

# SAGE SIGNALS

*The Voice of the Nevada Livestock Industry*

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE NCA MEMBERSHIP

## NCA May Snapshot

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

**H**appy May everyone. I'm not sure where the time goes, but it sure goes fast. I hope everyone is having a good spring season so far. As usual, there is a lot going on policy wise lately that has impacts on cattle production, so I'll dive right in.

Toward the beginning of April, the Biden Administration finalized three different rulemakings that rolled back previously made improvements to the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The revisions made do a couple of different things of importance. First, a version of the "blanket 4(d) rule for threatened species was reinstated. This means that a lot of the protections extended to endangered species will now also apply to threatened species. Second, Section 4 of the ESA previously stated that determinations must be made based on the best available scientific and commercial information. The rule now states that determinations on listing status and habitat must be made "without reference to possible economic and other impacts." Third, and also under Section 4 of the ESA, was a change regarding unoccupied Critical Habitat Designations. Previously, the regulations dictated that in order for an unoccupied area to be considered essential to a given species, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had to determine that the unoccupied area would contribute to the conservation of that species and the area contained one or more physical or biological features essential to its conservation. As a result of the new rule, the agency may now designate critical habitat in any

area that it believes is essential for the conservation of a species. In other words, any land in the country can be critical habitat for a given species if U.S. Fish and Wildlife believes the species is threatened by factors such as climate change.

These changes have the ability to significantly impact the livestock industry and in areas that have not had ESA related actions before. The Nevada Cattlemen's Association will continue to find avenues to advocate for common sense ESA regulations.

On a somewhat similar note, the Bureau of Land Management recently released their draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Greater Sage-Grouse Rangewide Planning effort. The plans consist of over 600 pages of materials and would amend 77 Resource Management Plans covering up to 69 million acres across 10 western states. The plans contain two separate comment deadlines. A proposal considering the establishment of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) has a 60-day comment period concluding on May 14th. The actual sage grouse plan amendments themselves have a 90-day comment period ending on June 13th. Anyone interested in viewing the proposal can do so here- <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2016719/510>. Due to the massive scale of the proposal and information included, the Public Lands Council and Nevada

— Continued on page 3 —

## CATTLEWOMEN'S CORNER OF THE CORRAL

### Nevada Cattlegirls Beef and Wine Pairing at the Park Home Ranch in Minden, Nevada

*By Keri Pommerening, NVCW President*



**N**evada Cattlegirls have been busy on several projects to promote the beef industry. One of those projects is our first Beef & Wine Pairing to be held in Minden, Nevada at the Park Home Ranch Venue, on June 2, 2024 at 2:00 pm.

What is a Beef & Wine Pairing? The intent is for the attendee to learn about different cuts of meat, how to best prepare those cuts, do a taste test and sample the appropriate wine that pairs best with each cut. Six different cuts of beef will be prepared

at six different stations and paired with a sample of the appropriate wine. Park Ranch Meats will be present to answer questions and sell the same cuts of beef. Bottles of the sampled wines will also be for sale. A recipe card for each sampling will be given out with the beef cuts. The attendee will leave prepared to cook the meal that night. Bringing producers and consumers together to enjoy the tasty

benefits of beef in a fun and interactive workshop, beef and wine, what else do you need? Tickets will be \$50 (\$40 for Nevada Cattlegirls members). Tickets will be available to purchase on our website [nevadacattlegirls.com](http://nevadacattlegirls.com) or you can email us at [cwnv.inc@gmail.com](mailto:cwnv.inc@gmail.com) for further information. We also plan to host pairings in Elko in the summer and Southern Nevada in the late fall or winter.

Applications for our Beef Ambassador contest have been received and we will be introducing our new ambassadors next month.

We have also been busy updating our website. Check us out at [nevadacattlegirls.com](http://nevadacattlegirls.com). We'd love to have you join our membership and help us promote the beef industry.

Until next month, whether you are irrigating, branding calves, or moving cattle to spring grass, enjoy the sunshine.

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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Hanes Homan, President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association

## War Horses and Colts!

I had a black horse here at the ranch named Token. He was a true "War Horse" in my opinion. I rode him at the Bob Feist Invitational Team Roping, Reno Rodeo, Jordan Valley Big Loop, Elko Fair, Eureka Fair, and just about everywhere you could think of where money was up for grabs. He wasn't just a "town horse" though. I picked up bucking horses and drug bulls out of the arena on him at most of the High School rodeos at the same time that my kids used him in the rodeo. If you had a tough ranch job to do he was the one you relied on. Foot Rot cows to doctor, calves to brand or a bull to get out of the willows, he was your best mount. There never was a circle too big or a job you couldn't count on him for. He never let me down. He is now semi-retired and lives the easy life in Texas with my oldest daughter doing a little team roping now and then. He earned it!

When he went on to retirement, I realized what a hole he left in my string of horses. I now have a lot of green colts that are really not prepared to go do some of the jobs that they are going to have to do. To tell you the truth I'm a little annoyed at myself for not spending more time to prepare them. Always in a hurry, knowing the job I was going to do was going to be challenging and wanting to just "get it done" I would rely on my old standby thinking "I'll get to the young

ones later". Lots of time to educate the colts later. Later is here and I haven't done my job to get the young one prepared. Fact of it is, some of the colts have tons of ability and talent, I just haven't made the necessary investments to cultivate them. They're going to have to step up now for "on the job" learning because there is no other choice. I am going to have to invest in these young ones' future, both time and money to catch them up. Too much time has passed relying on the War Horses to get the tough jobs done.

As you read this you may have had the fleeting thought that I may not be just talking about horses. You may think that in my own witty way I just might be using this as a metaphoric parable to invoke thought about some random Cattlemen's Association and the status of their membership. Let me assure you that I would do no such thing :) ! Oh, I almost forgot to mention that Anthony Barnes (youngest son of Tom and Kelly Barnes, Grandson of Harvey and Susie Barnes) is going to write the President's Perspective article next month. As Co-Chair of Nevada Cattlemen's Legislative Affairs Committee he attended the NCBA's (National Cattlemen's Beef Association) Legislative conference in Washington DC on our behalf along with Martin Paris, Dave Baker and Marlow Dahl. I look forward to his article. With that I better go, I have some colts to ride!

Cheers Hanes Holman

## NCA May Snapshot: *Continued from page 1*

Cattlemen's Association have formally requested that BLM extend both comment periods to instead be due on September 11th. The short comment periods do not allow anyone to thoughtfully digest and incorporate the discussion into comments. Stay tuned as NCA dives into the proposal and pushes for some additional time.

Shifting gears a bit, at the end of March the U.S. Senate voted 70-25 in support of S.J Res 62, a resolution disapproving of USDA's final rule to allow fresh beef imports from Paraguay. The resolution now heads to the U.S. House of Representatives for consideration and if approved, will go to the White House for final approval. Again, fresh beef imports from Paraguay pose a significant health risk to our domestic cattle and NCA greatly appreciates the 70 Senators

who voted to protect the health of U.S. cattle. We look forward to engaging with the Nevada members of the House of Representatives to get the resolution over the finish line.

Finally, please mark your calendars for the 88th Annual Nevada Cattlemen's Association Convention & Tradeshow. This year we'll be in Fallon at the Rafter 3C Arena, November 20-22nd. NCA is working hard to bring you a memorable and educational event this year and we hope you'll be able to make it.

This is just a snapshot of some of the work NCA is doing on your behalf. If anyone has any questions, concerns, input on the above or any other issue, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at [nca@nevadabeef.org](mailto:nca@nevadabeef.org) or (775) 738-9214.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Nevada Youth Range Camp

— June 16-20, 2024 —

Berry Creek, northeast of McGill, NV

<https://nevada-section-society-for-range-management.square.site/>

### NCBA Cattle Industry Summer Business Meeting

— July 8-10, 2024 —

San Diego, California

Hilton San Diego Bayfront

<https://www.ncba.org/events/summer-business-meeting>

### Nevada Cattlemen's Association Annual Convention

— November 20-22, 2024 —

Fallon, Nevada

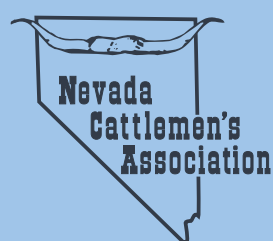
<https://www.nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings>

## NCA MEMBERSHIP

*We would like to thank the following people for joining or renewing their membership with Nevada Cattlemen's Association between March 26 and April 25, 2024.*

*(New members are in bold.)*

- Congressman Mark Amodei
- Andersen Ranch
- Bench Creek Ranch/Gascon Cattle, Paul Plouviez
- Chris Collis
- Corty Real Estate, Tom Corty
- Diamond Cattle Co. LLC, Mark & Martin Etcheverry
- Ted Guazzini
- Keystone Ranch Inc., Rolfe Schwartz D.V.M.
- Lantana Ranch, Mike Powell
- Owl Creek Ranch, Mike & Melinda Sarman
- Renner Equipment Co., Trent Renner
- Ritchie Industries, Robert Amundson
- Vesco Ranch LLC, Vance & Seth Vesco



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# Nevada Cattlemen's Association

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# University of Nevada, Reno Researcher Takes on Fight Against Deadly Cattle Tick

Pioneering researcher wins highly competitive Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award for collaborative international research project

RENO, Nevada – A tiny cattle tick is causing big economic losses to farmers and ranchers worldwide. A pioneering University of Nevada, Reno researcher in the field of tick research to help reduce the incidence of Lyme disease in humans has now been awarded a prestigious Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award to apply her research to try to unlock effective ways to control the tick that is wreaking havoc with cattle.

Monika Gulia-Nuss, an associate professor and graduate program director in the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology in the University's College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources, is working closely with researchers in Uruguay, where the national government is committed to protection of its important cattle industry from the economic ravages of the cattle tick, which are estimated to be well over \$30 million in losses annually. Up to 90% of cattle infected with a fever carried by the tick suffer death, while tick damage to cattle skins impacts the leather industry and tick-borne illness also reduces milk production.



Photo by Robert Moore

University of Nevada, Reno Associate Professor Monika Gulia-Nuss has been awarded a U.S. Fulbright Scholar Award to conduct research in Uruguay on ticks affecting cattle worldwide.

Gulia-Nuss already has broken important new ground in understanding the genetic code of ticks, beginning with the deer tick, which carries Lyme

disease-causing bacteria that infect humans. In the past decade, her lab has developed innovative tools to analyze and modify the ability of deer ticks to spread pathogens.

Generally, genetic modification relies on injection of genetic materials along with a fluorescent marker into a tiny embryo — whether it's a tick, a mosquito or a larger animal — so that scientists can observe activity of a targeted gene.

But researchers have been stymied in their attempts to inject tick eggs, which have hard outer shells, high pressure within, and a tough wax coating that female ticks apply to provide further protection. About two years ago, Gulia-Nuss and her researcher husband, Andrew Nuss, an associate professor in the University's Department of Agriculture, Veterinary & Rangeland Sciences, announced they'd successfully overcome those challenges, opening the door for injections into tick embryos and possible genetic modification.

"There is a huge demand for the development of genetic tools for tick research," Gulia-Nuss said. "Our deer-tick methods have already



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been adopted by many labs around the world, and we have trained many scientists in our labs in implementation of these methods.”

## More complex mystery

But the cattle tick, Gulia-Nuss acknowledged, presents a far more challenging genetic mystery than the deer tick. For starters, the genome of the cattle tick is large and complex — it’s twice the size of the human genome — and the genome hasn’t yet been fully mapped.

That’s critically important because Gulia-Nuss seeks to identify genes of cattle ticks that could be targeted for genetic control or improved pesticides. Alternatively, better understanding of the tick’s genetics might allow development of effective vaccines for the cattle that host the ticks.

Gulia-Nuss and Michael Pham, a research scientist in the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, will travel in June to the INIA Colonia institute in southwestern Uruguay. There, Gulia-Nuss and Pham, who also conduct research as part of the University’s Experiment Station, will work with researchers Alejo Menchaca of INIA and Pablo Fresia of the Pasteur Institute in Montevideo, Uruguay, to set up a suite where ticks will be raised and prepared

for the injections that will allow understanding gene functions.

Early in 2025, Gulia-Nuss will return to Uruguay for a three-month tenure supported by the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award. During that time, she’ll inject thousands of tick embryos to better understand their genetic workings. She also expects to begin some genetic modifications.

Given the size of the cattle-tick genome and the gaps in existing knowledge, there will be challenges that the researchers are ready to overcome.

“However, we are up to the challenge, and our prior work with two other tick genomes will help us navigate the issues that may arise,” Gulia-Nuss said.

## International collaboration

The highly competitive Fulbright U.S. Scholar Awards — only about 10% of applicants are approved annually — are designed to build collaboration between scholars in the United States and those elsewhere in the world. The awards support travel, lodging and other expenses for researchers; institutes in the host countries fund the research itself.

The government of Uruguay strongly supports the cattle-tick research. Even 25 years ago, economic losses caused by the cattle tick in Uruguay were es-

timated at nearly \$33 million a year. Currently, the only method of controlling cattle ticks is heavy use of chemical insecticides. But ticks are developing resistance to those chemicals, and lingering chemical residues may limit the ability of ranchers to sell their animals.

Although the tick is found in the United States only in a thin strip along the southern border with Mexico, it’s established elsewhere in nearly every tropical or subtropical region of the world where people raise cattle. Uruguay is among the hard-hit regions.

“Uruguay’s economy is highly dependent on agriculture, especially cattle. Cattle fever tick is a huge economic problem in the country, and the Uruguayan government is committed to research to develop genetic tick-control methods,” said Gulia-Nuss.

That’s why it’s particularly noteworthy, she said, that scientists in Uruguay sought out collaborators in far-away Nevada.

“Uruguay only provides one Fulbright Research Award a year,” Gulia-Nuss said. “Getting this award at the University of Nevada, Reno, emphasizes the quality of research at our University. Our team that has been working on tick research is extremely honored and excited to be working with our colleagues in Uruguay on this important project.”

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# Leadership and Legacy Go Hand-in-Hand

By Mark Eisele, NCBA President



## National Cattlemen's Beef Association

tation to members of Congress and federal agencies with jurisdiction over farmers and ranchers is critical to our past and future success. NCBA is the one national organization with the respect and ability to make progress on the challenges we face in producing beef. I am proud to report that the partnerships NCBA's leadership have forged with members of Congress and key agency personnel are strong, and our priorities are moving forward in a way that will both advance the industry and protect us from government overreach.

The Farm Bill is a key priority for NCBA members this year, and both state and national leaders had countless discussions with our members of Congress during visits on the Hill. We also had the opportunity to hear directly from House Agriculture Committee Chairman, GT Thompson, who remains committed to advancing a Farm Bill this year. His leadership and partnership on the Farm Bill, combined with the work of the cattlemen and women who were present for Legislative Conference, will help complete this important task, despite the ongoing turmoil preventing many other groups from advancing their agendas. Without partnerships on both sides of the aisle, the strong bond between NCBA and state associations, and the commitment of grassroots cattle producer members of both state and national organizations, we wouldn't be nearly as successful as we have been in protecting our future.

Each of us has a different leadership path in life, but each path is critical, and if you're not engaged with your state association, you should be. Fewer than 2% of Americans are engaged in agriculture, and our voices could easily be overwhelmed by the majority if we fail to work together on important issues. State cattle associations are the front line in protecting our way of life. If you haven't been to your state association meeting, I would strongly encourage you to take that first step and attend. The opportunity to work with neighbors and like-minded cattlemen

The NCBA Spring Legislative Conference is always a highlight of the year and, despite turmoil in Congress, this year was extremely beneficial for the cattlemen and women who traveled to Capitol Hill. One of my priorities as president is to expand NCBA's partnership opportunities. For more than a century, we have partnered with cattle producers across the country to protect and defend our common interests and this critical way of life we enjoy as stewards of cattle and the land. Those partnerships include state associations, and the strength of our bond was on full display in Washington, D.C., as more than 30 state associations worked together to advance the interests and needs of our members. It's this effort and these relationships that should instill pride in each of us.

Cattle producers have always been independent, and we always will be, but there are too few of us to leave our future to chance, and that's why opportunities to present our situa-

and women is invigorating and important to ensuring the future of your family business is protected. If you're already a state leader, I want to thank you for the important work you're doing and encourage you to take the next step and join NCBA's leaders in working at the national level. We're always in need of grassroots members who will share their stories, engage in committees, and serve as leaders of the association.

The work we do at the local, state and national level advances our interests and protects our future. Our industry's ongoing survival and ability to thrive depends on women and men like you sharing your story with decisionmakers at every level of government. By working together to strengthen our partnerships and our voice, NCBA and your state associations can build on more than a century of advocacy work that has overcome turmoil, change and time to make sure cattle producers thrive despite all of those who have aligned against us throughout past years.

There is no doubt our industry is strong, but it can always be stronger. I hope you'll take the first step and make sure your local, state and national membership dues are paid. Once that's done, reach further and get involved. As we head into summer, NCBA leadership will be traveling across the country to state meetings and working with state leaders, so I hope I'll see you there.



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# APHIS Bolsters Animal Disease Traceability in the United States

## Requires electronic ID for Certain Cattle and Bison Moving Interstate

WASHINGTON, April 26, 2024 – Today, by amending and strengthening its animal disease traceability regulations for certain cattle and bison, the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is putting in place the technology, tools, and processes to help quickly pinpoint and respond to costly foreign animal diseases.

“Rapid traceability in a disease outbreak will not only limit how long farms are quarantined, keep more animals from getting sick, and help ranchers and farmers get back to selling their products more quickly – but will help keep our markets open,” said Dr. Michael Watson, APHIS Administrator.

One of the most significant benefits of the rule for farmers and ranchers will be the enhanced ability of the United States to limit impacts of animal disease outbreaks to certain regions, which is the key to maintaining our foreign markets. By being able to readily prove disease-free status in non-affected regions of the United States, we will be able to request foreign trading partners recognize disease-free regions or zones instead of cutting off trade for the entire country. Traceability of animals is necessary to establish these disease-free zones and facilitate reestablishment of foreign and domestic market access with minimum delay in the wake of an animal disease event.

This rule is the culmination of goals established by USDA to increase traceability, one of the best protections against disease outbreaks, and enhances a rule

finalized in 2013 for the official identification of livestock and documentation for certain interstate movements of livestock.

USDA is committed to implementing a modern animal disease traceability system that tracks animals from birth to slaughter using affordable technology that allows for quick tracing of sick and exposed animals to stop disease spread. USDA will continue to provide tags to producers free of charge to jumpstart efforts to enable the fastest possible response to a foreign animal disease. For information on how to obtain these free tags, please see APHIS’ Animal Disease Traceability webpage at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/traceability>.

The final rule applies to all sexually intact cattle and bison 18 months of age or older, all dairy cattle, cattle and bison of any age used for rodeo or recreation events, and cattle or bison of any age used for shows or exhibitions.

The rule requires official eartags to be visually and electronically readable for official use for interstate movement of certain cattle and bison, and revises and clarifies certain record requirements related to cattle.

A copy of this rule may be viewed today, and the rule will be published in the Federal Register in the coming weeks. This rule will be effective 180 days after publication in the Federal Register.

To learn more about animal disease traceability and how APHIS responds to animal disease outbreaks, visit [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov).

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# USDA Actions to Protect Livestock Health from Highly Pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza

Federal Order to assist with developing a baseline of critical information and limiting the spread of H5N1 in dairy cattle

WASHINGTON, April 24, 2024 – To further protect the U.S. livestock industry from the threat posed by highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza, USDA is sharing a number of actions that we are taking with our federal partners to help us get ahead of this disease and limit its spread.

Today, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced a Federal Order requiring the following measures, effective Monday, April 29, 2024:

## Mandatory Testing for Interstate Movement of Dairy Cattle

- Prior to interstate movement, dairy cattle are required to receive a negative test for Influenza A virus at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory.
- Owners of herds in which dairy cattle test positive for interstate movement will be required to provide epidemiological information, including animal movement tracing.
- Dairy cattle moving interstate must adhere to conditions specified by APHIS.


- As will be described in forthcoming guidance, these steps will be immediately required for lactating dairy cattle, while these requirements for other classes of dairy cattle will be based on scientific factors concerning the virus and its evolving risk profile.

## Mandatory Reporting

- Laboratories and state veterinarians must report positive Influenza A nucleic acid detection diagnostic results (e.g. PCR or genetic sequencing) in livestock to USDA APHIS.
- Laboratories and state veterinarians must report positive Influenza A serology diagnostic results in livestock to USDA APHIS.

USDA has identified spread between cows within the same herd, spread from cows to poultry, spread between dairies associated with cattle movements, and cows without clinical signs that have tested positive. On April 16, APHIS microbiologists identified a shift in an H5N1 sample from a cow in Kansas that could

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indicate that the virus has an adaptation to mammals. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted further analysis of the specimen sequence, which did not change their overall risk assessment for the general public, because the substitution has been seen previously in other mammalian infections and does not impact viral transmission. Additionally, APHIS' National Veterinary Services Laboratories found H5N1 in a lung tissue sample from an asymptomatic cull dairy cow that originated from an affected herd and did not enter the food supply.

The novel movement of H5N1 between wild birds and dairy cows requires further testing and time to develop a critical understanding to support any future courses of action. This Federal Order is critical to increasing the information available for USDA. Requiring positive test reporting will help USDA better under this disease and testing before interstate movement will limit its spread.

While we are taking this action today, it is important to remember that thus far, we have not found changes to the virus that would make it more transmissible to humans and between people. While cases among humans in direct contact with infected animals are possible, our partners at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believe that the current risk to the public remains low.

Additionally, we continue to see affected cows recover after supported care with little to no associated mortality. We also continue to work with our partners in the states and industry to emphasize the critical importance biosecurity plays in limiting disease spread for all livestock and poultry.

You may view the Federal Order, which is effective on Monday, April 29, 2024 here- <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dairy-federal-order.pdf>

Further, in an effort to maximize understanding and research on H5N1 in dairy cattle, on April 21, APHIS made publicly available 239 genetic sequences from the U.S. H5N1 clade 2.3.4.4b influenza virus recently found in samples associated with

the ongoing HPAI outbreak in poultry and wild birds, and the recent H5N1 event in dairy cattle. APHIS has also offered virus samples to interested researchers to facilitate epidemiological study. Increasing our understanding of this disease and how it spreads is critical to stopping it. This is why APHIS is urging dairy cattle producers and those who work in or with the industry to share epidemiological information from affected farms, even if they are not planning to move cattle interstate. APHIS further urges producer participation in public health assessments to continue to confirm worker safety and monitor for any potential changes in the virus that could impact transmissibility.

In addition, our partners in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration released an update on the ongoing work to ensure continued effectiveness of the federal-state milk safety system. It is important to emphasize that, based on the information and research available to us at this time, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and USDA believe that our commercial milk supply is safe because of both the pasteurization process and the required diversion or destruction of milk from sick cows. Pasteurization has continuously proven to inactivate bacteria and viruses in milk. The FDA and USDA continue to work closely to collect and evaluate additional data and information specific to avian influenza in dairy cattle and to support state counterparts as this emerging disease in dairy cattle is managed.

As USDA continues to take steps to protect the health of livestock, the Department continues to work closely with federal partners at the CDC on protecting the health of people and FDA on protecting the safety of the food supply. The U.S. government is committed to addressing this situation with urgency.

To learn more about USDA's response to HPAI in dairy cattle, visit [www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock).

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# Nevada Beef Council Update — May 2024

## Your Checkoff Dollars at Work

By Allie Herring

# Exploring Consumer Behavior and Sustainability in the Beef Industry: A Deep Dive

Courtesy of Beef. It's What's For Dinner

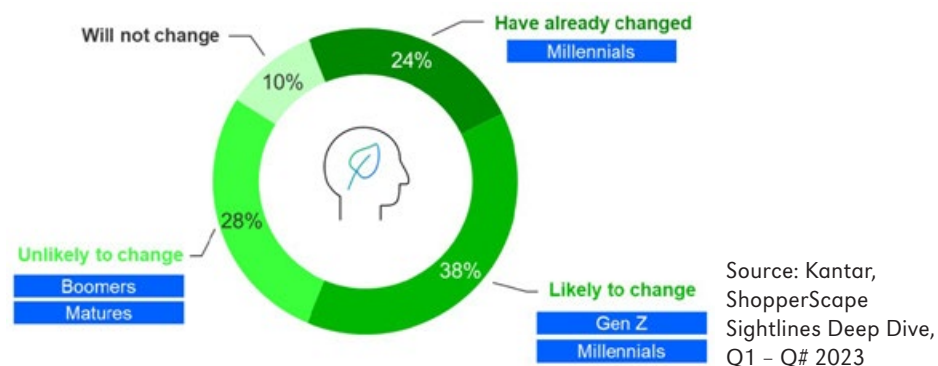
Within the current consumer landscape, a complex interplay of consumer behavior and sustainability practices is evolving. It is a world where taste, ethics, and environmental consciousness intersect, influencing not just purchasing decisions but also production practices.

This evolution of consumer consciousness is playing out in a myriad of products and services and the beef industry is no exception. Through the data, we unravel the multifaceted tapestry of consumer preferences, environmental considerations, and the crucial role of trust in the beef industry.

### Understanding the Shift Towards Sustainability

Central to our exploration is the discernible shift in consumer consciousness towards sustainability. In recent years, there has been a palpable surge in consumer demand for products that echo their environmental values. This is evident in the burgeoning popularity of sustainable alternatives, such as reusable bags, and the increasing preference for products boasting natural, eco-friendly ingredients.

Recent surveys reveal a significant portion of consumers actively engage in behaviors that support environmental causes. More than half of shoppers have already changed or are likely to change their shopping behavior due to environmental concerns.<sup>1</sup> From reducing single-use plastics to opting for products with sustainable attributes, consumers are signaling a broader shift towards greener, more eco-conscious shopping habits.

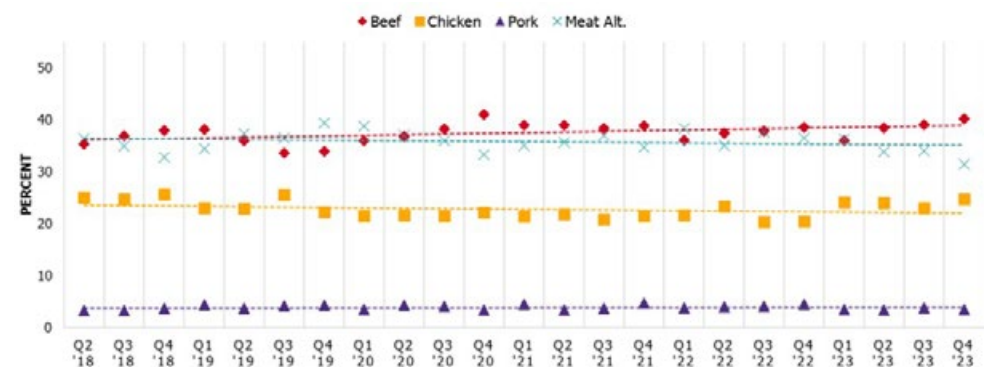


This shift towards sustainability is not just a passing fad; it is a fundamental reorientation of consumer values. As concerns about climate change and environmental degradation intensify, consumers are increasingly seeking out products that align with their ethical and environmental principles. The question for the beef industry is are these general consumer trends specifically impacting beef consumers, and if so, how can operators respond accordingly.

### Navigating the Path of Sustainability

As consumers pivot towards sustainability, manufacturing practices and ingredient sourcing come under scrutiny. This heightened awareness of sustainability considerations underscores the growing demand for transparency and accountability within the beef industry. A 2022 Kearney study found that in the last five years, Google searches about the carbon footprint of beef have increased by 18%.<sup>2</sup> Consumers want to know not just where their beef comes from but also how it is produced. This presents an opportunity for supply chain operators to embrace more sustainable practices, from sourcing strategies to packaging materials, and to communicate these efforts transparently to consumers.

Even though consumers have increasing awareness regarding beef sustainability, it does not mean that their sentiment is negative. Recent results from NCBA's Consumer Beef Tracker, a contractor to the beef checkoff, reveal that relative to other proteins, beef ranks #1 as supporting causes important to consumers.<sup>3</sup> Further evidence shows that consumers consistently perceive production of beef to be the most environmentally friendly with meat alternatives in second place.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, beef's lead over meat alternatives has been steadily increasing since 2019.<sup>4</sup>



### The Role of Trust in Beef Production

Trust is the bedrock upon which consumer confidence in the beef industry rests. Consumers increasingly want assurance that the beef they purchase is not only safe and nutritious but also produced responsibly and ethically. In fact, over 70% of con-

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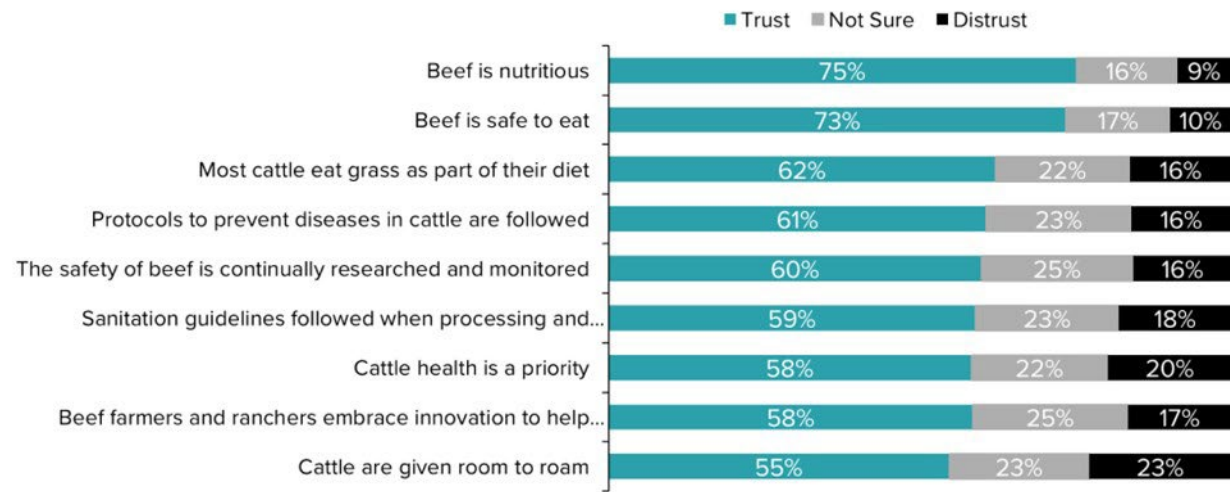
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sumers trust that beef is nutritious and safe to eat.<sup>5</sup> However, there are areas where operators can improve communications to help elevate trust within consumer perceptions about how cattle are raised. Looking at the same data set, consumers surveyed reported lower levels of trust when asked if cattle health is a priority and if cattle are given room to roam.<sup>5</sup>



Source: Consumer Beef Tracker January – December 2023. CR4: “Thinking about how cattle are raised for food in the U.S., please tell us how much you trust each of the following statements.” Analysis: National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff.

Consumers tend to place an elevated level of trust in sources such as veterinarians, farmers, and government institutions. Amongst the consumers surveyed, veterinarians, farmers, and ranchers scored the highest at 62%, with organizations like the USDA-FDA and the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) placing third and fourth at 57% and 53%, respectively. Anecdotally, large media outlets such as The New York Times and Fox News ranked last at 26%.<sup>6</sup>

This emphasis on credible sources underscores the importance of transparency and reliability in building consumer trust within the industry. By fostering open communication and providing verifiable information about production practices, industry stakeholders can strengthen consumer trust and confidence in the beef supply chain.

Sustainability Is Only a Small Part of the Consumer Mindset

Despite concerns about health and sustainability, there are several factors that rank higher in terms of why consumers choose to purchase beef over other proteins. Data from the Consumer Beef Tracker reveals that taste, convenience, and nutritional value continue to drive consumer preferences when it comes to beef products. A full 80% of consumers plan to maintain or eat more beef in the future. Of the 15% that plan to eat more, they cite reasons such as taste, adding protein to their diet, and the fact that beef is quick and easy to prepare. Unsurprisingly, of the 14% who plan to eat less, their reasons include higher prices, other meats are healthier, and health concerns. Interestingly, only 2.8% of that group cites ‘Eating Less Beef is Better for the Environment’ as a reason to eat less.’ This simple fact illustrates that although sustainability



concerns amongst consumers are growing, it remains a small motivator when it comes to beef consumption.

Conclusion

The data from the Consumer Beef Tracker provides valuable insights into the evolving landscape of consumer behavior and sustainability in the beef industry. As consumers increasingly prioritize sustainability and transparency, there is a need for supply chain operators to understand and share more about how beef is raised for food, and for the industry to stay committed to continually improving its environmental, economic and social responsibility.

1. Kantar, ShopperScape Sightlines Deep Dive, Q1 – Q# 2023
2. Consumer awareness of food’s environmental impact is slowly growing, Food Dive // Dawn of the Climavores, Kearney; April 2022
3. Consumer Beef Tracker, 2018 – 2023. Q11: For the statement shown, please rate each protein based on your experiences. You can rate each protein anywhere from Agree Completely to Disagree Completely... The scale is set up so that no two proteins can have exactly the same rating, so you will need to place them in the order that you intend them to be.
4. Consumer Beef Tracker, 2018 – 2023. Q11: For the statement shown, please rate each protein based on your experiences. You can rate each protein anywhere from Agree Completely to Disagree Completely... The scale is set up so that no two proteins can have exactly the same rating, so you will need to place them in the order that you intend them to be.
5. Consumer Beef Tracker January – December 2023. CR4: “Thinking about how cattle are raised for food in the U.S., please tell us how much you trust each of the following statements.”
6. Consumer Beef Tracker January – December 2023. SI3: Please tell us how credible you find each of the following sources of information regarding the US meat industries’ production practices. (Top 2 Box).
7. Consumer Beef Tracker January – December 2023. Q3 Looking forward, do you plan to eat more, less, or about the same amount of each of the following? (Beef); Q13/Q14: “Earlier you mentioned that you plan to eat more/less beef. Which of the following statements are reasons why you plan to eat more/less beef in the future? (Select up to 5 statements)

Source: Consumer Beef Tracker January – December 2023. Q3 Looking forward, do you plan to eat more, less, or about the same amount of each of the following? (Beef); Q13/Q14: “Earlier you mentioned that you plan to eat more/less beef. Which of the following statements are reasons why you plan to eat more/less beef in the future? (Select up to 5 statements) Analysis: National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff.



# Nevada Youth Range Camp

## June 16<sup>th</sup> – June 22<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Berry Creek, NE. of McGill, NV  
Scholarships available, information below



High school youth are invited to enjoy a week of fun, camping and learning about rangelands and natural resource management in Nevada. Camp will be held in the Schell Creek Range providing a beautiful setting for learning. The purpose of this camp is to provide youth with the knowledge and understanding of how decisions are made about natural resources on Nevada's rangelands



This is a weeklong primitive camp, food is provided. Camping gear is required, see application for details!



#### Learning Modules Include:

- Soils
- Pinyon-Juniper Management
- Wildlife Management
- Riparian Interactions
- The Sagebrush Environment
- Coordinated Resource Management
- Orienteering
- Conservation project implementation

This camp is sponsored by the Nevada Section of the Society for Range Management. Registration is \$250 per camper if application is accepted. See <https://nevada-section-society-for-range-management.square.site/> for more details and application materials. Contact camp director for information about potential scholarships. Questions? Camp Director Ethan Mower - [emower@parks.nv.gov](mailto:emower@parks.nv.gov) 775-726-3564