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TCFA Chairman Monte Cluck Responded To *TIME* magazine's recent assault on the food industry in a letter to the editors.

In his letter, Cluck took *TIME* to task for publishing an article that is "riddled with inaccuracies and untruths." Cluck said that based on reporter Bryan Walsh's article, "one would believe that those of us in livestock production operate with no oversight and with no consideration whatsoever for our animals, our land, our neighbors or our consumers. Nothing could be further from the truth, and Mr. Walsh should know this since he spoke to beef producers and was provided extensive background information prior to publication.

"All beef sold in this country is inspected to certify that it meets USDA standards for safety and quality. The feed I give my cattle must first be approved by a certified nutritionist and is subject to the scrutiny of the FDA. Any medical assistance I give to assure the health of my animals is approved by either FDA or USDA and overseen by a professional veterinarian. My entire operation must meet the requirements of federal and state environmental regulations that are enforced through random, unannounced inspections," Cluck wrote.

The letter also chastised *TIME* for Walsh's admittedly slanted coverage. In interviews he has granted since the article's publication, Walsh has said he was by no means attempting to provide balanced, objective coverage. Indeed, Walsh explained that *TIME* magazine has taken on a new form of journalism in which the publication's "being part of the conversation" is served by offering readers only one point of view. To hear Walsh's comments on this style of news coverage, go to http://www.cattlenetwork.com/Audio--Bryan-Walsh-Of-TIME-On-AgriTalk/2009-08-31/Article.aspx?oid=831847&fid=VN-HOT_TOPICS for his interview with *AgriTalk*.

Cluck also extended an invitation to *TIME* to visit a TCFA feedyard if the magazine "would like to get a true perspective of beef production in this country." To read the full letter, go to http://www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/chairmans_letter_to_time.pdf.

TIME's article has also drawn strong response from NCBA. As reported previously in TCFA's *Newsletter*, NCBA issued a statement reporting how its staff bent over backwards trying to accommodate Walsh by lining up six interviews with industry experts – interviews Walsh actually conducted and then left out of his article (with the exception of a one sentence quote from an NCBA staff member). NCBA's account of Walsh's bad reporting has been picked up by numerous trade publications, bloggers and ag broadcasters – many of whom joined in by rightfully blasting *TIME*.

NCBA also worked with producers across the country to submit letters to the editor. Of the six letters published in response to the article, five came from farmers and ranchers providing an opposing point of view to the article.

To see the letters to the editor published by *TIME*, go to <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1920292-1,00.html>.

The Political Shakeup In Japan May Have Consequences For U.S. Beef Producers. Last weekend's vote has delivered total control of Japan's parliament to the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), a party which has long campaigned with fiery rhetoric against U.S. beef imports.

"From a beef perspective, their (the DPJ's) early party platform was for a ban on all U.S. beef imports," NCBA Chief Economist Gregg Doud told the Radio Oklahoma Network. Doud explained that DPJ has moderated its position recently and no longer calls for a ban, but the party still wants stringent conditions on beef trade such as "full traceability."

"Politically, Japan is a whole different world than it was three days ago," said USMEF President & CEO Philip Seng.

In a USMEF news release, Seng said there is uncertainty about how the new government will respond to existing U.S. beef trade dynamics, but the DPJ has called for added transparency and strict scrutiny over all food imports from all sources.

"It's important for the U.S. government to engage with the new Japanese government as soon as possible to foster a cooperative atmosphere for future U.S. beef negotiations," Seng said. "At the same time, USMEF will

work with the industry and its contacts in Japan to try to determine the optimal approach to a beef trade protocol that will follow a scientifically sound approach and, ultimately, lead to expanded access for U.S. beef there."

There is good news from Japan despite the concerns over the nation's politics. A leading retail chain in northern Japan, York Benimaru, recently partnered with USMEF on a beef promotion campaign. USMEF market research shows that a leading factor in encouraging consumers to buy U.S. beef is when the stores they trust and patronize endorse it. The special promotion with York Benimaru, supported by the Beef Checkoff, included advertisements that featured photos of the retail chain's meat buyer and his personal endorsement of U.S. beef to the customers of the chain's 160 stores.

"The endorsement of the buyer, who is seen by customers as the expert, is extremely rare for imported meat products," said Takemichi Yamashoji, USMEF-Japan senior marketing director. "In Japan, an endorsement by the meat buyer is seen as the sign of quality, safety and taste." While sales data is still coming in, the early reports show that the promotion is generating results between 10% and 30% above those from the same time last year.



Golf, Guns and a Whole Lot of Fun! The 2009 TCFA Annual Convention is coming up Oct. 28-30. Get your Convention started off right on Wednesday, Oct. 28 with a little fun and friendly competition. Hit the long ball on the Wild Horse Course at Ross Rogers Golf Complex in the annual Golf Tournament or test your sharpshooter skills in the Sporting Clays Tournament at the Amarillo Gun Club. Cattle Feeders will come together at the Ambassador Hotel for a good time at the Welcome Reception. There will also be a special reception held for members of the Beef-PAC Feeders 500 Club. If you are not currently a member, you can still join the Feeders 500 Club and receive your personal invitation to the reception by calling Shannon Standley at the TCFA office.

Registration is up and running! TCFA members should receive their full Convention information in the mail in the coming days. You can register anytime online at <http://www.tcfa.org/convention>. Don't forget to make your

Convention reservations at the Ambassador Hotel by calling (806) 358-6161 or by going online at www.ambassadoramarillo.com and using the group code: TEXASCAT. Remember, the first TCFA member to register will receive a free \$125 registration. From that point forward, every hundredth member to sign up will also receive a free registration. Register today and we'll see you in Amarillo!

Ethanol Producers Are Looking For A COOL Way To Promote Their Industry. Growth Energy – an ethanol advocacy group – has launched a campaign asking Congress to establish mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL) for gasoline, according to *CongressDaily*.

"The American people have a right to know where their fuel is coming from," said Former Gen. Wesley Clark, the chairman of Growth Energy. Clark said a COOL for gasoline would help promote energy independence and indirectly support his group's objective of encouraging renewable fuel production.

Meanwhile, supporters of fossil fuel producers are speaking out against what they see as unjustified favorable treatment certain competitors are getting from the Obama Administration. A *New York Times* article on the \$1.6 million in aid given to trade groups to help promote ethanol and other forms of so-called "clean energy" included this quote from Daniel Kish of the Institute for Energy Research: "When is the last time the government gave a grant to the American Petroleum Institute to go out and tout the virtues of fossil fuel? Last time I checked, the National Mining Association hasn't gotten anything to educate people about the wonders of coal."

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP): Sept. 13 Is The Deadline for producers to apply for payments if they are seeking assistance for losses that occurred from Jan. 1, 2008 through July 12, 2009. LIP covers livestock deaths that result from a natural disaster. Owners and contract growers can be compensated for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, including losses due to hurricanes, floods, blizzards, disease, wildfires, extreme heat and extreme cold. For more information, go to http://www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/lip_link.html.

Meanwhile, An Additional Weight Category Is Being Added To LIP for non-adult beef cattle, non-adult dairy cattle and non-adult buffalo/beefalo, USDA-FSA announced today.

The over-400 lb. category will be split into two categories – 400 to 799 lbs. and 800 lbs. or more. This change will ensure that the assigned market values for animals over 400 lbs. reflect the statutory requirement for the payment to be 75% of the market value for the livestock. FSA state offices will establish new normal

mortality rates for each of the new weight categories covered under LIP and FSA national headquarters will establish average fair market prices for each category.

Tougher Penalties For Cattle Thieves were included in the new state laws that went into effect in Texas Sept. 1. Under the new law, theft of less than 10 head of cattle can result in a third degree felony conviction, punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

In 1993, the Texas Legislature lowered the theft of less than 10 head of livestock from a third degree felony to a state jail felony. Not surprisingly, cattle theft rose. In 2007, 2,400 head of cattle were reported stolen to the TSCRA Special Rangers, and that number climbed to 6,404 in 2008.

TCFA worked with members of the Legislature this year to get the penalty restored to a third degree felony.

...Feeders And Feedyards In The News...

Griffith Farms-Stith Pens in Merkel is welcomed as a new TCFA member. The manager is Eugene Griffith. Jess Turner is the new manager at **Pride Feeders, LP** in Hooker.

Taste Is A Key Advantage For Beef in its competition with other proteins. Finding new ways to maintain that edge is the focus of a research effort that has received nearly \$1 million in Beef Checkoff program money.

To learn more, go to an article by *High Plains Journal* at

http://www.hpj.com/archives/2009/aug09/aug17/0717NCBflavorresearchRPR1_1.cfm?title=Universities%20research%20beef%20flavor.

A Recent Beef Checkoff Study Measured Change In Consumer Demand for beef. The study surveyed more than 1,000 consumers ages 13-65 with a goal of helping Checkoff planners better understand how to optimize national communication strategies. The survey showed positive upswings in attitudes on various measures of how consumers think about beef. This study invariably shows the heavy beef consumer is also a heavy chicken consumer – they're protein fans, plain and simple. Over the years, chicken continues to score high in the nutrition category, but beef is gaining ground. Beef also continues to maintain its lead on taste and crave-ability where it tops chicken.

John Lundeen, NCBA executive director for market research, said what people desire from food is "actually pretty constant. Twenty years ago there were about five factors of importance: taste, convenience, nutrition, variety and price. Now the one that's possibly coming onto the radar is a broader definition of food around social causes – the environment, sustainability and animal welfare."

The survey numbers show consumers have reacted to the changes in Checkoff communications and are starting to get the message about the nutrient-richness of beef and its positive nutritional aspects. For more information from the Checkoff, go to <http://www.beefboard.org/>.

Six in 10 Americans Say They Worry About Food Safety, according to analysis of consumer global trends by Chicago-based research firm Mintel. A *Meatingplace.com* article reports that Mintel's research also shows eight of 10 Americans indicate they are cooking at home more now, and 52% say they are spending less at restaurants this year than last year.

A Lack Of Grain-Fed Beef In The EU makes that market a good opportunity for U.S. beef producers as growing volumes of their product begins to arrive, according to Thad Lively, USMEF's senior vice president of policy, planning and research. Lively told *Meatingplace.com* the new agreement that created a duty-free, high quality beef quota could mean within the next three to five years the U.S. will be sending as much as 70,000 metric tons of beef annually to the EU at prices that are "probably twice the average level of prices in the rest of export markets."

The E-Verify System Is The Topic of a series of free webinars being offered by the Department of Homeland Security this month. Discussions will include Form I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification, the E-Verify program, and E-Verify requirements under the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). For more information on webinar schedules and registration, go to <http://www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/e-verify.pdf>.

The TCFA Office Will Be Closed Monday, Sept. 7 For Labor Day. This weekend is traditionally the end of summer grilling season, and Labor Day is one of the top three beef consumption days of the year. So fire up the grill as part of an enjoyable holiday!