

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

MCA PRESIDENT GILLES STOCKTON TESTIFIES AT U.S. HOUSE AG COMMITTEE

“An Examination of Price Discrepancies, Transparency, and Alleged Unfair Practices in Cattle Markets”

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Opening Statement for Congressional Hearing



Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. My name is Gilles Stockton. I raise sheep and cattle near Grass Range Montana. Today, I am representing the Montana Cattlemen’s Association of which I am president, and the Northern Plains Resource Council. The mission of both these organizations is to preserve family agriculture and the rural communities upon which we depend.

I took over the family ranch in 1975, the same year that I graduated from Montana State University with a Master’s Degree in Animal Science. My wife and I started ranching with nothing except our degrees. My parents were as generous as they could afford to be. We had a loan from the Farmers Home Administration which was the most effective program USDA ever had. With this, we were able to make it work.

However, looking at the current economics of production agriculture, it is now impossible for beginning farmers and ranchers. We are losing

an entire generation of motivated, talented, and trained young men and women, because they cannot afford to take over the family farm or ranch. The economic realities just do not allow it.

In 1975, the concentration in the beef packing industry had four firms controlling 25% of the market. Today they monopolize 85%. I lived and ranched through the entire period that has seen the beef industry become subservient to a monopoly cartel.

In 1975, the year I started ranching, the farm to retail spread for beef stood at 71.3%. We ranchers and feeders were able to retain 71.3 cents of every dollar spent by the consumer at the grocery store. In 2021 the farm to retail spread was 36.5%. Over the course of my career in ranching, the primary producers of beef lost more than one third of the dollar spent by consumers. This is money that does not come back to me, my fellow ranchers, or my community. In terms that are very concrete, in 1979 I purchased a one-ton four-wheel drive truck from the proceeds of selling 18 calves. The equivalent truck today would cost me 59 calves.

I do not want to give you the impression that I am looking for sympathy. Far from it. I have had a wonderful life working in an occupation that I love. I experienced as a routine part of my day activities that many people can just dream of. I have been blessed to have two wonderful women willing to put up with me. My first wife passed away in 2003. Between us, we have three sons. One of whom has volunteered to look after my sheep, which are currently having their lambs. Without his help, I could not be here today.

My concern is for my community, the future of agriculture, and the future of food security for this nation. My community of Grass Range has over the course of my life as a rancher dried up and blown away like a tumbleweed. The Cheap Food Policy has been extraordinarily effective. Over the past half century Rural America has been impoverished and hollowed out. Now, from Grass Range Montana to Lumpkin Georgia, rural America is a very large, underpopulated slum.

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There is no part of the US Agricultural system that is not oppressed by monopolized dysfunctional markets. This is both for where we sell the food to where we buy our inputs. The American people are not being served by this system. We saw this in the disruptions to the beef supply during the pandemic. Illness in the packing plants slowed the processing of cattle resulting in empty shelves in the meat counter. The packing cartel was able to profit by buying cattle for less and selling beef for more. I am sure that we will hear today how this is all about supply and demand. But it is also about having our entire meat production system funneled through a very narrow bottle neck where packers can exploit both producers and consumers.

Recent research from Georgetown University reveals that for every 1% increase in the level of captive supply cattle procurement there is a 5.9% decrease in the price of cattle. The levels of captive supplies now approach 80%. Another study from Iowa State University shows that beef packers are leveraging their market power across their multiple plants, further eroding true price discovery in the cattle market.

What to do? Actually, it is not that complicated. First, pass the American Beef Labeling Act. It is absurd that beef and pork are the only food or manufactured items that do not carry a country-of-origin label. American consumers have the right to know the origins of their beef purchases and cattle producers have the right to a fair and transparent market.

Second, do what your colleagues did in 1921. Require that the beef packers buy their cattle in a competitive and transparent marketplace that they neither own nor control. This is what the Consent Decree that accompanied the passage of the Packers and Stockyards Act required. It was a perfectly free market approach that worked.

Why is this important? Your children's and grandchildren's food security is dependent upon your actions to restore competition to agricultural markets. Our entire food system is balanced on a very narrow vulnerable base. We are witnessing extremes in weather phenomena. The western third of America is in the worse drought experienced in the last 1200 years. We see the effects in dramatic wildfires that have burned millions of homes. I just had to sell a quarter of my cattle because there is no grass for the mothers and babies to graze. The south, from Texas to Virginia, is being hammered by storm after storm. The prediction is that these weather extremes will only get worse. Unless this country moves to reverse a half a century of bad rural policy the American people will find themselves with an unreliable, extremely expensive, food supply.

PRODUCT OF THE USA LABEL CONTROVERSY

By Ken Morris, MCA Director

In March of 2020 the USDA made a statement that the present definition of the Product in USA label was confusing consumers. The admission came in response to a petition filed by the United States Cattlemen's Association about accurate labeling. At present, simply repackaging imported beef once it enters the USA allows this product to carry the Product of USA label.

There is proposed legislation in Congress that seeks to redefine this voluntary label to be used **only** on products from cattle born, raised and harvested in the USA (Senate Bill 2623 and House Bill 4973, the USA Beef Act). The USDA has also stated that the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) division of the USDA has the authority to enforce the correct use of such a label going so far as to propose fine amounts for each instance of misuse.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), which claims it is the voice of the American cattle producer, on the other hand has petitioned the USDA to stop the corruptive use of the present Product of USA label on beef products by eliminating it altogether. In its place they propose a blanket Processed in USA label which could be placed on any beef, whether it is imported or domestically produced.

A public comment period has just closed initiated by FSIS asking for a survey of American's opinions on this important matter. The vast majority of those surveyed wanted a truthful Product of USA label on the beef they purchase. Additionally, a statement made in the comments from the Consumer Federation of America claims a poll they conducted found that 88% of those consumers questioned wanted a truthful origin label on the meat they buy.

Perhaps the most interesting statement was from the National Chicken Council which said at the end of its comments, "NCC urges FSIS to keep in mind the important role that **origin** labeling plays for American consumers of chicken products and to ensure that FSIS policy continues to allow this important information to be conveyed to consumers". It should also be noted here that much of the chicken sold at retail in the USA is subject to Mandatory USDA Country of Origin Labeling.

As an American cattle producer organization, the Montana Cattlemen's Association finds it strange that we agree more with the National Chicken Council than we do with the NCBA on this important issue. Please join MCA to help support the cattle industry's USA labeling rules.

For more information please visit www.montanacattlemen.org/news/

Committee opposes measure to cap residential property taxes in Montana

By: Jonathon Ambarian, KRTV

HELENA — On Tuesday, April 19, state lawmakers said they've heard the message that Montanans are concerned about rising property taxes – but that a proposed constitutional amendment isn't the right way to address the issue.

The Revenue Interim Committee voted unanimously Tuesday to oppose Constitutional Initiative 121, which would cap taxes on residential property in the state. Lawmakers said the measure would put the Legislature in the position of having to either reduce revenues for local government services or shift the tax burden to other sources.

"I think that's part of what we want the folks out there in Montana to understand about this initiative: There's no good choices for the Legislature in order to implement this," said Sen. Jill Cohenour, D-East Helena, the committee's chair.

The vote does not have any binding effect.

Advocates are currently collecting signatures, trying to get CI-121 on the November ballot. The measure would base residential property's assessed value on what it was in 2019, then limit any increases in value to no more than 2% per year, based on the rate of inflation. Property could be reassessed to its new market value only after it's sold or substantially improved. CI-121 would also limit total residential property taxes to 1% of the assessed value.

Bozeman attorney Matthew Monforton and Montana State Auditor Troy Downing are sponsoring the measure. "People are going to continue to move into Montana, there's going to continue to be upward pressure on real estate values here in Montana and upward pressure on property taxes, and we need to do something about that, or more of us are going to start getting taxed out of our home," Monforton told MTN.

State analysts estimate CI-121 could reduce property tax collections by about \$175 million a year, starting in 2024. Much of the impact could fall on local governments – including cities, counties and school districts.

During Tuesday's hearing, lawmakers heard a panel discussion where groups including the Montana Chamber of Commerce, Montana Association of Counties, Montana League of Cities and Towns expressed concerns about the measure's potential effects.

"Let me be clear: Passage of CI-121 would create chaos across the state," said Montana Chamber President and CEO Todd O'Hair.

Those speaking Tuesday argued CI-121 could disrupt local government services, lead to higher taxes or fees on businesses and make it harder for local governments to borrow money for large construction projects.

Lawmakers said they understood why the sponsors brought CI-121, but that they believed there needed to be a more extensive discussion about the tax system before making such a significant change.

"This is an issue that really needs to be discussed in a full legislative session to discuss comprehensive tax reform in our state, and take it piece by piece, responsibly and effectively and efficiently," said Rep. Becky Beard, R-Elliston.

Sen. Greg Hertz, R-Polson, said he doubts the worst-case scenarios local governments have laid out would occur if CI-121 passes, but he agreed it's not the best way to move forward. "It's an administrative nightmare," he said.

Monforton said the measure is designed to cap the rate of growth, not cut existing revenues, and he argued leaders shouldn't be relying on large tax increases to operate.

"It's a great system for legislators, for special interests, for government bureaucrats," he said. "It's good for everyone except Montana homeowners."

Monforton said Tuesday's discussion was a "farce" since no supporters of CI-121 were invited to sit on the panel. He said he didn't trust the Legislature to make serious property tax reforms if the measure doesn't go forward.

Still, committee members said looking into CI-121 has given them more understanding of the property tax issue, and they're willing to start looking at what can be done to address it.

"If nothing else, this initiative has brought us together to have a more thorough discussion about how we can help those that need it most in the state of Montana," said Cohenour.

On Tuesday afternoon, the committee did have a discussion about some other possible options for reducing residential property taxes – such as a "circuit breaker" program to provide relief for lower-income households or expanding existing assistance for people on limited or fixed incomes. It's part of a larger study being done into the property tax system, set up during last year's legislative session.

Livestock Risk Protection

Feeder Cattle (LRP-Feeder Cattle) is designed to insure against declining market prices. You may choose from a variety of coverage levels and insurance periods that match the time your feeder cattle would normally be marketed (ownership may be retained). You may buy LRP-Feeder Cattle insurance throughout the year from Risk Management Agency (RMA)-approved livestock insurance agents. Premium rates, coverage prices, and actual ending values are posted online daily.

You may choose coverage prices ranging from 70 to 100 percent of the expected ending value. At the end of the insurance period, if the actual ending value is below the coverage price, you will be paid an indemnity for the difference between the coverage price and actual ending value. Visit RMA's website to see the LRP-Feeder Cattle program's coverage prices, rates, actual ending values, and per hundredweight insurance cost (see useful links). Actual ending values are based on weighted average prices, from the Chicago Mercantile Exchange Group Feeder Cattle Index. Actual ending values are posted on RMA's website at the end of the insurance period.

Daily LRP Coverage Prices, Rates, and Actual Ending Values: rma.usda.gov/Information-Tools/Livestock-Reports

Coverage is available for:

- Calves;
- Steers;
- Heifers;
- Predominantly Brahman cattle;
- Predominantly dairy cattle; and unborn calves.

You may also choose from two weight ranges - under 600 pounds and 600-900 pounds. LRP-Feeder Cattle insurance is available in all counties in all states. Additional policies are also available for fed cattle (over 900#).

You must buy LRP-Feeder Cattle insurance through a livestock insurance agent. You may fill out an application at any time. However, insurance does not attach until you buy a specific coverage endorsement. You may buy multiple specific coverage endorsements with one application. Insurance coverage starts the day you buy a specific coverage endorsement and RMA approves the purchase.

Where to Buy Livestock Insurance

All multi-peril livestock insurance, including Catastrophic Risk Protection policies, are available from private insurance agents. A list of livestock insurance agents is available on the RMA website at rma.usda.gov/Information-Tools/Agent-Locator-Page.

The main benefits to using this insurance is that the premiums are partially subsidized by the USDA and you can insure your actual predicated weight of each grade of cattle instead of in 50,000# increments.

Grassland CRP Program

Grassland CRP is a federally funded voluntary working lands program. Through the program, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides annual rental payments to landowners to maintain and conserve grasslands **while allowing producers to graze, hay, and produce seed on that land.**

FSA provides participants with annual rental payments and cost-share assistance. The annual rental rate varies by county with a national minimum rental rate of \$13 per acre for this signup. Contract duration is 10 or 15 years.

Landowners and producers interested in Grassland CRP should contact their local USDA Service Center to learn more or to apply for the program before the **May 13 deadline.**

The main stipulation when using this program is that you need to develop a grazing plan with the USDA and NRCS. This is something that a lot of us are doing on our own anyway. Contact your local FSA office for more information.

At Senate Agriculture Committee, Tester Testifies in Support of His Bipartisan Anti-Consolidation Legislation

Senator Tester's *Meat Packing Special Investigator Act* and *Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act* considered in Committee

(U.S. Senate) – As a part of his continued fight to defend family farmers and ranchers from rigged prices as a result of anti-competitive behavior by corporate agriculture conglomerates, U.S. Senator Jon Tester testified on Tuesday, April 26, in support of two of his bipartisan bills to tackle consolidation in agriculture: the *Meat Packing Special Investigator Act* and *Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act*.

"Ag production has gotten far more consolidated than when I took over the farm 44 years ago in 1978," Tester said. "And it's not one party's responsibility, the fact is that both parties' have watched this happen and we've done nothing. Today, we have an opportunity to do something. Why? Because we've seen a mass exodus off the land. Rural America is drying up. On the other side of the equation we see consumers are being treated unfairly in the marketplace, because there's no competition. Today we can address both of those issues with these bills."

Tester's *Meat Packing Special Investigator Act*, which is co-led by Republican Senators Grassley (R-Iowa) and Rounds (R-S.D.), would create the "Office of the Special Investigator for Competition Matters" within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This office will have a team of investigators, with subpoena power, dedicated to preventing and addressing anticompetitive practices in the meat and poultry industries and enforcing our nation's antitrust laws.

Tester's *Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act*, which is co-led by Senators Fischer (R-Neb.), Grassley (R-Iowa), and Wyden (D-Ore.), sets regional mandatory minimum thresholds for negotiated purchases of fed cattle by large meatpackers. It also includes a number of transparency measures, including the creation of a cattle contract



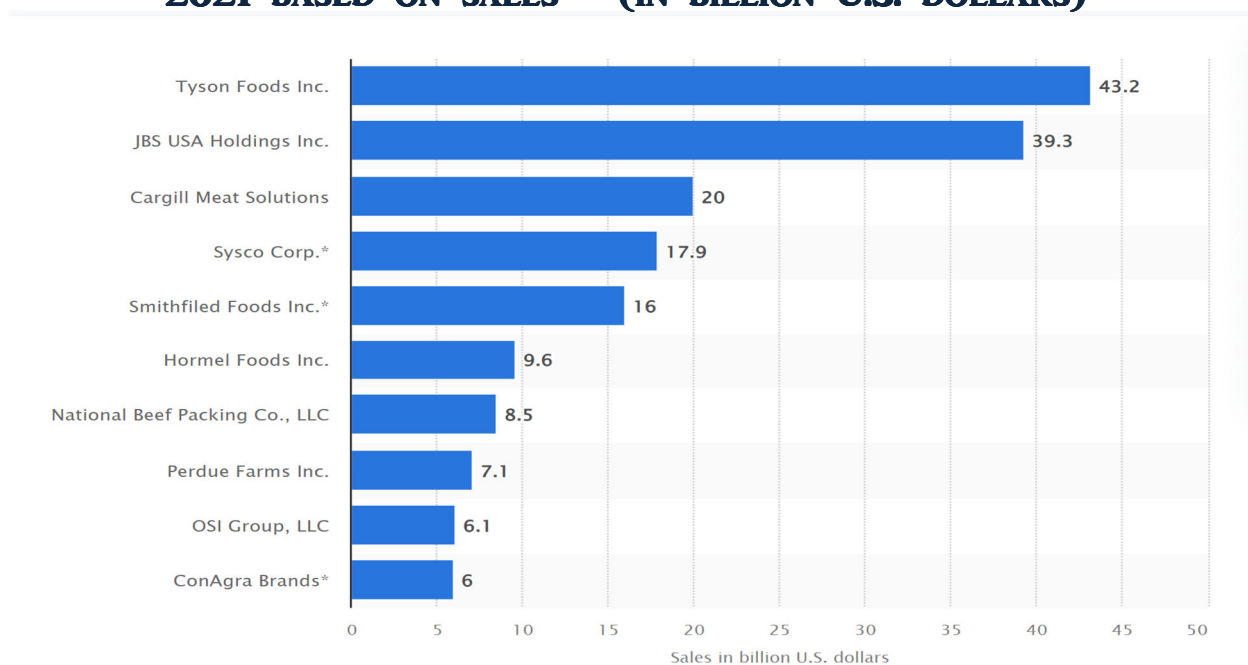
library, requirements that packers report carcass weight more quickly and that they report the number of cattle scheduled for slaughter each day for the next 14 days.

"Today's market place is more consolidated today than it was in 1921 when this body passed the *Packers and Stockyards Act*. Rural America is drying up because we can't get fair prices at the farm gate," Tester continued. "Capitalism isn't working in this particular instance because of concentration and consolidation in the industry. Consumers are paying higher prices because without competition, they're set without regard to what people can afford. We need some sunlight and we need some sideboards...I can guarantee you one thing: if we walk out of here today and we don't pass these bills, we will see the same result that we've seen for the last 100

years. And in the end our food security is put at risk." He concluded: "Please do the right thing for the sake of folks like me who want to pass the farm on to the kids."

As the only working farmer in the U.S. Senate, Tester has long been an advocate for increased market transparency and more competitive practices for Montana producers and consumers. Earlier this year, Tester introduced his *Agriculture Right to Repair Act* to finally guarantee farmers the right to repair their own equipment and end current restrictions on the repair market. Last year, he introduced his bipartisan *American Beef Labeling Act*, which would ensure that only beef raised in the United States is labeled as a product of the USA, and his bipartisan *New Markets for State-Inspected Meat and Poultry Act*, which allows meat and poultry products inspected by Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) approved state Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) programs to be sold across state lines.

LEADING MEAT AND POULTRY PROCESSING COMPANIES IN THE UNITED STATES IN 2021 BASED ON SALES (IN BILLION U.S. DOLLARS)



New Antibiotic Restrictions Soon to Become Reality

*By Becky Funk, DVM, Animal Health Teaching and NE Extension Specialist
Jesse Fulton, Extension Educator, Director of Nebraska Beef Quality Assurance*

In 2017, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began implementing the Guidance for the Industry #213 otherwise known as the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD). Implementation of the VFD focused on veterinary oversight of medically important antibiotics delivered to livestock via feed and/or water, leaving a significant loophole for those products that were available over-the-counter (OTC) by other dosage forms. Because of this, on June 11, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration quietly published Guidance for Industry #263 which put in motion the framework to remove any remaining medically important antimicrobials from OTC marketing channels, closing this loophole.

Guidance #263 recommends sponsors of medically important antimicrobial drugs that continue to be available OTC and approved for use in animals (companion and food producing), regardless of delivery mechanism, to voluntarily bring these products under veterinary oversight or prescription marketing status. These product labels will now contain the prescription (Rx) statement, "Caution: Federal law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian."

While very little information about Guidance #263 was aimed towards livestock producers, this may have significant impacts on the way in which livestock owners are able to access antibiotic therapy for their animals. While this change does not require the purchase of products from a veterinarian, going forward, producers will be legally required to obtain a prescription from a licensed veterinarian with which the producer has a valid veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR). What this means for many producers is that products that they may have purchased from the local feedstore, farm supply, or local co-op may no longer be on those store shelves.

Much like when the veterinary feed directive was put in place in 2017, some of these businesses may simply pull these products from store shelves and decline to offer products as they do not have the framework in place to meet the legal burden of acting as a "Pharmacy" which requires the ability to review veterinary authorized prescriptions and track refills of those prescription products. For those that do continue to stock these products on their shelves, producers will have to produce a prescription prior to purchasing.

Those producers who already have a VCPR in place and purchase their animal health products through their veterinary office, or who purchase through other distributors under an existing prescription system, will likely notice little change in their ability to source these products. However, those producers that don't consult a veterinarian on a regular basis will need to establish a valid VCPR prior to purchasing these products as they start to disappear from OTC access.

So, to the nitty gritty, what products should producers expect to see these changes. and when will this happen? The following are some products that will be seeing label changes to prescription-only status:

★ Oxytetracyclines

- * Injectables: Liquamycin LA-200, Noromycin 300 LA, Bio-Mycin 200, Agrimycin 200, etc.
- * Boluses: Terramycin Scours Tablets, OXY 500 Calf Boluses

★ Penicillins (*Penicillin G procaine, penicillin G benzathine*)

- * Injectables: Penicillin Injectable, Dura-Pen, Pro-Pen-G, Combi-Pen 48, etc.
- * Intramammary tubes: Masti-Clear, Go-dry, Albadry Plus

★ Sulfa-based antibiotics (*Sulfadimethoxine, sulfamethazine*)

- * Injectables: Di-Methox 40%, SulfMed 40%
- * Boluses: Albon, Sustain III Cattle & Calf Boluses, Supra Sulfa III Cattle & Calf Boluses

★ Tylosin

- * Injectables: Tylan 50, Tylan 200

★ Cephapirin, *cephapirin benzathine*

- * Intramammary tubes: ToDAY and ToMORROW

Additionally, several swine medications fall under the new guidance:

★ Lincomycin

- * Injectables: Lincomix 100, Lincomix 300, LincoMed 100, LincoMed 300

★ Gentamicin

- * Injectables: Garasol, Gentamicin Piglet Injection

When Guidance #263 was published on June 11, 2021, it was structured with a two-year phase-in for manufacturers of these products to make label changes and come into compliance with the guidance so that they would be able to continue marketing their products without interruption. All products covered under Guidance #263 are to be removed from OTC availability by June 11, 2023.

The expectation is that producers will see familiar products start to disappear from store shelves as OTC products over the next 14 months as manufacturers finalize label changes and refine their marketing and distribution channels to assure compliance with prescription requirements.

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It is important to remember that these critical products are not being removed from the marketplace, but instead being brought under veterinary oversight in order to combat overuse/misuse due to OTC access. Furthermore, producers SHOULD NOT “stock-up” on these products to avoid needing a prescription once this change takes effect. Again, these products will STILL be readily available.

Animal health products have expiration dates and are sensitive to storage time and conditions. Purchasing large quantities of animal health products may lead producers to have an excess of products unused by the date of the product's expiration. Products used after the expiration date are less effective and may not work as intended and may lead to higher incidences of treatment failure.

Disposal of expired antimicrobials can present challenges as well. In the long run, it is easier and safer to purchase products only when needed under the guidance of a veterinarian. Additionally, this guidance affects only medically important antibiotic products. Antiparasitides, injectable and oral nutritional supplements, oral pro/prebiotics and topical non-antibiotic treatments will not be affected and will remain available through OTC marketing channels just as before.

Now, more than ever, producers need to seek out and establish a VCPR with a trusted veterinarian to provide input on antibiotic selection for their operations so that the best treatment options can be selected with antibiotic stewardship, animal welfare, and livestock economics all important decision-making factors.

For more information:

CVM GFI #263 Recommendations for Sponsors of Medically Important Antimicrobial Drugs Approved for Use in Animals to Voluntarily Bring Under Veterinary Oversight All Products That Continue to be Available Over-the-Counter June 2021

<https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/cvm-gfi-263-recommendations-sponsors-medically-important-antimicrobial-drugs-approved-use-animals>

Brazil ranks fifth in sales of beef to U.S. market

The United States was among the top four nations importing beef from Brazil in 2020, when it acquired 59,544 metric tons. That was up 53.8% over the previous year due to the opening of the U.S. market to Brazil's fresh beef in February 2020. Those figures are according to the Brazilian beef industry association Abrafrigo which also reported revenue from beef exports last year were 11% higher at \$9.4 billion. The Brazilian cattle export numbers noted that Brazilian beef exports are at record levels.

The Brazilian trade group said it expected to see a continuation of China's purchasing pace and further increases of exports to the European Union, some Arab countries and new markets. China was the largest buyer of Brazilian beef with 1.18 billion metric tons of imports; Egypt was the second-largest customer at 127,953 metric tons.

From January through September 2021, Americans imported the equivalent of \$216.18 million (US\$) worth of Brazilian beef, a number that is three times higher than the same period in 2020 when \$60.34 million (US\$) came from the South American country to U.S. shores. In volume, the United States bought 38.69 thousand tons of frozen beef from Brazil in the first nine months of this year.

By comparison, during the same period last year, 12.89 thousand tons were shipped from Brazil to the United States.

Overall, the U.S. market has imported 2.48 billion pounds of beef (from all sources) from January through September 2021, which is down 6.2% from 2020. The most beef imports come to the United States from Canada, followed by Mexico, New Zealand and Australia. Brazilian imports stand in fifth place.

The data on U.S. imports of beef and where they came from is part of a report from the USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS). It detailed U.S. beef imports from January through September 2021: Canadian imports were up 15.3% to 708 million pounds; Mexico's beef imports to the U.S. market were down 7.7% with 497 million pounds of beef imported this year through September. For the first nine months of the year, imports from New Zealand were 419 million pounds (down 4.88%) and imports from Australia were 299 million pounds (down 44% from a year earlier.)

Brazilian sales of beef to the United States stand at 240 million pounds of beef for the first nine months of this year, which is 61% higher than year-earlier levels.

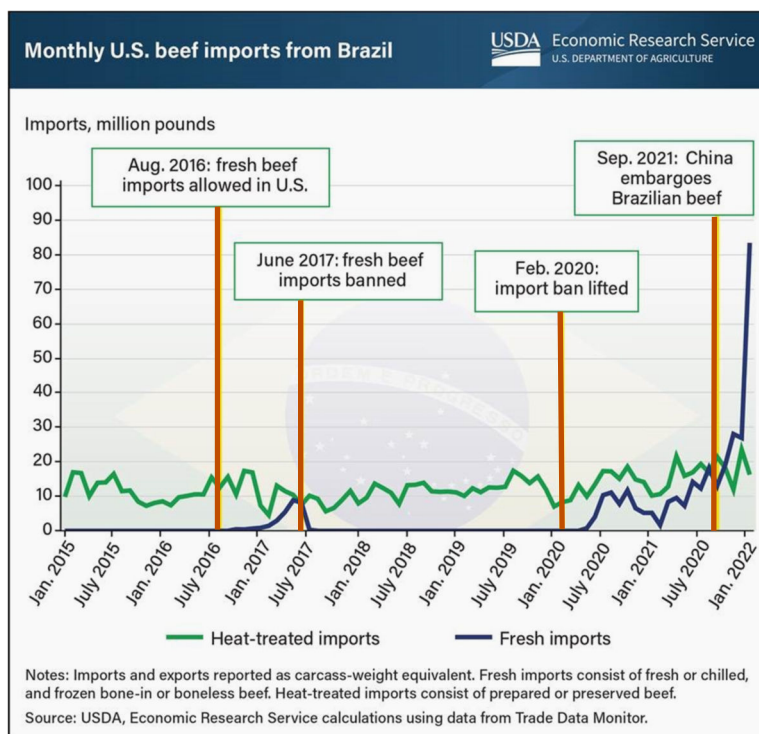
Other countries listed as beef importers to the United States were ranked by the ERS: 6) Nicaragua; 7) Uruguay; 8) Argentina; 9) Costa Rica; 10) Ireland; 11) Netherlands; 12) Japan; 13) United Kingdom; 14) France; 15) Chile; 16) Poland; 17) Honduras; 18) Croatia; 19) Lithuania; 20) Spain.

HUGE SURGE IN BRAZILIAN BEEF IMPORTS

Fresh beef imports were halted in June of 2017 following an investigation into corruption of Brazilian health inspectors and meat companies that export beef into the United States. Fresh beef imports from Brazil were allowed again starting in February of 2020. In June of 2021 two unrelated cases of BSE (Mad Cow Disease) were found in two separate packing plant locations in Brazil. The rest of the world did not know about this until September of 2021. China immediately halted imports from Brazil because of this. The United States, however, continued to import beef from Brazil and actually dramatically **increased** the amount. In November of 2021 Senator Tester introduced legislation to halt the import of Brazilian beef into the United States. The NCBA also petitioned the USDA to implement an immediate halt of these imports until the USDA completed a full investigation of the plants licensed to export beef to the US. Since then there has been no notable response from the USDA to halt these imports. Also, the USDA has not addressed the underlying concerns over Brazil's repeated failure to follow international animal health and food safety standards.

The following graph and article last updated April 8, 2022 illustrate what is happening:

Monthly U.S. beef import volumes from Brazil surge to record high in early 2022



Imports of beef from Brazil have spiked in the last two years as U.S. demand for processing-grade beef has substantially increased. In January 2022 alone, imports reached nearly 100 million pounds—a more than 500% increase relative to the same month a year earlier—with fresh beef accounting for 83 million pounds. Historically, imports from Brazil primarily consisted of heat-treated beef products, including prepared or preserved beef. In February 2020, the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service determined that fresh beef from Brazil was eligible for import. As a result, beef imports from Brazil have risen. Record high U.S. beef prices and drought-impacted supplies in Australia, where the United States would otherwise source beef, have also contributed to growing imports of processing-grade beef from Brazil. Further, in September 2021, China—the destination for more than 40 percent of Brazilian beef exports in 2021—temporarily embargoed imports of Brazilian beef based on animal health concerns. The embargo was lifted in December 2021, but not before some of Brazil's beef was redirected to other markets, including the United States. Further increases in U.S. imports of fresh beef from Brazil are limited by the tariff rate quota system. Beef imported from Brazil enters the United States under the open quota system. Once the quota is filled, imports of fresh beef from Brazil would be subject to a higher tariff, reducing the beef's competitiveness with sources from other countries. This chart is drawn from the USDA, Economic Research Service's March 2022 *Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlook*.

Considering one beef patty at an American fast-food restaurant may contain the beef from 100's of different animals all mixed together from all around the world this is a very serious problem. When people contracted the BSE variant from beef in Great Britain in 1992 and 1993 thousands of cattle had to be destroyed devastating the British beef supply. When one case was found in the US in December of 2003 from an animal that had originated in Canada 40 nations banned imports of American beef. As a result, the whole cattle market crashed and beef consumption went down considerably.

We cannot allow this to happen again. Contact our senators and the secretary of agriculture to immediately tell the USDA to do their job and protect American consumers and cattle producers from this severe threat. The profits of four multi-national beef processors should not be the top priority in this situation.

Contact our Congressmen and the USDA to halt Brazilian imports immediately:

Senator Jon Tester (202) 224-2644

Senator Steve Daines (202) 224-2651

Representative Matt Rosendale (202) 225-3211

USDA (202) 720-2791

Thank you for your support of Montana Cattlemen's Association.

If you have not yet renewed your dues for 2022 please complete the form below or renew online.

REASONS TO JOIN MCA? MCA is a grassroots organization not beholden to outside corporate interests. Our Board of Directors are non-paid volunteers engaging with other like-minded organizations to best serve the Montana cattle producer. MCA is a member of the revitalized Montana Agriculture Coalition consisting of 11 other Montana ag groups working on issues impacting all aspects of agriculture throughout our state that affect your livelihood and community.

MCA is actively representing you on: Water and property rights, ag property valuation & taxation, renewable resources, animal health and welfare, livestock loss & prevention, wildlife management, beef labeling and promotion (COOL), the checkoff program, State and Federal government relations, testifying at Washington DC legislative sessions, marketing and competition, youth in agriculture, and hosting the Annual Cattlemen's Day convention. Additionally, with your help MCA provides beef to Montana's food banks through our "Beef on Every Plate" program.

As a member-driven grassroots organization our work is completely funded through your membership dues and donations. The more members, the more effective MCA will be in dealing with problems facing our industry. Increased membership numbers also enables MCA to have a seat on the Montana Beef Council where we have input as to how your checkoff dollars are spent. Your thoughts and concerns about our industry are important to us. We look forward to your continued support and input and we welcome your participation in MCA!

Name: _____

Spouse Name (if joining): _____

Ranch Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Own cattle: ____ Yes ____ No

Tribal member: ____ Yes ____ No

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 _____

TOTAL AMOUNT SUBMITTED: \$ _____

*Only members owning cattle have voting rights ~ One member—one vote
Associate members do not own cattle but are supportive of MCA goals*

**Join online at www.montanacattlemen.org ~ OR ~ mail this completed form
along with your check in the enclosed envelope to PO 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!

DUES HAVEN'T INCREASED SINCE 2002 ~ STILL ONLY \$50 per year!!

MCA Comments on the Yellowstone Bison Management Plan

To Yellowstone Park Superintendent: These comments are made on behalf of the Montana Cattlemen's industry. We strongly oppose changes in the Interagency Bison Management Plan (IMP) which would increase the number of bison in the park. The Montana Cattlemen's Association, a grassroots organization representing the interests of the men and women engaged in raising cattle, Montana's largest cattle industry, is the largest of the numbers of bison in the park.

Climate experts confirm that the western part of North America is in the midst of the worst drought experienced over the past twelve centuries. This drought which has already lasted twenty-two years, coincides with increased global warming, and does not have a predicted end. This is not the time for anyone, ranchers or park service, to increase their herds.

The fact that Yellowstone Park, by following the agreement made in the Inter-agency Management Plan, is experiencing a surplus of vegetation is proof that the IMP is working as intended. And the IMP is working on all levels. Brucellosis is being controlled; Native Americans benefit from the excess bison; the rangeland and riparian areas of the park are recovering from overgrazing; tourists are profiting from ample bison viewing opportunities in a beautiful setting; and finally, the businesses catering to tourism are thriving. This is evidence of complete success, so why change what is working?

The danger in increasing the number of bison in the park is that we do not know what the coming years will provide. The plain fact is that with increased numbers of bison coupled with an increased severity in the drought, the Park may very well find itself, once again, overstocked. This will cause environmental degradation and result in increased numbers of brucellosis infected bison moving out of the park. Very possibly, given increased numbers of bison, we will witness a huge death loss during the next severe winter. Something no one should wish.

Plainly, the Park will not have the ability to readjust bison numbers to a more sustainable level when increased numbers of bison prove to be unsustainable. Political outcries and lawsuits will prevent prudent and timely range and wildlife management. Most certainly, extremist groups will use every legal, and perhaps illegal, tactics to prevent rational management practices. They have done so in the past, and most certainly will in the future.

If over the coming years we find that the drought threat has receded, then that would be the appropriate time to consider increasing the numbers of bison in the park. Today, in the midst of a severe drought, is not the right time.

Montana Range Days

As part of our objective of encouraging youth in agriculture, MCA is now one of the statewide sponsors of Montana Range Days, an annual event which has been held annually since 1977 at various locations in Montana.

Shelby Montana is the location of the 2022 Montana Range Days to be held on June 20, 21 and 22. The event includes instruction in range plants, soils and grazing management.

In addition, there are tours of rangeland resource projects and management areas in the local area for participants not taking part in the instruction sessions.

The final day consists of contests in several categories, followed by an awards ceremony and presentation of the college range management scholarships.

For more information: www.montanarangedays.org

Cash Cow or Cow Cash?

According to the Montana Beef Council's Annual Audit for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2021, the Montana State Beef Council had a gross checkoff fee revenue of \$2,105,344 of which \$1,035,349 was to be used at the State Council's discretion. The remainder was sent to the Beef Checkoff Beef Board to be used at the National level.

Of the \$1,035,349 state share \$96,000 was paid to the NCBA Federation or \$32,000 for each of 3 seats on the Beef Checkoff Federation. The Federation has been a division of the NCBA since 1996. The NCBA, by the way, is the main contractor at the National level which collected an additional \$26 million from all the beef councils at the National level for contracts promoting beef. This is kind of like paying your hired man a little extra so you can sit behind your own desk while writing him a check.

MCA SUBMITS COMMENTS TO USDA ON BEEF LABELING POLICY

TO USDA: The Montana Cattlemen's Association (MCA) is a non-profit, non-partisan, grassroots organization working for Montana's cattle producers on issues that affect the viability of the cattle industry. We are taking this opportunity to comment on this important debate regarding the future of the Product of USA label concerning beef. We agree that since the repeal of Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling this label has been used to deceive and confuse consumers on the beef they purchase.

We have researched this controversy and even spoke about it at our convention in December with a representative of Senator Rounds' office present. Senator Rounds' USA Beef Act redefines this label. It states that product labeled thus should only be from cattle Born, Raised and Slaughtered in the USA. We understand that FSIS has jurisdiction over this label. The Secretary of Ag has stated the new administration is interested in a correct label and would want FSIS to enforce its correct use, going so far as describing the fines and the amount that could be levied for misuse. The USA Beef Act provides for the new definition. We are for keeping the Product of USA label only if the Rounds bill is passed describing the definition of the new label as stated.

In speaking with the Rounds office, they believe that this voluntary label will be compliant with the WTO concerning Trade Agreements that are now in effect, thus avoiding the hassles that killed the Mandatory COOL bill. While this label is voluntary, its use would be far better than the current corrupt use centered around the label now. MCA also believes that the Rounds Beef Act could be passed far quicker than a WTO compliant mandatory label. Of course, a Mandatory beef label would be best and we support that legislation also; however, it is going to be a battle that will take a long time and may be impossible to pass.

There are now informed consumers that would like a legitimate label showing where their beef comes from, and we feel we must take advantage of this opportunity while we have the chance.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our views for cattle producers and consumers on this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gilles Stockton, MCA President

USDA LABELING FRAUD

By Gilles Stockton, MCA President

USDA has announced that they will conduct a survey to find out how much consumers are willing to pay in order for USDA to stop lying. The "Product of USA" label is consumer fraud, and USDA is under pressure from Congress and the President to stop the lying. In response, and apparently in an effort to buy time, USDA proposes instead to do a survey. USDA will ask three questions:

1. Do consumers notice the "Product of USA" labeling claim?
2. Do consumers understand the current "Product of USA" definition and other "USDA" labeling (such as "USDA Choice") as it relates to country of origin?
3. How much are consumers willing to pay for meat products bearing the "Product of USA" labeling claim for the current definition and potential revised definitions (such as if the meat were from an animal that was born, raised, slaughtered, and processed in the United States)?

Fraud is fraud! How else can one interpret a label on imported beef that once it has been repackaged in this country, qualifies it to be marketed as a Product of USA? Clearly, consumers are paying more for beef because they assume that the label means what it says. Why on earth would consumers be willing to pay more to not be lied to?

The simple and ethical thing for USDA is to disallow the use of the label unless it is in fact a – product of the USA. If a beef importer wants to claim that the meat in question had been repackaged in the USA, well they can say so. Nothing is stopping them. But repackaging and then claiming that makes it a "Product of the USA" is fraud.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) in their self-appointed role as protector of the global meat cartel, wants USDA to allow instead a label saying "Produced in the USA." This language is just as fraudulent. There is no need for a survey or a disingenuous change in the wording. The best course is for USDA to just eliminate the label completely because American beef producers and American beef consumers don't need imported beef masquerading as a product of the USA.

However, there is a bill in the Senate that will restore truthful country of origin labeling. "The American Beef Labeling Act," is currently gathering co-sponsors. Sponsors in the Rocky Mountain area includes Senators Rounds, and Thune from South Dakota, Senators Barroso and Lummis from Wyoming, Senator Hoeven from North Dakota, and Senator Tester from Montana. You will notice that Senator Cramer from North Dakota and Senator Daines from Montana are conspicuously absent.

Call them (Daines at 406-453-0148 or Cramer at 701-699-7020) and tell them that they need to sponsor the American Beef Labeling Act. If they answer that they are already sponsoring the "USA Beef Act," thank them but point out that the "USA Beef Act" addresses only the "Product of USA" fraud, but the "American Beef Labeling Act" restores true country of origin labeling. Tell them a label that proudly proclaims that this beef was –Born, Raised, and Processed in the USA - is the only acceptable label.

A-PLUS is a Failure

Op-Ed by Gilles Stockton, MCA President

It is not surprising that the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is promoting another bad idea, but it is disheartening that the United States Cattlemen's Association (USCA) and the Livestock Marketing Association (LMA) are going along with the Amplifying Processing of Livestock in the United States Act (A-PLUS). This Act, sponsored by Representatives Jimmy Panetta and Vicky Hartzler would allow livestock market owners to invest in and/or own packing plants, which is an obvious conflict of interest. Who will the auction market work for - you or the owner?

The genius of the Packers and Stockyards Act (P&S Act) is that it prohibited packing firms from owning cattle markets and vice versa. In the days before 1921, the five dominate packers owned the railroad loading yards, the livestock cars, and the terminal market places. This ownership of the vital market infrastructure allowed for the packers to have an unpriced captive supply. Once the livestock producer committed their cattle or hogs to a packer, they were captive to whatever that packer decided to pay.

Rather than break up the packer cartel, the lawmakers in 1921 relied on free enterprise to restore a fair and competitive market. They did this by requiring that the packers divest of the market infrastructure that they owned and controlled – the rail yards, the livestock cars, and the terminal markets. The packers were obligated to buy cattle and hogs at independent auction markets. This allowed for smaller regional packing concerns to competitively bid for cattle and hogs. And it worked, because by the 1970s the four largest packers controlled only a quarter of the market.

Our current market problems began in the 1980s when our government arbitrarily changed the policy and essentially negated any antitrust enforcement. This included enforcing the P&S Act. Since 1980, the dominate packers merged with one another and quickly came to monopolize the cattle and hog industries. At the same time, the growth and consolidation of supermarket chains conspired to eliminate smaller regional packers.

Over the past forty years, packers stopped using the public market in favor of captive supply arrangements where the cattle are not priced until delivery. The final price for most cattle and all hogs is now based on a very thin spot market. If a cattle feeder does not commit to this captive supply arrangement, they risk not having their cattle processed in a timely manner. The solution is to restore the requirement that packers purchase in a market forum that they do not own and control. The A-PLUS proposal goes in the exact wrong direction.

It is hard to know just who is pushing this crazy bad bill but it is obviously being advanced for the benefit of just a few, not independent livestock producers. The press release from the NCBA announcing the A-PLUS Act pretends that it is a matter of principal, helping to promote more packing capacity. A more likely possibility, is that certain parties are looking to cash in on the \$500 million stimulus program earmarked for building moderate sized packing plants. This is certainly what happened with the Trump Administration's stimulus plan, where big corporations and grifters got away with truckloads of money.

The claim that the intention of A-PLUS is to build small facilities is ludicrous. This bill allows for investment in or construction of packing plants capable of processing 2000 head per day or 700,000 per year. This is not small. A plant that size would process 2.5% of the total annual steer and heifer slaughter or 10.5% of the total cull, bull, and dairy cow slaughter. There is nothing modest about a plant that large.

What the Biden Administration apparently has not considered in proposing to use taxpayer's money to subsidize the building of moderate size packing facilities, is how will these new concerns market the meat? The existing packer cartel has all the supermarket meat cases obligated to themselves. An independent start-up packer, even one as large as the A-PLUS Act envisions, will not be able to get their product in front of the consumers.

This is assuming that these new packing plants can even buy fed cattle at a competitive price out from under the packer cartel. The probable outcome of this whole scheme is that after these independent packers go out of business, the big packers will be able to buy brand new state of the art slaughter facilities for pennies on the dollar. Perhaps this is what the parties who are pushing the A-PLUS bill are planning all along.

The A-PLUS Act is clearly a terrible idea. It moves the industry in the exact opposite direction than what is needed. If independent cattle ranchers and feeders are to survive, we need Congress and the Administration to restore competition. The way to do this is to do what was done in 1921 - require that the packers actually bid for their cattle in an open, competitive, and transparent market.

If you agree that the A-PLUS Act is a failure, call Representative Jimmy Panetta (202 225-2861) and Representative Vicky Hartzler (202 225-2876) and give them a piece of your mind.

Critique of the Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act

Op-Ed by Gilles Stockton, MCA President

I wish that I could love the Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act but I just can't. You can read the Bill at <https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/s4030/>. I rather like the part contributed by Senator Fisher that increases the reporting of the fed cattle market. The more information available for a cattle seller the better. But market reporting does not overcome the structural deficiencies of the fed cattle market.

The rest of the Bill is supposed to improve price discovery. This latest iteration of what started as the 50/14 concept is complicated and bureaucratic. If I understand correctly, USDA will be directed to determine the minimum percentage of fed cattle to be purchased through the negotiated spot market in each of nine separate marketing regions. They are allowed two years to accomplish this task. The dominate packers will, eventually, be required to use the negotiated spot market to buy the number of cattle determined to be sufficient by USDA.

There is a lot that is wrong with this approach and one is that it is heavily bureaucratic. It will require a regiment of USDA employees to make sure that the scheme is functioning as it is supposed to. As we all know, every branch of government that is supposed to regulate an industry ends up with that agency captured. Enforcement will also depend upon future Presidents liking the scheme.

This Bill focusses on controlling the negotiated spot market, when the real problem is captive supplies, or if you prefer - Alternative Marketing Agreements (AMAs). Granted, the two are related. The fewer cattle purchased on the negotiated spot market, the more that are committed through captive supply. The core problem is that this bill acquiesces to some level of captive supplies that is as yet to be determined by USDA. Anyone can read the Packers and Stockyards Act and understand that all captive supplies should be considered illegal.

The central problem is, therefore, that the Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act guarantees captive supplies. A recent economic study conducted by F. Garrido et. al. of Georgetown University, "Buyer Power in the Beef Packing Industry," concludes: "... that a one percent increase (in) the fraction of cattle purchased under AMAs is associated with a 5.9% reduction in the cash market price." How much AMAs (aka captive supplies) are we supposed to consider acceptable?

Another recent study, "Multi-Plant Coordination in the US Beef Packing Industry," written by C. Pudenz and L. Schultz of Iowa State University, states that: "U.S. beef packers openly began employing multi-plant coordination during the last decade. ... this leads to wider spreads between downstream beef prices and upstream fed cattle prices." Their conclusion is that by using advanced information technology, the dominate packers are now able to coordinate their procurement practices across the multiple slaughter plants that they own. At times, by closing or slowing a plant in one area, this allows them to lower the prices paid for fed cattle and thereby increase profits across their multiple plants. The paper does not speculate, but we can wonder if this same information technology allows packers to better coordinate their purchasing strategy with the competing firms.

Clearly, something has changed in the cattle market. Captive supply levels were a problem ten or twenty years ago, but are a much greater problem today. According to USDA, the farmers share of the beef dollar has fallen from 44.3% in 2016 to 36.8% in 2021. That is a loss of 8.6 cents of every dollar

spent on beef. In 1980, before the packing cartel gained control of the cattle market, the farmers share was 63%.

As we see, over the course of the domination by the big four packers, producers have lost a full one quarter of the value of the cattle we raise. If you ever wondered why the Main Street of your community is a ghost town, this is why. We do not generate enough profits in ranching to support a vibrant prosperous rural community. The problem with the Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act is that while it may improve the confidence in the negotiated spot market to be used as a basis to settle the captive supply formula cattle, it does nothing to restore competition to a seriously dysfunctional industry.

Maybe some of you, who have been kind enough to read this far into this op/ed, are tired of me beating the same drum, but the solution is staring us in the face. We have only to do what they did in 1921. The Consent Decree stemming from the passage of the Packers and Stockyards Act required that the Packer Cartel bid against each other in a competitive market that they did not own or control.

Therefore, once again, make the Packers bid against each other in a market in which: "producers and sellers in general have access and is designed to solicit more than one blind bid." Maybe at first there will only be the four dominate packers competing in the market, but it will not take long for smaller packing concerns to understand that they are able to competitively buy fed cattle without being targeted by predatory practices. The beauty of this approach is that it requires a minimum of USDA employees to make sure that the markets are honest, because the entire system is owned and operated by private enterprise.

Some economists have been telling us that without the prevalence of captive supplies (aka AMAs) ranchers and feeders will not be compensated for producing quality cattle and the resulting beef will be rejected by consumers. As usual, these packer apologist economists have it completely backwards. Requiring that a base price be set at the time that packers and feeders enter into a formula forward contract does not prevent feeders from receiving a premium for carcass quality. In fact, it would promote the use of formula forward contracts. A competitive market price would be set when the contract is entered into, resulting in actual price discovery. Because the terms for the premium for quality would be built into the contract, producers would be compensated for that quality. Under this approach, there would be less need for a spot market to serve as the basis to settle contracts.

A few weeks back I was in Washington DC and had a meeting with the legislative assistant for Senator Tester of Montana. He was confident that the Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act has real momentum. Too bad, because the concept is deeply flawed. I understand that livestock producers are desperate for Congress or the President do something - anything - and this Bill has the endorsement of a number of agricultural organizations.

Unfortunately, the Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act will not restore competition but rather lock in the four-packer domination by preserving the packer's ability to use captive supplies to control the market. The only people besides the packers who will likely benefit are the Chicago Mercantile speculators who will have a better basis to settle their futures contracts. I would urge everyone to reconsider and offer an amendment that requires packers to buy all of their cattle in a transparent competitive forum. Problem solved!

Canadian company scams Montana ranchers out of \$5 million in ag purchases

by NBC Montana Staff

The Office of Consumer Protection reports multiple scammers are targeting Montana ranchers, and warns them to be wary.

MISSOULA, MT — Montana's ranchers are being warned to look out for scams.

According to the Office of Consumer Protection, a Canadian company called New Way Ag has taken approximately \$5 million from Montana ranchers without delivering products, such as grain hay, wheat straw and barley straw.

The Office of Consumer Protection says this is just one instance, and there are more scams being conducted.

The following press release was sent by the Montana Attorney General's office:

Montana Attorney General Austin Knudsen is warning Montanans of a scams that could be impacting many Montana ranchers. One investigation is still ongoing, but the Office of Consumer Protection estimates that a Canadian company has stolen up to \$5 million from Montanans after receiving payments but never delivering the promised product – and other criminals may be conducting similar scams.

The company, New Way Ag, promised grain hay, barley straw, and wheat straw at low prices to quickly make sales, collected payments, and then never delivered any product to their victims. To aid in the investigation, Montanans who made payments to New Way Ag should contact the Montana Office of Consumer Protection at 406-444-4500.

"Montana ranchers are facing headwinds as it is without being scammed by crooks looking to make a quick buck. Please report any suspected scams to our office so we can hold these criminals accountable," Attorney General Knudsen said. "If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Now more than ever we all must keep a watchful eye out for scammers looking to take advantage of Montanans."

Montanans can report any phone, email, or mail scams to the Montana Department of Justice's Office of Consumer Protection at <https://app.doj.mt.gov/OCPPortal/?q=node/396>, contactocp@mt.gov, or (406) 444-4500 or toll free at (800) 481-6896.

Last year, the Office of Consumer Protection fielded 945 scam complaints and successfully saved Montanans from losing more than \$1.3 million, including \$869,600 that was recovered for Montanans who were victimized by scammers and \$465,579 in prevented loss for consumers who called inquiring about whether they were being scammed.

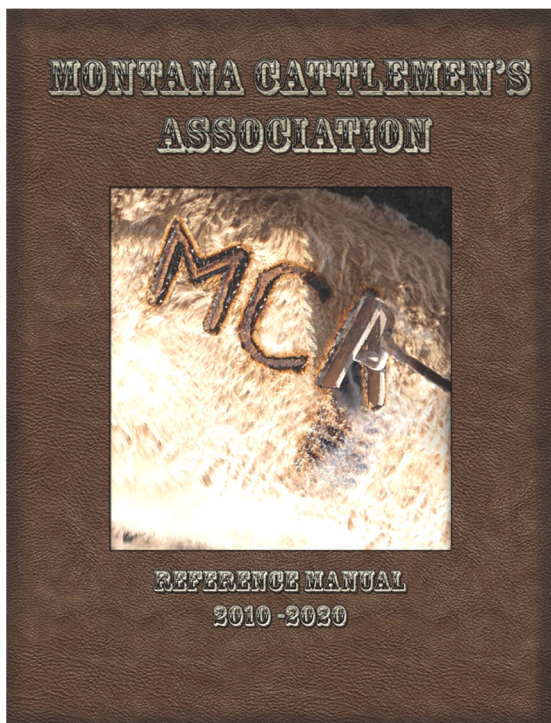
BEEF ON EVERY PLATE SEEKING FOOD BANK DONATIONS

"Beef on Every Plate" is a charitable program formed in 2008 by the Montana Cattlemen's Association. For those who are not familiar with this program, ranchers donate cull cattle and MCA pays for the processing of the beef into one-pound hamburger packages. We then arrange delivery to the local food banks. Since we began this program, we have provided over 322,000 meals to those in need. Additionally, local processing means the small, independent meat processors are getting needed economic stimulation as well.

As cattle producers we always have beef in our freezer. Unfortunately, this is a luxury that too many Montanans do not share. The need for healthy protein is overwhelming. ***"Beef On Every Plate"*** provides fresh, healthy, locally raised beef that many families in our neighborhoods would otherwise be unable to obtain.

Reports indicate one in seven Montanans struggle with hunger. Many Montana households are food insecure and often skip meals or go to bed hungry, including young children and the elderly. With your help we hope to reduce this statistic. Meat is seldom received by the food banks and many of those living on a fixed income, single parents, or the working poor simply cannot afford to purchase beef to feed their families, especially after paying their rent, utilities, medical bills, etc.

We are currently in need of cash donations to help pay for hamburger processing fees. Please consider contributing whatever you can to this program by calling 406-467-2251 or mailing your donation to Montana Cattlemen's Association, PO Box 536, Vaughn, MT 59487. Volunteers administer this program, so 100% of your donation goes to help those in need. Montana Cattlemen's Association is honored to help provide locally raised, nutritious, and delicious protein to our Montana communities so that all families have ***"Beef On Every Plate"***!



DISBURSAL SALE !!

Montana Cattlemen will **NOT** be publishing a third edition of the Brand Book covering the new renewals for 2022-2030. Therefore, the previous edition of the Montana Cattlemen's Association Brand Book and Reference Manual is being offered at a special reduced price. This is a deluxe hard cover three-volume series which catalogs Montana's recorded livestock brands through 2021. It also includes some special "extras": ranch histories, western poetry, traditional cowboy recipes, and photos. The three volumes of the brand book have been divided into the following counties:

WESTERN: Lincoln, Flathead, Lake, Sanders, Missoula, Ravalli, Granite, Powell, Glacier, Pondera, Teton, Lewis & Clark, Deer Lodge, Jefferson, Silverbow, Madison, Beaverhead, Gallatin, Broadwater, and Mineral.

CENTRAL: Toole, Liberty, Hill, Choteau, Judith Basin, Blaine, Fergus, Petroleum, Meagher, Wheatland, Sweet Grass, Park, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Yellowstone, Stillwater, Cascade and Carbon.

EASTERN: Phillips, Valley, Daniels, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Garfield, Rosebud, Treasure, Big Horn, McCone, Richland, Dawson, Prairie, Wibaux, Custer, Fallon, Powder River, and Carter.

⌘ ⑆ Ⓢ Ⓜ Ⓟ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ ⓐ ⓑ ⓓ ⓔ ⓖ ⓗ ⓙ ⓛ ⓜ ⓞ ⓟ ⓠ ⓡ ⓢ ⓤ ⓥ ⓷ ⓸ ⓹ ⓺ ⓻ ⓼ ⓽ ⓾ ⓿ ⓠ ⓡ ⓢ ⓤ ⓥ ⓷ ⓸ ⓹ ⓺ ⓻ ⓼ ⓽ ⓾ ⓿

MONTANA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION PO Box 536 ~ VAUGHN, MT 59487

Brand Book Order Form

Books can also be ordered online at www.montanacattlemen.org (while supplies last)

SHIP TO:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Eastern Volume (516 pages): \$65 now **\$32.00** plus \$5 shipping _____
(Quantity)

Central Volume (634 pages): \$75 now **\$35.00** plus \$5 shipping _____
(Quantity)

Western Volume (512 pages): \$65 now **\$32.00** plus \$5 shipping _____
(Quantity)

Three-volume set: \$185 now **\$90.00** plus \$10 shipping _____
(Quantity)

TOTAL AMOUNT SUBMITTED: \$ _____

NEWSLETTER

Montana Cattlemen's Assn.
P.O. Box 536
Vaughn, MT 59487

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"BEEF ON EVERY PLATE"

Proudly sponsored by MCA and its members!

One in seven Montanans struggle with hunger; one in five children in Montana live in households that struggle with hunger. USDA reports 11.5% of Montana households are "food insecure" and often skip meals or go to bed hungry, including the elderly and young children. Many on fixed incomes, single mothers, and the working poor simply cannot afford to purchase quality meat to feed their families. Montana Cattlemen's Foundation has organized the **"BEEF ON EVERY PLATE"** program to enable cattle producers to donate beef to help feed our neighbors. To date we have provided beef for over 322,000 meals!!

As cattle producers, we always have beef in the freezer. Unfortunately, this is a luxury that too many Montanans do not share. The need is overwhelming! 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 the hamburger 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!



For more information please contact:

MONTANA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION
PO Box 536 ~ Vaughn, MT 59487
(406) 467-2251

Email: mca@montanacattlemen.org
Web: www.montanacattlemen.org

Your Support Is Appreciated!