

SOUTHERN LIVESTOCK STANDARD

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28 PAGES

FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 2021

San Antonio All Breed Bull and Commercial Female Sale held despite weather conditions

The 30th Annual San Antonio All Breed Bull and Commercial Female Sale finally happened. Due to terrible winter weather, the sale had to be rescheduled from Feb. 17 to the following week, Feb. 24. Also due to the change of schedule, this year the cattle sold online by video only and there were no live cattle present at the sale site.

The 48 bulls, representing seven breeds, were well

received by the buyers and averaged \$5,057 while the 289 head of females sold for an average of \$2,372. One hundred and sixty-nine open heifers sold for an average of \$1,987; 40 bred heifers sold for an average of \$2,375 and 80 pairs sold for an average of \$3,184.

In the annual bull sale, four Angus bulls brought an average of \$4,125; eight

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Moving into 2021

By Caitlin Richards

Capital Farm Credit hosted a webinar with

CattleFax CEO Randy Blach for a Texas cattle review and outlook on Jan. 21. While 2020 was a year like no other, Blach discusses how 2021 could pan out and reminds producers to be wary when comparing 2021 to 2020 because of the volatility.

“Be very careful when looking at any monthly year-over-year comparisons when we get into February, March, April and that time period,” says Blach. “They aren’t going to mean anything because of COVID-19.”

One of the major impacts within the beef industry because of COVID-19 was the slowdown of production in the packing plants. Cattle were forced to spend more time on feed, which decreased prices for producers and increased prices for consumers. Blach says the backlog of cattle has leveled out and the supply is now steady.

Even with the markets being so unsure in the spring of 2020, beef demand remained strong.

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PERIODICAL

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ROUND-UP REVIEW
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Just Your Standard Bull

By Michael Sturgess

TEXAS Trails...

By Clay Coppedge

There is more than one side to every story. We all know this, but we often don't have access to multiple opinions. Such has been the case early on as we unveil EECOT's role in the storm of '21.

ERCOT, or the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, has been taking fire in its perceived role in the rolling blackouts and extended power outages. We have heard from the Governor, and others, who question the performance, and even the makeup of ERCOT's board. Many of us have no doubt heard that not all members of ERCOT are even from Texas. Is this a normal situation?

According to a KBTX interview with Dr John Russell, professor of electrical Engineering, Texas A&M University, who stated "that is fairly normal. The board members of the

Reliability Council (ERCOT) are picked based upon their expertise, experience, their qualifications for their specific roles that need to be filled. It's not uncommon at all that they would be from any geographic region. We need to find the best people in the country who have the right skill sets to run ERCOT. And whether they are Texas citizens or not I think is, frankly not a big issue."

"We need to be praising the ERCOT operators that were on duty during the period when the load was going up and generators were falling off-line. Frankly, those operators saved Texas from an absolute total black-out, which would have been a disaster and would have been much, much worse than the conditions that we ended up going through. It would have taken a while

to get back up, etc. So, ERCOT, in its active role during this crisis did a very good job. They kept us from having some real problems. More significant problems actually."

"On the other hand, it is yet to be investigated what role ERCOT played in the issue of requiring, if they can even do so, that the gas plants be weatherized. That's going to be a big issue that's going to be studied."

According to Dr Russell, it was already predicted by ERCOT that wind or solar would not be a major source of power during a storm like this. Why? Because you can't rely on the wind blowing or for the sun to shine.

So, it appears that the major problem was and is the weatherization of power plants.

Problem one—some of the older plants may cost more to weatherwise than what it would cost than what it might cost to build a new one.

Problem two – These plants are not owned by ERCOT, or even the State of Texas. They belong to local municipalities, cooperatives and other private and publicly owned utility companies. Who pays for these upgrades? Do we see our local rates increase to cover these costs? Will there be help from the State of Federal governments?

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The Angel of Goliad
The Battle of the Alamo is straight-forward and clean. The Mexican army attacks the Alamo and kills all its defenders but Texas rebels win the war, using the battle cry "Remember the Alamo" to rally the troops and an uneasy citizenry. It's the iconic story of Texas.

But "Remember the Alamo" was only half of the Texans' battle cry. The other half was "Remember Goliad." Remembering Goliad is messier than remembering the Alamo. The Alamo was a battle with a massacre tacked on at the end. Goliad was a wholesale slaughter of unarmed POWs.

Like the Alamo defenders, the slaughtered Texans who died at Goliad survive in history as martyrs, but the true hero of the Republic's darkest hour was a compassionate Mexican woman who might or might not have been named Francita Alavez and who might or might not have been married to a Mexican officer. We remember her today as the Angel of Goliad.

Dr. Joseph H. Barnard, who lived to tell the tale by virtue of Alavez's mercy and compassion, wrote of her: "I must not here omit the mention of Señora Alvarez, whose name ought to be perpetuated to the latest times for her virtues, and whose action contrasted so strangely

with that of her countrymen, and deserves to be recorded in the annals of this country and treasured in the heart of every Texan."

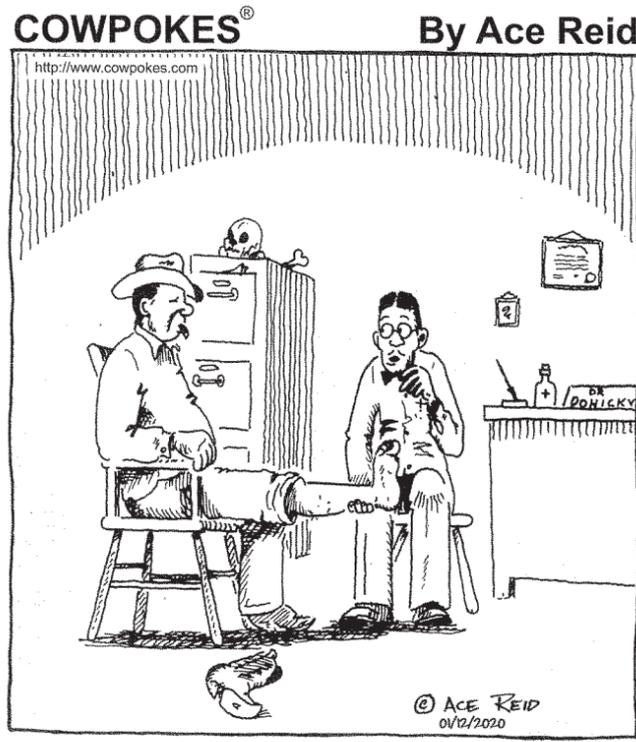
Francita Alavez first showed up in Texas in March of 1836 with Mexican captain Telesforo Alavez. Some first-hand witnesses to her mercies referred to her as Alavez's wife, but later research revealed that not to be the case, at least not in 1836. We have no idea when or

where she was born and we're not absolutely certain about when and where she died, though some accounts have her living out her days on the King Ranch.

The first references to her come from the captured members of Maj. William P. Miller's Natchez Volunteers in Copano Bay where she called upon officers to loosen the ropes binding the soldier's hands so as not to cut off circula-

(Continued on page 8)

USDA Livestock Export/Import Statistics For 3-1-2021			
SPECIES:	2-26-2021:	Wk.-Dt.:	Yr.-Dt.:
1) BEEF CATTLE			
a. Slaughter	46	741	6,966
b. Breeding Males	6	10	381
c. Breeding Females	0	10	141
Total	52	761	7,488
2) HOGS			
a. Slaughter	0	0	0
b. Breeding Males	0	0	351
c. Breeding Females	0	0	0
Total	0	0	351
3) SHEEP			
a. Slaughter			
1) lambs	0	0	0
2) ewes	0	0	0
b. Breeding Males	0	0	0
c. Breeding Females	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0
4) DAIRY CATTLE			
a. Breeding Males	0	0	0
b. Breeding Females	0	0	481
Total	0	0	481
5) GOATS			
a. Angora	0	0	0
b. Spanish	0	0	0
c. Other	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0
6) HORSES			
a. Slaughter	60	94	2,086
b. Breeding Males	5	23	147
c. Breeding Females	6	22	245
d. Geldings	1	5	61
e. Burro/Mule/Pony	0	0	5
Total	72	144	2,544
7) EXOTICS			
Total	0	0	5
MEXICO TO NEW MEXICO IMPORTS			
SPECIES:	3-2-2021:	1-1-2021 - Present:	
FEEDER CATTLE	17,410	103,824	
MEXICO TO TEXAS IMPORTS			
FEEDER CATTLE	5,219	32,450	



"Wilbur your problem is you have got 150-pound feet hooked to a 300-pound body!"

SOUTHERN LIVESTOCK STANDARD

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 CATTLE SHEEP & GOAT HORSES EXOTICS
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If registered, what breed? _____
Type of business: FARMER RANCHER AGRI-BUSINESS
 OTHER: _____

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DC News...

USDA offers disaster assistance for producers enduring inclement weather

Source USDA

Most of the nation faced unusually cold weather, as a winter storm moved coast-to-coast in mid February. Winter storms create significant challenges and often result in catastrophic loss for agricultural producers, especially for those raising livestock, row crops and vulnerable crops like citrus.

Despite every attempt to mitigate risk, your operation may suffer losses. USDA offers several programs to help with recovery.

Risk management

For producers who have risk protection through Federal Crop Insurance or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), we want to remind you to report crop damage to your crop insurance agent or the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

If you have crop insurance, contact your agency within 72 hours of discovering damage and be sure to follow up in writing within 15 days. If you have NAP coverage, file a Notice of Loss (also called Form CCC-576) within 15 days of loss becoming apparent, except for hand-harvested crops, which should be reported within 72 hours.

Disaster assistance

USDA also offers disaster assistance programs, which are especially important to livestock, fruit and vegetable, specialty and perennial crop producers who have fewer risk management options.

First, the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP) reimburses producers for a portion of the value of livestock, poultry and other animals that died as a result of a qualifying natural disaster event—like these winter storms – or for loss of grazing acres, feed and forage.

Next, the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) pro-

vides cost share assistance to rehabilitate and replant tree, vines or shrubs loss experienced by orchards

and nurseries. This complements NAP or crop insurance coverage, which covers the crop but not the plants or trees in all cases.

For LIP and ELAP, you will need to file a Notice of Loss for livestock and grazing or feed losses within 30 days and honeybee losses within 15 days. For TAP, you will need to file a program application within 90 days.

Documentation

It's critical to keep accurate records to document all losses following this devastating cold weather

(Continued on page 8)



Spring Consignment Sale

Saturday, March 27, 2021
Sale Time 12:00 NOON

Accepting Consignments
COWS & HEIFERS AND BULLS
FEMALES REQUIRED TO BE 6 YEARS OR YOUNGER.

FOUR COUNTY AUCTION CENTER

Hwy. 159 & FM 2754 • Industry, Texas
For More Information Call: Don Dreyer
Office: 979/357-2545 or Cell: 979/830-3959
SALE EVERY TUESDAY • 12 NOON

Prime Time at Mound Creek

Annual Bull and Female Sale • March 20, 2021

Ranch Headquarters near Leona, Texas

120 Breeding Age Brangus & Ultrablack Bulls • 50 Elite Brangus and Ultrablack Females



MC Bedrock 541G20
MC Boulder 889Z14 x MC Ms Resource 541A4
Boulder's greatest son from the same incredible damer that produced the \$110,000 Boom Town and the \$75,000 Big Tex. He's frozen a tank of semen so packages will be available at sale time!

National breed ranks for Non Parent GE-EPD values in Top 1% H PREG, FER2, TERM, REA; Top 2% WW, YW; 3% IMF; 4% TM; 10% STAP; 15% SC.



MC Five Star 541G30
BWCC Big Town 192B16 x MC Ms Resource 541A4
Ranks as the greatest from these extraordinary full brothers that includes this great group selling in 2021 along with the \$110,000 Boom Town and the \$75,000 Big Tex!

National breed ranks for Non Parent GE-EPD values in Top 1% H PREG; 2% FER2; 4% REA, TM, TERM; 5% WW; 10% YW, IMF, SC; 20% MILK, STAT.

Flush bull/ewe semen at 13 months of age so be sure and ask about semen possibilities.

For Sale Information and Catalogs Please Contact Us!

PROGRAM ADVISOR:
Tracy Holbert
(979)255-4357, txt or call
ctlbroker@suddenlink.net



Mound Creek Ranch
Eddie and Cindy Blazek, Owners • Leona, Texas
(713) 829-9908, txt or call
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www.moundcreekranch.com

USDA Major Livestock Reports:

Producers Livestock Auction, San Angelo, Texas, February 25, 2021: Total receipts: 804, last reported (2-11-21) 1,208, last year 1,168. Feeder cattle 515 (64.1%), last reported (2-11-21) 519 (43.0%), last year 1,040 (89.0%). Slaughter cattle 169 (21.0%), last reported (2-11-21) 193 (16.0%), last year 70 (6.0%). Replacement cattle 120 (14.9%), last reported (2-11-21) 496 (41.1%), last year 58 (5.0%). Compared to the last sale two weeks ago heavy steer and heifer calves and yearlings firm to 2.00 higher, light calves 6.00-8.00 higher. Slaughter cows and bulls firm to 1.00 higher. Stock cows and pairs firm in light test. Trading active, demand good. Supply included: 64% Feeder Cattle (47% Steers, 52% Heifers, 2% Bulls); 21% Slaughter Cattle (78% Cows, 22% Bulls); 15% Replacement Cattle (66% Stock Cows, 6% Bred Cows, 28% Cow-Calf Pairs). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs. was 20%.

Amarillo Livestock Auction, Amarillo, Texas, March 1, 2021: Total receipts 654, last reported (2-22-21) 0, last year 670. Feeder cattle: 15 (2.3%), last reported (2-22-21) 0 (0.0%), last year 30 (4.5%). Replacement cattle: 10 (1.5%), last reported (2-22-21) 0

(0.0%), last year 50 (7.5%). No recent auction for comparison due to shutdown from snow storm two weeks ago. Trade was fairly active on moderate to good demand. Supply included: 96% Feeder Cattle (24% Steers, 60% Heifers, 16% Bulls); 2% Slaughter Cattle (50% Cows, 50% Bulls); 2% Replacement Cattle (44% Bred Cows, 56% Cow-Calf Pairs). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 72%.

Oklahoma National Stock Yards, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March 2, 2021: Total receipts: 12,280, last reported (2-22-21) 2,723, last year 5,879. Feeder cattle: 12,280 (100.0%), last reported (2-22-21) 2,723 (100.0%), last year 5,879 (100.0%). Compared to last week's light test: Feeder steers traded 3.00-4.00 lower, feeder heifers lightly tested but sold 1.00-3.00 lower. Stocker cattle and calves steady to firm. Demand moderate to good as cattle futures closed in the red. Quality average to attractive. Supply included: 100% Feeder Cattle (60% Steers, 39% Heifers, 1% Bulls). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 70%.

SALE: Beeville Livestock Commission, Inc.
Beeville, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-26-21
VOLUME: 246
TREND: Steady/no change.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	112-170	105-129
300-400 lbs.	113-175	114-135
400-500 lbs.	112-163	102-158
500-600 lbs.	103-142	91-125
600-700 lbs.	94-133	88-122
700-800 lbs.	95-111	80-95
Slaughter cows	30-60	
Slaughter Bulls	50-87	
Stocker cows	590-750	
Pairs	960-1090	

SALE: Brazos Valley Livestock Commission
Bryan, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-23-21
VOLUME: 438
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	150-185	132-155
300-400 lbs.	150-172	126-142
400-500 lbs.	136-160	118-133
500-600 lbs.	122-142	110-134
600-700 lbs.	114-132	102-117
700-800 lbs.	111-115	—
Slaughter cows	35-77	
Slaughter bulls	77-88	
Stocker cows	750-1025	
Pairs	910-1300	

SALE: Live Oak Auction, Inc.
Three Rivers, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-28-21
VOLUME: 1496
TREND: Steady/lower.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	156-175	125-160
300-400 lbs.	150-185	120-152
400-500 lbs.	130-175	120-144
500-600 lbs.	120-160	112-132
600-700 lbs.	110-138	105-130
700-800 lbs.	112-135	95-132
Slaughter cows	30-65	
Slaughter bulls	62-86	
Stocker cows	550-1050	
Pairs	700-1250	

SALE: Nixon Livestock Commission, Inc.
Nixon, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 3-1-21
VOLUME: 642
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	144-175	126-190
300-400 lbs.	142-188	120-145
400-500 lbs.	141-188	116-143
500-600 lbs.	128-175	112-139
600-700 lbs.	117-147	105-126
700-800 lbs.	100-126	94-144
Slaughter cows	20-69	
Slaughter bulls	75-95	
Stocker cows	650-900	
Pairs	800-1025	

SALE: Gulf Coast Livestock Auction, LLC
Alice, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-23-21
VOLUME: 325
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	145-175	120-145
300-400 lbs.	142-170	127-150
400-500 lbs.	133-155	125-147
500-600 lbs.	125-145	115-125
600-700 lbs.	110-130	100-120
700-800 lbs.	100-120	90-105
Slaughter cows	45-68	
Slaughter bulls	80-90	
Stocker cows	700-1000	
Pairs	750-1100	

SALE: Gillespie Livestock Company
Fredericksburg, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-24-21
VOLUME: 353
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	140-201	120-170
300-400 lbs.	150-210	120-160
400-500 lbs.	145-192.5	110-154
500-600 lbs.	130-175	105-137
600-700 lbs.	122-154	105-124
700-800 lbs.	110-130	100-120
Slaughter cows	40-79	
Slaughter Bulls	70-99	
Stocker cows	—	
Pairs	—	

SALE: Groesbeck Auction/Livestock Co., LLC
Groesbeck, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-25-21
VOLUME: —
TREND: *NO SALE REPORTED*

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	140-201	120-170
300-400 lbs.	150-210	120-160
400-500 lbs.	145-192.5	110-154
500-600 lbs.	130-175	105-137
600-700 lbs.	122-154	105-124
700-800 lbs.	110-130	100-120
Slaughter cows	40-79	
Slaughter Bulls	70-99	
Stocker cows	—	
Pairs	—	

SALE: Jordan Cattle Auction
San Saba & Mason, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-25-21
VOLUME: 1333
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	180-202	135-150
300-400 lbs.	175-210	140-159
400-500 lbs.	165-190	135-155
500-600 lbs.	145-169	125-156
600-700 lbs.	130-157	118-129
700-800 lbs.	115-130	110-127
Slaughter cows	30-75	
Slaughter bulls	70-93	
Stocker cows	600-950	
Pairs	750-1160	

SALE: Giddings Livestock Commission
Giddings, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 3-1-21
VOLUME: 459
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	130-175	137.5-448
300-400 lbs.	125-185	101.5-141
400-500 lbs.	118-174	100-141
500-600 lbs.	105-157.5	80-133
600-700 lbs.	120-135	75-124
700-800 lbs.	77-123	80-124
Slaughter cows	30-70	
Slaughter bulls	48-95	
Stocker cows	524-975	
Pairs	900-1200	

SALE: Lampasas Cattle Auction
Lampasas, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-25-21
VOLUME: 416
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	—	—
300-400 lbs.	127-165	124-150
400-500 lbs.	136-163	120-138
500-600 lbs.	122-142	115-130
600-700 lbs.	105-127	115-130
700-800 lbs.	105-127	97-117
Slaughter cows	20-73	
Slaughter bulls	60-96	
Stocker cows	550-1250	
Pairs	750-1300	

SALE: East Texas Livestock, Inc.
Crockett, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 3-2-21
VOLUME: 543
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	163-205	128-200
300-400 lbs.	146-188	121-178
400-500 lbs.	138-179	118-157
500-600 lbs.	130-167	118-151
600-700 lbs.	121-150	109-133
700-800 lbs.	—	—
Slaughter cows	53-78	
Slaughter Bulls	84-98	
Stocker cows	580-1625	
Pairs	900-1900	

SALE: Caldwell Livestock Commission Co., Inc.
Caldwell, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-24-21
VOLUME: 420
TREND: Steady/no change.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	120-165	128-150
300-400 lbs.	154-177	136-160
400-500 lbs.	151-175	131-162
500-600 lbs.	140-155	127-162
600-700 lbs.	130-137	117-129
700-800 lbs.	106-123	95-111
Slaughter cows	30-67	
Slaughter bulls	65-88	
Stocker cows	650-1125	
Pairs	700-1175	

SALE: Buffalo Livestock Commission Co., Inc.
Buffalo, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-27-21
VOLUME: 704
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	125-210	120-210
300-400 lbs.	120-202	115-190
400-500 lbs.	115-200	100-150
500-600 lbs.	110-170	95-145
600-700 lbs.	100-144	90-125
700-800 lbs.	95-127	85-119
Slaughter cows	15-75	
Slaughter bulls	55-103	
Stocker cows	750-1000	
Pairs	800-1425	

SALE: Navasota Livestock Auction Co.
Navasota, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-27-21
VOLUME: 1123
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	120-220	120-190
300-400 lbs.	120-200	110-160
400-500 lbs.	120-200	110-153
500-600 lbs.	110-165	110-144
600-700 lbs.	110-139	100-126
700-800 lbs.	—	—
Slaughter cows	20-66	
Slaughter bulls	50-94	
Stocker cows	600-1050	
Pairs	800-1125	

SALE: Cattleman's Brenham Livestock
Brenham, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-27-21
VOLUME: 629
TREND: Steady/no change.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	150-197	118-205
300-400 lbs.	145-190	118-205
400-500 lbs.	120-180	105-154
500-600 lbs.	110-150	98-168
600-700 lbs.	90-128	90-149
700-800 lbs.	96-129	78-126
Slaughter cows	34-72	
Slaughter bulls	70-98	
Stocker cows	550-1000	
Pairs	—	

SALE: Cuero-Victoria Livestock Markets
Cuero & Victoria, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-26-21
VOLUME: 947
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	175-180	129-160
300-400 lbs.	153-179	132-162
400-500 lbs.	149-192	125-167
500-600 lbs.	137-160	121-186
600-700 lbs.	1390135	113-126
700-800 lbs.	123-133	104-117
Slaughter cows	15-69	
Slaughter Bulls	70-93	
Stocker cows	70-87	
Pairs	—	

SALE: Gonzales Livestock Market, Inc.
Gonzales, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-27-21
VOLUME: 857
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	198-220	151-160
300-400 lbs.	197-200	145-148
400-500 lbs.	167-192	141-143
500-600 lbs.	149-162	127-128
600-700 lbs.	118-145	114-122
700-800 lbs.	118-122	—
Slaughter cows	23-63	
Slaughter bulls	68-91	
Stocker cows	525-1025	
Pairs	750-1200	

SALE: Columbus Livestock Co.
Columbus, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-25-21
VOLUME: 670
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	135-210	115-190
300-400 lbs.	125-190	110-160
400-500 lbs.	115-180	105-150
500-600 lbs.	110-165	100-140
600-700 lbs.	105-145	90-130
700-800 lbs.	100-134	85-120
Slaughter cows	30-77	
Slaughter bulls	70-95	
Stocker cows	550-1150	
Pairs	750-1300	

SALE: Four County Livestock Auction
Industry, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 3-2-21
VOLUME: 347
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	125-225	120-220
300-400 lbs.	120-185	110-155
400-500 lbs.	115-180	110-145
500-600 lbs.	110-165	105-138
600-700 lbs.	105-140	95-130
700-800 lbs.	—	—
Slaughter cows	30-67.5	
Slaughter bulls	65-96	
Stocker cows	450-975	
Pairs	850-1300	

SALE: El Campo Livestock Auction
El Campo, Texas
DATE OF SALE: 2-23-21
VOLUME: 163
TREND: Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	153-180	140-150
300-400 lbs.	150-180	130-145
400-500 lbs.	135-158	120-143
500-600 lbs.	124-146	118-130
600-700 lbs.	116-136	97-110
700-800 lbs.	—	—
Slaughter cows	30-74	
Slaughter bulls	80-95	
Stocker cows	—	
Pairs	—	

Sheep & Goat Auctions:

Producers Livestock Auction, San Angelo, Texas, March 2, 2021: Total receipts: 6,400 2,653, last year 6,103. Slaughter sheep/lambs: 4,032 (63.0%), last reported (2-23-21) 1,760 (66.3%), last year 4,638 (76.0%). Replacement sheep/lambs: 64 (1.0%), last reported (2-23-21) 0 (0.0%), last year 123 (2.0%). Feeder goats: 256 (4.0%), last reported (2-23-21) 53 (2.0%), last year 191 (3.1%). Slaughter goats: 1,984 (31.0%), last reported (2-23-21) 761 (28.7%), last year 1,038 (17.0%). Replacement goats: 64 (1.0%), last reported (2-23-21) 79 (3.0%), last year 113 (1.9%). Compared to last week all classes of sheep sharply lower in a market adjusting for last week's weather related market. Nannies sharply lower; kids firm to 10.00 higher. Trading and demand moderate. Supply included: 63% S

Five things to know about the Beef Checkoff, Part I

How much do you really know about the beef checkoff? With a petition being circulated to have an up-or-down referendum that would terminate the \$1 per head promotion and research program, it's time to get a better understanding of the checkoff. This issue, we look back at the history of the program and how long and hard producers fought to get it passed.

By Sharla Ishmael

"Tomorrow hopes we have learned something from yesterday." — John Wayne

The first thing to understand about the beef checkoff, as it now exists, is that it didn't come easy. Producers worked for decades to get a mandatory national beef checkoff in place. Here are five things you should understand about the history of the beef checkoff.

1. Producers have been financing a self-help program through deductions from cattle sales to promote beef to consumers for about the last 100 years.

The origins of the beef checkoff go way back to the 1920s, when producers worried over the need to combat "claims of faddists and those interested in beef substitutes." In 1922, the National Live Stock and Meat Board was established to build demand for beef and other meats on a national level. Its efforts were financed by voluntary contributions — 5 cents deducted from the sale of each car of stock sent to market, matched by an equal amount from the packers, according to the June 1929 issue of *The Cattleman*. At the time, an increase in the assessments was being discussed because more funds were necessary to continue the National Live Stock and Meat Board's activities: meat cutting and meat cooking demonstrations in leading cities; conducting meat essay competitions in public schools; cooperating with retail butchers in advertising meats; furnishing meat cooking recipes for the press, and eliminating unfair advertising by advocates of other food products.

2. It took producers 60-plus years to come to an agreement on how to structure a checkoff program so that everyone who sold cattle paid into it.

Seven checkoff bills failed in Congress before the "Great Cattle Bust of 1953," and two more refer-

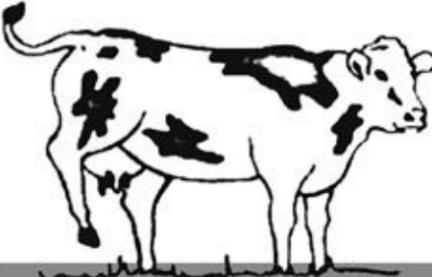
endums to start a national, mandatory checkoff failed in 1977 and 1980 before finally being passed with the 1985 Farm Bill.

"If you go back in history, starting during the voluntary period of the checkoff during the 1950s, you
(Continued on page 10)

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Select beef: Who wants it?

By Miranda Reiman, Certified Angus Beef

What was exceptional yesterday is average today. That's true in the cattle business and especially apparent in high-quality beef production.

"Without paying attention to shifts in the market, it can be easy to assume what worked when you started still works now," says Paul Dykstra, of the Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand. "It's hard to argue there's ever been true demand for Select, rather than simply a price point for those indifferent to quality."

But indifference has left the market.

The Choice-Select spread has been sending the message for decades, says the CAB assistant director of supply management and analysis. A wider spread signals strong demand for marbling, while a narrow spread suggests weaker demand for the same.

It gives cattlemen a roadmap of what the market wants, but price married with quantity provides the complete picture.

During the last decade, Select carcass production fell 50% in relation to Choice and Prime. Through December 2020, the Select proportion was 13.9% of fed-cattle carcasses, down from the 2019 average of 16.9%. The Select grade typically comprised nearly half of fed beef 15 to 30 years ago.

"Supplies have dramatically decreased, and so we might assume scarcity would spur prices higher, given healthy demand," Dykstra says, "But the numbers tell a different story."

A two-year snapshot of the spread between Select and No-Roll (ungraded, practically devoid of marbling) shows a narrowing trend, with the exception of the erratic markets this past May (Figure 1-page 22). The value difference between No-Roll and Select typically hit its highs at \$20 per hundredweight (cwt.) from 2015 to 2018, but those peaks dropped to \$12/cwt. after that. The lows in the comparison were also slightly lower in recent years.

On the flip side, the Choice-Select spread showed a widening trend (Figure 2-page 22) even as

Choice supplies increased and Select decreased.

"There's less demand out there for Select beef. Retailers have embraced higher marbling, in part because it's easier to procure," he says.

Choice has surpassed 70% of the fed-cattle supply. CAB often makes up 20% of the total, while Prime reached as high as 12% last year.

"Consistent, high vol-

umes of high-quality beef is key to retailers' ability to

feature it week in and week out," Dykstra says.

In 2020, the percentage of fed cattle reaching premium Choice and Prime came to more than 40%. CAB hit its fifth year above

a billion pounds, yet "based on the CAB to Choice cutout, demand is exceptional," he says. "And that happened while a significant portion of foodservice and international business was sidelined due to

COVID-19.

"As demand for quality continues to increase, both domestically and abroad, Select starts to find itself in a bit of a 'no man's land.'"

It's no longer the low- (Continued on page 22)



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D.C. News...

(Continued from page 3)

event. Livestock producers are advised to document beginning livestock numbers by taking time and date-stamped video or pictures prior to after the loss.

Other common documentation options include:

- Purchase records
- Production records
- Vaccination records
- Bank or other loan documents
- Third-party certification

Other programs

The Emergency Con-

servation Program and Emergency Forest Restoration Program can assist landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore damaged farmland or forests.

Additionally, FSA offers a variety of loans available including emergency loans that are triggered by disaster declarations and operating loans that can assist producers with credit needs. You can use these loans to replace essential property, purchase inputs like livestock, equipment, feed and seed, or refinance

farm-related debts, and other needs.

Meanwhile, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides financial resources through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program to help with immediate needs and long-term support to help recover from natural disasters and conserve water resources. Assistance may also be available for emergency animal mortality disposal from natural disasters and other causes.

Additional resources

Additional details –

including payment calculations – can be found on our NAP, ELAP, LIP, and TAP fact sheets. On farmers.gov, the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet, and Farm Loan Discovery Tool can help you determine program or loan options.

While we never want to have to implement disaster programs, we are here to help. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local USDA Service Center. All USDA Service Centers are open

for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require ap-

pointments because of the pandemic.

SLS

Texas Trails...

(Continued from page 2)

tion, and to give them food and water.

Dr. Barnard wrote: "They {the Texas prisoners} were tightly bound with cords, so as to completely stop the circulation of blood in their arms, and in this state had been left several hours when she saw them. Her heart was touched at the sight, and

she immediately caused the cords to be removed and refreshments furnished them."

After Miller's volunteers were moved to Goliad to await their execution, Francita managed to save a few of the men. "She treated {the prisoners} with great kindness, and when, on the morning of the massacre she learned that the prisoners were to be shot, she so effectually pleaded with Colonel Garay (whose humane feelings so revolted at the order) that with great personal responsibility to himself, and at great hazards at thus going counter to the orders of the then all-powerful Santa Ana, resolved to save all that she could; and a few of us, in consequence, were left to tell of that bloody day." She may have also entered the fort the evening before the massacre and smuggled several of the condemned men to safety.

The next day Mexican soldiers executed 340 or so Texans as traitors and pirates under Santa Anna's "no quarter given" policy. The soldiers hunted down those not killed by the first volley and shot, stabbed or speared them to death.

Francita left Texas after the Battle of San Jacinto and Santa Anna's subsequent surrender and went with Captain Alavez to Mexico City. Some accounts have it that the captain abandoned her in Mexico City, while some say she later lived with him as his wife and they raised a family in Matamoros.

After the captain died, Francita and other members of the family worked north of the Rio Grande on ranches and truck farms.

Elena O'Shea, a schoolteacher on the King Ranch in the early 1900s, wrote in her memoirs that Francita's whole extended family lived and worked on the ranch. As for Francita, O'Shea wrote "...she died on the King Ranch and is buried there in an unmarked grave... Old Captain King and Mrs. King knew and respected her identity."

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Executive Director's Report...

By: Bill Hyman

The Independent Cattlemen's Association (ICA) lost a dear friend and past president last week with the passing of Robert L. Bruner of Huntsville. Bruner was president of ICA from 2011 to 2012. He served seven years on the Texas Beef Council (TBC), with his last two years serving as chairman and past chairman. He also served on the board of Sam Houston State University. He and his wife, Toni raised registered Angus cattle for many years and she says she will continue to raise cattle on a somewhat smaller basis.

Bruner was a quiet man who seldom made speeches but when he spoke, you had better listen. He was in tune with the entire industry and if he said it, it was fact. There was never any jockeying for favoritism when he led the TBC. He

gave every organization or sector of the industry an equal voice. He never played favorites and ran the TBC meetings in a professional manner. He listened to every producer, no matter how big or small. He mentored me on many of the issues facing producers and guided ICA, as we developed policy and direction.

He was always there for ICA and its leaders even when he could no longer attend the board meetings. He always called after the meeting to see how things went. He never said this is the way to do things or else. He would suggest direction and explain the issues with factual information every time. ICA will miss him and his wisdom.

I hope that I can someday be half the man he was. Please remember Toni and the family in your prayers.

ICA



By Joe C. Paschal,
Livestock Specialist,
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Freeze aftereffects on cattle

A friend and colleague of mine, Dr. Ted McCollum, who was an Extension Beef Cattle Specialist in Amarillo for many years but is now retired to ranching in New Mexico, came up with many of these after a blizzard hit the Texas Panhandle in late 2015. He reminds us that even after the weather warmed up that we should continue to watch our livestock for the aftereffects, especially of this weeklong freeze.

The weeklong freezing temperatures and windchill can have especially long-lasting impact on livestock. Tails and ears and even cows' teats and udders and

bulls' sheaths and scrotums could be frostbitten causing some partial loss (tails, ears and teats) or loss of function (testes) in the next few days or weeks. However, Dr. McCollum said that these are not long-term threats to the animal's well-being.

Cows with frostbitten udders or frozen teats may be sensitive, reducing milk production and consumption by their calves for a few days. Also, there might be some mastitis and partial loss of udder function. Cows calving this spring could also be affected but it would not be noticeable

(Continued on page 10)



President's Address...

By: Brad Cotton

Howdy friends,

I hope everyone survived the cold and is back up to speed. I am sure if you are reading this and own cattle that the week of snow was definitely a challenge for you. I enjoy my cattle and depend on them for added income but this week definitely was a test. I had a gentleman from the **Wall Street Journal** call last week doing a phone interview about ranching through this snow and ice in Texas. Good thing he called toward the end of the week or I may not have been so pleasant.

I try to always look at the positives even in the worst of times. Cattle ranchers sometimes get a bad representation from some of the media, as well as some of the animal rights groups. The trying conditions we just went through which is more realistic of cattle folks. Men and women were seen on national TV and social media risking their own lives to free their animals from freezing conditions. There was also a great deal of footage showing folks breaking ice for livestock,

putting out hay and feed, warming newborn calves and so on.... This is representative of most all cattle ranchers. This week just brought to light what most of us already knew which is, country folks are great and care about their animals. Another area of great pride is how the people of Texas responded. Neighbors helping neighbors and people heaping praise on the first responders and those working to restore power was scattered all across social and local media. No signs of looting or violence, were used to show peoples anger.

For those of you who did not fare so well, keep in mind FSA has a livestock indemnity program (LIP) which helps producers when a larger than normal mortality rate occurs due to weather and other natural disasters. You can get more information at fsa.usda.gov or call your local FSA office.

As we close out the end of February, the weather has definitely changed for the better and the green in the fields is starting to come back. Until next month, stay safe and God bless.

Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas



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Chapter Happenings...

Around The Lone Star State

Guada-Coma Happenings

Hello to all. A lot is happening in our chapter. We will have our first chapter meeting March 8 at the Red Barn on Cordova Road at 6:30 p.m. A BBQ meal will be served. Since we have lots of space, guidelines for the Covid-19 will be observed at the Red Barn.

We will have two speakers. Dr. Joe Paschal will talk about calving and cow/calf well-being during the

late winter/early spring season, emphasizing nutrition. We will also have Dr. Larry Unruh of American Plant Food. He will be addressing the state of the fertilizer industry and how to optimize fertilizer management.

Our scholarship for high school seniors and first year college students, as well as the State ICA deadline are both April 1. Our scholarship requirements

(Continued on page 10)



Nine-year-old Randall Ritchey shows off the 10-point buck he bagged on his grandmother's property. His great-grandfather and SCTICA member, Alton Kuykendall is pictured with him. Ritchey is son of Brian and Christy Ritchey and great-grandson of Alton and Pat Kuykendall.



STICA members, Alton and Pat Kuykendall, Stockdale, Texas celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary on Feb. 15th. Congratulations.

Aftereffects...

(Continued from page 9)

until they calve and begin lactating, so they should be evaluated then, too.

Prepuces and scrotums of bulls exposed to freezing temperatures and wind chills may have been damaged, especially bulls with slightly larger sheaths and prepuces. Bulls being used now or considered for use should have a breeding soundness examination (BSE) performed on them. Semen production is a long-term process and fer-

tility could be impacted for one or two months.

Bulls breeding fall calving herds should have a BSE performed as soon as possible to check for injury and semen quality to ensure a high percent calf crop. Cows in fall calving herds that are not bred could have delayed estrus and pregnancy resulting in late calves. Estrus activity should return to normal in a few weeks, if there are no other injuries.

Cattle and other livestock that survived the extremely frigid tempera-

tures for days are physically very stressed, even those that were adequately supplemented and sheltered. Producers should monitor their herd's body condition scores and possibly increase supplemental feeding for the remainder of breeding season (for fall calving cows) or calving (for spring calving cows). Finally, observe your livestock closely for other signs of stress. Even though they survived the weather, something may just not be quite right.

SLS

Checkoff...

(Continued from page 5)

saw different state beef councils and cattlemen's associations sending voluntary dollars to the National Live Stock and Meat Board," explains Richard Wortham, who served as executive vice president of the Texas Beef Council (TBC) from 1995 until December 2020. "The failed referendums in 1977 and 1980 were for a program that was really structured from the top down. After the second failed referendum, they did a survey of producers to find out what they really wanted."

Anne Anderson was Wortham's predecessor at the TBC and oversaw the implementation of national checkoff through the TBC when it finally passed.

"After the second failed referendum, they spent a lot of time rewriting the structure of the program so that it reflected what producers intended it to be – a self-help program run by the industry and controlled by producers, without a lot of government intervention," she adds. "The cattle industry has always been independent; if something is broke, we'll fix it."

The national checkoff,

as we now know it, started in October 1986 and ran for 18 months as a trial period, during which producers could see how their money was being invested, the different programming areas (promotion, research, education, etc.) and get an idea of the benefits that could be reaped. During the trial period, producers could also request refunds.

"The first thing to understand about the beef checkoff, as it now exists, is that it didn't come easy."

A confirmation vote was taken in May 1988 – after a massive industry educational campaign – and the beef checkoff became a mandatory \$1 per head fee with no more refunds.

In Texas, the 1988 referendum passed by 88% (the failed referendum in 1980 received yes votes from only 24% of Texas producers).

"The biggest challenge is that we fail to remember

how hard it was to get this program in place and what the need was for the program," Wortham says.

3. At the time the checkoff passed, beef demand was going down every year due to everything from consumer boycotts of beef, government price controls, negative perceptions of beef's nutritional value and more.

"I can remember Dr. Bill Mies at meetings saying the one thing you could count on, from 1980 to a 1995, is that we would lose about 1% of beef demand per year," Wortham recalls. "It took the industry about 15 years to begin to reverse the trend and start to see beef demand turn the other way. We had to overcome a lot of misinformation during those 15 years. Certainly, I think the program is delivering on the promises it made when the checkoff was originally passed."

Anderson's background is in nutrition, and one of the biggest issues she remembers having to fight was over cholesterol and dietary guidelines.

"The 1970s introduced the heyday of cholesterol research," she explains. "If we wanted facts to support beef's role in a healthy diet, we had no money to do it. We desperately needed accurate nutritional research for our consumers. After the checkoff passed, we had the money to fund cholesterol research. It was the first time we had data to show in Washington when they were talking about dietary guidelines, and we were able to get the dietary guidelines changed."

However, the beef industry had been fighting the same problems from way back. Consider this comment from R. C. Pollock, the general manager of the National Live Stock and Meat Board in 1939: "Never in history has the battle for the consumer's dollar been so keen. Scores of foods are battling for a place in the human stomach. Meat must have its fair share of the food dollar, if the livestock and meat industry is to retain its position as a national leader."

While promotional efforts had been ongoing for decades, being funded solely by voluntary dollars just hadn't been enough to overcome all the obstacles causing beef demand to decline. Here is how Dolph Briscoe, the late Texas governor who served on the meat board for 10 years

(Continued on page 11)



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Happenings...

(Continued from page 9)

are open to all careers. Please contact us or state office for requirements and additional information.

May 16th is our Spring Fling banquet at the Red Barn in Seguin. We will be honoring our scholarship recipients, both high school and first year college students. This will also be our fundraiser. More information will be discussed at our March 8th meeting.

Until then, hope to see you at our meeting.

News from South Central Texas

Hello SCTICA Members and friends,

The South Central Texas Independent Cattlemen's Association (STICA) Directors met in January and voted to share some information with all of our active members through a mailed letter. So, if you haven't received your letter in the mail and you are an active member through ICA in Lockhart, please contact me, Laurie Miller at 210/215-1139, and I'll glad verify your address and your membership.

A second letter some of

you may have received came from ICA to renew your membership. We hope you have updated your membership so you can continue to meet with us and will receive the membership benefits. If you want to call Lockhart to renew your membership please call Sandy at 512/620-0162.

We have some very exciting news to share, our next SCTICA membership meeting will be held in Floresville at the Wilson County and Community Center on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 starting at 6:30 p.m. Postcards will be mailed to our members in March with a number to RSVP. The facility is a large facility and allows for good social distancing. Please wear your mask.

The SCTICA-Windy Miller Memorial Team Roping will be held Oct. 2, 2021, at Cowboy Fellowship. Thank you Brenda Moore for booking this for us. More information to come.

We look forward to seeing you soon! Remember that things aren't falling apart; things are falling into place.

Checkoff...

(Continued from page 10)

described the situation.

"... the most challenging problem in those years was to secure enough voluntary dollars to fund both the research and promotion programs. We never had adequate funding until the recent referendum was passed," Briscoe said.

4. We also have a Texas beef checkoff that operates separately from the national program.

Like the national beef checkoff, there was first a voluntary state program. In fact, the TBC was launched in September 1954. An article in the November 1955 issue of Progressive Farmer quoted Leo Welder, president of the TBC.

"It's been become more and more evident to livestock producers in the last 10 years or so that they're in the meat business, whether they like it or not. Cotton, rice and citrus growers, to name only a few, have found that producer-supported promotion was their solution to price and market problems. Livestock people are coming to the same conclusion. That is the reason the TBC was formed," Welder stated.

"They've learned that it isn't a hardhearted packer's buyer or a sharp cattle broker who holds cattle prices down," he added. "They've learned its Mrs. American Housewife who controls their cattle prices by how often or how seldom she says 'beef' at the meat counter."

The TBC had been in operation for one year when the article was written and a year-end survey of 581 retailers indicated beef sales in their Texas stores were up about 17%. Welder wrote they planned to carry on their promotional efforts but also believed more resources were necessary.

"We will continue on this (voluntary) basis, though eventually we believe beef promotion should be financed through a checkoff at the marketplace," he explained. "This will distribute the load more equitably and will keep the few from carrying it for the many."

Flash forward past the eventual approval of the national checkoff to 2014,

when a separate (additional) \$1 per head state-level promotion, marketing, research and education program for beef and beef products was approved. The Texas Beef Checkoff program is collected by the TBC, with assessments on cattle at each point of ownership transfer in Texas.

Payment of the Texas Beef Checkoff is mandatory but does include an option for refund. The Texas Beef Checkoff program may complement and extend national beef checkoff efforts, but these checkoff dollars are con-

trolled by Texas producers and 100% of the money stays in Texas.

5. Texas producers support the Checkoff

Anderson believes Texas producers are more positive toward the checkoff than some other states in part because the results of their investment are visible.

"Producer attitude – it's different in Texas," she explains. "It is more positive because producers in Texas are more aware of what is being done for them with checkoff dollars. And \$1 or \$2 is very little invest-

ment on a \$1,000 animal, it's less than a cup of coffee.

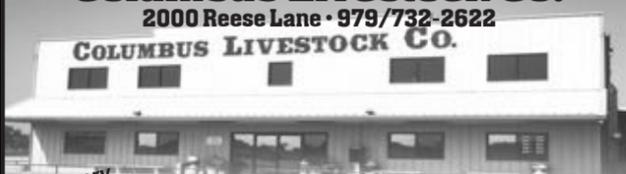
"I also think the TBC is head over heels compared to other state programs. The board is willing to take risks, manage decisions and stick their necks out. They trust the staff. TBC has done a phenomenal job. In the nutrition area, their reach of physicians ran ahead of the national effort and is more cost effective. The Beef Loving Texas promotion – you see it in places and sponsorships of all kinds of events that other states just don't do. Our producers see their

dollars being spent. It makes a difference."

Editor's note: To see more information on the petition/referendum process, visit www.ams.usda.gov and search for Fre-

quently Asked Question Regarding the Beef Checkoff Program Petition Process. There are numerous misleading claims being passed around about how this process works.

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- Sale Catalogs: Electronic versions should be available online around February 15, 2021 and via e-mail request. To be put on mailing list for hard-copy catalog, please contact the sale secretaries via phone or e-mail.
- New for 2021: The sale will be broadcast via DVAAuction. If you cannot make the sale, you may register for a bid card and purchase via the online auction. If you plan to attend the auction, please **DO NOT** register for a bid card at DVAAuction. See link below for additional information.
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Animal extremist and HSUS darling, New Jersey Senator Cory Booker's new appointment raises concern for animal agriculture

By Jaelyn Krymowski for Protect the Harvest

It's official – animal extremist political icon Cory Booker (D-NJ) has been appointed to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. This was met with much dismay from the animal agriculture world and not unjustifiably so.

Besides having absolutely no practical or real-world experience in any of the agriculture industries or sectors, Booker has long been a poster child for radical animal extremism and vegan movement enthusiasts by being a politician made in their own image.

His political career and personal motives have been rigorously documented by Protect The Harvest and other allied industry entities. Farmers, ranchers, veterinarians and other animal professionals need to be aware of what his appointment could mean for them and the industry as a whole.

Booker's background – no practical experience with agriculture

Born in Washington, D.C., and raised in New Jersey, Senator Booker has no direct connections with today's farming world. He attended Stanford University to get his BA in political science and master's in sociology. Afterwards, he went to Oxford where he earned a degree in U.S. history then moved on to Yale for his juris doctor.

During his mayoral career where he presided over Newark, New Jersey from 2006 to 2013, he was largely known for working with urban development and sociological issues.

So where exactly did his supposed animal expertise come from?

Booker attributes Gandhi's autobiography, The Story of My Experiments with Truth, as being largely responsible for his personal connection with animal rights in 1992. Shortly thereafter, he became a vegetarian and remained so until 2014 when he fully transitioned to an all-vegan diet.

“Legislatively,” he told the prominent vegan activist media outlet VegNews, “I want to continue to be a part of a movement of folk who are fighting against corporate interests that are undermining the public

good and the public welfare.”

By integrating his animal rights ideology into his political life, Booker quickly shot up the ladder to animal activist stardom. He has received numerous laurels and recognition in this realm on the national level – not removing his vegan lifestyle and beliefs from his legislative activity.

Senator Booker was a featured guest and award winner at the Humane Society of the United States' Farm Animal Protection fundraiser in Los Angeles.

Booker's legislative activities Farm Systems Reform Act – Boycott big meat campaign

While he's been on the favored side of the animal extremist agenda for some

time, Booker gained a whole new level of attention when he, along with Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), introduced the Farm Systems Reform Act (FSRA) in 2019.

The Farm Systems Reform Act was a direct affront to large modern farms which utilize concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) of all types, as previously report-

ed by Protect The Harvest. The bill seeks to eliminate all CAFOs entirely by January of 2040 and would force animal agriculture production to be entirely pasture-based.

To gain favor, many animal extremists and unfamiliar media outlets tried to explain the motives behind the bill as pushing out “corporate ag” in favor of smaller, family farms

with greater sustainability and economic fairness. Movements like the #BoycottBigMeat campaign and associating it with the Green New Deal are examples of this. The bill itself completely overlooks the fact that large modern farming practices were developed by experts in the field, university researchers, and livestock veterinarians. These practices were developed through scientific facts, not subjective emotions, like the animal extremist movement's motives. They maximize

(Continued on page 16)



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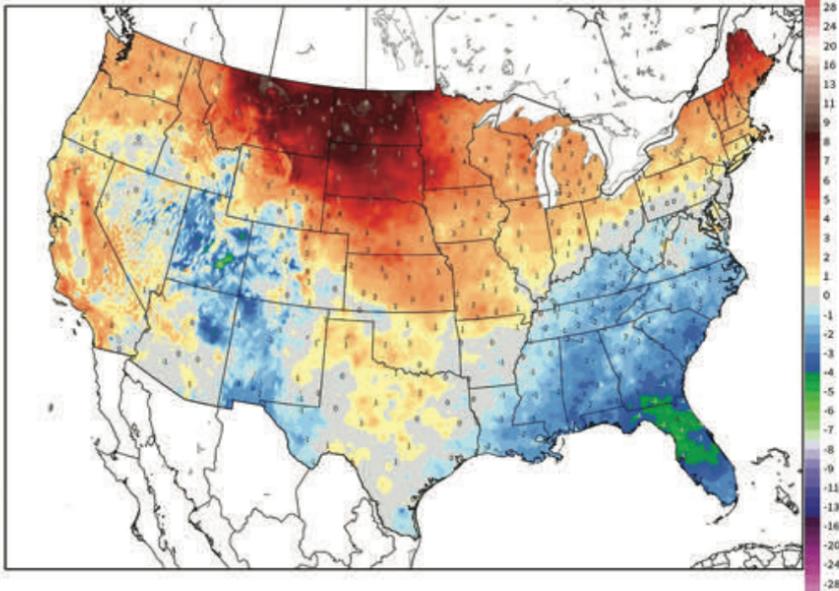


Meteorological Winter Summary

Well folks, the "official" end of winter has come and gone. Meteorological winter runs from December through February. I know that many of us can still see winter before or beyond that time frame. For me, here in Colorado, typically our snowiest months come during March and April. So while the rest of you are warming up, we still have snow to worry about up here. At any rate, I wanted to give you a rundown of how we all did in terms of temperatures and precipitation.

Temperature Anomaly December

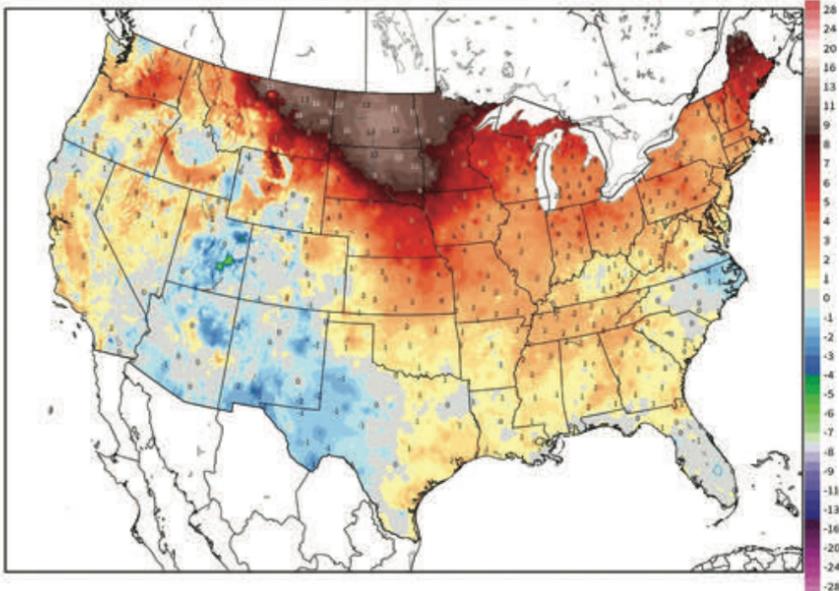
PRISM TEMPERATURE ANALYSIS ANOMALY [*F]: Dec 1, 2020 -> Dec 31, 2020
LOWER 48 MEAN ANOMALY: 1.31°F | ACTUAL MEAN TEMPERATURE: 35.54°F



PRISM CLIMATE GROUP OREGON STATE UNIV | 1991-2020 HISTORICAL CLIMATOLOGY

January

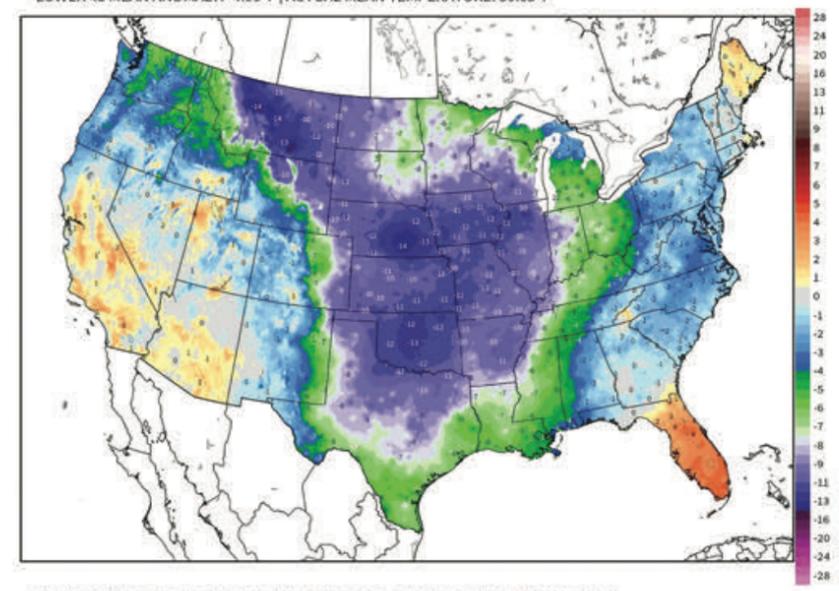
PRISM TEMPERATURE ANALYSIS ANOMALY [*F]: Jan 1, 2021 -> Jan 31, 2021
LOWER 48 MEAN ANOMALY: 2.25°F | ACTUAL MEAN TEMPERATURE: 34.30°F



PRISM CLIMATE GROUP OREGON STATE UNIV | 1991-2020 HISTORICAL CLIMATOLOGY

February

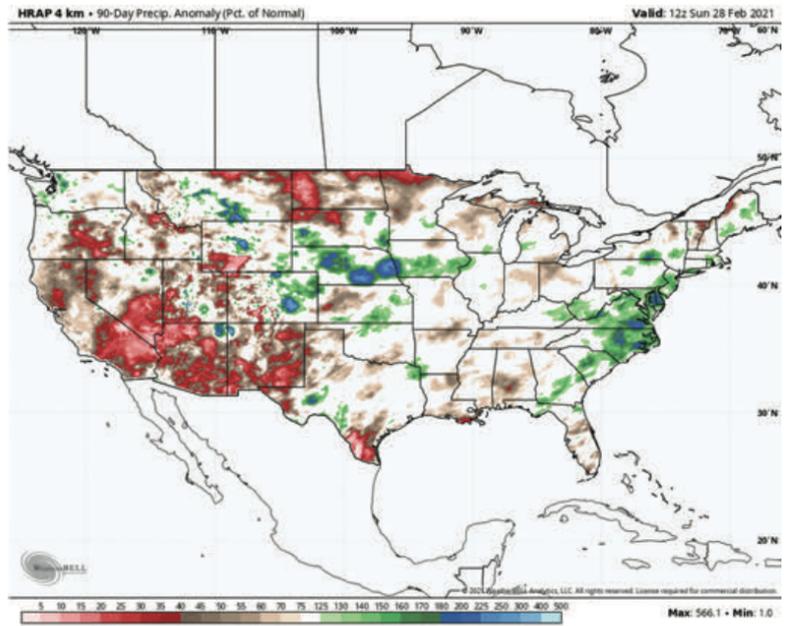
PRISM TEMPERATURE ANALYSIS ANOMALY [*F]: Feb 1, 2021 -> Feb 28, 2021
LOWER 48 MEAN ANOMALY: -4.99°F | ACTUAL MEAN TEMPERATURE: 30.05°F



PRISM CLIMATE GROUP OREGON STATE UNIV | 1991-2020 HISTORICAL CLIMATOLOGY

You can see from the maps above, most of the country was average to above average in the temperature department for the first two months. However, February was a completely different story. I know that comes as no surprise to anyone, with the snow and the record setting cold air that impacted the central part of the country. Isn't it amazing how one significant event or two can skew the entire winter? This past February will no doubt go down as one of the most memorable for the state of Texas

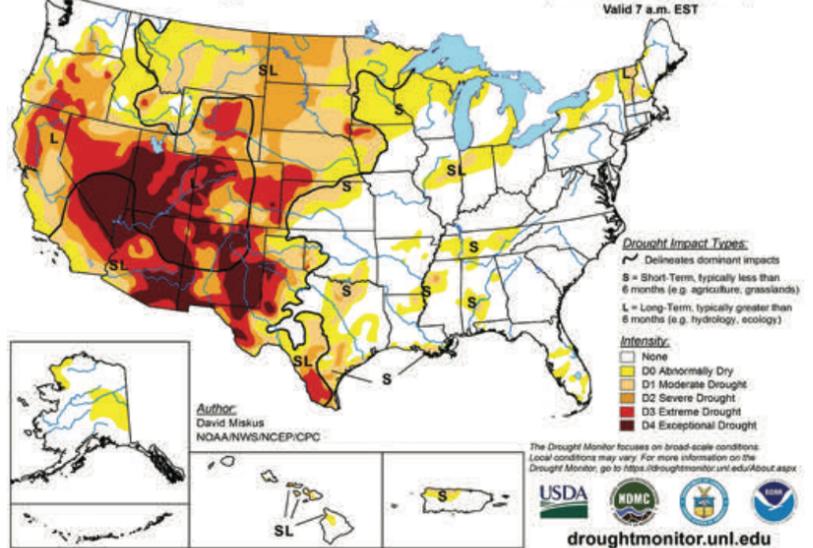
December - February Precipitation Anomaly



Precipitation wasn't as polarizing as temperature. However, for some areas it was largely considered some of the driest times on record. Southern California, Arizona, New Mexico, far South Texas all experienced significant dryness and significant drought. The other area of interest was the Northern Plains. The Drought Monitor continues to show the areas that remain the driest, and with the biggest drought issues.

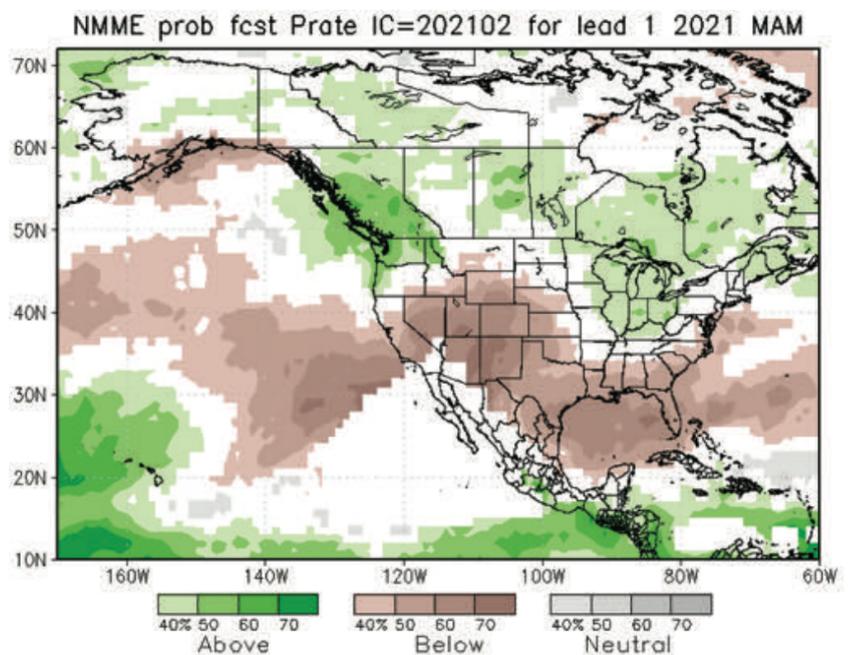
U.S. Drought Monitor

February 23, 2021
(Released Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



That's a lot of real estate that is currently dealing with drought...most of the western half of the country. What does the latest NMMET Model precipitation forecast look like? Well, less than ideal for many areas that need drought relief.

NMME Model Precipitation Forecast March-May



The brown shaded areas reflect a tip toward drier to much drier than average conditions, while the green shaded areas reflect the opposite. The stoutest dry signal exists across The Four Corners states, which is no big surprise, is where the drought is already the worst. We'll see how she pans out.

If you have any questions or comments, please drop me an email... Brian Bledsoe, brianbledsoewx@gmail.com

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Breaking the infertility cycle: Sheep could show us the way

Texas A&M AgriLife attacks most common human fertility disorder with animal study

By Kay Ledbetter, Texas AgriLife Today

A Texas A&M AgriLife study with sheep may soon help address fertility problems in women, if it can discover ways to break the chain of generational transfer of polycystic ovary syndrome, PCOS — one of the most common infertility disorders.

Rodolfo Cardoso, DVM, Ph.D., Department of Animal Science assistant professor and reproductive physiologist in Texas A&M's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, will lead a \$2.4 million National Institutes of Health-funded project that will investigate the multi-generational effects of prenatal exposure to androgen excess using the sheep as the animal model.

Joining Cardoso on this project are Renata Landers, Ph.D., a post-doctoral research associate in Cardoso's program, Jessica Sustaita, a graduate student in Cardoso's team, and Vasantha Padmanabhan, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Pediatrics with the University of Michigan Health System, who will also serve as a principal investigator in the project.

PCOS affects about five million women in the U.S. and over 100 million women worldwide. It is a complex syndrome that includes an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, dyslipidemia, hypertension, diabetes mellitus and endometrial cancer.

Findings from this sheep model will provide crucial biological information for improving reproductive function across generations and are of clinical relevance to women with PCOS and other hyperandrogenic fertility disorders.

Why sheep?

A critical concern of PCOS is the vertical transmission of unwanted traits to the offspring. A woman who has PCOS is highly likely to pass that to her daughters and granddaughters, Cardoso said. Sheep are very similar in that the daughters of ewes with PCOS also typically have the syndrome.

"The sheep is an animal

model that is very translational to humans," Cardoso explained. "When we look at what happens during fetal life, the development of the ovine fetus parallels that of humans. While much of biomedical work uses rodents in research,

our ability to translate our findings are much easier and clinically relevant to humans when using sheep. Other key benefits are that sheep only generate one or two fetuses, not a litter, and they have a gestation process more similar to

humans."

Approximately 70% of women with PCOS are obese or overweight with metabolic complications, he said. It is well documented that if women are able to lose weight and improve metabolic function, they can improve their fertility. Also, it is known that whatever happens to a baby during fetal development can affect the health of that individual throughout life and can also carry over to the next generation upon reproduction.

"What we are trying to answer with this project is

how to break this multi-generational cycle using dietary interventions," Cardoso said. "The goal is to prevent the animals from becoming obese and thus prevent the vertical trans-

mission of the PCOS traits."

It would take 20 or more years to answer the question in humans. The dietary changes would be made

(Continued on page 20)



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Concern...

(Continued from page 13)

land, water and other resources while upholding animal welfare standards. This is the very definition of sustainability.

“Big multinational corporations turn massive profits by cramming farm- ed animals into barren sheds and massive feed- lots,” writes Joe Loria for animal extremist-based World Animal Protection.

“The Farm System Reform Act (FSRA) would over- haul our broken food sys- tem by placing a moratori- um on the largest factory farms—immediately pro- hibiting the creation or expansion of these mon- strous factories and requir- ing they be phased out by 2040. It’s the first step towards shifting away from our current factory farming model and toward a more sustainable and kinder food system.”

Our food system is not broken and Loria’s claim is simply untrue. Farmers in the United States have been practicing sustainabil-

ity for decades. Improve- ments in modern farming practices are allowing farmers and ranchers to produce much more with less. Farming looks much different today than it did 10, 20, or 50 years ago due to scientific research and adaptation to more effi- cient and sustainable prac- tices.

This bill overlooks the gap left in the system with- out livestock to fulfill it — unused food industry byproducts, nonarable land left unproductive, and lack of essential nutrients, for example.

Likewise, there are the

lingering questions regard- ing how such transitions would be made possible. Is there is even enough graz- ing land to support all live- stock that is needed to fill consumer needs? A 2017 study from researchers at the Department of Agri- culture’s Research Service and Virginia Tech showed this would be a serious con- cern.

Senator Booker publicly endorses the HSUS

When he’s not support- ing anti-animal agriculture legislation, Booker can be found supporting animal extremist causes in his per- sonal life.

In 2017, he took center stage at the Humane Soci- ety of the United States’ (HSUS) luxurious annual Farm Animal Protection benefit in Los Angeles, California. At the fundrais- er Booker was honored with the organization’s Humanitarian of the Year Award for his political work.

“HSUS is working every day to end animal cruelty and I’ve been proud to stand with them. No liv- ing creature is so insignifi- cant as to not be worthy of our kindness and compas- sion,” he said in his accept- ance speech. “I’m ener- gized by the progress we’ve already made, and I look forward to continuing to work on animal welfare issues in the United States Senate in the years to come.”

Animal extremism is not animal welfare, al- though extremist groups like the HSUS, ASPCA and PETA work to confuse the public about their defi- nitions and their agenda. To learn more about the difference between animal extremism and animal wel- fare, visit the Protect The Harvest website.

Senator Booker’s beliefs and actions have long concerned farmers and ranchers

For years, those in ani- mal agriculture have been well aware of Booker’s involvement with the ani- mal extremist movement and his resume. Now that he has a place on the Senate Agriculture Committee, there real is concern and great discussion around this happening.

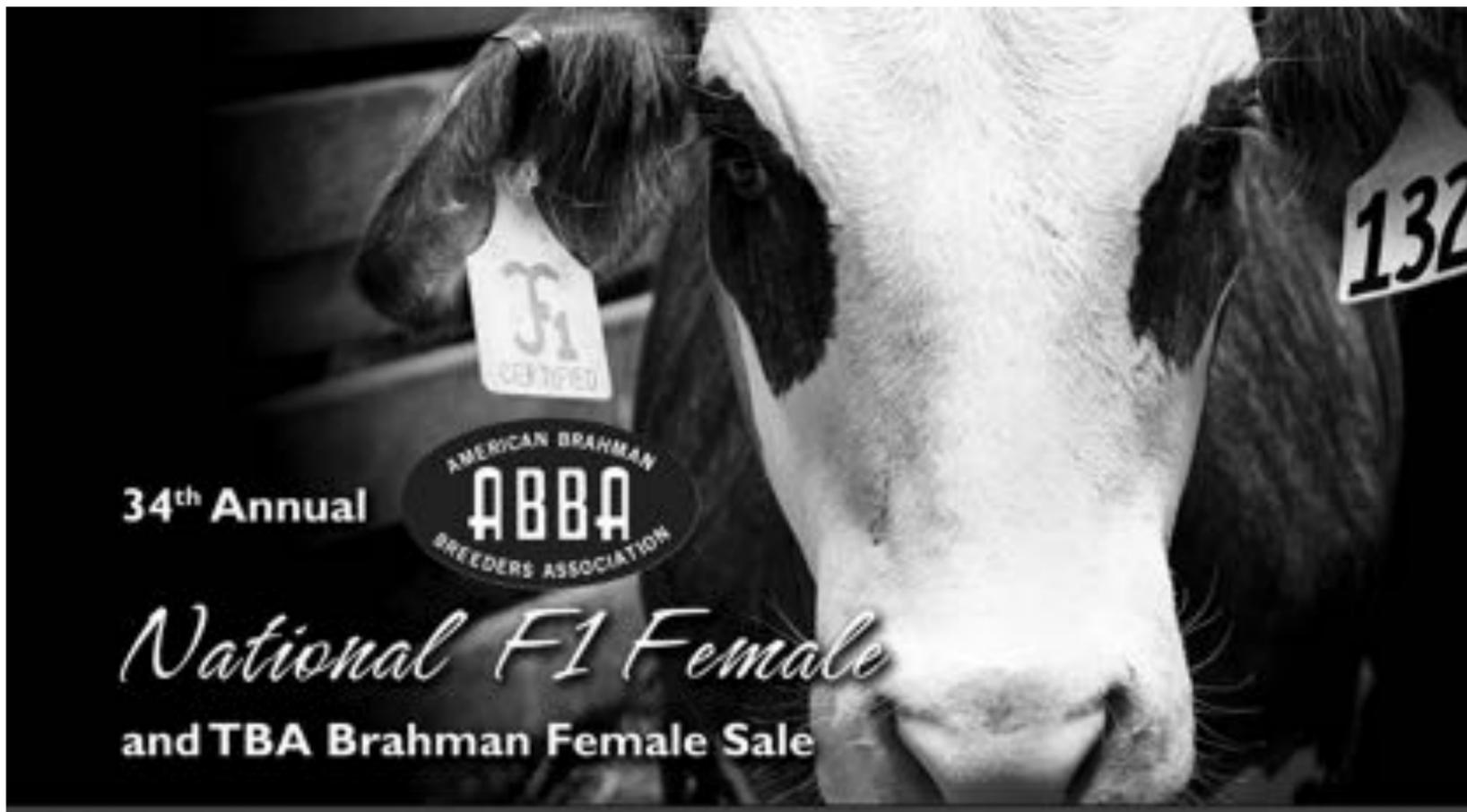
While Booker has been very vocal about his per- sonal beliefs and reason for adopting a vegan diet, he fails to provide the creden- tials to speak or work on projects directly linked to food production and ani- mal agriculture. This makes his newly minted appointment all the more baffling for agriculturalists.

This is an optimal time for animal industries to be increasingly vigilant about political action and legisla- tion that has an impact on present and future of farm- ing and ranching practices – and to make their thoughts on these topics known.

Editor’s Note: For addi- tional information on Sen- ator Booker’s beliefs and involvement, see <https://protecttheharvest.com/news/fox-in-the-henhouse-bookers-seat-on-the-senate-agriculture-committee/>

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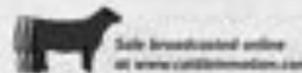


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AgriLife TODAY

Texas crop, weather

Winter storm offers few silver linings

By Adam Russell, Texas A&M AgriLife Today

So far, there are few silver linings related to the winter storm system that brought historically low temperatures and a mix of precipitation throughout Texas, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service experts

As damage assessments begin around the state, AgriLife Extension specialists said the positive impacts of the weeklong arctic front were minimal for Texas agriculture. They said snow and ice helped topsoil moisture levels a little and likely insulated some crops from severe damage. And, the cold temperatures may also have had an impact on early emerging generations of insect pests.

John Nielsen-Gammon, Ph.D., Texas state climatologist, Bryan-College Station, said the February arctic front was one of only two winter storms going back to the first weather records in 1881 with similar snowfall totals and low temperatures for all 254 counties.

“From an ag perspective, the extent of the cold temperatures was most relevant, and based upon 26 weather stations in and around major cities, it was a historically cold storm,” he said. “As far as precipitation and helping drought conditions in several parts of the state, snow doesn’t amount to much when compared to rainfall. But the combination of historically low temperatures and significant snow is a rarity in recorded history, and only comparable to an event in 1949.”

Nielsen-Gammon said the average minimum temperature around the state was 8 degrees on Feb. 15, making it the 10th coldest on record and coldest since 1989. The winter storm delivered the coldest temperatures on record for two major recording stations – Longview and Tyler, at -5 degrees and -6 degrees, respectively. The previous lows in those locations

were -3 degrees and -4 degrees, respectively, set in 1930.

In general, most areas around the state reached colder temperatures in 1989, which is the second coldest event on record and

caused severe agriculture damage, especially to the state’s citrus crops in the Rio Grande Valley. Damage is still expected as temperatures for the week-long storm averaged 26.4 degrees in South Texas and along the Gulf Coast. By comparison, the 1989 temperature average was just above 21 degrees.

Nielsen-Gammon said snowfall totals were very preliminary, but that most of the state received measurable amounts.

Reagan Noland, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension agronomist, San Angelo, said his

location reported 10.1 inches of snowfall, but said it will have minimal positive impact on soil moisture levels.

“Snow is a good form of precipitation as it doesn’t

create much runoff and soaks into the soil, and can actually insulate the plants from damaging temperatures,” he said. “But the disappointing thing about
(Continued on page 18)

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Crops...

(Continued from page 17)

this snow is it doesn't represent an appreciable contribution to soil moisture. The 10 inches of snow was marked as only 0.28 of an inch of actual water."

Jourdan Bell, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension agronomist, Amarillo, said the precipitation value from snow is not equivalent to the same depth of rainfall, and moisture varies with snowfall events. Dry snow was widely reported during the recent arctic front. The two snow events in the

Panhandle during the week delivered 0.26 of an inch of moisture according to official measurements in Bushland.

Despite snow's failure to deliver needed moisture to areas like San Angelo and the Panhandle, where soil moisture levels have been at or near drought level and declining for months, Bell said the snow protected winter wheat fields from low temperatures.

"We are seven days past subzero temperatures, so we may start seeing some evidence of damage, but we

are currently only seeing leaf burn," she said. "Even though the snow doesn't represent significant moisture, it still provided a blanket to help protect the wheat from extreme temperatures."

Noland agreed that the snow likely helped insulate winter wheat and other small grains or winter forages from severe freeze, and that any amount of moisture will help growers in his region, especially as cotton planting approaches. But spring rains will be necessary for dryland acres to survive and produce.

In the Rio Grande Valley, cold temperatures damaged orange and grapefruit production and trees, said Juan Enciso, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Research irrigation engineer, Weslaco. Luckily around 80% of oranges and almost 70% of grapefruit were harvested before temperatures dipped into the danger zone.

Enciso was heading to the field to assess the severity of crop damages and said any positives from the storm were hard to measure.

"The moisture impact (Continued on page 23)

A map of the 12 Texas A&M AgriLife Extension districts:



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Winter storm leaves empty Texas grocery shelves – again!

Texas A&M AgriLife economist: It's different this time, stores begin restocking

By Kay Ledbetter, Texas AgriLife Today

The shelves of Texas grocery stores are seriously picked over, if not empty, for the second time in less than a year, said a Texas A&M AgriLife expert. But winter storm-related supply chain shortages are different than those consumers experienced during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It's a matter of supply and demand, said David Anderson, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service economist, Bryan-College Station.

"This is not another COVID situation from last March," Anderson said. "This is a really harsh winter storm. Of course, the effects have been exacerbated by the electric grid and water problems."

He explained that snow and ice storms, as well as other weather events, can and do cause food production problems, some short- and some long-term.

Many AgriLife Extension agents and specialists as well as other government officials are assessing damages this week and turning those reports in for a state assessment of expected losses and economic impacts. Some impacts can be seen immediately, while others, especially on crops subjected to freezing temperatures for extended periods, need some time to materialize once the snow and ice have melted away.

"If a cattle packing plant is shut down, then beef production will be lower one week but back up the next," he said. "Also, these weather events may destroy crops like vegetables or fruit. If they do, then we'll have tighter supplies and higher prices until the next production can occur either from another region of the world or part of the U.S. If the storm killed a lot of chickens, then we might have lower production for a few months and higher prices."

So, while this is a transportation and supply chain issue again, it is one that will be mostly short in nature. What occurred last week and through the weekend in the stores is the result of pretty understandable occurrences, Anderson said.

"We aren't used to see-

ing the shelves empty because almost all the time the trucks run normally and restocking gets done," he said. "So, it's a surprise when it happens."

But, he said, with a little time to resupply shelves, things will be back to normal.

Overall food production not the problem

"It is not a food production problem. We produce plenty of food. But it's not

stored at the grocery store," Anderson said.

"In extreme events like this, people go to the store and buy a lot of stuff to get through the event," he said. "Then, during the event, the trucks to resupply the shelves can't get through, so there is nothing there. And all the folks working to refill the shelves were also affected by the storm — their homes faced the same problem, they have

trouble getting to work, and the trucks can't move until the storm passes."

Anderson said, however, this situation was a consumer issue as well — one learned during the COVID-19 pandemic early stages. In addition to overcoming the urge to overbuy on some items, consumers had to learn to be flexible in their choices until things returned to normal.

"I can't help but think there is some demand side to this too," he said. "All of us consumers rush out to

buy stuff, overwhelming the system. That's fine. You need to get stocked up for not being able to go out. But I think also we could

probably all use some flexibility. We expect the shelves to be full no matter what. We expect to be able

(Continued on page 23)

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All Breed...

(Continued from page 1)

Brahman bulls averaged \$4,255; eight Brangus bulls averaged \$3,875; eight Charolais bulls averaged \$7,031; 15 Hereford bulls averaged \$5,350; two Red Angus bulls averaged \$3,100 and two Ultrablack bulls averaged \$5,000.

High selling bulls by breed: Angus: consigned by Green Meadows Ranch, Madisonville, Texas, sold to Randy Dornak, Shiner, Texas for \$5,250. Brahman: Schneider Brahmans sold to Norman Hernan-

dez, Adkins, Texas for \$3,500. Wichita Ranch-Martin Div. sold to J.F. Welder Heirs, Goliad, Texas for \$3,500. Martin & Schwartz, Brenham, Texas sold to Shiner Ranch, Pearsall, Texas for \$3,500. Brangus: consigned by Myron Saathoff, Hondo, Texas sold to Jasik Hay Farm, Pleasanton, Texas for \$5,750. Charolais: Jay & Lori Sturgess, LaRue, Texas sold to Stephen Williams, Centerville, Texas for \$10,000. Sturgess Double S Cattle, LaRue, Texas, sold to Stephen Williams for \$10,000.

Herefords: B&C Cattle Company, Miami, Texas sold to Case Herefords, Mertzon, Texas for \$10,000. Polled Hereford: Barber Ranch, Channing, Texas sold to Watson Langford, Okmulgee, Oklahoma for \$7,750. Red Angus: Detering Ranch, Houston, Texas sold to Chase Fautch, Canton, Texas for \$3,100. Ultrablack: Scott Broadus, Atkins, Texas sold to Rodney Butler, Beeville, Texas for \$5,250.

High selling females by categories:

Certified F-1 Hereford X Brahman: Five pair from

W D Cattle Co., Floresville, Texas sold to James Meischen, Cuero, Texas for 3,900. Five open heifers from Bludau Ranch, Hallettsville, Texas sold to David Fritz, Dublin, Texas for \$3,600.

Beefmasters and Crosses: Five pair from Billy Yeary, Lampasas, Texas sold Marvin Migura, Houston, Texas for \$3,100.

Brahman: Five pair from South Texas Cattle Marketing, Pearsall, Texas sold to Big 5 Enterprises, Huntsville, Texas for \$3,300. Five bred heifers from Blandford Brahmans,

Floresville, Texas sold to Big 5 Enterprises for \$2,600.

Brangus: Five pair from Jasik Hay Farm sold to Marvin Migura for \$3,700. Five bred heifers from Vertuyft Farms sold to Stephen Sisti, Floresville, Texas for \$2,000. Five open heifers from Jackson Family Brangus, Waco, Texas sold to James & Laramie Pieper, Caldwell, Texas for \$2,300.

F-1 Hereford X Brahman: Five Pair from South Texas Cattle Marketing, sold to Ryan Nails, Gonzales, Texas for \$3,100.

Five head of open heifers from Rocky "G" Ranch, Floresville, Texas sold for 2,400 to Jim Watts, Houston, Texas.

Certified F-1 Angus X Brahman: Five head of bred heifers from Red Rock Ranch, Bullard, Texas sold to Ross Cornet, Marquez, Texas for \$1,700. Five head of open heifers from Patrick Farms, Bishop, Texas sold to Jim Watts for \$2,200.

Santa Gertrudis and Crosses: Five head of pairs from Corparron Acres, Schulenburg, Texas sold to Jim Watts for \$3,200.

English and Crosses: Five head of bred Hereford heifers from Rocking Chair Ranch, Ft. McKavett, Texas sold to Jake Matthews, St. Augustine, Texas for \$3,600. Five head of open Hereford heifers from B&C Cattle Company sold to Sheldon Grothaus, Hondo, Texas for \$2,500.

Volume buyers of the sale were Jim Watts, Houston, Texas; Big 5 Enterprises, Huntsville, Texas and Marvin Migura, Houston, Texas.

SLS

Breaking...

(Continued from page 15)

with the mother while she was carrying the fetus, but then would require waiting until that daughter grows up and has a daughter.

"With sheep, we can answer the question much quicker. Within three years we will have the daughter that reaches puberty and soon have a granddaughter present that we can investigate the effects of the dietary interventions."

He said the mothers received an androgen treatment during pregnancy. The androgen treatment mimics the conditions or disease that occur in humans that elevate their level of steroid hormones during pregnancy, such as PCOS and congenital adrenal hyperplasia. The androgen levels in humans can also be raised during pregnancy in other situations such as when women who are unaware they are pregnant continue to take contraceptive pills or after exposure to environmental compounds that act in a similar way to steroid hormones.

"We know these sheep will have PCOS and we know when their daughters reproduce, they will devel-

(Continued on page 21)

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Joe Hargrove passes...

Joe Earl Hargrove, 78, of Crystal City, Texas, passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2021 at his residence. He was born on March 25, 1942 in Uvalde, Texas.

He began his career in agriculture way back in his high school days. He began by leaving school during his ag classes to attend the local auction barn to purchase cattle where he would then resell them, thus becoming a cattle buyer/seller as a young teenager. His love of buying and selling cattle led to the lease and ultimate purchase of Southwest Livestock in 1967, where he has continued for 54 consecutive years. Hargrove earned a reputation as a very successful businessman, rancher and mentor throughout South Texas.

Hargrove's passion for livestock and giving back was evident when it came to the youth of Uvalde and surrounding counties. He believed in these young

people and saw them as the backbone and future of communities. He loved to see young people excel and did his part to see them become successful and grow in the field of agriculture.

His many accomplishments have included: West Texas Boys Ranch Special Wagon Boss in 1972, president of Uvalde Fair Association in 1973, Man of the Year in Agriculture in 1977, countless 4-H/FFA activities, vice

chairman Uvalde County Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas, Uvalde County Livestock Association Honorary Superintendent in 2007, member of Dimmit/Zavala Water Improvement District and served on the Hondo National Bank Board of Directors from 1993 till present.

Hargrove's entire life was built around agriculture and he touched many lives as a result. He was truly a man who loved the land, the livestock and everything it had to offer.

Memorial services were

held at Uvalde County FairPlex Arena, Uvalde, on Sunday, Feb. 28, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

Hargrove is survived by his daughter Melody Hargrove Speer and husband Jimmy Speer, son Billy Joe Hargrove, grandsons Justin Speer and wife Bethany Speer, Cline Speer and Sherida Natho, great-granddaughters McKenzie and Madison Speer, Alyson's daughter/granddaughter Kate Gourley and Alyson Glasscock, sister Charlotte Crider, brother Neal Hargrove and wife Nancy Kay Hargrove, spe-

cial riend Alice Rogers, lifelong friend/faithful employee Abraham Gonzales, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Homer Hargrove and Verdine Welch Hargrove, wife of 20 years Nadine Shoemaker Hargrove and wife Alyson Margaret Gourley Hargrove, brother Darrell Hargrove and wife Mary Jane Hargrove and brother-in-law Larry Crider.

Honorary pallbearers were Roy Angermiller, Victor John Niemeyer,

Tootie Ilse, Rodney Barrett, Bob Barrett, Robert Smith, Happy Schawe, Ron Baker, Clarence Stephens, Jon Taylor, Jeff Vaughn, Jimmie Raines, Scott Brauchle, M.B. D'Spain, Juan Salinass and Abraham Gonzales.

The family asks in lieu of flowers that memorial donations can be made to West Texas Boys Ranch, 10223 Boys Ranch Rd, San Angelo, Texas 76904 or Uvalde Hospice, 100 Royal Lane, Uvalde, Texas 78801.

SLS

Breaking...

(Continued from page 20)

op PCOS. We will do the dietary intervention with those daughters and then study the granddaughters," Cardoso said.

Beyond the diet

In the first four years of this study, Cardoso said they will use dietary interventions or lifestyle modifications to improve the health of the pregnant females and then track the multi-generational impacts to understand if it worked and if the lifestyle interventions help.

The final year will concentrate on epigenetics studies, identifying mechanisms by which prenatal androgen exposure and dietary interventions can control how specific genes are expressed.

"We know diet plays an important role in the cross-generational expression of genes," he said. "We know in humans that lifestyle intervention will improve PCOS. But what we don't know is if we can minimize the risk of that being passed to daughters and granddaughters. If we learn the mechanisms of how the diet is improving the health - we may identify therapeutic targets for improving health and fertility in women with PCOS."

SLS



MARCH 20, 2021

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Lavaca County Exposition Center • Hallettsville, TX

Offering to Include:
Replacement Females • Show Prospects
Quality Bulls

Sale Schedule

Friday, March 19
5:00am - Cattle Viewing
6:00am - Dinner

Saturday, March 20
8:00am - Cowboy Coffee
11:00am - Sale Begins

Arrangements can be made to leave cattle onsite until after the SGBI Annual Meeting has concluded.

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USDA NRCS offers technical, financial assistance in response to recent Texas winter storm damage

Temple, Texas, Feb. 24, 2021 — In response to the winter storms that hit Texas in February 2021, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering farmers and ranchers technical and

financial assistance to repair and replace certain damaged conservation practices.

NRCS is accepting applications for its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for the recovery measures listed below:

- Animal Mortality and Animal Mortality Facility
- High Tunnel Systems
- Irrigation System and Irrigation Pipeline
- Livestock Pipeline
- Obstruction Removal
- Pumping Plant
- Roofs and Covers
- Waste Storage Facility
- Water Well
- Watering facility

NRCS accepts conservation program applica-

tions year-round; however, applications for 2021 winter storm recovery funding must be submitted by one of three deadlines: Mar. 5, Mar. 19, or Apr. 2, 2021. After each deadline, applications will be ranked and approved as soon as possible so conservation work can begin. Producers must submit a separate application by one of the ranking deadlines for this disaster sign-up to be considered.

Farmers and ranchers negatively impacted by winter weather are encouraged to contact their local NRCS office to seek assistance. Find contact information for local NRCS offices at www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Select beef...

(Continued from page 7)

price option when compared to product from other countries such as Mexico, Brazil and Australia, and it lacks the quality and performance compared to domestic Choice and Prime.

“With Select product devalued to this extent and representing a shrinking category, we need to embrace the change,”

Dykstra says.

Hitting 100% Choice on loads of cattle isn't the gold standard it once was, he adds. Low Choice is no longer a premium product, but merely the low-water mark once anchored by the Select grade.

“The market gives us a pretty clear picture of where it's headed, and all cattlemen have an equal opportunity to respond,” he says.

FIGURE 1

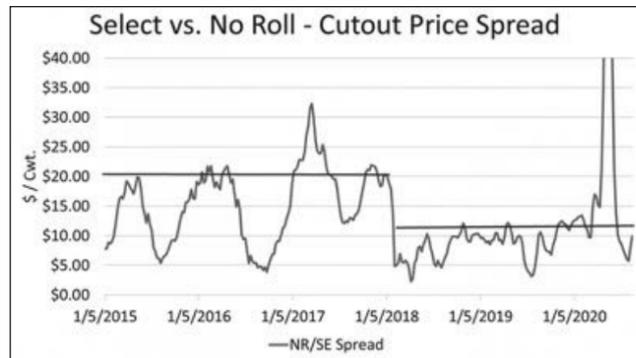
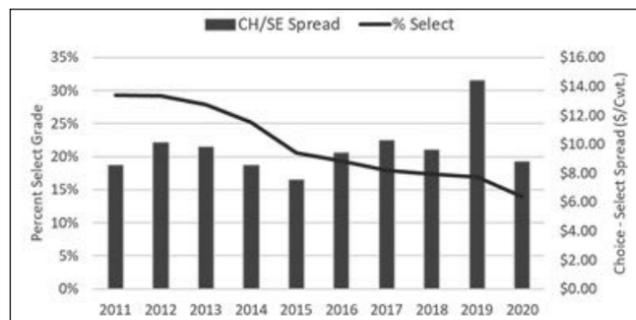


FIGURE 2



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Crops...

(Continued from page 18)

will be minimal, and about the only silver lining I can think of is that it may have killed some insect pests," he said. "There's just not much good news that I see coming from this winter storm."

AgriLife Extension district reporters compiled the following summaries:

CENTRAL: Single-digit and negative temperatures created havoc for livestock producers. Despite producers' best efforts, most agriculture wells froze, and cattle and livestock operations without tanks were forced to find and haul water. Those with tanks were chipping through a layer of ice at least twice daily so livestock could drink. Many beef, sheep and goat producers were calving, kidding and lambing when the front arrived. There was no accurate accounting of losses at this time, but losses were expected. It was very difficult to keep equipment running. Livestock were in fair condition. Producers expected near complete loss of oats, and substantial losses on other small grains. One earlier-planted winter wheat field showed signs of frosted tillers. Plants were expected to recover as growing points were likely protected by snow cover before cold temperatures caused damage. Exposed ridges in other fields exhibited more crop injury and frosted tillers. The most common crop injury was to oats, which showed substantial chlorosis with 30% or more frosted tops, and likely was expected to have some whole plant injury and require green-up. Topsoil moisture was adequate to saturated. Most fields were ready to plant once it warms up. Heavy damage to tropical foliage landscapes was noted. More than half the district reported poor pasture and rangeland conditions.

ROLLING PLAINS: Temperatures dropped to -6, and wind chills reached -20 in places. Some areas received up to 12 inches of snow. Cattle and livestock fared reasonably well in general, as producers provided plenty of hay and protein. Watering was a challenge, and producers were breaking ice frequently. Much of the ice was about 4 inches thick each day. The damage to winter wheat will be

assessed in the coming weeks.

COASTAL BEND: The area experienced five consecutive days of ice, sleet, snow and temperatures in the teens and 20s. Agriculture water systems and equipment suffered significant damage. Weather conditions made it difficult to feed cattle when diesel tractors would not start. Livestock producers scrambled to feed and care for animals. Power outages created water issues for livestock due to water wells being offline or frozen. Most ponds, tanks and troughs were frozen over.

Livestock producers were feeding hay and supplemental feed, and finding additional rations needed was a challenge. Feed stores were short on inventory, and some that had protein and hay were forced to limit individual purchases. No significant livestock losses were reported, but all animals were negatively impacted by the arctic front, and some newborn calves died. Oats, ryegrass and fruit trees that broke dormancy early froze. Emerged corn will require replanting. No fieldwork was accom-

(Continued on page 24)

Storm...

(Continued from page 19)

to get whatever we want, whenever we want it, regardless of season. I think some flexibility, planning and patience would help us all."

Anderson said he knows that is often easier said than done for those who are in need. This terrible winter storm hit when there are still those in need due to the economic effects of COVID-19 - those who are out of work and this hardship has made it even worse.

"So, I am not saying that

we, as consumers, need to stop buying," he said. "We need to get what we need to get, but some understanding of how our food system

gets from the farm to your house helps a lot. I think it's another reminder of how this all works."

SLS



Dairy supplies were not able to make it from the processing plants to the stores, in spite of steady milk production every day during the storm. (Texas A&M AgriLife photo by Sam Craft)

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Crops...

(Continued from page 23)

plished during the storm, but producers were busy preparing beds and applying fertilizer and controlling weeds. Corn planting was expected to resume with good soil moisture and temperatures. Sorghum plantings were expected to follow.

EAST: As much as 12 inches of snow and ice fell across the district. Producers reported the loss of calves, goats, sheep and chicks. Nurseries and greenhouses suffered tremendous losses as well. Damage to structures and farm equipment was reported by many producers. Cool-season forages took a big hit. Pasture and rangeland conditions were fair to poor. Subsoil and topsoil conditions were adequate to surplus.

SOUTH PLAINS: The arctic front was very hard on livestock and feed supplies, but the snow represented some moisture. Cattle were in decent condition. Producers were preparing for planting.

PANHANDLE: Temperatures were as low as -13 degrees with 8-12 inches of snow. Soil moisture con-

ditions were short to very short. Pasture and rangeland conditions were poor to very poor. Winter wheat was in fair to poor condition, and oat condition was fair. Beef cattle producers struggled to feed livestock and maintain water supplies during the extreme cold. Some cow-calf producers reported losing calves born during this event, but most operations were prepared and managed well. Stocker cattle gains on wheat were at a standstill, but compensatory gains were expected as temperatures warmed.

NORTH: Topsoil moisture throughout the district was adequate to surplus. Winter storms delivered 8-12 inches of snow. Everything was covered in snow or ice for three days. Bitter cold forced producers to feed and get water to livestock. Feed stores were running out of hay and feed. Tanks froze over and livestock were lost as they ventured onto frozen water sources. Assessment of crop losses was underway. The soil was saturated, and many areas were standing in water. The forecast called for sunshine and warmer temperatures, which should help winter

wheat recuperate from the harsh temperatures.

FAR WEST: Temperatures averaged highs in the upper 60s to lows in the negative single digits. Precipitation in the form of rain, sleet and snow were reported. Rain averaged less than 0.5 inch, and snow accumulation measured between 1 to 8 inches. Homeowners and producers reported damage from busted pipes and heavy snow fall. Livestock had to haul water and feed and increased hay and protein rations. Beef cattle and goat producers reported a few newborn losses and premature births. Cattle were still in overall good condition. Winter wheat and oat conditions were average to poor. Wheat does not appear to have suffered any winter kill, but the full effects will not be known for another week or so. Vegetable producers reported frozen crops. Most pecan trees were hedged, so there was very little to no limb breakage from snow and ice. No fieldwork was done. There was some damage to irrigation systems. In El Paso, preparations for cotton planting continued though acreage was expected to be

cut by 30% due to reservoir water levels. Effluent water from the city of El Paso was being used to irrigate some pecan orchards. Cotton acres will be pre-irrigated soon.

WEST CENTRAL: Extreme cold weather with ice and snow occurred. Low temperatures were in the -5 to -10 degree range, with highs below freezing for nine consecutive days. Winter wheat conditions declined due to cold weather. Livestock producers reported some animal losses, averaging 5-15 head per producer. There were many broken water lines, and watering issues continued. Rangeland and pasture conditions were mostly fair following the winter storm. Loss assessments continued.

SOUTHEAST: Historic losses were expected following the winter storm. Moisture created sloppy field conditions. Pasture and livestock conditions were poor. Livestock were recovering from severe stress from weeklong snow, ice and freezing rain. Hardin County producers struggled to find hay supplies because bale stocks were damaged, and feed supplies were short be-

cause trucks were not running. Producers struggled to get livestock feed as the trucks were not running. Families were struggling without water and/or power, and producers were struggling to supply water to livestock due to frozen or broken pipes. Some livestock losses were reported. Rangeland and pasture ratings were fair to very poor with fair ratings being the most common. Soil moisture levels ranged from adequate to surplus with adequate levels being the most common.

SOUTHWEST: Extreme winter weather conditions brought up to 11 inches of snow to parts of the district. Low temperatures in the single digits were reported for multiple days. Rangeland and pasture conditions declined. Producers provided heavy supplementation for livestock and hauled water during the winter storm. The extent of agriculture losses caused by the storm were being assessed. Gillespie County estimated 30% loss of limbs on trees due to ice, a 5% loss of livestock and a 50% loss of free-range black buck and axis herds. Producers were assessing peach losses.

SOUTH: Temperatures reached 16 degrees. Jim Wells County reported 42 hours of below-freezing temperatures. Cold temperatures hurt native and improved vegetation. Rain, light snowfall and wintery mix were reported. Roads were icy, and fields were difficult for producers to access. Maverick County reported 4-8 inches of snow. Soil moisture levels were mostly short to adequate in northern areas and short to very short in southern parts of the district. Wheat and oat damages were expected due to the winter storm. Producers provided heavy rations of supplemental feed during the arctic front. Rangeland and pasture conditions declined dramatically. There was little to no browsing or grazing available for livestock and wildlife. Livestock producers faced hay shortages and water issues. Freezing temperatures impacted early planted corn and sorghum, and replanting will be necessary. No significant cattle or livestock losses were reported. Some home citrus trees experienced total fruit loss, and many homeowners will lose trees.

(Continued on page 25)

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SALE REPORTS



Livestock Sales Calendar

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bold-faced listings have advertisements in this issue.



Foundation Angus Alliance Sale February 20, 2021 Luling, Texas

#	Category:	Average
19	Bulls	\$4,009
62	Females	\$3,288

44 Farms Spring Angus Bull Sale February 27, 2021 Cameron, Texas

#	Category:	Average
498	Angus Bulls	\$9,918

Masters of Beef Advocacy program modules updated

The Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) program managed by National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, launched updated advocacy training modules – MBA NextGen. Updated information and resources to help answer consumer questions are all accessible with the click of a mouse.

MBA NextGen continues to be a free, self-guided online course that provides all members of the beef community the tools and resources to become a beef advocate and answer tough questions about beef and raising cattle.

MBA NextGen consists of five self-guided online lessons, open to everyone, and at no cost to participate:

-Lesson 1: The Beef Community - Context of raising beef from pasture to plate focusing on the community of people involved throughout the beef lifecycle.

-Lesson 2: Raising Cattle on Grass - An introduction to the first step in the beef lifecycle and the many benefits of raising cattle on our country's vast grass pasture resources.

-Lesson 3: Life in the Feedyard - A discussion on the role of feedyards, including animal care, nutrition and environmental stewardship, at this important step in the beef lifecycle.

-Lesson 4: From Cattle to Beef - An in-depth look at the slaughter process and the humane handling and safety measures in place at today's beef processing facilities.

-Lesson 5: Beef. It's What's For Dinner. A primer on choosing and cooking the right cuts of beef and the important role of beef in a healthful diet.

To enroll or find out more about the latest Masters of Beef Advocacy Program, visit BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com.

Crops...

(Continued from page 24)

Commercial citrus fruit and vegetable crops were damaged. Willacy County reported damage to all leafy vegetables. Swiss chard, cilantro, onions, turnips, cabbage and more were mostly, if not completely, lost. Citrus trees were reported to be burnt from the freeze, but it is unclear if mature or young trees will make it to the next growing season. About 10% of row crops were planted in February and lost due to freezing temperatures. Losses to the onion crop were expected. Freeze damage and continued drought were expected to put pressure on cattle producers to provide increased supplemental feed until grasses recover.

- MAR 6 Houston All Breeds Bull & Commercial Female Sale, Brenham, TX
- MAR 6 South Texas Cattle Marketing Spring Replacement Female Sale, Nixon, TX
- MAR 10 RA Brown Ranch Spring Bull Sale, Throckmorton, TX
- MAR 12 Cavender-Druggin' M and Partners Spring Brangus Bull Sale, Jacksonvi;;e, TX
- MAR 13 Louisiana Brangus Bull Sale, Alexandria, LA
- MAR 13 Jones Cattle Company Annual Production Sale, Hondo, TX
- MAR 13 S.E. ICA 26th Annual Commercial Bull & Heifer Sale, Beaumont, TX**

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Sale Manager: Chuck Kiker 409/658-0959

- MAR 18 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Replacement Female Sale, San Saba, TX

Jordan Cattle Auction

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Mason on Monday & San Saba on Thursday

Special Replacement Female Sale
Thursday, March 18 @ 10:00 AM | San Saba
In conjunction with our regular sale. Females will sell at 10:00 AM.

Knox Brothers Bull Sale
Thursday, March 25 @ 10:00 AM | San Saba
In conjunction with our regular sale. Bulls will sell at 10:00 AM.
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- MAR 19-20 Two Fast Nickels Online SimGenetic Sale
- MAR 20 Santa Gertrudis Bluebonnet Classic, Hallettsville, TX**
- MAR 20 Mound Creek Ranch Brangus Bull & Female Sale, Leona, TX**
- MAR 20 ABBA National F1 & TBA Brahman Female Sale, Caldwell, TX**
- MAR 20 Live Oak Beefmaster Breeders Association Spring Sale, Three Rivers, TX**
- MAR 20 Malazzo Farms F-1 Females Sell at the National F-1 Sale, Caldwell, TX**
- MAR 20-23 RGV BIA Online Bull Sale
- MAR 22-23 Alamo City Simbrah Online Sale
- MAR 25 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Bull Offering, San Saba, TX
- MAR 25 International Brahman Sale, Waco, TX**
- MAR 25 Super American Bull Sale, Bloomington, TX**
- MAR 26 Santa Gertrudis International Super Sale, Briggs Ranches, Bloomington, TX**
- MAR 27 Genetic Edge Brangus Sale, Waco, TX**
- MAR 27 Emmons Ranch Annual Bull Sale, Groesbeck, TX**
- MAR 27 Four County Auction Special Replacement Sale, Industry, TX**

- APR 3 TBBA Brangus Sale, Salado, TX
- APR 8 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Bull Offering, San Saba, TX
- APR 10 Collier Farms Advantage Sale, Giddings, TX
- APR 10 Texas Simmental/Simbrah Assn Southern Showcase SimGenetics Sale, Brenham, TX
- APR 10 Clayton Williams Ranch Company Share the Genetics Brangus Sale, Bastrop, TX
- APR 10 Charolais Assn of Texas Spring Innovation Sale, Gainseville, TX
- APR 17 East Texas/Louisiana Beefmaster Marketing Group Sale, Crockett, TX
- APR 17 MP Brangus at Diamond D Ranch Spring Brangus Sale, Poteet, TX
- APR 17 Pearsall Livestock Auction Special Replacement Sale, Pearsall, TX
- APR 17 Jordan Cattle Auction Spring "Best of the Best" Special Bull Offering, San Saba, TX

- APR 23 Spring Flint Hills Classic Beefmaster Sale, Paxico, KS
 - APR 24 Cavender-Druggin' M and Partners Spring Brangus Female Sale, Jacksonville, TX
 - APR 24 Springtime in Texas Beefmaster Sale, Brenham, TX
 - APR 24 Beefmaster E-6 Commercial Female Sale, Brenham, TX
 - APR 25 Cattleman's Brenham Livestock Auction Special Replacement Female Sale, Brenham, TX
 - MAY 1 Charolais Sale of Excellence, College Station, TX
 - MAY 8 Jordan Cattle Auction May Replacement Female Sale, San Saba, TX
 - MAY 10 Mid-Coast Santa Gertrudis Spring Sale, Brenham, TX
 - MAY 15 Swinging B & Friends Sale, Salado, TX
 - MAY 22 2nd Annual Get Back To Grass Sale, Henderson, TX
 - JUN 11 Quail Valley Farms Mature Cowherd Brangus and Santa Gertrudis Dispersal Sale, Oneonta, AL
 - JUN 12 Quail Valley Farms Elite Brangus & Santa Gertrudis Female Invitational Sale, Oneonta, AL
 - JUN 12 Wallen Prairie Ranch Beefmaster Production Sale, Lockwood, MO
 - JUN 26 Southern Tradition XXI Beefmaster Sale, Savannah, TN
 - AUG 7 J&T Farms Beefmaster Sale, Lexington, TN
 - AUG 21 Emmons Ranch Beefmaster Production Sale, Bryan, TX
 - SEP 24-25 Flint Hills Classic Beefmaster Female & Bull Sale, Paxico, KS
 - SEP 25 Synergy SimGenetics Sale, Giddings, TX
 - OCT 16 Beef on Forage Beefmaster Bull Sale, Brenham, TX
 - OCT 16 Carr & Others Fall Beefmaster Sale, Floresville, TX
- SLS

Standard bull...

(Continued from page 2)

Problem three—Texas weather is all about extremes. Never about out averages or "normal" conditions. Weatherizing in Texas takes on a much different meaning than weatherizing in the Dakotas. On Feb. 15th, we dropped to a low of 7 degrees at our house. On Feb. 23 we saw a high of near 80 degrees! Weatherizing in Texas means temperatures as low as -10 in the Panhandle, with highs

in the triple digits. Blizzards, hurricanes and tornadoes are all part of our "normal" pattern.

There are obviously other problems when it comes to how these issues will be dealt with moving forward. Was ERCOT the problem? Perhaps not. Could it be part of the solution? Maybe. Can ERCOT or the state of Texas hold each utility company to minimum standards? Can they hold these companies accountable? I guess we will see.

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Animal agriculture markets resilient almost a year into COVID-19 pandemic

Texas A&M center cooperates on studies examining costs to producers, consumers

By Kay Ledbetter, Texas AgriLife Today

As vaccination efforts expand and the economy begins showing signs of recovery, Texas A&M AgriLife personnel are tabulating the impacts of COVID-19 on the U.S. animal agriculture product market. Leading the effort is Texas A&M University's Cross-Border Threat Screening and Supply Chain Defense, CBTS, Department of Homeland Security, DHS, Center of Excellence.

The two recent contributions to that effort specifically examine the impacts on livestock, meat, poultry and dairy product

markets, and what that means for producers and consumers, said Greg Pompelli, Ph.D., CBTS director.

"We want to gain a clearer picture of the pandemic's short and longer-term impacts on the U.S. food and agriculture sectors in comparison to other critical sectors," Pompelli said.

CBTS-funded researchers at the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute, FAPRI, at the University of Missouri are examining the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on agricultural commodities, food and related supply chains.

Additionally, CBTS joined forces with Arizona State University's Center for Accelerating Operational Efficiency DHS Center of Excellence and researchers at the Victoria University in Australia to determine how COVID-19 mitigation costs in the meatpacking plants might have affected retail meat prices and the prices received by livestock producers.

Surprising, expected results in animal agriculture market

These two efforts have identified impacts consistent with prior expectations, as well as some surprises. The assessments indicate that COVID-19 presented circumstances

that could not have been predicted prior to experiencing the pandemic, Pompelli said.

When meat packing plants suspended or slowed operations due to COVID-19 outbreaks among workers, these disruptions contributed to sharp increases in the processing cost of consumer-ready meat products. The expectation was that these costs would be borne both by livestock producers and meat consumers.

While the contracting U.S. economy was expected to reduce disposable income and cause consumers to buy less meat and other high-value food products, that didn't end up being the case, according to FAPRI's assessment of USDA data.

Farm prices for livestock and animal agriculture products did decline sharply in the spring, but apparently, supply chain issues were the primary cause, not macroeconomic effects.

"Consumer meat prices increased by more than 6% in 2020, while domestic per-capita meat consumption also increased slightly," Pompelli said. "This is one of the surprising outcomes for a year in which the pandemic's disruptions and negative impact on the domestic economy signaled a weak outlook for livestock producers."

Watching the market

The USDA data show that the average price paid to livestock, poultry and dairy producers at the farm level dropped by almost 20% in April. At the same time, consumer prices for meat, poultry, fish and eggs began a sharp increase in April, and by June, consumer prices were more than 10% above the March level.

But, according to the USDA data, when the packing plant disruptions subsided and other supply chain problems were

resolved, the trends reversed.

"We would have expected to see reduced domestic consumption of meat and/or lower retail prices," Pompelli said.

The data also show consumer prices for meat and other animal products actually declined by more than 5% between June and November, while farm-level prices for animal products increased by 20% between April and November.

And while real GDP contracted sharply in 2020 in the U.S. and many other countries, real disposable income actually increased significantly because of various government stimulus programs.

Increased spending on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the new Food Box program from USDA directly subsidized food consumption. Also, restrictions on restaurant indoor dining resulted in major changes to where consumers purchased their food and what food they purchased.

"While things are not back to their pre-COVID stages in the sector — consumers are still paying slightly higher prices — we can say the situation has improved dramatically since the depths of the crisis last spring," Pompelli said.

Report: Consumers will help pay for meat-processing employee safety measures

The second CBTS-involved study with researchers in Arizona and Australia focused on: If changes in work practices introduced to reduce the spread of COVID in U.S. meat-processing plants remain in place, who will pay for them?

Meat-processing plants saw a rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus in the early months of the pandemic, which led to

increased, when possible, distances between workers, improved hygiene measures and the installation of separation barriers. These changes increased costs per unit of meat processed.

For this study, researchers used the USAGE-Food model to simulate the impact of a permanent 10% increase in the labor and capital investment costs for meat-packers. Although the exact percentage is not known at this time, the 10% figure is considered to be higher than actual costs. As such, it serves as a worst-case scenario to illustrate possible impacts.

The USAGE-Food model depicts the U.S. economy across 392 industries, including beef, hogs and poultry processing, related industries, cattle ranching and other animal farms — mainly hogs, and poultry and egg farms.

Contrary to expectations, the USAGE-Food simulations showed that when processing costs increased, the additional costs are paid mainly by meat consumers, not farmers.

For example, a 10% increase in beef processing raises the price of beef products in supermarkets by 1.488% relative to the general consumer price level. Similarly, 10% increases in pork and poultry processing raises the prices of these products sold to households by 1.444% and 1.673%, respectively, relative to consumer prices in general.

Farmers and ranchers were able to avoid over 80% of extra processing costs because they have alternative markets, including direct exports of farm products, replacement of imported farm products, and direct sales of farm products such as eggs to households, the report concluded.

This finding does not

mean that livestock producers can avoid extra processing costs entirely, Pompelli said. Instead, they can avoid some of these costs on the margin, especially if they can shift marketing channels where less processing is required.

In the end, he said, simulating the effects of 10% increases in labor and capital requirements in processing showed a negative impact on farm incomes of only 1-2.5%. And the effects on the macroeconomy of these large, simulated increases in processing costs are minor, only reducing GDP in the long run by about 0.03%.

Looking forward

While questions remain about how markets for meats and other animal products will evolve in 2021 and beyond, the largest COVID-related supply chain disruptions appear to be waning. However, according to the FAPRI assessment, forecasters expect GDP to rebound, but the eventual decisions about stimulus programs could affect disposable income and food demand in 2021.

Finally, as the risk of further pandemic disruptions fades, livestock producers still face longstanding risks, including sharply increasing feed prices due to lower-than-expected crop production in the U.S. and South America, Pompelli said. These changes in feed costs will eventually affect livestock sector production and consumer prices for meat and other animal products.

"The fact that livestock producers weathered the worst the pandemic had to offer in 2020 is great news," Pompelli said. "But the rising feed costs remind us that agricultural producers face a wide variety of risks every year in their business, and those aren't going away, just changing."

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Sources: National Agricultural Statistics Service of USDA and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

2021...

(Continued from page 1)

According to Blach, beef demand was the strongest in 2020 of any year in the last 30 years. The markets and production had a bumpy road, but beef pulled through and rose to the top.

"The consumer votes with their pocketbook on a daily basis, and beef demand clearly won out as we came through the course of the year," says Blach.

Blach explains even with the backlog of a mil-

lion head of cattle by June 1, retail sales were phenomenal. With less beef going into high end restaurants, higher quality products were in the retail stores and consumers has a fantastic eating experience.

"People have kind of reawakened to the quality and taste of our product," says Blach. "And again, I take my hat off to all of you producers out here that have been able to share in that experience."

The bottom line, Blach continues, is producers have not benefited as much as the packers and retailers

did in 2020. He encouraged producers that the current margins are not going to stay extreme like they are now forever.

"Those things will tend to correct, and they'll correct quicker than you think," says Blach.

Reviewing exports for 2020, Blach says roughly exports were down only one to two percent, which he says is remarkable considering the circumstances. He said exports were strong in the first quarter and again in the last quarter, enough so to offset the big gap in the early spring.

"As we look forward, we think exports are going to be strong in 2021," says Blach. "I think we will be up five plus percent in 2021 and imports will be down several percent."

A weak U.S. dollar, Blach explains, is giving other countries like China, South Korea and Japan, which are the bigger U.S. beef marketplaces, more purchasing power. When considering overall trade with a new administration, Blach says he doesn't expect the previous trade deals to change and believes excellent deals to

be in place.

"I would say the biggest difference with the new administration versus the previous administration is to look for more multilateral trade agreements as opposed to all these bilateral trade agreements that we've had," says Blach.

He explains, instead of having separate trade agreements for example with Japan, South Korea and China, trade agreements will be broader based and focus across more regions of the world in the future. Blach notes exports to China have

picked up significantly since July and August of 2020, and major quantities of product are being shipped to the region.

"I think in order to move forward we are going to need more of those types of agreements [multilateral agreements]," says Blach. "When I look at trying to be competitive in the global marketplace, we can't do bilateral trade agreements with every country out there. I'm not sure what a final analysis would say between the two, but all I know is we have to stay competitive in the global marketplace."

The global economy, Blach expects, will continue to pick up steam through the spring, summer and fall due to COVID-19 vaccinations, which will in part continue to drive up overall demand for beef.

"As we look forward, we think exports are going to be strong in 2021,"

"As people get vaccinated, you're going to see the economy pick up at a great pace moving forward," says Blach. "People start moving, we start seeing traffic flows pick up, more people on airplanes, more people in hotels and more people in high-end dining restaurants. All of those things are going to be bullish for demand for agriculture products and demand for meat protein."

The recent stimulus funds are putting more money in consumer's pockets to spend, which bodes well for demand of agriculture products and meat protein, but Blach warns it is going to be inflationary.

"One thing is that I would anticipate interest rates may start moving higher a little sooner than what we have been anticipating," says Blach. "We've been thinking we'd get two to three years in this very low to no interest rate environment, but I suspect it may not be more than 12 to 18 months before inflationary rates get high enough to force higher interest rates."

Capital Farm Credit will be hosting another Texas cattle review and outlook webinar with Blach on Thursday, April 15 at noon. Visit their Facebook page or website for more information about registering.

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