

With A "Steak" In Montana's Future

P.O. Box 536
Vaughn, MT 59487

Web: www.montanacattlemen.org
Email: mca@montanacattlemen.org
Phone: 406-467-2251

"BEEF ON EVERY PLATE"

Proudly sponsored by MCA and its members to help those in need

The COVID-19 pandemic has been scary for all of us. We are all practicing the CDC guidelines in an effort to help curtail the spread of this deadly virus to keep our loved ones and neighbors safe and healthy. The virus has caused the closures or reductions of many meat packing plants where the virus has hit those workers hard. These closures and reductions have resulted in a severe downturn in cattle markets and shortages of meat in the supermarkets. Cattle producers are unable to sell their calves and culls at fair prices. And those Montana citizens who have lost their jobs are unable to purchase affordable protein to feed their families.

The "Beef on Every Plate" program established by MCA in 2007 is needed now, more than ever. This program is designed for cattle producers to donate a cow, bull, or steer that we will then have processed and delivered to local food banks. With cattle prices at livestock sales yards so low and to help those in need, please consider making a donation. If you don't have cattle to donate, cash donations are also needed to help pay for costs associated with processing the beef for the food banks.

Even before the pandemic one in nine Montanans struggled with hunger. USDA reports 10.3% of Montana households are "food insecure" and often skip meals or go to bed hungry, including the elderly and young children. Approximately 37,000 Montana children live in food insecure homes. These numbers have increased since the pandemic.

WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY? The inability to access food in a consistent manner, resulting in reduced quality or variety of diet. While food banks and federal nutrition programs have made severe hunger and malnutrition rare in this country, millions of low-income Americans are still faced with *food insecurity*.

WHAT IS HUNGER? *Hunger* is defined as the uneasy or painful sensation caused by lack of food. Hunger occurs when households must reduce food intake or skip meals because the household lacks money and other resources for food.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF HUNGER ARE SEVERE AND LONG-LASTING:

- Individuals experiencing food insecurity have increased rates of both physical and mental health challenges.
- Children struggling with hunger are more likely to have impaired cognitive development, lower math and reading scores, and higher rates of absenteeism.
- Food insecurity among seniors leads to a variety of health problems including an increased chance of being hospitalized, a worsening of chronic conditions, and a weakened immune system.

Hunger also has a significant economic impact on our state due to preventable health care costs, lower educational attainment, and lost productivity in the workforce. Low wages, job loss, and insufficient fixed incomes leave many families unable to keep food on the table while trying to afford the rising costs of housing, child care, and medical care. Limited access to food also contributes to hunger and food insecurity in Montana. Thirty of Montana's 56 counties have areas considered *food deserts*: low-income areas where at least 500 people and/or 33% of the residents must travel more than ten miles to the nearest supermarket (or 1 mile in urban areas). In Montana, nearly 72,000 individuals live in areas considered food deserts and have limited access to a grocery store or supermarket, making access to fresh, affordable food a daily challenge.

Hunger and food insecurity are worsened in our state due to the underutilization of the public food programs such as SNAP, WIC, School Breakfast, and the Summer Food Service Program. Lack of knowledge about the programs, confusion over eligibility, limited program availability in some areas, as well as the stigma of participating in public programs are some of the reasons participation in these excellent programs is not maximized, contributing to increased food insecurity rates in Montana.

As cattle producers, we always have beef in the freezer. Unfortunately, this is a luxury that too many Montanans do not share. Many on fixed incomes, single mothers, those who have lost their jobs, and the working poor simply cannot afford to purchase quality meat to feed their families. To help alleviate this problem, Montana Cattlemen's Foundation's **"BEEF ON EVERY PLATE"** program enables cattle producers to donate beef to help feed our neighbors. To date we have provided beef for over 263,000 meals!!

If you wish to donate a cow, bull, or steer, please call the Montana Cattlemen's Foundation 406-467-2251 to make arrangements. For those who do not own cattle, cash donations are also needed to help pay for costs associated with processing the beef. Montana Cattlemen's Foundation is working with the Montana Food Bank Network and others to distribute beef throughout the state. With your help we can provide assistance to Montanans in need!

Montana Cattlemen's Foundation for Research, Education and Endowment is a non-profit tax-exempt charitable foundation organized under IRS tax code Section 501(c)(3). All of your contributions are fully deductible. There are no administration costs, so 100% of your donation goes to this program!

Governor Bullock Announces \$123 Million Available in Emergency Grants

Grants available May 7 to support homeowners, renters, small businesses, public services

May 5 – Governor Steve Bullock today announced that families, small businesses, non-profits, health services centers and individuals across Montana hardest-hit by impacts of COVID-19 will be eligible to apply for grants through nine new programs created in response to the emergency.

Guided by more than 1,400 public comments and his Coronavirus Relief Fund Advisory Council, Governor Bullock is making \$123,550,000 available in the first round of emergency grants funded through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

“Montanans have made it clear it’s imperative that we step in and do everything possible to ensure small businesses can responsibly reopen, non-profits continue to serve our vibrant communities, homeowners can stay in their homes, and Montanans most in-need have access to services,” Governor Bullock said. **“We’re all in this together and I know Montana will emerge from this challenge even stronger than before.”**

Beginning Thursday, May 7, Montanans out of work, families with limited resources, small businesses, non-profits and others can apply for financial relief for things like rental and mortgage assistance, business and non-profit grants, grants to serve seniors and those living with a disability, food banks and local food producers.

The following new programs join the state’s suite of existing support services and direct federal appropriations:

The **Montana Business Stabilization Grant program** will provide working capital for Montana-owned small businesses with 50 or fewer employees that have sustained a loss of revenue due to COVID 19. Current funding available is \$50 million, the maximum award amount per business is \$10,000. **(Editors note: Montana Cattle producers could benefit from this program.)**

The **Montana Innovation Grant program** is intended to help companies scale up, improve capabilities, or drive expanded distribution of products or services developed in response to COVID-19. Non-profit and for-profit businesses of less than 150 employees with primary operations in Montana that have created an innovative product or service intended to directly confront the COVID-19 emergency can apply for grants of up to \$25,000. Current funding available is \$5 million.

Montana Food and Agriculture Adaptability Program grants are available to food and agriculture businesses to help increase community resilience amid the COVID-19 pandemic and other economic disruptions. Examples of eligible projects include those focused on accessing new markets, projects which strengthen and expand local food systems, and other business adaptations that decrease food and agricultural waste. Current funding available is \$500,000, with a maximum grant award of \$10,000.

Emergency Housing Assistance Program will provide rent, security deposit, mortgage payment, and/or hazard insurance assistance as-needed for Montanans who have lost a job or substantial income loss as a result of COVID-19. Initial payments may include up to three months assistance where the eligible household can demonstrate arrears for April and May, with continuable inability to make their June payment. Montana Housing will pay the difference between 30 percent of the household’s current gross monthly income and their eligible housing assistance costs, up to \$2,000 a month. Household income limits range from \$75,000-\$125,000 based on family size. Montanans receiving other forms of housing assistance are not eligible. Total funding available is \$50 million.

Public Health Grants are available to local and tribal health departments and urban tribal clinics to help in the response to COVID-19 and to meet the needs of their communities. Each organization is eligible to apply for funding. Current funding available is \$5 million.

Stay Connected Grants ranging from \$500-\$2,000 per applicant are available to reduce social isolation among Montana’s seniors. Eligible applicants include area agencies on aging, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and tribal elder services. Grant funds can be used to fund technologies and other efforts to encourage physically distant forms of social interaction for elderly Montanans during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Current funding available is \$400,000.

Food Bank and Food Pantry Assistance of up to \$50,000 per applicant are available to increase food security for Montanans hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible applicants include community organizations providing food assistance to Montanans with limited resources, food banks, food pantries, community cupboards, and entities with infrastructures already in place to begin new food distribution programs. Current funding available is \$2 million.

Social Services Nonprofit Grants of up to \$10,000 per applicant are available for nonprofit organizations impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency to retain existing programs and services, employees, or organizational viability for provision of future services and operations. Eligible applicants are registered, Montana-based social service nonprofits that were operating prior to February 15, 2020. Current funding available is \$10 million.

Telework Assistance Grants of up to \$1,000 per individual will go towards purchasing equipment to assist Montanans with disabilities access telework equipment. DPHHS will partner with a local non-profit organization to assess and support assistive technology needs of individuals with disabilities during COVID-19. This assistance will help ensure people with disabilities have the equipment needed to adapt to the change in working environment due to COVID -19. Current funding available is \$650,000.

A comprehensive information resource and application portal is available at COVIDRELIEF.MT.GOV. The application portion of the website will go live at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 7. To prepare for the application, businesses and non-profits should have their tax ID, proof of business registration, a brief description of how the grant will be spent, and a brief description of how COVID-19 has impacted operations. Homeowners and renters should have bank account information available and verification of job or income loss.

MCA RAFFLE



LAST FALL, “AN OLD MONTANA GAL” SENT A MESSAGE TO MCA: She had a Heiser saddle (see photo) that was collecting dust and felt the saddle should come back to Montana, so she donated it to MCA!!

Hermann H. Heiser Saddlery Company produced saddles and tack in the mid 1800's until 1955. The famous HHH saddles were known for their high quality and craftsmanship and were highly sought after worldwide. By 1917 the Hermann H. Heiser Company was the largest manufacturer of saddlery goods in the West. The company remained a family business for 87 years. The logo embossed on this saddle dates the saddle between 1920-1950.

MCA's board elected to raffle the saddle at our 2020 Cattlemen's Day in December. The raffle tickets will be available starting June 1st and can be purchased from any MCA board member, or direct through the MCA office. Tickets are \$20.00 each or 6 for \$100.00. **AS A BONUS**, a complimentary ticket will be mailed to all those who have paid their \$50.00 membership dues for 2020.

Contact information for our board members are on our website montanacattlemen.org or mail a request to PO Box 536, Vaughn, MT 59487 and Jan will send the tickets by return mail.

RAFFLE TICKETS—\$20.00 each or 6 for \$100.00

Good luck!

Notices . . .

FACEBOOK PAGE:

Please go to our website www.montanacattlemen.org and click on the **Facebook** icon located on the rightside column for updates to the cattle industry.

HELP IS REALLY NEEDED:

If any member with secretarial/computer skills has an extra 2 to 4 hours per month to help send out membership notices, press releases, newsletters, correspondence, etc., please contact Jan at 406-467-2251.

MONTANA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION WISHES ALL OUR MEMBERS HEALTH AND HAPPINESS. WE ARE ALL WORKING TOGETHER AND NEED EACH OTHER'S SUPPORT.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATE

We had a good response from the last newsletter regarding the election of our 2020 board. We now have a complete board. The 2020 MCA Board of Directors is as follows:

PRESIDENT:	GILLES STOCKTON	Grass Range, MT	406-428-2183
VICE PRESIDENT:	WALLY CONGDON	Missoula, MT	406-925-1351
SECRETARY:	KELLY CLARKE	Polson, MT	
TREASURER:	JAN MCDONALD	Vaughn, MT	406-467-2251

WESTERN DISTRICT DIRECTORS:			
	BRUCE LEE	Choteau MT	406-466-2488
	KEN MORRIS	Fairfield, MT	406-467-2038

CENTRAL DISTRICT DIRECTORS:			
	COLTER DEVRIES	Billings, MT	406-425-1027
	CASEY MCDONALD	Big Timber, MT	406-861-0173

EASTERN DISTRICT DIRECTORS:			
	WALLY HARBAUGH	Jordan, MT	406-557-2865

AT LARGE DIRECTORS:			
	JIM BAKER	Hot Springs, MT	406-741-3680
	DOUG CAMPBELL	Harlowton, MT	406-632-4304
	BEN PETERSON	Judith Gap, MT	406-366-4814
	NEWELL ROCHE	Lewistown, MT	406-535-5288

BUSINESS DIRECTOR:	ROSS MICKEALSON	Great Falls, MT	406-530-2393
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To determine the districts served by the above directors, please refer to the map below. At large directors represent the entire state, as does the business director.



MCA appreciates the time and effort our members volunteer to help make Montana Cattlemen's Association successful in representing Montana cattle producers.

MCA is a member driven, grassroots organization committed to ensuring profitability for the Montana cattle industry. We have no paid staff, so members who would like to volunteer to head a committee or represent MCA in some other capacity are encouraged to contact any of the board members listed above to discuss how you can help.

Right now we are in dire need of someone to help with some of the secretarial tasks, such as mailing out memberships, preparing the newsletter, sending out press releases and correspondence, helping to organize our annual Cattlemen's Day event, etc. So if any MCA member who has secretarial/computer skills would like to volunteer two to four hours of their time per month please contact Jan at 406-467-2251. We need you!!

Pandemic prices could shutter Montana ranches

By **Johnathan Hettinger**, Montana Free Press

Some Montana ranchers will likely go out of business due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Livestock told state legislators last week. Montana cattle producers are facing enormous uncertainty after restaurant closures and COVID-19 outbreaks at meat processing plants across the country caused severe disruptions in the meat supply chain and reduced demand for cattle. Cattle prices have dropped about 30% since January.

"Potentially, we will see some attrition in the number of producers, as some producers may not be able to make it through the term" said Mike Honeycutt, executive officer of the Montana Department of Livestock, during an interim Economic Affairs Committee meeting on Thursday, April 30.

The majority of Montana ranchers are cow-calf producers, breeding and grazing in Montana before selling the larger calves to feedlots out of state. Recent projections from Oklahoma State University predict Montana ranchers may have to sell those cattle for \$111 less per head.

"Ranchers are scared as hell," said Gilles Stockton, a rancher near Grass Range and president of the Montana Cattlemen's Association. "They have no clue what their calves might be worth in the fall." Stockton said he's especially concerned about younger ranchers and those that are highly leveraged with debt. Stockton said he can see the pandemic-pinch market putting ranchers out of business.

Though agriculture remains Montana's top industrial sector, the value of animal production in Montana fell from \$2.2 billion in 2014 to \$1.5 billion in 2018, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"With this disruption, it just compounds the losses," Stockton said. "It's harder and harder to talk your banker into supporting your next year."

Right now, ranchers are having a hard time finding anyone to buy their cattle, and anyone who finds a buyer is losing money, Honeycutt said. Over the next year, Honeycutt said he expects ranchers to reduce the size of their herds across the state.

"We do have to be prepared for some systemic long-term impacts to our system," Honeycutt said.

EFFECTS GO BEYOND CATTLE

Upheavals in ranching will have "cascading impacts" on other businesses and state revenue, Honeycutt said. Though cattle producers are the largest sector of Montana's livestock economy, other types of producers are also impacted by the pandemic.

"I would say there's not been any sector of the animal protein and livestock industry that has not been affected: cattle, swine, poultry, sheep and lambs, wool," Honeycutt said. Montana's dairy producers are dumping milk. Other states have already seen hogs and chickens euthanized, and Montana is "getting its carcass disposal plant ready to go," Honeycutt said.

"We typically use those plants to deal with a foreign animal disease outbreak. I did not realize we might have to be executing those plans for this type of a crisis," he said. Montana swine producers are losing \$5 per head on any animal they ship right now, Honeycutt said. Over the next few months, he expects producers to slow the growth of their animals and hold onto them as long as possible.

USDA GUIDANCE

Congress has passed \$16 billion in coronavirus relief funds aimed at agriculture, but it's unclear when that money will be available and how much will go to each industry, Honeycutt said. "This relief needs to come soon," he said.

The Interim Economic Affairs Committee voted to write a letter to the USDA asking for guidance about when the \$16 billion will be available to ag producers.

Additionally, with processing facilities having gone offline in April, food banks that have recently seen up to 300% increases in demand have been unable to get meat. Honeycutt encouraged the committee to ask the USDA for waivers to allow custom meat processors in Montana to slaughter livestock for food banks during the pandemic. The committee agreed. Senators Jon Tester and Steve Daines and Gov. Steve Bullock have also asked the USDA for a waiver.

"It really concerns me that we're dumping and euthanizing and we're creating a big old circle of food shortage," said Chairwoman Sharon Stewart Peregoy, a Democrat from Crow Agency. "This really shows us we have the capacity to be self sufficient, and we need to return to that."

'CONTROLLED GOING OUT OF BUSINESS'

Stockton said he doesn't have statistics other than market price on how ranchers are being affected, but that current conditions could be a breaking point for many. "We've been going out of business at a steady rate for decades," said Stockton, 74. "It's been a controlled going of business."

He then navigated a mental map of the road bounding his Fergus County ranch, counting from his start in ranching. "One, two, three, four," he said, pausing between each number to imagine a bygone ranch. "Five, six, seven. Just in this valley, along this road, there were seven independent farm ranchers. Today there's three. We just had to get bigger and bigger."

Honeycutt told the committee he's not sure today's ranchers will be able to absorb those opportunities like they have in the past. "Typically what has happened is, as producers go out, someone usually takes on that production," Honeycutt said. "I don't know that we will continue to see that trend."

March 26, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President;

We are writing to inform you how the Coronavirus emergency has made a bad situation in rural America much worse. Ranchers and cattlemen in Montana and across the nation have been struggling from “below cost of production” cattle prices for the past five years. The disastrous decline of cattle prices dates to 2015, the year that Congress rescinded Country of Origin labeling (COOL). *Please see the attached graph (back page of this newsletter).*

The price discovery system for the cattle market is clearly dysfunctional, and subject to chronic manipulation by the beef packing cartel. “Captive supply” purchasing practices has eliminated the publicly traded market for fat cattle. Couple that with the strategic use of beef imports, and the result is a permanent down market for all classes of cattle. The beef packing cartel receives record profits while the cattle producers’ share of the consumer dollar is at an all-time low, and getting lower.

This pandemic has resulted in a further collapse of the live cattle markets which has nothing to do with market fundamentals. Consumers are buying beef and retail prices are high, it is just the price of live cattle that has gone down. Beef packers and retailers are using this medical emergency to further profit at the expense of Americans family cattle feeders and ranchers. We are asking you to implement a series of market reforms that will immediately restore competitive forces to the cattle markets:

1. The first order of business would be to assist those ranchers and cattle feeders that in the past years have lost livestock to fire, horrendous winter storms, flooding, and drought. As a result of the current extremely low cattle prices, these families find themselves tested to the limit. An emergency payment under the Commodity Credit Corporation will help struggling families survive the immediate emergency. In addition, a program offering low interest bank loan guarantees will allow ranch and farm families to plan for the future.
2. Issue an executive order restoring mandatory Country of Origin Labeling and eliminating the loophole that allows imported beef to be labeled “Product of the USA.”
3. Suspend beef imports until the United States Dollar (USD) exchange rate returns to normal historical levels. Just since March ninth, when the Federal Reserve began to intervene in the economy, the USD has appreciated significantly against the currencies of all of the major beef importing countries. This has put an even greater downward pressure on the cattle market. In just two weeks there has been a 15% devaluation of the Australian Dollar, an 8.5% devaluation of the Brazilian Real, and a 6.8% devaluation of the Canadian Dollar. Cheap beef imports have been a major negative factor in our cattle markets and the devaluation of the currency of the countries that export their beef to our country, is a factor that US cattle producers should not be required to face alone.
4. Issue a directive to the Secretary of Agriculture to immediately began rulemaking ending “Captive Supply” practices by the beef packing cartel which circumvents competitive public trading in cattle. A mechanism for Captive Supply Reform has been proposed by the Western Organization of Resource Councils (*Federal Register Vol 62, No. 9, Tuesday, January 14, 1997*) and by Senators Grassley, Enzi, and Tester (*Captive Supply Reform Act, 110th Congress. S 1017*). By implementing Captive Supply Reform, Secretary Purdue will restore competition and functionality to cattle markets.
5. Immediately suspend trading in cattle futures until major reforms are enacted. Hedge Funds and electronic trading, has eliminated any correlation between live cattle markets and futures prices. Fluctuations in the futures negatively affects live cattle prices with real life consequences to the people who legitimately need to use the futures market.
6. Prohibit all imports of fresh beef from Brazil until the country is certified to be free of Foot and Mouth Disease.

Mr. President, you will note that our requests, except for the first, will have no impact on the budget. They are instead market reforms that cattlemen have been desperately requesting for these past number of years. The situation in the heartland is critical, and this is why we ask for help for those ranch and farming families who have not only been dealing with disastrous commodity prices but have also faced serious weather-related calamities. However, the best and most permanent cure for the struggling rural economy is to restore competition and functionality in the markets for the food produced by America’s family farms and ranches. This is how we will Make America Great Again.

Sincerely Yours,



Gilles Stockton
President Montana Cattlemen’s Association

cc: Senator Jon Tester, Senator Steve Daines, Representative Greg Gianforte, Secretary Sonny Perdue

THE LOSS OF ONE OF AMERICA'S LAST GREAT ARENA OF COMPETITION

By Leo McDonnell, Columbus, MT

Pat Goggin's, who was one of the greatest advocates for rancher's and preserving a competitive market based on market fundamentals, always said it takes a little government to maintain a free market. I don't think Pat was talking about a free market where you were free to do whatever you want to whomever you want. I'm pretty sure with his love for this country, this industry and his Faith, he was talking about a market that was free of oppression and one that offered opportunity. Kind of what this country was founded on. With a system of checks & balances.

What we've seen happen in our cattle markets starting in 2015 and by end of 2016 with a \$700.00 increase in Packer margins has nothing to do with a free market responding to fundamental demand indicators.

While we've seen one of the greatest periods for retail beef demand, we've also seen a cattle market that has collapsed against beef demand since 2015, due to the concentration in our packing industry and the character of many of these folks. The Holcomb plant fire in August has only seemed to empower the major packers. All evidence by the price gouging we've seen with the Coronavirus epidemic - and they are feeling empowered.

No doubt price gouging is taking place. Choice cuts went up to \$44.50/cwt in just 3 days, live cattle prices fell in the last 3-4 weeks to \$112.00/cwt and this week's kill is exceeding 2019 levels. Choice Cutout has never rallied that much in just 3 days – it's historical and at the time of this writing is at \$250.51.

That's the highest Boxed Beef since March 2015 when we had fat cattle at a little over \$160.00 instead the \$112, we see today. On a 1400 lb. steer that's \$700/head increase in packer margins. The demand for beef is great; in fact, historical, as reported this week, "Many beef items are sold out at the packer level 2-3 weeks...and some retailers are hiring more employees, even raising wages as grocer's strive to restock". Price Gouging is often considered "Price increases do not appear to be supported by increased costs".

The COVID-19 epidemic has served to magnify a trend that started in late 2015 in cattle price suppression and by 2018 & 2019 we saw annual fed cattle prices below \$120.00, the first time since 2011. In fact, 2019 annual averages were \$5.82 for All Retail Beef. \$222.86 for Choice Boxed Beef, but only \$114.70 for the 5-area steer price. Basically the same price as 2011 when we had All Beef Retail at \$4.44 and Choice Boxed Beef at \$181.29. Also interesting to note, that Beef Packers margins were pretty good back in 2011 as noted on August 31, 2011 when the CME reported, "Beef packer margins have been generally good in 2011."

The last time we had price trends for any period of time in All Retail and Boxed Beef that close to these 2019 prices was in the first half of 2016, after the spread in feeder/packer margins had started expanding. For that period fed cattle averaged \$131.25. Interesting during this period from 2011-2019, U.S. Beef Production had increased only by 3.4% over those 9 years while beef export demand expanded, the number of consumers increased, and U.S. consumer spending hit a record high in 2019.

This is not a fairness issue this is a corruption issue. With the concentration we have in the Beef Packing business, it's important to note that collusion doesn't even require these packers talking to each other or making side deals. Concentration at this level takes on a completely different set of collusions dynamics. That's why a large group of us from across the U.S. are putting pressure on the Justice Department to put opportunity and greatness back into the rancher's and independent feeders' hands. When you look at the impact of production agriculture in our U.S. economy and all the downstream entities we impact and support entities behind them it's huge.

I'm not going to confuse this issue with what's going on in the retail sector or the CME, but along the way those discussions need to happen also. Don't leave the cow and bull plants out, as since late 2015 I believe it's even worse.

From the Desk of . . .

George Edwards
Livestock Loss Board
Executive Director
Helena, MT
gedwards@mt.gov
<http://llb.mt.gov>
406-444-5609



Apply now for livestock loss prevention grants. The Livestock Loss Board has \$80,000 available for wolf only loss prevention projects. Limited money will be available for grizzly bear loss prevention projects. Applications are available on our website www.llb.mt.gov or by calling our office. The deadline for applications is June 30, 2020. All projects must be for loss prevention for the following animals: cattle, sheep, horses, mules, goats, swine or llamas. Other animals such as chickens or bison are not eligible for our loss prevention grant funds. Also agricultural crop damage prevention is not covered by our board.

There is a 50-50 match requirement for all grants. This can be in the form of cash, in-kind work or a combination of both. None of the required match can include anything you are already receiving from federal sources. The grant period for wolf only projects is from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. Our grizzly bear loss prevention funding is from state sources. The grant period for these grants are one year from when they are approved by the board.

Our board will not know how much money is available for grizzly loss prevention grants until mid-July. Board members will be holding a board meeting either in July or early August to award these grants. Use separate grant forms for wolf and grizzly related projects. They will be reviewed separately as each type of grant has a different funding source.

Up to ten percent of the total applied for may include administrative costs. Keep in mind that if an excessive value is listed for these costs, the board may reject your administrative costs for matching values. Please be reasonable if listing these values. The same thing would apply to values for in-kind values for labor, materials, and/or equipment time on projects. Be specific in all aspects in your description of the grant. For example, the number of estimated hours and wages for range riders, type and number of livestock covered or fencing materials. If applying for a grant to purchase a guard dog and/or dog food, include the receipts if already purchased in 2020. Any part of a project occurring before January 1, 2020 is not eligible for grant funding.

All projects must be for loss prevention due to wolves, grizzly bears or mountain lions. Loss prevention grants are not available for other predators such as coyotes, fox, eagles, etc...

Please contact me for more information or to apply for a livestock prevention grant.

George Edwards
Montana Livestock Loss Board

Livestock Loss Board

The Montana Livestock Loss Board was established by the legislature in 2007 to address economic losses due to wolf predation and to create incentives for producers to take proactive, preventative steps to decrease the risk of loss.

The purpose of the Montana Livestock Loss Program is to acknowledge the importance of economic viability and sustainability of individual livestock operators in Montana who are negatively affected by wolves, grizzly bears or mountain lions. Specifically, the purpose of the loss reduction and mitigation programs are:

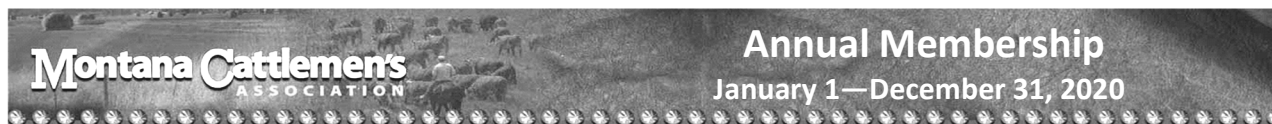
- To provide financial reimbursements to producers for losses caused by wolves, grizzly bears or mountain lions based on program criteria.
- To proactively apply prevention tools and incentives to decrease the risk of wolf, grizzly bear or mountain lion caused losses.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS WERE DUE JANUARY 1, 2020. IF YOU HAVE NOT YET RENEWED YOUR DUES, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW OR RENEW ONLINE AT: mca@montanacattlemen.org/Membership

IF YOU JOIN MCA OR RENEW YOUR 2020 DUES FOR ONLY \$50 YOU WILL RECEIVE A COMPLIMENTARY RAFFLE TICKET FOR THE "HHH" ANTIQUE SADDLE (See page 3 of this newsletter)



A



Name: _____

Spouse Name: _____

Ranch Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Membership Dues:

Cattle Producer ~ \$50 _____

Associate Member ~ \$50 _____

College Student ~ \$25 _____

Junior Member ~ \$25
(Age 18 & younger) _____

OR ~ Optional Premier Memberships:

Gene Autry level ~ \$100 per year _____

Roy Rogers level ~ \$150 per year _____

John Wayne level ~ \$200 per year _____

Additional Optional Contribution _____

Own cattle: ____Yes ____No

Tribal member: ____Yes ____No

TOTAL AMOUNT SUBMITTED: \$ _____

Only members owning cattle have voting rights ~ One member—one vote

**MONTANA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 536 ~ Vaughn, MT 59487**

Please make copies of this membership form for multiple memberships or to share with your friends and neighbors.

Your continued support of Montana Cattlemen's Association is very much appreciated!

July 15th Deadline for FSA Maps - 2020 Acreage Reporting/Crop Certification

USDA Farm Service Agency offices in Montana are currently open to phone and virtual appointments only; but can still work with producers on timely filing crop acreage reports. FSA staff can provide assistance over the phone, by email and through virtual meetings via a software program called Microsoft Teams. The deadline for acreage certification is **July 15, 2020**, and applies to crops such as **spring alfalfa seed, CRP, perennial forage (not covered by NAP), annually spring seeded crops, and any other crop not reported by a previous deadline.**

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers, including livestock producers, must file an accurate crop acreage report by the deadline. FSA staff is available to assist producers in completing acreage reports and providing maps. Certification plans may vary by office, so customers can assist FSA by:

- Paying close attention to email or mail from their county FSA office that outlines the process put in place for 2020 spring certification in their office and following the requested steps; and

- Keeping good records of what is planted, where and when it is planted, and ensuring that information is accurately reported on the maps and provided to FSA as soon as possible following the completion of planting.

Producers are encouraged to work with their county office to arrange for completing the certification process using available options. Upon receipt of completed maps, FSA will make software updates and contact the producer to obtain signatures on the FSA-578 to complete the certification process by the July 15 deadline. Crops not certified by this date may be subject to late-filed fees. The following exceptions apply to the July 15 acreage reporting date:

- If the crop has not been planted by the acreage reporting deadline, the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.

- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the acreage reporting date, the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after the purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation to support the newly acquired land must be provided to the county office.

- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the **earlier of** July 15, 2020 or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop.

Important FSA Dates to Remember for Montana Producers

Montana producers are reminded of the following FSA dates and deadlines. Contact your local FSA office for assistance.

- **June 1:** Last day to apply for a 2019 crop marketing assistance loan or LDP for harvested Corn, Dry Peas, Grain Sorghum, Lentils, Mustard Seed, Rice, Safflower Seed, Chickpeas, Soybeans and Sunflower Seed.
- **June 15:** Nominations Open for 2020 FSA County Committee Elections
- **June 30:** Last day of 2020 Agricultural Risk Coverage Price Loss Coverage Enrollment Period
- **July 15:** 2020 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Spring Seeded Alfalfa Seed, Forage Seeding, CRP, Perennial Forage not covered under NAP, Annually Seeded Spring Crops, and all other crops not required to be reported by a previous reporting date. *Please note that this is the final date that FSA can accept late-filed 2019 reports for these crops.*
- **July 16:** First day of 2020 CRP Summer/Fall Non-Emergency Grazing and Harvesting Periods (*prior approval required*)
- **Aug. 3:** Last day to file nominations for 2020 FSA County Committee Elections to FSA (or postmarked)
- **Aug. 3:** Deadline to request a farm reconstitution or farm transfer for 2020.
- **Aug. 15:** 2020 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Hemp
- **Aug. 21:** Last day of Soil Health and Income Protection Program (SHIPP) Pilot Signup Period
- **Aug. 31:** Last day of 2020 CRP Summer/Fall Non-Emergency Harvesting Period (*prior approval required*)
- **Aug. 31:** All Hay Bales Must be Removed from Non-Emergency Conservation Reserve Program Acreage
- **Sept. 1:** 2021 NAP Coverage Application Closing Date for all Canola (Winter and Spring Seeded) and Value-Loss Crops such as Nursery, Christmas Trees, Grass Sod, Ginseng, Aquaculture, Floriculture, Root Stock Sets and Mushrooms
- **Sept. 30:** Deadline to update PLC payment yields
- **Sept. 30:** 2021 NAP Application for Coverage Deadline for Annual Fall-Seeded Crops, Perennial Forage and Grazing, Mixed Forage Crops (including spring seeded annual types of mixed forage), Rye, Speltz, Triticale, Wheat and Garlic

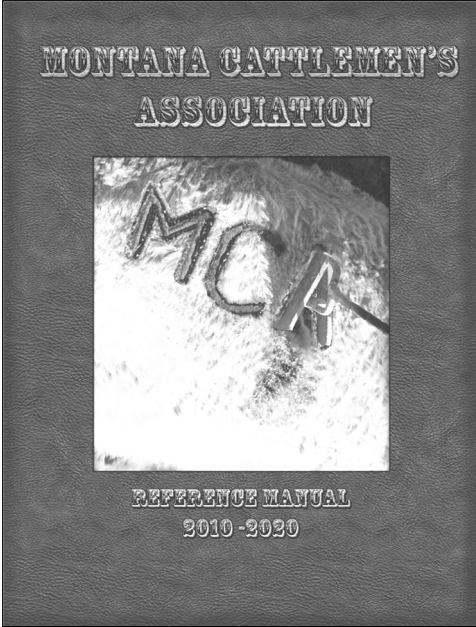
Ongoing FSA Notice of Loss Requirements:

NAP – Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program: Submit Notice of Loss within 15 calendar days of the earlier of a natural disaster occurrence, the final planting date if planting is prevented by a natural disaster, the date that damage to the crop or loss of production becomes apparent; or the normal harvest date.

ELAP – Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program: Submit Notice of Loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or Nov. 1st after the end of the program year in which the loss occurred.

LIP - Livestock Indemnity Program: Submit Notice of Loss within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.

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