



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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Another Earth Day Has Come And Gone. For years now, Earth Day has become that annual day where radical animal rights and environmental activists bombard the media with false information attacking the very people who are most committed to preserving natural resources for future generations: namely, cattlemen and everyone else in agriculture.

Fortunately, those who feed this hungry world have learned to fight back and use the powerful weapon of the truth to do so. One example from this week is the commentary by **TCFA Chairman Mike Engler** that was published in the editorial section of the *Amarillo Globe News*. In his column, Engler informed readers that "by constantly working to improve production efficiencies, cattle feeders have made great strides in recent decades to conserve natural resources and shrink our carbon footprint while continuing to provide consumers with an abundance of affordable and highly nutritious beef." The column offered information from several studies that show how modern beef production practices help the cause of achieving "sustainable agriculture." To read the full article, go to http://www.amarillo.com/stories/042210/opi_opin2.shtml.

Meanwhile, NCBA was active on the national front helping secure positive coverage for beef producers in newspapers across the country and on radio stations and internet sites as well. A national news release, highlighting a recent Beef Checkoff-funded consumer survey that ranked cattle ranchers and farmers as the third greenest profession, was issued on April 15. To date, the release has resulted in 67 reprints, including the DenverPost.com and Yahoo!, and has garnered more than 141 million media impressions. The release is available at <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/cattle-ranching-a-green-profession-survey-finds-90931649.html>.

Another release highlighting the 40 ways cattle farmers and ranchers help the environment was distributed last Thursday and has resulted in 491 online placements so far. To read that release, go to <http://www.explorebeef.org/protectingresources.aspx>.

Animal ID Meetings Scheduled: USDA-APHIS today announced it will host two public meetings regarding the federal government's new initiative on animal identification and disease traceability. APHIS announced earlier this year that states and tribal nations would be required to develop and implement a system to identify and trace (to their state of origin) animals moving in interstate commerce. The purpose of the upcoming public meetings is to share with stakeholders the results of previous discussions between APHIS and state animal health agencies regarding the different approaches and the regulatory framework identified to achieve this goal and to receive feedback. TCFA staff will attend the May 11 meeting in Kansas City. The second meeting will be May 13 in Riverdale, Md.

Interim Committee Hearings Underway In Texas: In preparation for the 2011 Texas legislative session, House and Senate committees are meeting in Austin and around the state to conduct hearings on interim charges. TCFA Government Relations Director Josh Winegarner was invited to testify before the Senate Committee on Agriculture Rural Affairs this week on innovative ways to increase investment, employment and production in Texas agriculture. Winegarner talked about the need for additional funding for vocational education, workforce development and rural development; the threat of increased state and federal regulations regarding environmental, trade, tax, healthcare and competition issues; and the need to maintain the use of technological advancements and modern production practices to ensure that U.S. agriculture can continue to provide consumers with safe, affordable and nutritious food.

In the coming weeks, Winegarner will testify at a joint meeting of the House Agriculture and Transportation Committees regarding the state's transportation infrastructure as it relates to the movement of agricultural products and also at a meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee regarding efforts to increase truck weights. TCFA also is monitoring several other hearings.

Helping Set The Record Straight Has Not Made Dr. Frank Mitloehner Popular With Everyone. Last month, Mitloehner's research forced the United Nations to admit that it had made mistakes in "Livestock's Long Shadow," the 2006 report that made the now-debunked claims that livestock production causes more greenhouse gas emissions than transportation.

Although the UN owned up to its errors in methodology and said it will work to correct them, not everyone is pleased with Mitloehner's efforts. *Feedstuffs* quotes Mitloehner as saying he has "received hundreds of emails. There have been people on the extreme side who have sent threatening and very upsetting messages."

The angry email messages are coming primarily from people who advocate a meatless diet, according to Mitloehner, a University of California-Davis air quality specialist. He declined to be more specific about the threatening nature of the messages but described some of them as "very aggressive."

Mitloehner also told *Feedstuffs* that some critics have questioned the University of California-Davis report's conclusions because some of the research funding came from agricultural sources. "People need to understand that science doesn't always turn out the way they like it, but if some people don't like your science, they try to discredit you," Mitloehner said. "That is unacceptable. I've been asked if I ever receive funding from agricultural sources. Yes, 5% of my funding is from agricultural stakeholders. I think who else would be interested in funding this?" he added. "To take that issue and turn it against the credibility of scientists borders on libel," Mitloehner said. "It is inappropriate and upsetting."

An Ethanol Tax Extenders Bill Has Been Introduced by U.S. Senator Charles Grassley (R-Iowa). The legislation would extend several tax incentives for the use and production of ethanol. Specifically, the Grow Renewable Energy from Ethanol Naturally Jobs Act of 2010 would extend through 2015 the Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit (VEETC), the offsetting tariff on foreign ethanol, the Small Producers Tax Credit and the Cellulosic Ethanol Producer Tax Credit. This legislation is a companion to the Renewable Fuels Reinvestment Act (H.R. 4940), which was introduced earlier this year by U.S. Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-N.D.). TCFA is opposed to both bills.

Federal Water Regulation Bill Introduced: U.S. Rep. James Oberstar (D-Minn.) has again introduced legislation to remove the word "navigable" from the definition of "waters of the United States" under the Clean Water Act (CWA). "The so-called America's Commitment to CWA is yet another example of federal overreach that would curtail states' rights and infringe upon private property rights in the name of environmental protection," said Josh Winegarner, TCFA government relations director. "This bill would grant the federal government unprecedented regulatory authority over all waters in our country, including groundwater and playas, regardless of their environmental significance." The bill's author refutes claims that the bill would regulate groundwater, but strangely there is not an explicit exclusion of groundwater in the legislation. A copy of the bill is available at http://www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/cwa_oberstar_2010.pdf.

"Removing the word 'navigable' from the definition of waters of the United States is a non-starter for us," said Tamara Thies, NCBA chief environmental counsel. "Navigability is essential to maintain the appropriate federal-state balance that has always been the hallmark of the Clean Water Act. Without it, the reach of the federal government's strong arm will be limitless. This bill would take away state and private property rights and would only lead to endless litigation and bureaucratic red tape. The result would actually hamper our nation's ability to maintain clean waters."

TCFA and NCBA are strongly opposed to this bill and will work hard to defeat it. Currently, waters under the federal jurisdiction of the CWA are defined as "navigable waters of the United States." Other waters are subject to regulation by individual states and local governing bodies, which are better equipped to manage their own unique needs and resources.

Your Tax Dollars At Work: Vegan Activist Messaging On EPA's "Official Blog." A college sophomore who is interning at EPA has been allowed to post an article titled, "Living without Meat" on the *Greenversations* blog. Her message, which features radical rhetoric typical of the anti-modern agriculture crowd, has sparked furious debate in the blog's comments section – including many pro-meat postings. EPA has also embedded this disclaimer immediately below the intern's post: "The opinions and comments expressed in *Greenversations* are those of the authors alone and do not reflect an Agency policy, endorsement, or action, and EPA does not verify the accuracy of the contents of the blog." Interestingly, it does not appear to be standard policy for EPA to attach such disclaimers to individual postings. You can check out the intern's original post and the reaction it is getting by going to <http://blog.epa.gov/blog/2010/04/20/living-without-meat/comment-page-1/#comment-29556>.

The 2010 TCFA Fed Beef Challenge took place this week at the historic Amarillo Livestock Auction in Amarillo. The event showcased 108 of the best fed cattle in Cattle Feeding Country from 19 TCFA Feedyard Members, all vying for awards and cash prizes. More than 200 people participated in the live evaluation contest and the always-popular free steak feed. In addition, more than \$1,200 was raised for the TCFA Education Foundation. See next week's *TCFA Newsletter* for information on the winners in the Fed Beef Challenge.

A \$465,000 USDA Grant Is Funding E. Coli Research At Kansas State University (KSU). The project title is "Ecology of E. coli O157:H7 in Beef Cow-Calf Operations from Ranch to Feedlot." KSU says the research efforts will include collecting samples from feedyards and processing plants in Kansas and Nebraska. For more information, go to <http://www.k-state.edu/media/newsreleases/apr10/nagaraja42010.html>.

The CattleFax Risk Management Seminar Is June 8-9 In Denver. CattleFax reports there are still some seats available but advises those interested in attending to not delay their registration. For more information, call (800) 825-7525 or go to <http://www.cattlefax.com/meetings/seminars/risk-management-seminar/>.

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

Texas Cattle Feeders Association

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