



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

5501 I-40 WEST

AMARILLO, TEXAS 79106

806 / 358-3681

Volume 43, Number 13

March 27, 2009

A Study Linking Red Meat With Modest Increases In Total Mortality, cancer mortality and cardiovascular mortality has received widespread media coverage and a healthy dose of skepticism about the researchers' methodology and conclusions.

For the study, researchers from the National Cancer Institute followed a half a million people aged 50 to 71 years old for 10 years and investigated more than 70,000 mortalities. The study was published Monday in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, a journal published by the American Medical Association. NCBA staff has been hard at work answering reporters' calls and proactively reaching out to major news organizations to share the industry's perspective.

In response to the study's release, the beef industry issued a statement quoting Dr. Shalene McNeill, NCBA's executive director of human nutrition research. Dr. McNeill said, "As is often the case with epidemiological research on this subject, it is hard to draw substantial conclusions about any one food. This latest research is complicated by the fact that study participants exhibited unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, lack of physical activity and maintaining a higher body mass index which are known risk factors for chronic disease.

What can be concluded from this study is that a balanced diet and overall healthy lifestyle can make a difference in helping prevent chronic disease."

The American Council on Science and Health (ACSH) posted an editorial by Dr. Ruth Kava on its "[Facts and Fears](#)" website discussing the limitations of the study. Dr. Kava said the accuracy of the data researchers used is flawed because the study's participants "didn't actually measure the amount of foods they ate." And, Dr. Kava said, the increases in risk cited in the study "did not reach the levels that would make most epidemiologists sit up and take notice -- a relative risk of 2 (a 100% increase) or greater. In fact, the increased risk of all deaths in the men in the highest group of red meat intake was 31% and for cancer was 22%. For women, the corresponding increases were 36% and 20%."

Another offering came from the Center for Consumer Freedom. David Martosko, the Center's director of research, said, "It's ridiculous to try to separate our diets from our lifestyles. Nobody eats in a vacuum, and countless variables go into figuring out when we die. This study's data connect mortality with smoking, a lack of exercise, taking daily vitamins, and even marriage. It's silly to suggest that any single factor is the biggest one."

New Mexico Receives Split-State Status For Bovine TB: USDA-APHIS has determined that New Mexico meets the requirements for zone classification for bovine TB. In September 2008 the entire state was classified as modified accredited advanced. However, all of the state's affected herds are located in a small area along its eastern border. Therefore, USDA is removing New Mexico from the list of modified accredited advanced states and adding an area consisting of Curry and Roosevelt counties to the list of modified accredited advanced zones. This means, other than the Curry/Roosevelt zone, New Mexico is now considered TB-free.

Notice of this interim rule was published in the March 23 *Federal Register* and became effective upon publication. The deadline for comments is May 22. For more information, go to:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/content/2009/03/regnmtb.shtml>

Draft Permit Proposed for Oklahoma CAFOs: This week, EPA Region 6 issued a proposed General Permit for CAFOs. When complete later this year, the permit will replace the existing General Permit for Oklahoma. The permit will implement provisions required by federal revisions to CAFO regulations adopted in 2003 and 2008. Additional emphasis will be placed on the development and implementation of: (1) Nutrient Management Plans for land application of manure and effluent, and (2) Emergency Action Plans for CAFOs located in watersheds where concern for threatened and endangered species has been identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition, most of the permit conditions in the existing General Permit will be

retained. The comment deadline on the draft permit is April 24. TCFA staff will continue to work with EPA Region 6 on completion of the permit.

TCFA Opposes State Senate Bill: On Monday, the Texas Senate Committee on Agriculture and Livestock considered legislation authored by Senator Kevin Eltife (SB 682) to prohibit the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) from developing and implementing a mandatory animal identification system until required by the federal government. The bill also requires TAHC to enact a fee for participation in the voluntary state premises identification system and to notify current participants that they are not required to participate in the program and can have their information deleted from the system if they so choose.

Current state law is already permissive and allows the TAHC to be consistent with NAIS, which is voluntary. There is also concern that SB 682 could unintentionally prohibit TAHC from requiring compliance with certain animal disease testing and surveillance programs (such as bovine TB and brucellosis) that require animal identification.

TCFA policy supports the creation of a privately maintained, mandatory animal identification system and a government managed premises identification system because of the importance of such information to disease prevention and traceability. Director of Government Relations Josh Winegarner testified against SB 682.

The Union Card Check Bill Has Been Dealt A Potentially Fatal Blow, according to *CNN's* reporting of the announcement by U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Penn.) that he will oppose the legislation. Specter believes that his decision makes it likely that Republican opposition in the Senate will be unanimous. If all 41 Republicans in the chamber hold together against the bill, Democrats would not have enough votes to shut down a filibuster. Specter said he is against the bill because it threatens to eliminate secret ballots in union elections. TCFA and NCBA share that assessment and will continue working with Members of Congress to defeat the legislation. TCFA members are urged to contact their Senators and Representatives by going to <http://capwiz.com/tcfa/issues/alert/?alertid=12912931&PROCESS=Take+Action>.

Tax Law Changes: As a part of H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Tax Act of 2009 (the "Stimulus Bill"), provisions were passed to allow taxpayers who are Eligible Small Business owners (ESB) to elect for a 3, 4, or 5-year Net Operating Loss carryback for the 2008 tax year. This is a change from the current carryback period of two years.

The changes were made to instructions for Forms 1045 and 1139 and are usable when a small business has deductions that exceed their income resulting in a Net Operating Loss. For the 2008 tax year, ESBs with a net operating loss can choose to offset their 2008 loss against the income earned in and up to a five year period. The normal two-year carryback remains available for any ESB that does not choose to use the special carryback provision. If the loss exceeds the income for the carryback period, the ESB can continue to carry forward the remaining balance of the loss for up to 20 years.

Producers need to check with their tax advisors or preparers to see if they are eligible as well as find out about pending deadlines for submission.

To learn more, go to: <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=205329,00.html>. More information is also available at: <http://www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/IRS-farm-income-sheet.pdf>.

Legislation To Prohibit Non-Therapeutic Use Of Antibiotics In Food Animals would be bad for livestock producers and people who eat beef, TCFA member Glenn Polhemus of Miles told the *Scripps Howard News Service*. "It would add to our costs and eat into our profit," said Polhemus, adding that higher costs for producers would eventually mean higher costs for consumers. Polhemus said some people might prefer "a niche product" such as beef raised without antibiotics "and would be willing to pay those very high prices. But it would be ridiculous to say all American consumers would."

A bill to restrict the use of antibiotics in food animals was introduced last week by U.S. Rep Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.)

Barring antibiotics would decrease farm efficiency by about 15% and more animals would be needed to produce the same amount of product, according to Dr. Ron Gill, Texas A&M University professor and Extension livestock specialist and associate department head for Extension. "With the way the economy is right now, we're trying to do everything we can to produce the same quality product at the lowest cost," he said. "If (the legislation) was based on sound science and data, I would back it up -- but it's not," Gill said.

U.S. Rep. Mike Conaway (R-Texas) said he thinks FDA regulations already in place are sufficient. "Any decision regarding the use of antibiotics in animal feed lots should be based on sound science and facts,"

Conaway said. "There is no evidence that the antibiotics used have contributed to increased resistance to humans."

U.S. Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack Has Named Dave White As Chief Of USDA-NRCS. White is a career conservationist with NRCS. He was Montana's State Conservationist from 2002 to 2008. White helped the Senate Agriculture Committee staff craft the Conservation Title for both the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills. He also served on the White House Task Force for Livable Communities during the Clinton Administration. White was named Acting Chief of NRCS in January.

Meanwhile, Michael Michener Has Been Named Administrator of USDA-FAS. Michener has served in three U.S. foreign affairs agencies in the past 10 years. Most recently, he served as the senior democracy and governance advisor and lead planning officer for the U.S. State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. From 2005 to 2007, he served as the lead Iraq policy officer for the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. He has also worked with the United States Agency for International Development in Kosovo, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

USDA Has Announced Approximately 200 Million Lbs. Of Nonfat Dry Milk Will Be Transferred from the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to USDA's Food and Nutrition Service for use in domestic feeding programs. USDA said the goal is to help support both low-income families put food on their tables and dairy farmers challenged by high feed costs and low dairy prices.

The nonfat dry milk (NDM) was acquired by the CCC under the Dairy Product Price Support Program. Under this program, CCC purchases NDM, butter and cheddar cheese at statutorily mandated prices.

Should Animals Have The Same Rights As People? That is the question discount club Costco is asking in an online survey. At last check, about 29,000 people had participated in the survey, with 93% answering no. To see what Costco has posted and to participate in the survey, go to:

<http://www.costcoconnection.com/connection/200903/?pg=16>

The Beef Checkoff's New Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) Program has drawn hundreds of participants who are learning how to become effective spokespersons for the cattle and beef business. The MBA program is a self-directed online training program designed to equip producers and industry allies with the information they need to be everyday advocates for the beef industry.

MBA candidates will be required to complete six courses in beef advocacy, including:

- Modern Beef Production – Sharing the many benefits of modern, efficient U.S. beef production
- Animal Care – Explaining our commitment to raising healthy animals
- Beef Safety – Communicating why producing safe food for consumers is a top priority
- Beef Nutrition – Explaining how great-tasting beef strengthens and sustains our bodies
- Environmental Stewardship – Sharing how we're protecting the environment for future generations
- The Beef Checkoff – Communicating the value of your investment in growing demand for beef

Following completion of these courses, each candidate will be invited to attend a full day "final exam/graduation" ceremony focusing on online advocacy, public speaking and working with the media.

For more information or to enroll in the MBA program, send an e-mail to MBA@beef.org.

Please note: All links are still available at www.tcfa.org under Newsletter links.