



# TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

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**Finally! The United Nations Is Owning Up To Bad Science On "Livestock's Long Shadow,"** a report that has been used over and over again to bash beef producers and others in the meat industry.

On Wednesday (March 24), one of the report's authors told the *BBC* that criticism of the report's calculations is valid, and the UN is now conducting a more comprehensive analysis.

Published by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 2006, "Livestock's Long Shadow" is the highly flawed report that has been cited repeatedly by activists of every stripe as they proclaim that eating less meat – or no meat – will help save the world from global warming. The FAO report ludicrously claims livestock production is responsible for more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions than transportation. Through the art of phony arithmetic, the report deems livestock production responsible for 18% of the world's GHG emissions.

Now the report is coming unraveled, thanks in large measure to an effort led by University of California researcher Dr. Frank Mitloehner. Mitloehner was the principal investigator for "Clearing The Air: Livestock's Contribution To Climate Change," which discredits many of the claims made in "Livestock's Long Shadow." One key point made by Mitloehner: EPA data shows that in the United States, only 2.8% of annual GHG emissions can be attributed to livestock production, compared to 26% from transportation.

"Clearing the Air" is a synthesis of research by the U.C.-Davis authors and many other institutions, including FAO, EPA, USDA, California Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board. Writing the synthesis was supported by a \$26,000 grant from the Beef Checkoff Program.

At the National Meeting of the American Chemical Society (ACS) this week, Mitloehner gave a presentation on "Clearing The Air" and challenged the conclusions of "Livestock's Long Shadow."

"We certainly can reduce GHG production, but not by consuming less meat and milk," said Mitloehner. "Producing less meat and milk will only mean more hunger in poor countries."

"Clearing The Air" points out the FAO report produced its GHG numbers for the livestock sector by adding up emissions from farm to table, including the gases produced by growing animal feed, animals' digestive emissions, and processing meat and milk into foods. But FAO's transportation analysis did not similarly add up emissions from well to wheel; instead, it considered only emissions from fossil fuels burned while driving. This creates what Mitloehner calls an "apples and oranges" comparison.

Mitloehner's criticism was accepted by FAO Livestock Policy Officer Pierre Gerber, who told the *BBC*, "I must say honestly that he (Mitloehner) has a point. We factored in everything for meat emissions, and we didn't do the same thing with transport."

Gerber said the UN's more in-depth analysis should be complete by the end of the year.

While the UN's confession of mangled mathematics in "Livestock's Long Shadow" is welcome news for the livestock industry, it is also encouraging that Mitloehner's ACS presentation received widespread international media attention. Along with the *BBC*, news organizations providing coverage included the *Washington Times*, the *Des Moines Register*, *FOX News*, *CNN*, the news agency *AFP*, and two leading U.K. publications – the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Register*.

**An Effort To Extend A Major Tax Credit For Ethanol Refiners And Blenders** is under way as two U.S. House members have introduced H.R. 4940, the "Renewable Fuels Reinvestment Act."

The legislation by U.S. Reps. Earl Pomeroy (D-N.D.) and John Shimkus (R-Ill.) would extend the 45-cents-per-gallon credit until the end of 2015. The credit is scheduled to cease at the end of this year.

TCFA and NCBA are strongly against an extension of the credit and will work to defeat this bill and any similar legislation. The domestic ethanol industry no longer requires government support and should be allowed to stand on its own as a free market enterprise. TCFA continues to oppose all forms of government supports for an industry that competes with cattlemen for feed grains.

**At The Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) In Amarillo**, a groundbreaking ceremony was held Monday (March 22) for a project that includes renovations and the addition of a new Biosafety Level

3 facility. The Level 3 resources will expand the lab's capacity to respond to and recover from high-consequence agricultural or zoonotic disease events, according to AgriLife communications. Plans also call for a newly renovated sample receiving area and a new bio-secure sample drop-off area. Actual construction is expected to begin this month and be finished in early 2011.

TCFA played an important role in convincing state lawmakers to provide funding for the lab's new facilities.

TCFA Chairman Mike Engler participated in the groundbreaking. "I applaud our elected leaders, along with Texas A&M University and industry leaders who once again recognized the need and secured more than \$1 million for these projects, which will allow rapid response to help protect the livestock industry from devastating foreign animal diseases.

"With the addition, we now have the capability to save critically important hours in diagnosing serious animal diseases that could threaten the multi-billion dollar livestock industry in the High Plains. This will prove essential to limiting the possible spread of such diseases and ultimately to eliminating them."

Other dignitaries present at the ceremony included State Rep. Warren Chisum (R-Pampa), State Rep. David Swinford (R-Dumas), Joe Cox, assistant vice chancellor for external relations for the Texas A&M University System; TVMDL State Director Dr. Tammy Beckham; Dr. Robert Sprowls, resident director of for the Amarillo lab; and representatives of Texas Association of Dairymen and Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association.

**USDA Is Testing Cattle Carcasses As It Works To Reset Pathogen Testing Baselines.** *Meatingplace.com* reports that USDA plans to create baselines for ground beef, beef trim and other beef components.

The baselines are used to determine the process control capability of the industry, Deputy Assistant Administrator for USDA-FSIS Daniel Engeljohn told participants at a seminar in Chicago on E. coli O157:H7 prevention presented by the North American Meat Processors Association.

To create the beef baselines, USDA will take one sample immediately following hide removal but prior to decontamination interventions and evisceration. A second sample will be taken post-chill after all decontamination interventions but prior to fabrication. The tests will baseline pathogen reductions achieved by current industry practices.

Engeljohn told *Meatingplace* earlier tests for cattle were only performed post-chill. Thus, adding the pre-decontamination test will provide new data upon which to base performance standards. The baseline testing should take about a year to complete. Similar efforts are also underway for hogs, chickens and turkeys.

**Child Nutrition Bill Passes Out Of Committee:** This week, the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry unanimously approved the "Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010," which reauthorizes childhood nutrition programs. The bipartisan legislation invests \$4.5 billion in new child nutrition program funding over the next 10 years. The legislation invests in new initiatives to enroll more children in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs and takes step to address the epidemic of childhood obesity.

Many studies show a direct link between nutrient intake and academic performance. In fact, zinc deficiency during the early years adversely affects cognitive behavior, including attention, short-term memory and problem-solving. Research shows that 12% of males ages 6-11, 29% of males ages 12-19, 26% of girls ages 6-11 and 47% of females ages 12-19 are not meeting the recommended dietary allowance for zinc. A 3 oz. serving of lean beef (184 calories) provides 74% of the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) of zinc for girls and boys ages 9-13, 54% of the RDA of zinc for boys 14-18, and 65% of the RDA of girls 14-18. As the number one food source for zinc, beef provides 25% of the total zinc in the American diet.

Research also suggests that high-quality protein – such as found in lean beef – plays an increasingly important role in weight management. There are 29 cuts of beef that meet government guidelines for lean, with less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 3 oz. serving. That same 3 oz. serving of lean beef is an excellent source of protein, zinc, vitamin B, selenium and phosphorus; and a good source of niacin, vitamin B, iron, choline and riboflavin.

TCFA and NCBA are supportive of the goals of this bill, but will continue to work with senators and representatives to find alternative funding sources. As it stands today, the bill would cut \$2 billion from EQIP over the next ten years to fund a portion of the new program spending.

**Flawed Data On Global Warming And The Deceit Of Climategate** are the focus of an op-ed by U.S. Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.) in the March 23 edition of *U.S. News & World Report*.

Inhofe, who is aggressively taking on corrupt research tactics used to create and sustain global warming fears, offers a variety of the inconsistencies coming from scientists and policymakers:

"We've been told cap-and-trade would create thousands of green jobs, yet the Congressional Budget Office, Department of Energy, National Black Chamber of Commerce, and others say it would mean a net loss of jobs.

"We are told that increasing levels of CO2 will increase temperature, yet the key scientist in the Climategate scandal says there's been 'no statistically significant warming' in the past 15 years – all while CO2 levels have increased. We've been told that there is an 'indisputable consensus' that human-caused global warming is happening and pushing the planet to certain disaster. Yet that same scientist – Phil Jones, former director of Britain's Climatic Research Unit, the foremost such center – now says that the vast majority of climate scientists don't agree on what the data are telling us."

To read Inhofe's op-ed in full, go to <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2010/03/23/inhofe-climategate-shows-theres-no-global-warming-consensus.html>.

### **Texas AgriLife Reports The "Air Quality: Reducing Emissions From Cattle Feedlots and Dairies"**

**Research Team** has earned the state's highest environmental honor: the 2010 Texas Environmental Excellence Award from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The federally funded research team is coordinated by Dr. John Sweeten, resident director for research at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Amarillo.

"This project has involved five agencies or universities working together to conduct research to develop science-based emission factors and cost-effective abatement technologies, and to extend that research to the feedlot and dairy industry and regulators," Sweeten said. "A host of graduate students have received hands-on training in the course of this research project as well."

The field and laboratory research is aimed at accurately determining emissions of dust/particulate matter, ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, odor and volatile organic compounds from cattle feedlots, and developing technologies to mitigate such emissions, he said.

In a letter supporting the project, TCFA President & CEO Ross Wilson said, "Open-lot cattle feedyards have continued to make environmental management improvements over the past three decades; however, our knowledge and understanding of air emissions, measurement of those emissions and associated mitigation practices has been limited.

"Over the past five years, the federal Air Quality research project has greatly expanded the database and foundation from which additional progress can be made."

To find out more about the research team and how its efforts have benefited the livestock industry, go to <http://agnews.tamu.edu/showstory.php?id=1831>.

**The 2010 Fed Beef Challenge** is just around the corner. April 21 will be the big day at Amarillo Livestock Auction. Dozens of TCFA member feedyards will send pens of steers and heifers to compete for prize money and bragging rights on a carcass performance basis. There also will be a live evaluation contest in which feedyard employees can try to win a custom-made saddle, college students have a chance to win valuable scholarships, and everyone else has the opportunity to show their cattle knowledge. For more information, go to [http://www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/fed\\_beef\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/fed_beef_flyer.pdf) or contact Jason Slane, [jason@tcfa.org](mailto:jason@tcfa.org), or Trent Tyson, [trent@tcfa.org](mailto:trent@tcfa.org), at (806) 358-3681.

**Employers Who Sponsor Group Health Plans** face a new annual notice requirement, potentially as soon as May 1 as the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has issued a model premium assistance notice to employees under the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA). BlueCross BlueShield of Texas says employers need to be aware of notice deadline that many companies with plan years beginning from Feb. 4, 2010, through April 30, 2010, must meet to comply with the DOL guidance.

CHIPRA added new notice and disclosure obligations for employers that sponsor group health plans in states that provide Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) assistance in the form of premium assistance subsidies. It also created additional HIPAA special enrollment rights for eligible employees.

For more information, use the following links:

- <http://www.dol.gov/federalregister/HtmlDisplay.aspx?DocId=23521&AgencyId=8&DocumentType=3>
- <http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/chipmodelnotice.doc>
- <http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/newsroom/2010/ebsa020910.html>

**In Japan, Fish Is Losing Out To Meat** when it comes to consumer preferences. The *Wall Street Journal* reported this week on the Japanese government-sponsored public relations effort to win consumers back to seafood. In 2006, for the first time ever, fish fell below meat in per capita Japanese food purchases. Since 2000, average household spending on seafood is down 23% in Japan. Complaints about fish by Japanese citizens quoted in the article include the smell and the hazards of those tiny bones. This sounds like a market primed for U.S. beef, where the aroma is always pleasing and the bones are plainly visible and easily removable.

**TCFA Sponsor Spotlight.** TCFA is proud to recognize its top sponsors whose efforts help deliver top-notch services to members.

This week's spotlight shines on



Micro Beef Technologies, a long-time TCFA supporter, is proud to serve as *Your Connection to Profit*, providing innovative management solutions to America's cattle producers since 1971. From individual producers, to cattle feeders and beyond, Micro Beef is increasing value throughout the supply chain with integrated health, feed, animal, and information management systems. Whether you're looking for tools for age and source verification or an integrated system to manage all of your day-to-day feedyard operations, Micro Beef offers the most comprehensive systems and service in the industry. Visit them online at <http://www.microbeef.com>, and be sure to stop by <http://www.mymicrostore.com> for all of your animal health needs.

Please note: All links are still available at <http://www.tcfa.org> under This Week's Newsletter links.

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