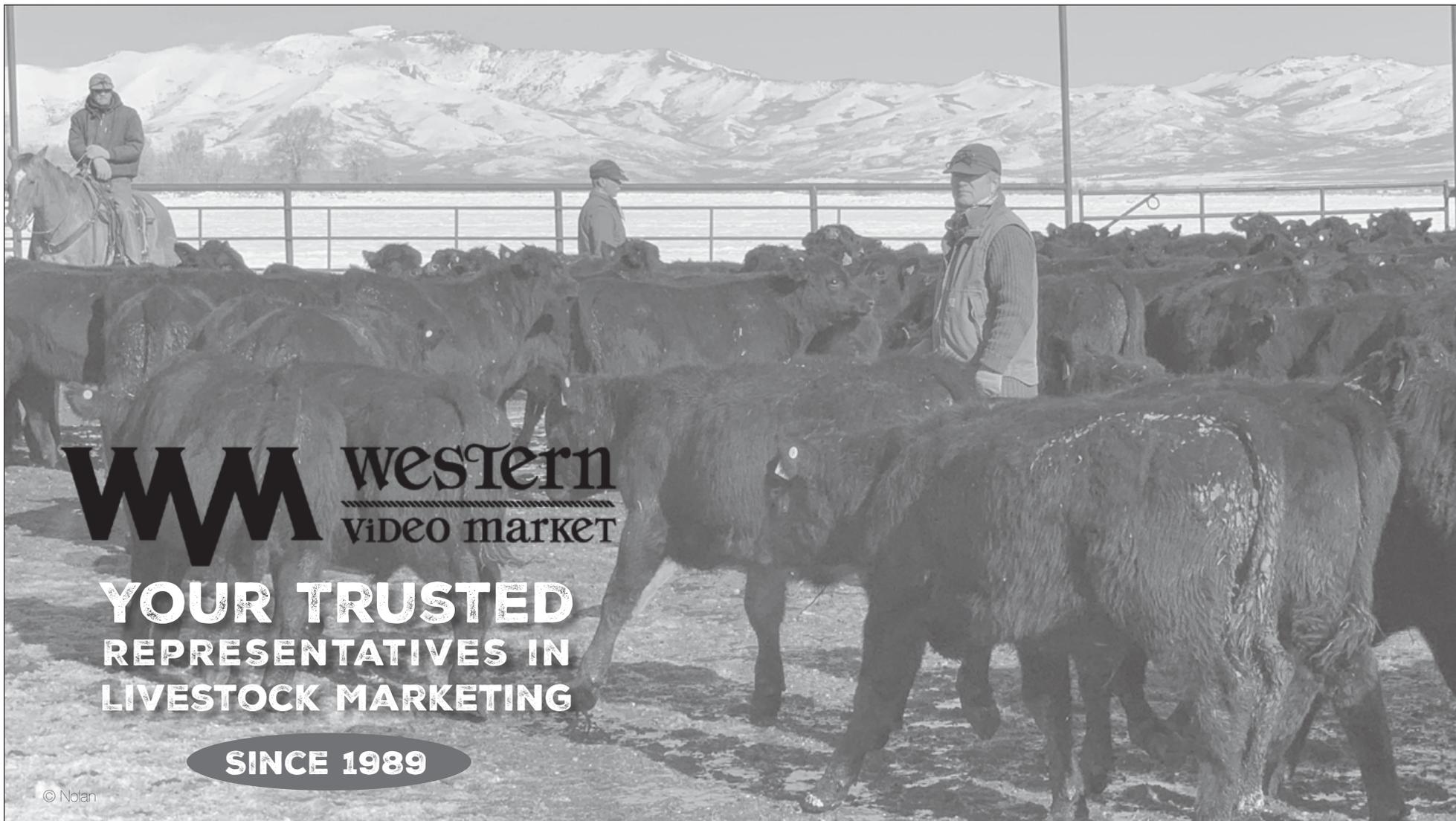
Aurora, Colorado  
Gaylord Rockies Resort  
& Convention Center

### NCA 91st Annual Convention & Trade Show

— November 12–14, 2026 —

Elko, Nevada  
Elko Convention Center

[www.nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings/convention-and-trade-show](http://www.nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings/convention-and-trade-show)



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# BLM, USDA Forest Service Announce 2026 Grazing Fees

WASHINGTON – The federal grazing fee for 2026, as calculated by the National Agricultural Statistics Service, is \$1.69 per animal unit month for lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

An animal unit month or head month — treated as equivalent measures for fee purposes — is the use of public lands by one cow and her calf, one horse, or five sheep or goats for a month. The newly calculated grazing fee takes effect March 1, 2026. The fee will apply to nearly 18,000 grazing permits and leases administered by BLM and nearly 5,550 permits administered by the Forest Service.

The formula used for calculating the grazing fee was established by Congress in the 1978 Public Rangelands Improvement Act and has remained in use under a 1986 presidential Executive Order. Under that order, the grazing fee cannot fall below \$1.35 per animal unit month/head month, and any



Cattle graze in a field in Montana. (BLM photo)

increase or decrease cannot exceed 25% of the previous year's level.

The annually determined grazing fee is established using a 1966 base value of \$1.23 per animal unit month/head month for livestock grazing on public lands in Western states. The figure is then calculated according to three factors: current private grazing land lease rates, beef cattle prices, and the cost of livestock production. In effect, the fee rises, falls, or stays the same based on market conditions.

BLM and Forest Service are committed to strong relationships with the ranching community and work closely with permittees to ensure public rangelands remain healthy, productive working landscapes. The grazing fee applies in 16 Western states on public lands administered by BLM and the Forest Service.

Permit holders and lessees may contact their local BLM or Forest Service office for additional information.

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# Public Lands Council And BLM Sign MOU To Promote Grazing Allotment Cooperative Monitoring



Cattle on Idaho Public Land (BLM/PLC photo)

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE (February 2, 2026) – Today, the Public Lands Council (PLC) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to promote cooperative monitoring of grazing allotments on BLM lands. The MOU will help public lands ranchers and local BLM officials cooperate to collect and analyze data on rangeland health to ensure higher quality management of federal rangeland.

“Federal lands ranchers manage millions of acres of federal land through livestock grazing as well as voluntary conservation work, ranchers strive to improve range conditions every day. To help boost these management efforts, data is needed to help ranchers make decisions on the landscape and this MOU will allow BLM and grazing permittees to better share the information that is key to those management efforts,” said PLC President Tim Canterbury. “The Public Lands Council is thrilled to join BLM in this cooperative monitoring agreement that will strengthen partnerships between agency officials and producers. We look forward to continuing our work with BLM and utilizing this MOU to improve and protect America’s treasured natural resources.”

“Public lands ranchers are essential partners in sustaining healthy rangelands,” said Acting BLM Director Bill Groffy. “Their on-the-ground knowledge and stewardship play a critical role in managing and protecting these resources for future generations. This MOU strengthens our ability to work side by side with permittees and other partners, ensuring that decisions are informed by sound data and collaborative monitoring. Together, we can achieve resilient landscapes that support productive grazing, healthy wildlife habitat and clean water.”

The MOU provides a clear path for more efficient data collection and information sharing between grazing permittees and the BLM. PLC signed a similar MOU with the Forest Service in 2022, and these monitoring activities have proven to be integral factors in the decisions grazing permittees make to keep rangelands healthy and resilient through grazing activities. The data collected by permittees through approved and agreed upon methods will provide the agency with a larger set of reference points when evaluating rangeland health and resource management and clear records of the positive results from producers’ investments in resilient rangelands, healthy wildlife habitat, and robust watersheds.

The MOU is in effect from 2026 until January 2031.



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# Virginia Cattleman Takes Helm as NCBA President

*By the National Cattlemen's Beef Association*

Since 1850, Gene Copenhaver's family has been rooted in the land raising crops and livestock. The Virginia cattleman now takes the helm as the new president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). Copenhaver's new leadership role began at the end of CattleCon 2026, held this week in Nashville, Tennessee.

The 2026 NCBA officer team was approved by the NCBA board of directors and includes Kim Brackett of Idaho, president-elect and Skye Krebs of Oregon, vice president. Kenny Rogers of Colorado was elected chair of the NCBA Policy Division and Scott Anderson of Oklahoma was elected policy vice chair. Travis Maddock of North Dakota and Dan Hanrahan of Iowa were elected as chair and vice chair of the NCBA Federation Division, respectively. Brad Hastings of Texas will serve in the role of NCBA treasurer.

Copenhaver currently manages his family's stocker operation in southwest Virginia with his son, Will, and was an agriculture loan officer for 38 years. He has been married to his wife, Jodi, for more than 35 years, and they have three grown children, Brad, Will and Jaymee, and three granddaughters.

Copenhaver's father taught him early to "be at the table," especially when policy decisions were being made. About 25 years ago, he helped launch a county cattlemen's group, then worked his way through leadership roles at the state level, even-

tually serving as president of the Virginia Cattlemen's Association. Nationally, he became involved with NCBA, serving on the Tax & Credit and International Trade committees, multiple task forces, and the officer team. If there is a single theme to his leadership philosophy, it is grassroots engagement.

"I'll go to my grave saying our greatest strength is grassroots," Copenhaver said.

The new president's priorities are straightforward: continue what works, stay grounded in grassroots input, remain open-minded, and focus on profitability. Copenhaver wants every sector and every scale of operation to be viable. That means pushing back against regulatory barriers, supporting policies that allow reinvestment, and building on recent momentum around tax provisions.

"We can't build the future if every good year gets taxed away before we can shore up our infrastructure," he said.

Copenhaver remains optimistic about the future for two reasons. First is the demand the beef industry has built steadily in the last four decades. Second is the next generation — young producers who are smart, relationship-driven, and family-centered, and who want to build operations that last.

Success, for Copenhaver, is not complicated. "Build a good operation. Involve your family. Treat people right," he said. For the industry, it means continuing to grow demand and profitability across all sectors without losing sight of its roots.

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# Strengthening Our Foundation, Advancing Our Future

By Gene Copenhaver, NCBA President

It's an extraordinary honor to step into the role of president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

Not as a title, but as a responsibility, a calling and a covenant with each of you across this great country. My journey, rooted in nearly six generations of cattlemen and cattlemen in southwest Virginia, has taught me early and often that the true strength of our industry comes from the grassroots, from producers who wake up each day committed to caring for cattle and stewarding the land.

This year, as I take the helm alongside an incredible team of officers, I carry a simple but steadfast philosophy: stay grounded in grassroots input, remain open-minded and focus relentlessly on profitability for our members. Our success as an industry depends on practical policy solutions that reduce costs, open doors to new opportunities, and keep demand for beef strong.

Over the past year, NCBA made meaningful strides on that front. Thanks to the hard work of our grassroots members and policy teams, we secured major wins that directly impact producers — from expanded estate tax exemptions to revised Waters of the U.S. rules to the rescission of the BLM Public Lands Rule. Each of these developments provides something producers desperately need more of: certainty. Certainty to plan, invest, grow and pass on operations to the next generation.

## Empower the Next Generation and Strengthen the Industry's Future

This point is incredibly meaningful to me and a key focus of my term as president. I'm very proud of my three kids, and I'm fortunate to work alongside my son, Will, on our operation. Ensuring he and his family are set up for success and able to carry forward the legacy built by generations before me has been at the forefront of my mind for a long time. Last summer, I had the opportunity to travel with participants in NCBA's Young Cattlemen's Conference, and that experience renewed my determination to strengthen our national position and create a clearer, more accessible path for the next generation.

I met first generation producers, multi-generation operators, people in corporate agriculture hoping to return to the family farm, and producers representing every segment of our industry and nearly every state. One thing was unmistakably consistent: they are innovators. They are finding ways to make this life work and are deeply committed to preserving our way of life while pushing the industry forward.

We must remove barriers standing in their way and invest in them as the leaders of tomorrow.



## Grow Strong Demand and Protect Profitability

Beef producers have experienced strong market momentum, but volatility and margin pressures persist. We will continue advocating for tools and policies to enhance and protect your bottom line. As many of you know firsthand, risk management isn't optional, it's essential. You also can't talk demand and profitability without trade. Export markets matter. The recent expansion of duty-free beef access into Taiwan and a trade deal with Indonesia are major wins for producers, opening new opportunities for growth and helping to maximize carcass value.

NCBA will continue pushing for strong, science-based trade agreements that enhance access, dismantle barriers, and provide long-term certainty for U.S. cattle producers. We'll also push to hold trade partners accountable to the same animal health and food safety standards we have in the U.S.

## Advance Policy that Supports NCBA Members

A clear, forward-looking policy agenda is critical to the work we do as an association. This year, that includes reducing unnecessary federal regulations, bolstering animal health protections against emerging threats, expanding global market access for U.S. beef, defending science-based nutrition policy that keeps beef central in consumers' diets, and securing a resilient supply chain through improved transportation flexibility and a strong, stable workforce — all rooted in the policy direction you've developed through grassroots engagement.

## Listen to You — Always

If my family's history in this industry has taught me anything, it's that leadership doesn't come from a title, it comes from service. My priority this year is to meet members across the country, listen to your challenges and success stories, and make sure your voice is heard where it matters most. Your grassroots input drives everything we do.

We're not here simply to react to change, we're here to shape it. Plant strong roots, keep costs manageable, advocate for workable policy, and build a future where every producer has the tools to prosper. Together, we will continue to not only sustain our industry's momentum, we will grow it. Thank you for your trust in me and I hope to meet you down the road.

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# Beef and RFK, Jr.

By Colin Woodall, NCBA CEO

U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. was one of our surprise guests at CattleCon last month in Nashville, but his presence was far more than a headline moment. It was a clear signal that the tide has turned for beef in the national nutrition conversation, and the decades of effort we've poured into Checkoff-funded beef nutrition research paid off in a historic way. RFK, Jr. was there to tout the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the powerful role beef plays in the redesigned food pyramid and in his own personal life. This wasn't a request coordinated months in advance, nor was it a political courtesy call. It was his idea, and he asked to attend CattleCon because he wanted to stand with us, America's cattle producers.

The fact that the nation's top public health official asked to speak to us is significant for three reasons. The first is he wants the celebration of these guidelines to continue and not just be a fleeting January headline. When he arrived at HHS, he inherited a draft of the Dietary Guidelines from the Biden administration that replaced beef with beans, peas and lentils. Secretary Kennedy understands beans, peas and lentils are side dishes, not the main event. His Make America Healthy Again platform recognized that beef is nutrient-dense and a cornerstone of healthy dietary patterns.

His enthusiasm for beef predates his role as Secretary. RFK, Jr. often talks about beef as his protein of choice, even telling us he sometimes eats it twice a day. On social media he has promoted beef, beef jerky, and even a Thanksgiving turkey fried in beef tallow. This isn't political theater for him. It reflects genuine belief and consistent behavior. He knows the Dietary Guidelines are a win for him, President Trump and us as cattle producers. Watching him on stage at CattleCon, you could see he was relishing every moment talking to the very people who produce the real food he wants more Americans eating.

The second reason his request is so important is because it validates all the Checkoff-funded research work done on nutrition. While RFK, Jr. has plenty of detractors who question his policy positions, it became clear his focus on real and whole foods was supported by our research. NCBA has been the primary contractor on Checkoff-funded beef nutrition research for decades. Our work built a solid foundation of sound, peer-reviewed science supporting beef's role in the diet.



There's not a much more real and whole food than beef, and having the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recognize that validates all the Checkoff-funded research we've done. The Secretary clearly announced in Nashville that the "war on protein" is over.

Third, his presence reinforced NCBA's standing as the trusted leader and definitive voice of the U.S. cattle and beef business. There were countless venues he could have chosen to have this discussion, but he chose NCBA. He chose CattleCon. He chose to have a real conversation with then NCBA President Buck Wehrbein instead of simply delivering a prepared speech. He even took a selfie with Buck onstage with thousands of cattle producers in the background. He made it real and did so because he recognizes the disciplined, science-driven and professional work NCBA conducts each day. He recognizes how grassroots cattle producers lead and direct this association. RFK, Jr. understood that if he wanted to speak directly to cattle producers — the people who feed this nation — there was only one place to be... CattleCon.

NCBA's work on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans is something we've talked about as being "generational" because it's the result of long-term Checkoff investment in rigorous scientific research, relationship building and steadfast advocacy. It demonstrated how all the work of NCBA comes together to protect and promote our business. The Checkoff-funded research NCBA conducts as a contractor delivered the scientific foundation. The Federation of State Beef Councils supported, funded and amplified our voice. The dues-funded policy team kept the process grounded in facts rather than being derailed by agenda-driven narratives.

Thanks to this combined effort, the nation's nutrition policy recognizes and promotes what we've always known; beef belongs in the center of American's plates. This win isn't simply about the new guidelines. It builds momentum for the future by strengthening the role of science and putting real, whole food like beef back into the spotlight. It also ensures that when this process begins again in five years, under a different presidential administration, we enter the debate from a position of undeniable strength. This is a win for NCBA and the Checkoff, but more importantly, it is YOUR win because you've never stopped believing in the power of this association and the national Beef Checkoff.

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# Nevada Beef Council Update – March 2026

## Your Checkoff Dollars at Work

By Kori Dover, RD, Director, Food & Nutrition Outreach

# GLP-1s, Protein, and Making Every Bite Count

**G**LP-1 medications are now part of everyday nutrition conversations. Research on GLP-1s continues to be studied beyond diabetes and weight management, examining a range of health areas including cardiovascular disease, kidney and liver health, neurodegeneration, and women's health. Today, about one in eight U.S. adults has tried a GLP-1 weight loss medication, and use continues to grow as these medications become part of long-term weight and chronic disease management.<sup>3</sup> As this research expands, it has also raised new questions about how nutrition supports health when eating patterns change.

For many people using GLP-1 medications, appetite changes are one of the most noticeable shifts.<sup>1</sup> Meals may be smaller, less frequent, or skipped altogether, which can feel like a relief for some and a challenge for others. Even so, the body's need for nutrients does not change, meaning the foods people choose play a bigger role in supporting health when overall intake is lower.

This shift is happening at a time when protein already matters to consumers. Research from the International Food Information Council shows that protein consistently ranks among the top nutrition priorities, driven by interest in muscle health, feeling satisfied after meals, and overall wellness. For many people, protein is often thought of in terms of energy, physical strength, and staying functional day to day, rather than weight loss alone.<sup>2</sup>

As appetite changes with GLP-1 use, the question is not whether protein still matters, but how to get enough of it in a way that fits new eating patterns. Adequate protein intake helps preserve lean muscle during weight loss and supports strength and metabolic function. Research consistently shows that higher-protein eating patterns are associated with better retention of lean body mass, particularly when weight loss occurs alongside a reduced appetite.<sup>3</sup> Choosing protein-rich foods that deliver meaningful amounts of protein and essential nutrients in a relatively small portion becomes especially valuable in this context. Lean beef is an example that can fit this need.

Lean beef is a nutrient-dense protein option. A three-ounce serving of cooked lean beef provides about 25 grams of protein for around 170 calories, along with ten essential nutrients that can support muscle and metabolic health.<sup>4</sup> Maintaining muscle mass is not only about strength. Muscle plays an important role in blood sugar control, mobility, and long-term cardiometabolic health, especially as people age. Preserving muscle through adequate protein intake may help support these outcomes alongside GLP-1 use, particularly for older adults and others at higher



Figure 1 Roasted Sundried Tomato Tri-tip. Image courtesy of Beef It's What's For Dinner

risk for muscle loss.<sup>5</sup>

GLP-1 medications influence appetite, but they do not replace the role of nutrition. Research shows these medications work best when paired with supportive eating patterns and healthy lifestyle behaviors.<sup>3</sup> Even as appetites and routines change, balanced meals that include protein-rich foods, along with fiber-rich fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and regular movement, remain central to overall health.

One thing is clear: as eating patterns evolve, making every bite count becomes more important. Foods that deliver high-quality protein and essential nutrients in a reasonable portion help people get more value from the meals they enjoy. Beef offers a wholesome, familiar, and flavorful way to do just that, which can help support health and wellness goals while fitting into changing eating patterns.

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