



# TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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## Final COOL Rule Issued

Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer announced Thursday that he signed the final rule for COOL. Details are not yet available. The rule should be posted in the *Federal Register* next week.

Meanwhile, COOL is choking imports of cattle from Canada and Mexico, according to livestock analysts Steve Meyer and Len Steiner. *Meatingplace.com* quotes a report by the analysts as saying COOL "has been quite effective, if you measure effectiveness by the degree to which it has been able to stifle cattle trade in North America." USDA data shows a dramatic drop in cattle imports from Canada and Mexico during the second half of 2008. From July 14 to Dec. 27, Canadian feeder cattle imports were down 38% to 187,866 head. Mexican feeder cattle declined nearly 40% to 323,105 in the period from July 14 to Dec. 20. TCFA estimates the diminished feeder cattle imports cost Canadian cattlemen approximately \$85 million while their Mexican counterparts lost roughly \$139 million.

On the export side, NCBA projects that U.S. shipments to Mexico of beef, beef variety meats and processed beef products will be a record \$1.4 billion in 2008 — topping the previous mark of \$1.386 billion sold to Japan in 2003. Shipments of those U.S. products to Canada in 2008 are projected to total \$750 million, a record for that country. Put altogether, NCBA's forecasts show a combined \$2.15 billion in exports of U.S. beef, beef variety meats and processed beef products to Mexico and Canada — 60% of the total U.S. exports of those products for 2008. In other words, the data suggests the negative impacts of COOL are harming the best customers for U.S. beef.

## NCBA Announces New CEO

Forrest L. Roberts, 42, has been named as the next CEO of NCBA. He will officially take the helm on Jan. 20.

Roberts grew up on a family-owned, diversified livestock operation in Uvalde, Texas. He received a Bachelors of Science in Animal Science from Texas A&M University and a Masters of Business Administration from the University of North Carolina.

During his career, Roberts has held several marketing and sales positions in two animal health companies. He started with Upjohn Animal Health in 1992, and remained with the company through its two mergers to Pharmacia Animal Health and later Pfizer Animal Health. In 2004, he left Pfizer to join Elanco Animal Health where he most recently served as the Marketing Manager for Elanco's Beef Business Unit.

Roberts has served in several volunteer positions in NCBA. He has been a member of NCBA's Executive Committee, Board of Directors, Allied Industry Council, Long-Range Planning Committee and the National Cattlemen's Foundation Board of Trustees.

## New Congress Assembles

Members of the U.S. House and Senate returned to Washington this week and were sworn in as the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. The economy and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars will likely dominate much of the debate during the first few months of the new Congress; however, they must also pass a budget and appropriate money to fund the government and its multitude of programs. The Senate will also have the added responsibility of interviewing and confirming President-Elect Barack Obama's Cabinet and sub-cabinet appointments.

Energy Secretary nominee Steven Chu is scheduled to appear before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee on Jan. 13. EPA Administrator nominee Lisa Jackson is scheduled to appear before the Environment and Public Works Committee on Jan. 13. Former Iowa Governor and Agriculture Secretary nominee Tom Vilsack is scheduled to appear before the Agriculture Committee on Jan. 14. And former Colorado Senator and Interior Secretary nominee Ken Salazar is scheduled to

appear before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee on Jan. 15. Hearings have not yet been scheduled for former Dallas Mayor and Trade Representative nominee Ron Kirk and former Illinois Congressman and Transportation Secretary nominee Ray LaHood. President-Elect Obama has not nominated a new Commerce Secretary after New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson withdrew his name.

There are also a couple of noteworthy changes in committee leadership on the House side to report. Rep. Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) continues to serve as Chairman of the Agriculture Committee while Rep. Frank Lucas (R-Okla.) takes over as Ranking Member. The scenario is reversed on the Energy and Commerce Committee (which has jurisdiction over environmental issues) where Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) is in a new role as Chairman, but Rep. Joe Barton (R-Tex.) remains Ranking Member. The Senate Committees remain unchanged with Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Georgia) serving as the Agriculture Committee's Chairman and Ranking Member, respectively. On the Environment and Public Works Committee, Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) remains Chairman and Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) continues as Ranking Member. Rank and file committee assignments and subcommittee leadership posts have not yet been announced.

## **Animal Rights Groups Getting Rich**

If you thought 2008 was a uniquely aggressive year for animal rights activists, the Animal Agriculture Alliance believes it knows why: Money and lots of it. Research of IRS records and other information by the Alliance shows that fundraising by animal rights groups soared in 2007, the latest year for which data is available.

Overall, charitable donations to HSUS, PETA and their various allies and subsidiaries grew by 11% in 2007 to nearly \$330 million — money that helped fund efforts such as the push for California's Proposition 2, undercover video operations, legislative initiatives and legal actions.

Meanwhile, the activists cannot be accused of spending money as fast as they get it. Much of the increase in donations went into the organizations' reserves as their total assets expanded by 31%. The Alliance estimates that HSUS has enough assets on hand to fund itself for more than 28 months at the 2007 budget level.

"Much of this increased funding is attributed to donors who are not fully aware of the anti-animal use campaigns of many of these groups," noted Alliance Executive Vice President Kay Johnson Smith. "It's unfortunate many portray themselves as mainstream and working to improve animal care, yet their funding is primarily spent on campaigns to ban or restrict essential uses of animals such as being raised for food or for research to find cures for diseases. Even worse, many of their campaigns demand changes that are actually harmful to animals' overall health and well-being."

**TCEQ Hosted A Stakeholders Meeting** in Austin this week to review proposed changes to the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards. The changes will update the scientific criteria for classifying waterbodies as impaired for parameters such as bacteria, nutrients, dissolved oxygen and others. As proposed, the number of waterbodies on the state's list of impaired waters will be reduced. TCFA will file comments on the proposal by the Jan. 23 deadline. For more information, contact Ben Weinheimer at [ben@tcfa.org](mailto:ben@tcfa.org).

**New Tick Control Port:** USDA-APHIS has announced a final rule that adds San Luis, Ariz. as a port to control the import of cattle infested or exposed to fever ticks or tick-borne diseases into the United States from Mexico. However, APHIS will not allow cattle to be imported through the port until a new facility for the handling of animals is constructed on the Mexican side of the border. This Mexican facility will need to be equipped with facilities necessary for the proper chute inspection, dipping and testing that are required for such cattle under APHIS regulations. To read the rule, go to <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E8-31212.htm>.

**A Fever Tick Stakeholder Meeting** is scheduled Jan. 12 in Laredo. Ag Secretary Ed Schafer will host the meeting to get producers' perspective on the fever tick issue. The event at the FSIS Cold Storage Facility will begin at 10:30 a.m.

**Noted Researcher Dr. Joe Templeton** of College Station passed away Jan. 6 at the age of 67. Templeton had spent the past 33 years with the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. He worked in the veterinary pathobiology department with a research focus on

immunogenetics in cattle, dogs and bison. He was also the head of the comparative medicine division. Templeton received the USDA Award for Excellence in Group Research in 1989 and the Beecham Award for Research Excellence in 1990. In 1998, he was one of the collaborators that cloned a purebred Angus bull known as Bull 86 Squared. Templeton also served on the TAHC from 1996 to 2002.

**Beef From Cloned Cows** appears headed for acceptance in Japan. A Japanese newspaper, *The Yomiuri Shimbun*, reports a working group of the nation's Food Safety Commission is expected to report that meat from cloned animals is safe. A final decision by Japan's central government could come by the end of 2009.

**Carbon Monoxide (CO) Packaging Is Safe**, according to a peer-reviewed paper issued by the American Meat Science Association. *Feedstuffs* reports the researchers also found that CO packaging offers advantages over conventional meat packaging such as improved flavor, no bone darkening, no premature browning, increased tenderness and desirable and stabilized red color at bacterial levels below spoilage levels of 28 days for ground beef and 35 days for roasts and steaks. As for activists' concerns about CO hazards, the researchers reported that CO cannot be demonstrated to affect workers in plants, cooks in kitchens or consumers who eat CO-packaged meat. Workers and consumers receive far less exposure to CO from the packaging than EPA air quality standards allow.

**Proof That PETA Is On The Attack** against all forms of animal agriculture is available in the organization's new video narrated by Alec Baldwin. *Meet Your Meat* can be seen on PETA's website and You Tube.

**Texas Panhandle Feedyard Managers** should mark their calendars for the Panhandle Emergency Preparedness Conference to be held Jan. 14 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Amarillo Civic Center. The keynote speaker will be Don Powell, former Federal Coordinator of Gulf Coast Rebuilding. Those in attendance will also hear from Steve McCraw, director of the State of Texas' Office of Homeland Security; Dr. Bob Hillman, executive director of TAHC; and Dr. Tammy Beckham, director of the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Lab. TCFA is a sponsor of the event. The registration form is posted on the TCFA website.

**TCFA Dues Rebates Available.** If you fed 10,000 head or more in 2008, you may apply for a dues rebate. The rebate applies to the cumulative number of cattle fed by a single feeding entity. Rebate applications must be completed and returned to the TCFA office by April 15. For more information or to request an application, call TCFA at (806) 358-3681 or contact Trent Tyson at [trent@tcfa.org](mailto:trent@tcfa.org).

*Please note: All links are still available at [www.tcfa.org](http://www.tcfa.org) under Newsletter links.*