

# SOUTHERN LIVESTOCK STANDARD

VOLUME XXXII, NUMBER 20

20 PAGES

FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 2021

## Get the most out of higher cattle placement weights in feedlots

By Don Stotts, Oklahoma State University Agricultural Communications Services

The rising feedlot cost of gain in the southern Great Plains should have cattle producers considering economic opportunities for operations in forage-based stocker and back-

grounding programs, said Oklahoma State University Extension experts.

Cost of gain, or the expense of gaining a pound of livestock bodyweight, involves several critical factors such as feed costs, flesh condition, animal genetics, weather and cattle health. When grain prices rise and cost of gain increases – as is currently the case – feedlot operators shift their favor to heavier-weight cattle.

“It’s all about adding value, though the producer still will need to determine the price needed to sell his or her fed cattle to break even on the transaction,” said Paul Beck, OSU Extension beef cattle specialist and holder of the university’s Dennis and Marta White Endowed Chair in Animal Science. “Determining the break-even price is just part of raising cattle, no matter the size or type of operation.”

Key questions for producers to ask include:

- How will the cattle be raised? What will they be fed, and what are the associated costs?
- Are there additional expenses relative to maintaining animal health and condition?
- What resources are available in terms of needed skills, labor and facilities?
- Does taking advantage of the current opportunity derail value projected to be gained from previous operational plans? For example, if feeding the livestock on wheat pasture that was originally intended to be harvested for hay or grain, is it economically worth the switch?

“Look at growth-promoting technologies such  
(Continued on page 17)



WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Just Your  
Standard Bull ..... 2  
Texas Trails ..... 2  
D.C. News ..... 3  
Market Reports ..... 4  
Sales Calendar ..... 17  
Weather Wise ..... 20

PERIODICAL

Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas  
**ROUND-UP REVIEW**  
• SEE PAGES 11-15 •

*Just Your* **Standard Bull**   
By Michael Sturgess

**TEXAS** *Trails...*  
By Clay Coppedge

Dr. Anthony Fauci was quoted in a Fox News article last week citing figures that indicate around 30% of the U.S. population has been fully vaccinated now for COVID-19, with at least 50% having already received one vaccination dose. However, they also found in a recent Fox News poll that one in five have rejected the vaccine, citing concerns that development was rushed and requesting more data before they will consider it.

Therein lies the danger of politicizing health concerns. When there is a full 20% of the population out there that doesn't trust what is being told—we have a real problem. Part of it stems from the debate

centered around wearing masks. Should we wear one or should we not? How about indoors? How about outdoors? What about if you have been fully vaccinated? What about those who have been vaccinated and formerly tested positive for COVID-19?

Part of this comes down to common sense, although there are some that would have you adhere to the strictest set of guidelines. When you travel as much as I do, you tend to see quite a few different scenarios out there. I go to the more rural parts of the country where you see very few masks—even in public areas like grocery stores. However, I also pass people on the highway where

there are two people driving down the road in their car with both wearing a mask. One has to think that perhaps the guy driving picked up the passenger somewhere and they don't know each other or haven't been together.

I passed another one the other day driving a Ford Explorer down the interstate with all the windows down, luggage strapped to the top, all the while wearing a mask. Perhaps his thing was that the terrible virus would escape from passers by and infiltrate him while going 70 mph down the highway.

Still, when I get back to San Antonio and a more "restrictive area", I'm told of one person who had been seeing a physical therapist for back issues. When told of a recent trip out of town to see relatives in another part of the state, they were told that they would have to wait 14 days before they could come back in to continue treatment. Now to me, such a policy could prove to be a recipe for bankruptcy.

Common sense dictates that sunshine is not a suitable environment for the virus, so being outdoors should be a very healthy alternative to barricading oneself indoors for days and now months on end.

Of this 20% that are choosing not to get the vaccine, it would be interesting to note all their reasons. For example, I wonder how

(Continued on page 6)

**Remembering the Club-Footed Comet**

Here, on the eve of the 147th running of the Kentucky Derby, we take a moment to remember Assault, one of 13 horses to ever win horse racing's Triple Crown (the Derby, Preakness and Belmont Stakes) and the only one from Texas.

Assault was sired by 1936 Kentucky Derby winner Bold Venture, who ended up on the King Ranch after Robert Kleberg, Jr., as fine a judge of horseflesh the state has ever produced, bought him in 1941. Despite the strong bloodlines, Assault didn't look like anything special when he was born on the ranch in 1943. He was a dull chestnut color, taller than he was long, and he didn't help his cause by stepping on a surveyor's stake and splitting his right front hoof when he was still a colt.

Conventional wisdom dictated that the horse be put down but Kleberg was reluctant, partly because of the horse's bloodlines and partly because he might have seen something in the horse that other people missed. He put King Ranch vaquero Lolo Trevino and a veterinarian to work repairing and rehabilitating the hoof and, lo and behold, Assault turned out to be a horse born to run, injured hoof or not. Assault still walked with a limp but he galloped without a hitch. "Assault was desperate all the time, ready to go,"

Trevino later noted. "He wouldn't stay still for anything."

Encouraged by Trevino's enthusiasm and his own instincts, Kleberg employed legendary horse trainer Max Hirsch from the Morris Ranch in Gillespie County to train Assault. Hirsch devised a special steel spring that allowed the horse to run without stumbling, but Assault's first race as a two-year old resulted in a 12th place finish. He won his first three races as a three-

year old—the first at 70-1 odds—but still entered the Kentucky Derby as an 8-1 underdog.

Kleberg was working at the ranch on Derby Day, May 4, 1946, when he drove up on some vaqueros branding calves. He turned on the car radio and he and the vaqueros listened together as Assault, now dubbed the "Club-Footed Comet," won the Derby by a record eight lengths. Sportswriters came up with other nicknames for the

(Continued on page 6)

**USDA Livestock Export/Import Statistics For 4-22-21**

SPECIES:	4-17-2021:	Wk.-Dt.:	Yr.-Dt.:
<b>1) BEEF CATTLE</b>			
a. Slaughter	595	495	12,845
b. Breeding Males	73	0	611
c. Breeding Females	3	180	520
Total	671	675	13,976
<b>2) HOGS</b>			
a. Slaughter	0	0	0
b. Breeding Males	104	145	1,116
c. Breeding Females	1,008	184	1,444
Total	1,112	329	2,560
<b>3) SHEEP</b>			
a. Slaughter	0	0	0
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
<b>4) DAIRY CATTLE</b>			
a. Breeding Males	0	0	0
b. Breeding Females	0	0	1,385
Total	0	0	1,385
<b>5) GOATS</b>			
a. Angora	0	0	0
b. Spanish	0	0	0
c. Other	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0
<b>6) HORSES</b>			
a. Slaughter	365	395	4,730
b. Breeding Males	11	48	391
c. Breeding Females	21	86	663
d. Geldings	9	38	207
e. Burro/Mule/Pony	0	1	35
Total	406	568	6,026
<b>7) EXOTICS</b>			
Total	0	0	5

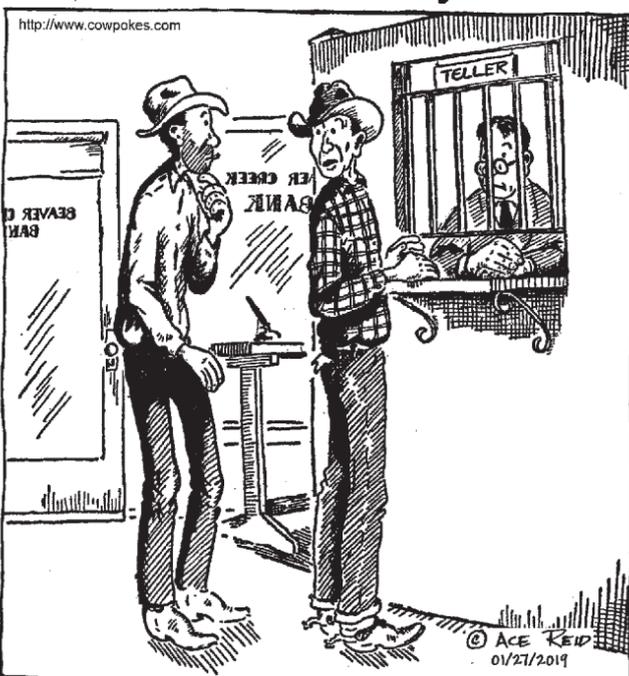
**MEXICO TO NEW MEXICO IMPORTS**

SPECIES:	4-24-2021:	1-1-2021 - Present:
FEEDER CATTLE	5,979	232,717

**MEXICO TO TEXAS IMPORTS**

FEEDER CATTLE	6,086	80,874
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**COWPOKES®** By Ace Reid



"He says we got the only savings account in town that is \$34 overdrawn!"

**SOUTHERN LIVESTOCK STANDARD**

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# DC News...

## NCBA delivers Preserving Family Farms Act: A permanent solution to a generational issue

Washington -- The Preserving Family Farms Act of 2021 was introduced by U.S. Representatives Jimmy Panetta (CA-20) and Jackie Walorski (IN-2). NCBA has long supported efforts to reduce undue tax burden on farmers and ranchers. This bipartisan legislation to expand IRS Code Section 2032A would allow cattle producers to take advantage of the Special Use Valuation and protect family-owned businesses from the devastating impact of the federal estate tax, commonly referred to as the Death Tax.

"We thank Representatives Panetta and Walorski for their leadership and dedication to protecting future generations of agricultural producers through the introduction of the Preserving Family Farms Act of 2021," said Jerry Bohn, National Cattleman's Beef Association (NCBA) president.

The Preserving Family Farms Act increases the maximum amount allowed under the Section 2032A exemption from \$750,000 to \$11 million (indexed for inflation), thus reviving a critically important tool in the toolbox for farm and ranch families across the U.S. If enacted, this legislation will provide a permanent solution to an issue that has long plagued our nation's cattle producers.

"America's farmers and ranchers deserve certainty in the tax code overall, and they need certainty especially when it comes to the estate tax. Without it, transition planning for the next generation of producers is nearly impossible," Bohn said.

### Background

In the Tax Reform Act of 1976, Congress recognized the disproportionate burden of the Death Tax on agricultural producers and created Section 2032A as a way to help farmers keep their farms. However, the benefits of Special Use Valuations have been stymied over the years as the cap on deductions has

failed to keep pace with the rising value of farmland.

While the current 2032A reduction is 55 percent higher than the value established two decades

ago, USDA estimates that cropland values have increased by 223 percent. Agricultural land values – including on-farm buildings – have also risen dramatically, increasing by 241 percent during this same period. Due to the rapid inflation of farmland values, the 2032A deduction is no longer aligned with the needs of modern agriculture – nor does it accomplish Congress' intended goal of providing meaningful protection to those producers who are most vulnerable to the estate tax.

SLS

## The Santa Gertrudis Cow... She Isn't Just A Pretty Picture!



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# CATTLEMAN'S OPPORTUNITY

## Santa Gertrudis Sale



<p><i>Hotel</i> Best Western Inn Brenham, Texas 979-251-7791</p>	<p><i>Contact</i> Sale Chairman Matt Kubena • 979-373-1911 makubena@aol.com</p>
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**12:00 P.M.**  
**SATURDAY, MAY 8, 2021**  
*Four County Auction Center, Industry, Texas*  
Auctioneer: Hoover Case

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**USDA Major Livestock Reports:**

**Producers Livestock Auction, San Angelo, Texas, April 22, 2021:** Total receipts 1,528, last reported (4-15-21) 1,350, last year 813. Feeder cattle 550 (36.0%), last reported (4-15-21) 567 (42.0%), last year 536 (65.9%). Slaughter cattle 321 (21.0%), last reported (4-15-21) 243 (18.0%), last year 106 (13.0%). Replacement cattle 657 (43.0%), last reported (4-15-21) 540 (40.0%), last year 171 (21.0%). Compared to last week steer and heifer calves and yearlings 2.00-4.00 lower. Slaughter cows and bulls 1.00-2.00 higher. Stock cows and pairs firm to slightly higher. Trading fairly active, demand good for better quality cattle. Supply included: 36% Feeder Cattle (31% Steers, 57% Heifers, 12% Bulls); 21% Slaughter Cattle (91% Cows, 9% Bulls); 43% Replacement Cattle (48% Stock Cows, 16% Bred Cows, 36% Cow-Calf Pairs, 0% Bulls). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 33%.

**Amarillo Livestock Auction, Amarillo, Texas, April 26, 2021:** Total receipts 375, last reported (4-19-21) 504, last year 287. Feeder cattle 343 (91.5%), last reported (4-19-21) 354 (70.2%), last year 270 (94.1%). Slaughter cattle 18 (4.8%), last reported (4-19-21) 50 (9.9%), last year 10 (3.5%). Replacement cattle 14 (3.7%), last reported (4-19-

21) 100 (19.8%), last year 7 (2.4%). No recent comparable trend. Trade activity and demand were light to moderate. Summer like temperatures returned to the area to kick off the week, and a chance of much needed rain in the forecast. Supply included: 91% Feeder Cattle (22% Steers, 70% Heifers, 5% Bulls, 3% Dairy Heifers); 5% Slaughter Cattle (89% Cows, 11% Bulls); 4% Replacement Cattle (100% Bred Cows). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 26%.

**Oklahoma National Stock Yards, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 27, 2021:** Total receipts 6,163, last reported (4-19-21) 7,752, last year 10,151. Feeder cattle 6,163 (100.0%), last reported (4-19-21) 7,752 (100.0%), last year 10,151 (100.0%). Compared to last week: Feeder steers steady to 3.00 lower. Feeder heifers 4.00 -6.00 lower. Steer and heifer calves lightly tested and few sales 6.00 -9.00 lower. Demand moderate, despite much higher corn prices. Quality average to mostly attractive. Supply included: 100% Feeder Cattle (55% Steers, 44% Heifers, 1% Bulls). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 76%.

**SALE: Beeville Livestock Commission, Inc.**  
Beeville, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-23-21  
**VOLUME:** 564  
**TREND:** Steady/lower.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	105-200	102-152
300-400 lbs.	123-172	94-141
400-500 lbs.	106-150	95-141
500-600 lbs.	100-133	89-137
600-700 lbs.	92-130	79-112
700-800 lbs.	80-111	51-92
Slaughter cows	42-67	
Slaughter Bulls	57-93	
Stocker cows	560-890	
Pairs	800-1275	

**SALE: Brazos Valley Livestock Commission**  
Bryan, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-27-21  
**VOLUME:** 514  
**TREND:** Steady/no change.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	150-175	132-155
300-400 lbs.	140-162	120-140
400-500 lbs.	137-164	118-140
500-600 lbs.	128-147	113-133
600-700 lbs.	118-135	102-122
700-800 lbs.	122-126	—
Slaughter cows	46-80.5	
Slaughter bulls	75-91	
Stocker cows	850-1010	
Pairs	—	

**SALE: Live Oak Auction, Inc.**  
Three Rivers, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-26-21  
**VOLUME:** 1780  
**TREND:** Steady/no change.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	138-184	120-162
300-400 lbs.	126-172	112-144
400-500 lbs.	120-164	108-140
500-600 lbs.	112-152	102-134
600-700 lbs.	108-134	96-122
700-800 lbs.	88-126	84-116
Slaughter cows	36-74	
Slaughter bulls	70-90	
Stocker cows	475-1225	
Pairs	740-1375	

**SALE: Nixon Livestock Commission, Inc.**  
Nixon, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-26-21  
**VOLUME:** 1368  
**TREND:** Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	143-188	111-144
300-400 lbs.	133-193	118-160
400-500 lbs.	128-173	114-160
500-600 lbs.	116-144	105-152
600-700 lbs.	109-135	95-121
700-800 lbs.	98-127	80-109
Slaughter cows	30-78	
Slaughter bulls	82-95	
Stocker cows	560-1125	
Pairs	600-1350	

**SALE: Gulf Coast Livestock Auction, LLC**  
Alice, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-20-21  
**VOLUME:** 983  
**TREND:** Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	145-185	130-180
300-400 lbs.	140-178	125-160
400-500 lbs.	135-170	124-155
500-600 lbs.	127-163	115-135
600-700 lbs.	118-140	104-125
700-800 lbs.	105-120	90-110
Slaughter cows	48-75	
Slaughter bulls	79-91	
Stocker cows	750-1050	
Pairs	800-1150	

**SALE: Gillespie Livestock Company**  
Fredericksburg, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-21-21  
**VOLUME:** 1062  
**TREND:** Steady/lower.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	140-200	120-160
300-400 lbs.	160-200	120-160
400-500 lbs.	150-190	120-153
500-600 lbs.	140-180	120-140
600-700 lbs.	130-164	105-130
700-800 lbs.	120-147	100-125
Slaughter cows	40-75	
Slaughter Bulls	70-90	
Stocker cows	700-1000	
Pairs	900-1300	

**SALE: Groesbeck Auction/Livestock Co., LLC**  
Groesbeck, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-21-21  
**VOLUME:** 700  
**TREND:** Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	—	—
300-400 lbs.	150-190	135-170
400-500 lbs.	140-170	125-160
500-600 lbs.	130-160	120-138
600-700 lbs.	120-140	100-130
700-800 lbs.	90-110	90-130
Slaughter cows	40-68	
Slaughter bulls	72-99	
Stocker cows	750-1300	
Pairs	1050-1600	

**SALE: Jordan Cattle Auction**  
San Saba & Mason, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-21-21  
**VOLUME:** 4531  
**TREND:** Steady/lower.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	160-180	135-144
300-400 lbs.	150-180	140-165
400-500 lbs.	140-175	130-149
500-600 lbs.	130-156	120-134
600-700 lbs.	128.5-150	115-126
700-800 lbs.	110-136	105-128
Slaughter cows	25-77	
Slaughter bulls	70-92.5	
Stocker cows	640-1850	
Pairs	890-2600	

**SALE: Giddings Livestock Commission**  
Giddings, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-26-21  
**VOLUME:** 728  
**TREND:** Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	120-167.5	120-160
300-400 lbs.	120-182.5	121-164
400-500 lbs.	120-172.5	118-140
500-600 lbs.	118-141	106-141
600-700 lbs.	110-139	100-124
700-800 lbs.	80-124	88-122
Slaughter cows	30-75	
Slaughter bulls	60-93	
Stocker cows	400-1100	
Pairs	500-1375	

**SALE: Lampasas Cattle Auction**  
Lampasas, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-21-21  
**VOLUME:** 414  
**TREND:** Steady/lower.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	144.5-172.5	141-175
300-400 lbs.	149-160	137-150
400-500 lbs.	149-162	122-150
500-600 lbs.	149-162	122-140
600-700 lbs.	136.5-155	114-129
700-800 lbs.	124-132	110-120
Slaughter cows	44-68	
Slaughter bulls	60-88	
Stocker cows	475-900	
Pairs	750-1250	

**SALE: East Texas Livestock, Inc.**  
Crockett, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-27-21  
**VOLUME:** 1641  
**TREND:** Steady/lower.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	160-185	145-170
300-400 lbs.	145-180	138-165
400-500 lbs.	138-168	123-145
500-600 lbs.	134-149	118-140
600-700 lbs.	128-136	109-121
700-800 lbs.	—	—
Slaughter cows	54-73	
Slaughter Bulls	79-98	
Stocker cows	620-1350	
Pairs	840-1525	

**SALE: Caldwell Livestock Commission Co., Inc.**  
Caldwell, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-21-21  
**VOLUME:** 862  
**TREND:** Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	160-175	135-170
300-400 lbs.	151-187	135-167
400-500 lbs.	140-165	134-205
500-600 lbs.	132-143	120-138
600-700 lbs.	123-134	100-133
700-800 lbs.	107-125	95-135
Slaughter cows	35-68	
Slaughter bulls	60-96	
Stocker cows	725-1200	
Pairs	825-1675	

**SALE: Buffalo Livestock Commission Co., Inc.**  
Buffalo, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-24-21  
**VOLUME:** 1072  
**TREND:** Steady/no change.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	—	—
300-400 lbs.	175-200	140-160
400-500 lbs.	155-174	140-155
500-600 lbs.	150-169	130-150
600-700 lbs.	141-155.50	120-137
700-800 lbs.	130-144.5	110-126
Slaughter cows	47-72.5	
Slaughter bulls	84-110	
Stocker cows	750-1000	
Pairs	—	

**SALE: Navasota Livestock Auction Co.**  
Navasota, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-24-21  
**VOLUME:** 944  
**TREND:** Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	120-200	120-180
300-400 lbs.	120-165	110-150
400-500 lbs.	120-160	110-152.5
500-600 lbs.	110-145	110-135
600-700 lbs.	110-135	100-118
700-800 lbs.	—	—
Slaughter cows	30-74	
Slaughter bulls	60-104	
Stocker cows	600-975	
Pairs	800-1375	

**SALE: Cattleman's Brenham Livestock**  
Brenham, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-23-21  
**VOLUME:** 985  
**TREND:** Steady/no change.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	135-192	128-195
300-400 lbs.	130-187	118-162
400-500 lbs.	120-178	110-170
500-600 lbs.	110-152	108-152
600-700 lbs.	108-136	105-115
700-800 lbs.	97-121	85-118
Slaughter cows	32-76	
Slaughter bulls	57-103	
Stocker cows	400-1150	
Pairs	500-1250	

**SALE: Cuero-Victoria Livestock Markets**  
Cuero & Victoria, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-23-21  
**VOLUME:** 1577  
**TREND:** Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	142-168	131-160
300-400 lbs.	141-172	124-170
400-500 lbs.	128-174	119-165
500-600 lbs.	124-146	113-136
600-700 lbs.	116-136	98-120
700-800 lbs.	118-125	89-122
Slaughter cows	150-172	
Slaughter Bulls	72-95	
Stocker cows	74-87	
Pairs	600-710	

**SALE: Gonzales Livestock Market, Inc.**  
Gonzales, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-24-21  
**VOLUME:** 1049  
**TREND:** Steady/higher.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	180-185	163-168
300-400 lbs.	175-178	145-160
400-500 lbs.	153-168	126-138
500-600 lbs.	136-149	114-125
600-700 lbs.	124-132	112-123
700-800 lbs.	115-123	—
Slaughter cows	27-74	
Slaughter bulls	74-94	
Stocker cows	600-1025	
Pairs	750-1400	

**SALE: Columbus Livestock Co.**  
Columbus, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-22-21  
**VOLUME:** 784  
**TREND:** Steady/lower.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	150-200	140-195
300-400 lbs.	135-190	120-155
400-500 lbs.	125-180	125-415
500-600 lbs.	120-147	105-146
600-700 lbs.	110-140	100-150
700-800 lbs.	105-130	90-115
Slaughter cows	30-72	
Slaughter bulls	65-92	
Stocker cows	550-1250	
Pairs	750-1375	

**SALE: Four County Livestock Auction**  
Industry, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-20-21  
**VOLUME:** 907  
**TREND:** Steady/lower.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	130-215	120-195
300-400 lbs.	120-185	115-160
400-500 lbs.	115-175	110-140
500-600 lbs.	100-170	95-135
600-700 lbs.	100-138	90-124
700-800 lbs.	—	—
Slaughter cows	32-74	
Slaughter bulls	70-92	
Stocker cows	400-1050	
Pairs	800-1250	

**SALE: El Campo Livestock Auction**  
El Campo, Texas  
**DATE OF SALE:** 4-27-21  
**VOLUME:** 389  
**TREND:** Steady/no change.

	STEERS	HEIFERS
200-300 lbs.	137-153	147-160
300-400 lbs.	135-155	126-154
400-500 lbs.	129-150	121-138
500-600 lbs.	125-145	113-134
600-700 lbs.	112-125	111-133
700-800 lbs.	—	—
Slaughter cows	20-75	
Slaughter bulls	75-98	
Stocker cows	—	
Pairs	—	

**Sheep & Goat Auctions:**

**Producers Livestock Auction, San Angelo, Texas, April 27, 2021:** Sheep and goats: Total receipts 8,900, last reported (4-20-21) 8,114, last year 9,639. Feeder sheep/lambs 89 (1.0%), last reported (4-20-21) 0 (0.0%), last year 229 (2.4%). Slaughter sheep/lambs 5,963 (67.0%), last reported (4-20-21) 5,676 (70.0%), last year 5,976 (62.0%). Replacement sheep/lambs: 360 (4.0%), last reported (4-20-21) 20 (0.2%), last year 49 (0.5%). Feeder goats: 356

# Five things to know about the Beef Checkoff, Part IV

*It's hard to narrow down the beef checkoff's biggest wins over the years, because there have been so many amazing outcomes from this self-funded, producer-driven program.*

**By Sharla Ishmael**

No matter how many pages there are in this issue of Southern Livestock Standard, we could fill every single page with positive stories about what the beef checkoff – both nationally and in Texas – has accomplished for cattle producers.

Since we don't have that luxury, here are our Top Five checkoff wins with input from some Texas ranchers that have served on the Beef Board as well as the Texas Beef Council (TBC). They've seen all the behind-the-scenes hard work that goes into these programs and invested their own time to help provide leadership and guidance on how checkoff dollars are spent.

**1. Beef. It's What's for Dinner.** This popular national promotion has been going on for 25 years and to date has reached consumers with informative and persuasive beef messaging 1 billion times according to beefboard.org. It was relaunched in 2018 to great success with a new website, logo and creative ad campaign, attracting hundreds of millions of consumer touchpoints in the first year alone.

In Texas, several key promotional programs created by the TBC have taken off like a rocket, including **BBQuest** – a documentary style video series featuring renowned chefs and prominent pitmasters. They take viewers all over the state on a barbecue journey. The series is so popular that viewers have watched about 515 months, or 42 years' worth of content on major platforms like Hulu and YouTube.

Another highly successful checkoff-funded promotional program is **Beef Loving Texans**. The TBC's consumer brand is ultra-popular, garnering 6 million views and twice as many recipe shares in 2020 as the year prior. Molly McAdams, TBC executive vice president, recently reported the Beef Loving Texans website saw a 46%

increase in visits in the first quarter of 2021 and 38% increase in new users compared to the first quarter of 2020. The team also has named Eddie Jackson, ath-

lete and Food Network star, as the new chief recipe officer. His campaign has brought in 11 million video views so far. Already in 2021, TBC

and checkoff partner National Cattlemen's Beef Association took beef promotion to another level with the Beef. It's What's for Dinner 300 race and 63rd Annual Daytona 500. For the first time ever, beef was in the spotlight for the season-opening race for the NASCAR Xfinity Series.

**2. Checkoff-funded research identifies new cuts of beef.** Everyone interviewed for this article viewed for this article named research funded by the checkoff as one of the program's biggest wins. While checkoff-funded research has covered every-

thing from verifying the healthy, nutritional profile of beef to identifying how to control pathogens like E. coli throughout the production system, one of the most visible accomplish-

ments is in the area of new product development. It was checkoff funds that brought us the now very popular Flat Iron steak, as well as the Delmonico

(Continued on page 8)

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## Texas Trails...

(Continued from page 2)

unlikely champion such as "The Crippled Champion" and "Texas Flier" but bettors were still leery of him.

Assault won the Preakness when he charged from sixth place to take a four-length lead and beat a furious charge by Lord Boswell down the stretch. Bettors didn't believe Assault had the stamina for Belmont's full mile-and-a-half track at Pimlico, but it didn't pay to bet against Assault that year. Despite stumbling out of the gate, Assault recovered to win by three lengths.

Assault, at the time the seventh horse to win the Triple Crown, was the official 1946 Horse of the Year and top money winner, earning \$424,195 with eight wins in 15 starts. But after winning six times in nine weeks, Assault lost his next six races. Tests revealed a slew of physical problems, including a bad kidney, bleeding issues and a bum knee.

Any hopes of continuing that spunky line of underdog champions came to an end when, in addition to all his other ailments, Assault turned out to be

sterile. He returned to the race track and won a few more races but was never the same horse he was for that one glorious year.

Hall of Fame jockey Eddie Arcaro named Assault as one of his favorite horses and the best he ever rode other than Citation, another Triple Crown winner.

"Assault was fun to ride," Arcaro said. "He moved up on you quick, then exploded."

King Ranch horses won six Triple Crown races—three Kentucky Derbies, one Preakness and two Belmont Stakes, thanks

largely to Kleberg's passion and money and Hirsh's genius. Hirsch-trained horses won 1,933 times and earned more than \$12 million, putting him and several of the horses he trained in the Horse Racing Hall of Fame.

Assault finished his career with 18 wins in 46 starts, six second-place finishes and seven thirds, earning \$675,400 in the process. He lived 28 years and was buried on the King Ranch in 1971. The 1946 Triple Crown trophy still graces the dining room of the main house at the King Ranch.

## Standard bull...

(Continued from page 2)

many of them fall into a category of: 1) those who don't believe in the mask, so I'm not going to get vaccinated; or 2) they have already had the virus, so they see no need to be vaccinated for something they already have antibodies for; or 3) don't trust the vaccine to the point where some even fear it will alter their DNA; or finally 4) my personal favorite, the belief that the vaccine will be used to track us.

The point of this article is not so much to point out the absurdities surrounding the vaccine, but more so to point out that when you politicize a health concern, the end result is a total lack of trust—which leads to all of these absurdities.

When it comes to our health, it should never have a Democrat or Republican spin on it. We should be confident in what they tell us—what they prescribe to us—what they recommend for us. We have lost this confidence. To have a global pandemic occur during a Presidential election year was very unfortunate for all of us because it showed us all just how far our politicians and main-stream press would go to win an election.

Public health should always be void of all politics. And shame on anyone who truly thinks the oppos-

ing side purposely put people's lives in danger for the sake of a vote. We need a system where we can believe what is being said, where the unpoliticized truth is being shared with us, and where there are opposing scientific views, that both sides be given equal billing so that the American people have enough information to make a decision that they can live with.

For me personally, I have been vaccinated. I did test positive for COVID back in early January with a very mild case. I have a brother-in-law who is a doctor, and we discussed the vaccine at length. Ultimately, I chose to get vaccinated because Jim and I travel a great deal in our line of work and wanted our customers to be assured that we are taking steps to not spread or expose anyone to the virus.

Having said that, I make no judgement towards those who do not feel the need to be vaccinated. This is a free country. And, unless it is required by the place of business that I go to, I would rather not wear a mask since I do not believe that I pose a risk to spread or to contract the virus now that I am vaccinated. Some would have you believe that I still pose a risk. But I ask you—how much of that is politics and how much of that is based on science?

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# Bringing relevance and value to the beef industry

By Holly Martin, Angus Communications

Beef industry organizations will need to evolve in order to continue to bring value in the future. That philosophy is particularly true for breed associations, said Mark McCully, chief executive officer of the American Angus Association.

McCully spoke recently during the Dr. Harlan Ritchie Symposium for the American Society of Animal Science.

"I think it comes down, very simply, to relevance," he said. "We all understand that you have to maintain relevancy. You have to continue to bring value."

Fostering profitability of commercial cattle producers is what brings value to breed associations like the American Angus Association.

Part of that strategy is to guard against complacency — something that can be hard for members of an Association established in 1883. Seedstock breeders and their breed associations must fight against the tendency to become complacent. Driving for constant improvement is hard when the status quo can be comfortable.

"The pace of change today is so incredible," McCully said. Any organization today has to stay nimble and make decisions in a fast and efficient way. If the last year has taught us anything, he said, it is to adjust as needed.

While change is never comfortable, no matter whether you are a breed association, a company or an individual breeder, it is necessary. Focusing on what will drive the beef industry helps, he said.

"We need to think more about genetic solutions and the commercial industry," he said. "After all, that's what we're here to do."

One of the ways breeders and their associations can continue to evolve is to adopt disruptive technologies. In the 1950s, artificial insemination was one of those disruptive technologies.

"It was a technology that was very controversial at the time," McCully said. "Today it seems kind of silly to think of that as disruptive."

Being closed-minded and looking at technology

as a threat will not benefit the industry.

"We have to be very open and quick to embrace and adopt those technologies that may very well change the procedures of what we do," he said. "We need to make sure that we keep our members relevant to the commercial industry and moving forward."

The need for data will not change, but the ways we collect and think about

it may. Associations will then be charged with making the most of the data.

"I think we have to be very diligent as a breed association to make sure we are building tools that are focused on profitability and biological balance."

Biological balance is a term McCully uses to describe avoiding extremes that could lead to unintended consequences.

In the beef cattle world,

the generation interval is longer than other species.

"When we make a mistake, when we get in the ditch, it takes us an awfully long time to get up out of the ditch." McCully urged breeders and associations to be thinking about tools that stress optimal production for different environments.

One only has to look back with clarity of hindsight to the 1980s when the industry was seeking the highest frame scores. We

know now, there were a lot of unintended consequences to chasing maximums, McCully said.

In addition to providing the right kind of breeding tools to members, other

(Continued on page 8)

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### Checkoff...

(Continued from page 5)

steak, Denver cut and more.

"Probably one of the biggest things that continues to be a big advantage

for the American cattle producer would be the research dollars spent and the subsequent value cuts that the checkoff dollars have developed in the last several years," says Austin Brown III of Beeville.

Brown served six years each on the Beef Board, the TBC and the U.S. Meat Export Federation. "It's such a great success because all these different valuable cuts obviously return more dollars to a beef carcass, as opposed to just grinding it into ground beef."

As examples, in 1998, SYSCO Corp., the largest food distributor in the U.S., rolled out 26 new beef and veal products developed by the beef checkoff. In 2004, the Flat Iron steak and Petite Tender, also checkoff-developed cuts, outsold the T-Bone and Porter-

house steaks in the food-service sector for the first time.

Coleman Locke, producer from Wharton, says he's also seen the great benefits of checkoff dollars used in research. Locke served six years on the TBC board and was chairman when the Texas state checkoff was approved.

"The research has been valuable not just for the new products developed but also to prove the validity of arguments for the healthiness of beef," Locke explains. "I'm also so proud Texas led the charge to get a state checkoff the

last time the national checkoff was threatened. We have great resources to promote beef in this state and we should all be very thankful we have such a wonderful organization in the Texas Beef Council to look after our checkoff dollars. Because of checkoff research, we can prove the heart-healthy benefits of beef and share that information with doctors, dietitians and others in the nutrition world that we couldn't have done otherwise."

Early in the life of the beef checkoff, former TBC executive vice president,

Anne Anderson, says checkoff dollars funded research on cholesterol that proved beef was not the problem some were claiming it to be.

"With the cholesterol research, it was the first time we had actual data to show in Washington when they were talking about dietary guidelines," Anderson explains. "We were able to get the dietary guidelines changed because of it."

**3. Foreign marketing and exports.** Through checkoff dollars, foreign marketing advertising and promotions have put 5.5% more beef into eight pri-

(Continued on page 10)

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### Bringing...

(Continued from page 7)

association-offered programs are important. In the case of the American Angus Association, marketing programs like AngusLink<sup>SM</sup> are focused on the commercial cattleman, McCully said. They benefit members by helping their commercial customers achieve more profit. The American Angus Association's AngusLink program helps document the value of calves with genetic merit and process-verified programs.

"It's about creating value," McCully said.

In the ever-changing marketplace, making those tools widely available to commercial cattlemen is important.

Where the industry used to describe cattle by hide color and condition, today it is headed toward programs that document the genetic capabilities of groups of cattle.

In the future, McCully also sees the Association serving additional needs. As the speed of change continues, Angus breeders are asking for more education, McCully said. "I believe to stay relevant, we're going to have to be an educational resource."

For the Angus breed specifically, education is one of the long-range objectives adopted recently. That plan will help guide the Association in the future.

"It's about driving breed improvement. It's about enhancing the membership experience and success. It's about focusing on the commercial cattleman and the consumer that ultimately trusts the product we are producing," McCully said.

# February Red Meat Exports below last year, but 2021 outlook remains strong

Source: U.S. Meat Export Federation

February exports of U.S. beef and pork remained below the rapid pace established in early 2020, according to data released by USDA and compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF). However, exports were consistent with USMEF's February projections and the federation still expects 2021 beef exports to increase substantially year-over-year, while pork exports are projected to narrowly surpass the 2020 record.

Beef exports totaled 103,493 metric tons (mt) in February, down 8% from a year ago, valued at \$669.5 million (down 2%). This was due mainly to a decline in variety meat exports, as beef muscle cuts were steady with last year in value at \$597.9 million on a volume of 82,530 mt (down 3%). Through February, beef exports were 5% below last year's pace at 208,540 mt, valued at \$1.32 billion (down 2%). Beef muscle cut exports were down 1% to 163,928 mt and steady in value at \$1.18 billion.

February pork exports were down 12% from a year ago at 239,240 mt, valued at \$629.4 million (down 13%). For muscle cuts only, exports fell by the same percentages to 203,526 mt valued at \$548 million. Through February, pork exports were 11% below last year's pace at 487,896 mt, valued at \$1.27 billion (down 13%). Pork muscle cut exports were also down 11% to 411,760 mt, valued at \$1.1 billion (down 14%).

"While February exports were in line with expectations, the results don't fully reflect global demand for U.S. red meat," said Dan Halstrom, USMEF president and CEO. "Logistical challenges, including congestion at some U.S. ports, are still a significant headwind and tight labor supplies at the plant level continue to impact export volumes for certain products – including some variety meat items and labor-intensive muscle cuts."

Halstrom notes that the flow of exports through U.S. ports is showing some gradual improvement as COVID-impacted crews

move closer to full strength, but remains a serious concern for the U.S. agricultural sector.

"USMEF greatly appreciates the members of Congress and ag industry representatives who have worked to bring more attention to this situation, and the efforts of maritime regulators to address shipping practices," he said.

Export demand has remained solid despite logistical challenges and other pandemic-related obstacles. Continued international demand, along with robust domestic business, contributed to stronger cutout values in the first quarter, which were up an average of 27% year-over-year for pork (nearly \$90/cwt) and 4%

for Choice beef (\$224/cwt).

**Strong momentum for beef exports to China, Korea; safeguard impacts Japan**

February beef exports equated to \$345.37 per head of fed slaughter, up 1% from a year ago. The January-February average was \$327.92, up 2%. February exports accounted for 14.4% of total beef production and 12.3% for

muscle cuts, down from 15.3% and 12.4%, respectively, last year. The January-February ratios were 13.8% of total production (down from 14.1%) and 11.6% for muscle cuts (up slightly).

The surge in beef exports to China continued in February, reaching 8,644 mt valued at \$66 million – far above the minimal levels posted a year ago and making it the fourth largest

(Continued on page 10)



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### Checkoff...

(Continued from page 8)

many foreign markets, according to the latest Return on Investment Study (conducted every five years). For example, in 1994, following a foreign buyers conference in California, a Chinese representative purchased 41,000 lbs. of U.S. beef, marking the first sale ever to China.

“They say 95% of the world population lives out-

### Exports...

(Continued from page 9)

destination for U.S. beef. Through February, exports were more than 1,000% above last year's pace in both volume (16,506 mt) and value (\$124.1 million). Beef exports to China already exceed the full-year totals reached in 2019, prior to the U.S. securing expanded beef access through the Phase One Economic and Trade Agreement.

February beef exports to South Korea were slightly above last year's strong totals, pushing January-February exports to 44,892 mt, up 9% from a year ago, while a 10% increase in value (\$328 million) established Korea as the value leader for U.S. beef exports in early 2021.

Korea surpassed perennial value leader Japan, where exports felt the impact of an annual import safeguard established in the U.S.-Japan Trade Agreement. While the higher safeguard tariff rate (38.5%) on beef muscle cuts was not triggered until mid-March, importers' efforts to manage the safeguard likely impacted February shipments, which were 8% below last year at 24,879 mt, valued at \$165.1 million (down 4%). Through February, beef exports to Japan were 10% below last year's pace in volume (46,897 mt) and down 8% in value (\$303.1 million).

Japan imposed the higher tariff rate on March 18. It will remain in effect for 30 days, when the rate declines to 25% – the same rate that now applies to beef cuts imported from Japan's other major suppliers. As prescribed in the trade agreement, trade officials from the U.S. and Japan have begun consultations on possible adjustments to the safeguard.

For complete report visit [www.usmef.org](http://www.usmef.org).

side the United States,” Brown explains. “We consume roughly 85% of our beef at home in the U.S., so we can increase domestic consumption some, but the real opportunity to grow our market is through exports. Plus, the vast majority of the product we are exporting are items like tongue, liver and kidneys that don't have much value here but are very desirable in foreign markets.

“For example, in America, beef tongue is worth \$2/lb. but in Japan it's \$7.35/lb. That a \$15 per head contribution just for tongues. The chuckeye roll

is worth \$6.30/lb. in Japan but only \$3.50/lb. in the U.S. I think the most recent figures on the value that beef exports brings to a fed steer in the feed yard is about \$345 a head – even more if you include the stuff that is rendered overseas. That's a significant difference in the value of a carcass and checkoff dollars play a big role in promoting U.S. beef overseas.”

In 2020 during the pandemic, the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), which receives funds from the beef checkoff, was able to pivot strategy and

provide support to trade partners that kept exports going. According to beef-board.org, “USMEF was able to help foodservice partners develop new means of food delivery and takeaway. In some markets, USMEF staff participated in re-engineering menus and developing and using online platforms for ordering and delivery logistics. USMEF also initiated unique promotional campaigns for U.S. beef and produced new delivery materials.

“When social restrictions were implemented, USMEF shifted the weight

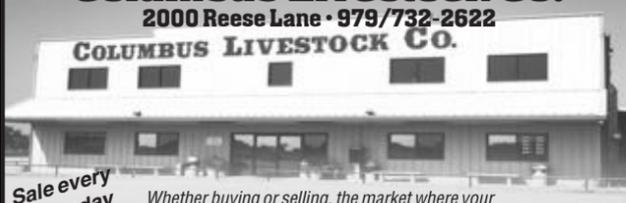
of its educational and promotional programs toward e-commerce and social media to directly reach consumers at home. Thanks in part to these checkoff-funded promotional programs, U.S. beef

exports to China reached \$130 million through September 2020, a 136% increase over levels from one year ago.”

### 4. Industry information and issues management.

(Continued on page 14)

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# AgriLife TODAY

## Texas crop, weather

By Adam Russell, Texas AgriLife Today

Texas cotton producers could have a tough year due to drought, but good prices are likely to soften the blow, according to a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service expert.

Drought and good prices will influence the final total acres of cotton planted, especially in Texas, said John Robinson, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension cotton marketing economist in the

Texas A&M University Department of Agricultural Economics, Bryan-College Station.

Robinson said cotton prices have recovered from a deep slide due to

COVID-19. The pandemic recession sent cotton into a spiral as demand for cotton plummeted in April 2020.

Cotton prices bottomed on April 1 last year but began climbing back, in large part due to China purchasing large amounts of U.S. cotton to build up their re-serves when prices cratered. The purchases provided cotton with a bump, but prices gained momentum as mills around the world ramped up production this year.

Robinson said export demand for U.S. cotton has been historically high,

which led to a 45-cent rally from below 50 cents per pound April 1, 2020 to 95 cents per pound by March 2021.

“It was an astounding rally,” he said. “Mills around the world from Asia to Turkey ramped up production and bought a lot of U.S. cotton, and the resumption of demand fed upward prices.”

The market has corrected since, and prices settled in the low- to mid-80 cents per pound range, which is still a good price for producers, he said.

Prices may have recov-

ered, but the opportunity for Texas cotton producers will depend on Mother Nature.

Robinson said the state’s cotton growing regions, from the Panhandle down to the Rio Grande Valley, are experiencing drought at levels that threaten yield potential in both irrigated and dryland fields. And forecasts are calling for drier- and hotter-than-normal weather through May, and then normally hot weather after that. Irrigation would likely not support the crop without rainfall because the moisture deficit is too high.

Irrigation in areas like Far West Texas and the Rio Grande Valley may be limited this season due to rationing by water districts. Furthermore, areas like the South Plains and Panhandle may find irrigation difficult due to water demand and high energy costs.

But that may not dissuade producers from putting seed in the ground because crop insurance prices for lint were at 83 cents based on the recent price surge. The high insurance price cuts both ways. While implying a better safety net against losses, it also raises the value of the coverage, leading to higher insurance premiums paid by farmers.

“It’s one of those years where the possibility of crop failure might lead to more cotton plantings, since cotton performs better agronomically than grain crops in dry conditions,” he said. “It’s still a risk for producers because these dry plantings could get rain and then they have to follow up with weed control and more inputs and end up playing catch-up.”

Producers are also likely to pay more for inputs from fertilizer, seed and herbicides to around-the-clock electricity that runs water pumps and drives irrigation pivots, he said.

Robinson said U.S. cotton producers were expected to plant 12 million acres this season, as of USDA’s March 31 estimate. Texas likely will account for 6 million of those acres, and it could climb by several hundred thousand acres due to good market and insurance prices.

High grain prices may have changed some producer’s minds, but the final decision will depend on how producers invested preparation dollars. But even with the high number

(Continued on page 16)



# ROUND-UP REVIEW

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May, 2021  
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## Executive Director's Report...

By: Bill Hyman

We are over halfway through the legislative session in Austin. Only a few bills are moving out of committees. Our Truth in Labeling bills (fake meat) have both moved out of the House and Senate committees. Hopefully, by the time you read this, we might be close to getting one or the other passed. So far, none of the anti-agriculture bills have moved out of committee and most appear to be dead in committee. The battle over the state budget, constitutional carry, write-in voting rules along with along with border security measures seem to be the bills getting the most attention and debate. With very few bills moving, the thing to watch carefully will be amendments that are attached to the bills that are close to being passed.

The state agencies are almost all requesting more funding but with the comp-

troller's forecast on the state budget for the next two years being on the conservative side there will not be enough funding for all of the requests. Governor Abbott has made it clear that he wants a balanced budget and that he will veto a budget that is not balanced, in other words "no deficit spending".

We are finally breaking out of the Covid-19 lockdown with several chapters having meetings. It has been great to see folks that have been secluded during the pandemic. In fact, it is reunion of sorts. The 2021 ICA Convention is set to convene on June 23-25 in San Marcos and we have a great group of speakers lined up. Please make plans to attend. The registration forms should be in the mail this week. Make plans to attend, bring the family and have fun.

ICA

## Chapter Happenings...

# Around The Lone Star State

### Colorado Valley Chapter Bybee awards 2021 scholarships

Colorado Valley Independent Cattlemen's Association (CVICA) is pleased to announce this year's scholarship winners. In partnership with the Faith P. and Charles L. Bybee Foundation and along with the Carl L. Wendler Family, the organization will

once again award \$2,000 scholarships to selected students from the three counties of Colorado, Fayette and Lee. CVICA Scholarship Chairman and Director, Anna Karisch, is pleased to advise that the four students receiving scholarships this year are Natalie Blackwell, Regan Lux, Shannen Novak and

(Continued on page 14)



Natalie Blackwell attends La Grange High School in Fayette County. She will be attending Texas A&M University and majoring in kinesiology. She received a CVICA scholarship.



CVICA scholarship recipient, Regan Lux attends Schulenburg High School in Fayette County. She will be attending Texas A&M University and majoring in animal science.



Shannen Novak is a senior at Flatonia High School in Fayette County and was awarded a CVICA scholarship. She will be attending Texas A&M University and majoring in recreation, parks and tourism science.



Philip Matocha attends La Grange High School in Fayette County. He will be attending Texas A&M University and majoring in aerospace engineering. He received a CVICA scholarship.



## President's Address...

By: Brad Cotton

### Howdy friends,

I hope all is well with everyone. Looks like we are back in that familiar place of waiting for rain and hoping the hay holds. As with many other things in life, about all we can do is offer up prayers.

I receive and read numerous publications every month, both through the mail and email. There are many useful articles and I find them to be informative. It is important, as ranchers and beef producers, we stay tuned in to what is happening in this crazy world we live in. We could all go hide out on the ranch and ignore the happenings but that will get us nowhere except out of business real fast. I visit with many ranchers and many don't seem to be interested in getting involved. Thankfully, there are a number of cattle organizations looking out for our interests in our local, state and national politics.

A couple of years ago there was legislation proposed to make it mandatory for cattle haulers to give cattle ample room to turn around, lay down and rest and who knows what else. I read an article this week reporting on legislation in Colorado. There is a group trying to make it illegal to AI cattle, do embryo work, bull soundness exams and pregnancy checks as this is invasive and inhumane to the cattle. Go figure! This is not made up stuff folks.

How about the ongoing national argument over the cattle haulers and the limit of time they are allowed to drive. Imagine transporting cattle from South Texas to Kansas and having to pull over a couple of times on the way. Talk about a train wreck. Most of you are aware of the fake meat and their efforts to piggyback on the term "beef" in their marketing. Groups across the country are working tirelessly to stop this from happening. Yes, they can wrap their garbage in a pretty package and try and convince the consumer it is a good product but we do not want it associated in any way with the beef we all work so hard to produce. How about the meat out day proposed by the governor of Colorado to try and get the folks of the state to go a day without meat which included the schools? Does anyone remember way back (two years) when government began pulling many common antibiotics off retail shelves?

A couple of weeks ago I bought a load of hay to get me through until my hay was ready. I notice an old, faded ICA sign on the rancher's gate and questioned him about his membership. He quickly responded he was a member for a few years but had let his membership lapse and wanted to know the benefits of being a member. The point of this article is to

(Continued on page 14)

## Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas

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## Checkoff...

(Continued from page 10)

From the BSE crises of the 1990s to the latest scare tactic activists use to discourage people from eating beef, checkoff funding fights to get accurate information about the beef industry out through contract partners like the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture (AFBFA).

For instance, in 2020, the AFBFA engaged with educators from the top 10 largest school districts in the U.S. through

livestream events with teachers from 800 school districts. They also had an opportunity to attend On the Farm STEM virtual experiences like touring a feedyard virtually or a meat lab. AFBFA provided beef resources and hosted a workshop to help teachers implement those materials in their classrooms. Surveys after these events showed a 54% increase in folks who responded they positives strongly outweigh the negatives of how cattle are raised.

It's a never-ending battle to correct misinforma-

tion about beef and raising cattle.

"If you remember back a couple of years ago, when studies and some papers were written about red meat as a carcinogen and all of a sudden that story blew up in the media?" Brown asks. "It was probably the biggest story in the world for a 24-hour period and then it just disappeared. The issues management side of TBC and Cattleman's Beef Board and the beef checkoff in general, monitored the situation and acted promptly to address misinformation.

Nearly all of it is behind the scenes. No one ever knows it happens. That is just one more big win for checkoff dollars and it's so important in today's world."

**5. Helping producers be better advocates and BQA certified.** While much of the checkoff's work is done in the world of consumers, some very valuable dollars

are spent directly helping producers. One program is the Masters of Beef Advocacy program, which trains producers to interact with the media, answer consumer questions about ranching, beef and so much more. Since 2009, more than 11,000 producers have completed the Masters of Beef Advocacy program.

As well, checkoff dollars support producer certification in Beef Quality Assurance (BQA). From teaching injection site techniques to avoid blemishes in the steak on somebody's plate to biosecurity plans, BQA has been an industry changing program to help increase beef demand by

(Continued on page 15)

## Happenings...

(Continued from page 12)

Philip Matocha.

CVICA is one of many chapters in Texas. The chapter participates in three counties (Colorado, Fayette and Lee) and awards scholarships to graduating high school seniors. The chapter also supports the Fayette County All-Breed Jr. Commercial Heifer Show & Sale. For further information, please review our website, [www.coloradovalleycica.com](http://www.coloradovalleycica.com).

**Guada-Coma Chapter to host meeting**

All are invited to the Guada-Coma chapter meeting on May 17, 2021 at Seguin Cattle Company. A BBQ meal will be served

with all the trimmings. Ladies, we do ask that you bring desserts and we would welcome door prizes.

At this gathering, we will be honoring our scholarship recipients. We ask that you follow all Covid protocols.

The Spring Fling scheduled for May has been scrapped. Our fundraiser and Christmas party is scheduled for Dec. 5th at the Red Barn.

Please RSVP for the May meeting by May 12. Call or text Carilyn at 210-827-1696 or Allan Bode at 830-305-1325 to reserve your seats.

**South Central Texas ICA holds meeting**

The South Central Texas ICA (SCTICA) chapter met on April 6, 2021, at the Wilson County Expo & Community Center for their annual meeting which had been delayed by Covid. Close to 80 guests attended to hear Dr. Joe Paschal share his ideas on "Spring Cleaning Your Herd - Preparing for the Market."

He not only reviewed what to do to get your cattle ready for market but shared why we do those things. His topic gave new insight to some regarding why things are done rather than just "do this." Dickie Jackson and Weldon Riggs helped give out door prizes and Dr. Paschal added to the prizes by giving away two pairs of tickets to the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course.

Riggs, vice president, gave an update on scholar-

ships this year and noted at least two scholarships will be presented.

Jackson, representing the chapter's nominating committee, gave the names of directors voted on for three more years on the board and for officers to be in position for another year. Both motions passed by acclamation. Directors voted on for another term are as follows: Dickie Jackson, Gus Gonzalez, Brenda Moore and Ronnie Moore. The officers are as follows: Laurie Miller, president; Weldon Riggs, vice-president; Brenda Moore, treasurer; and Paula Riggs, secretary.

Bill Hyman, CEO of ICA, gave a report and ended by answering the questions of how our beef market is being "threatened" by companies producing products from plants. President Miller added recently she saw an advertisement showing how plants were now copying the taste and flavor of an egg.

The attendees were also able to meet Samantha Shannon, the new Agri-life Extension Agent for Wilson County, focusing on agriculture. She is from this area and knows many in the county. She said she was glad "to be home."

The next SCTICA meeting will most likely be in July and the October meeting will be the annual SCTICA Windy Miller Memorial Team Roping to be held at Cowboy Fellowship in Jourdan on Oct. 2, 2021.

## Address...

(Continued from page 12)

answer the question "why should I join a cattle organization?" or "how does being a member benefit me?" Sadly enough, issues like those mentioned earlier and countless others won't go away but will only get worse. Someone has to be a voice for the ranchers and rural Americans. Some of you may believe our elected officials are smart enough to work through this without any outside influence. Yeah right! Have you seen the news lately? Did you see the results from our Great State of Texas in the last election? We are not as far removed from the craziness as some might believe. At the end of the day it takes money and more importantly, groups with a sizeable base and a common interest to keep these things in check. There are numerous groups locally, statewide and nationally there to assist you and all are in need of members. Just reach out to one and they would greatly appreciate it.

On a happier note, here is hoping we receive much needed rain and cattle prices continue to move upward just as the demand for our great beef. God bless, take care and stay safe.



The CVICA chapter also prepared hamburgers for the Fayette County Junior Livestock Show (FCJLS) on March 27, at the La Grange Fairgrounds. Ron Denham coordinated the event with the FCJLS. Daryl McCarty and his son, Cody, cooked the hamburger patties. The following members were on hand to assist: Ron Denham and his granddaughter, Cambree, Dr. James Tiemann, DVM, Tara Van Wart, Horace Drisdale, Jeff Gau, Les Mallory, David Karisch and Steve Janda.



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# Feral pig baits showing promise

By Kenneth Gautreaux, Louisiana State University Extension

Feral pigs are a nuisance in many areas of the country, causing billions of dollars in damage. Scientists with the LSU AgCenter and the LSU Department of Chemistry are working on a bait and delivery system to help reduce the population of feral hogs.

Glen Gentry, LSU AgCenter feral hog specialist, and John Pojman, a chemistry professor, have been working for more than two years on perfecting a bait and delivery system that minimizes the risk to off-target animals.

The researchers had to look at several factors when developing the bait. One involved choosing a formula that was more attractive to hogs based on features such as smell and texture than other animals such as deer or raccoons.

“It took us two years to determine what we were going to use in our matrix,” Gentry said. “We landed on dehydrated fish. But that’s not before we went through things such as maple syrup or marshmallows.”

The researchers knew that sodium nitrite, a common food additive in products such as bacon is lethal to pigs at fairly low levels. The problem with sodium nitrite is it breaks down when it comes into contact with moisture, giving off a chlorine-like odor that pigs find unappealing.

At first, encapsulating the sodium nitrite, similar to a gel cap, was looked at. But Pojman and his doctoral students came up with a simpler solution.

“All we had to do was raise the pH,” Pojman said. “Using some basic general chemistry and putting some additives to keep the

pH high enough, we can make it so it is stable.”

Pojman’s doctoral students, Anthony Mai and Anowar Khan, helped develop the bait, which is round and a soft texture. When dropped from a height of approximately 4 feet, it will bounce nearly a foot. Because it is soft, the pigs can swallow it whole, leaving no crumbs for any scavengers that might come along.

Because of the unique metabolism of feral hogs, the sodium nitrite is more effective on the hogs and poses a low risk to humans.

“If the hogs eat a sub-lethal dose, and a hunter were to kill it and eat it,” Pojman said, “there’s no danger to them. And also, if a hog does die somewhere and predators or scavengers find it, they would not be contaminated with it.”

Even with these measures, Gentry doesn’t expect feral pigs to disappear from the landscape.

“People are concerned when some kind of new control method that’s going to come on, the pigs are going to disappear,” Gentry said. “We’ve been poisoning rats for 50 to 60 years. We still have rats.”

Another part of the solution involves delivering the baits when hogs are

actively feeding. Gentry has a prototype that can deliver up to 20 baits when it is activated.

The system has a live feed camera installed, and a person can monitor from their home or their phone.

If the camera sends an alert and shows pigs are present and feeding, baits can be released remotely. This feature would also help eliminate other species from being fed the baits.

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### Checkoff...

(Continued from page 14)

showing producers how management on the ranch can affect the final product in so many ways. By following best management practices, BQA programs can also help producers capture more value in their cattle and show consumers that cattle producers value animal welfare, food safety and other qualities that solidify consumer confidence in beef.

### Crops...

(Continued from page 11)

of acres, Robinson said the cotton supplies will likely be tight after this season due to drought, international demand and low car-

ryover stocks from last season.

Robinson doesn't expect more than 16 million bales of U.S. production in 2021, which he said would support good prices into summer and could push

them further upward if crop abandonment numbers are high throughout the cotton-producing

southwest U.S. Additional uncertainty surrounds an ongoing geopolitical problem unfolding

with China, as retailers have begun boycotting cotton produced in the Xinjiang province because of the nation's treatment of the Uyghur population. Xinjiang produces 85% of Chinese cotton, and it is unclear whether the boycotts will help U.S. cotton or spiral into another trade war. "There is above-average uncertainty this season," Robinson said. "The stories to follow will be drought and the economic recovery and whether it continues to remove some of the hesitation Ameri-

cans have when it comes to discretionary spending. The China situation is a wild card."

AgriLife Extension district reporters compiled the following summaries:

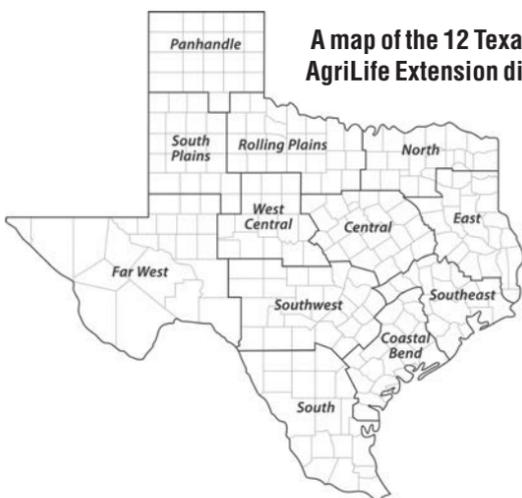
**CENTRAL:** Most areas remained dry, but some rainfall was reported. Cotton plantings were mostly completed, but seeds went into dry topsoil. Cereal crops were flowering, but conditions declined due to drought. Small amounts of rainfall received could help germinate dry-planted cotton and aid cereal crop filling. Bermuda grass was starting to green up. Corn and sorghum crops were in decent condition overall. Foliar fungicides were applied on the best wheat fields to control leaf and stripe rust and Septoria. Forages were not recovering very quickly from livestock grazing due to inadequate soil moisture conditions. Grazing was still available on winter-planted oats. A very small number of corn acres were replanted due to dry soil conditions and inadequate crop development. Livestock were in good shape. Stock tanks continued to decline. The weather outlook called for a cool week with significant precipitation.

**ROLLING PLAINS:** Areas in the district received cooler weather and much-needed rain, with some areas receiving up to 2.5 inches. Livestock were in fair condition as supplemental feeding continued in areas with limited grazing. Farmers continued to prepare cotton fields for planting.

**COASTAL BEND:** A little rain was received in some areas, but it was not significant enough to change drought conditions. Some corn fields were moisture stressed. Cotton was still being planted, and plantings were nearing completion. Emergence was slow but good due to cooler soil temperatures and mostly overcast skies. Producers were spraying for weeds in cotton. Rice producers were nearly done planting, and a majority of fields were up and being flushed. Livestock producers were spraying for weeds in pastures. Lack of soil moisture for warm-season forages was a major concern. Overgrazing was prevalent, and herd management decisions were expected soon. Livestock water tank levels continued to worsen. Livestock mar-

(Continued on page 17)

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



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## Crops...

(Continued from page 16)

kets were holding steady for now.

**EAST:** Much of the district received rainfall with some areas becoming saturated. Producers were waiting for fields and pastures to dry out before fieldwork resumes. Smith County reported below-normal rainfall numbers so far this year. Pasture and rangeland conditions were fair to good across the district. Subsoil and topsoil conditions were adequate. Cooler temperatures at night slowed forage and grass growth. Cattle prices dropped from the previous week. Livestock were in fair to good condition with some supplemental feeding taking place. Large horn fly numbers were reported. Feral hog activity increased across the district.

**SOUTH PLAINS:** Slow, drizzling rain was reported over two days. Rainfall amounts ranged from 0.4-1.2 inches across the district. The rainfall kept farmers from working in fields but was a great time for moisture with planting around the corner. Farmers were fertilizing and spraying in preparation for spring planting before the rains. Recent moisture helped winter wheat that was trying to head out. The recent moisture also gave cattle producers a chance to graze winter wheat. Cattle conditions improved with winter wheat grazing. Cattle were in good condition.

**PANHANDLE:** Northeastern parts of the district reported short to adequate topsoil while all other areas were short to very short on moisture. Pasture and rangeland conditions were poor to good. Winter wheat conditions were very poor to good. Light showers and cooler weather in northeastern areas halted all farming activity. Drizzling moisture was reported in northwestern areas. Producers were irrigating and hoping for rain in drier areas. Fieldwork continued as planting was expected to start in the next 10 days. Irrigated wheat looked good, with many fields getting close to the flag leaf stage. However, there was a good chance of freezing temperatures reaching the mid-20s, which could affect the wheat crop.

**NORTH:** Topsoil moisture throughout the district ranged from short to adequate. Temperatures were cooler, with colder temperatures in the forecast and a concern for some producers. Parts of the district received some much-needed rainfall as small systems moved through earlier in the week and widespread significant rainfall was reported across most of the district later in the week. Many areas received 1-2 inches of rainfall. Wheat was doing well and heading out. Corn was doing well. The rain and sunshine produced noticeable differences in plant life in a few days span. Livestock were in good condition. Spring pastures were doing well, and spring-born calves looked nice. Horn flies were a problem.

**FAR WEST:** Daytime temperatures reached 90 degrees at the beginning of the week but gave way to daytime lows in the 50s. Nighttime temperatures were in the low 40s. A very fine light mist delivered trace amounts of moisture. High winds were keeping conditions dry, and wildfires were a concern. Colder temperatures slowed the growth of the corn, sorghum and watermelons. Wheat was expected to be fine as temperatures never got close to freezing. Irrigated wheat fields were cut for round bales of hay. Pecan producers began watering their orchards again.

(Continued on page 19)



# Livestock Sales Calendar

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



**MAY 8 Jordan Cattle Auction May Replacement Female Sale, San Saba, TX**

**Weekly Sales at 11:00 AM**  
Mason on Monday & San Saba on Thursday

**May Replacement Female Sale**  
Saturday, May 8 at 10:00 Am | San Saba

**June Replacement Female Sale**  
Saturday, June 5 at 10:00 Am | San Saba  
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For details on the above sale or online viewing/bidding call or visit our website.

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**MAY 8 Mid-Coast Santa Gertrudis Spring Sale, Brenham, TX**

**MAY 13 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Stocker & Feeder Sale, San Saba, TX**

**MAY 15 Swinging B & Friends Sale, Salado, TX**

**MAY 22 2nd Annual Get Back To Grass Sale, Henderson, TX**

**MAY 22 Divas in Red Brangus Sale, College Station, TX**

**JUN 5 Jordan Cattle Auction Replacement Female Sale, San Saba, 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 14 Union Commission Company Special Stocker Feeder Sale, Hondo, TX**

**JUN 17 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Stocker & Feeder Sale, San Saba, TX**

**JUN 26 Southern Tradition XXI Beefmaster Sale, Savannah, TN**

**JULY 8 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Stocker-Feeder & Premium Weaned Sale, San Saba, TX**

**JULY 10 San Gabriel Beefmasters Complete Dispersal, Rockdale, TX**

**JULY 24 Jordan Cattle Auction Replacement Female Sale, San Saba, TX**

**AUG 5 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Stocker & Feeder Sale, San Saba, TX**

**AUG 7 J&T Farms Beefmaster Sale, Lexington, TN**

**AUG 21 Emmons Ranch Beefmaster Production Sale, Bryan, TX**

**AUG 28 Jordan Cattle Auction Early Fall Replacement Sale, San Saba, TX**

**SEP 2 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Stocker-Feeder & Premium Weaned Sale, San Saba, TX**

**SEP 24-25 Flint Hills Classic Beefmaster Female & Bull Sale, Paxico, KS**

**SEP 25 Jordan Cattle Auction Fall Replacement Female Sale, San Saba, TX**

**SEP 25 Synergy SimGenetics Sale, Giddings, TX**

**OCT 7 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Stocker & Feeder Sale, San Saba, TX**

**OCT 7 Dudley Brothers Production Sale, Comanche, TX**

**OCT 14 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Bull Offering, San Saba, TX**

**OCT 16 Beef on Forage Beefmaster Bull Sale, Brenham, TX**

**OCT 16 Carr & Others Fall Beefmaster Sale, Floresville, TX**

**OCT 16 Strait-Hefte Tried & True Santa Gertrudis Production Sale, Carrizo Springs, TX**

**OCT 20 Texas Hereford Association Fall Classic Sale, Buffalo, TX**

**OCT 21 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Female Offering, San Saba, TX**

**OCT 30 South Texas Hereford Association Sale, Beeville, TX**

**OCT 30 Jordan Cattle Auction October Replacement Female Sale, San Saba, TX**

**NOV 4 Jordan Cattle Auction Stocker-Feeder & Premium Weaned Sale, San Saba, TX**

**NOV 4 Jordan Cattle Auction special Bull Offering, San Saba, TX**

**NOV 10 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Bull Offering, San Saba, TX**

**NOV 10 Barber Ranch Annual Hereford Bull Sale, San Saba, TX**

**NOV 18 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Bull Offering, San Saba, TX**

**NOV 20 Perez Cattle Company Hereford Production Sale, Navasota, TX**

**NOV 20 Collier Farms Performance Tested Bull Sale, Brenham, TX**

**DEC 3 Lone Star Angus Alliance Bull Sale, Hallettsville, TX**

**DEC 4 Jordan Cattle Auction December Replacement Female Sale, San Saba, TX**

**DEC 9 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Stocker & Feeder Sale, San Saba, TX**

**DEC 13 Jordan Cattle Auction Special Stocker & Feeder Sale, San Saba, TX**

**JAN 8 Live Oak Beefmaster Breeders Association Bull Sale, Three Rivers, TX**

**FEB 12 San Antonio Livestock Show & Rodeo Beefmaster Subasta, San Antonio, TX**

**FEB 16 San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo All Breed Bull & Female Sale, San Antonio, TX**

**MAR 19 Live Oak Beefmaster Breeders Association Spring Sale, Three Rivers, TX**

## Get the most...

(Continued from page 1)

as implants and ionophores," Beck said. "The value of such technologies tends to increase whenever the value of gain increases. Evaluate supplementation programs being used. If the added cost of gain is less than the added value of gain, then that is a good economic decision."

Fact sheets detailing research-based information about retained ownership, determining break-even costs, and cattle management practices and technologies are available online through OSU Extension.

Cattle producers looking to retain ownership and graze some or all of their livestock through the summer should determine if they want to take advantage of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Livestock Risk Protection insurance program, said Scott Clawson, OSU Extension area

agricultural economist.

"LRP insurance is a per-head product and acts as a price floor," Clawson said. "Producers can buy the insurance at different levels of coverage. It's a relatively quick and easy management option, though producers always need to consider how a policy works in conjunction with their other risk management strategies."

The program's insurable level is up to 6,000 head per endorsement and a total of 12,000 head per year. Length of coverage can vary from 13 to 52 weeks, though the number of weeks is set by the USDA depending on the endorsement selected. For example, a producer might select the 17-week option, the 26-week option or the 43-week option.

Coverage levels vary from 70% to 100% of the expected ending value of the livestock. LRP insurance can be purchased through a livestock insurance agent.

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**INDEX:**

Employment Wanted.....1	Insurance.....18
Help Wanted.....2	Livestock Supplies.....19
Cattle.....3	Tack.....20
Sheep, Goats.....4	Pasture For Lease.....21
Horses, Mules.....5	Pasture Wanted.....22
Misc. Livestock.....6	Personal.....23
Exotic Game.....7	Photography.....24
Livestock Wanted.....8	Schools/Education.....25
Livestock Order Buyers.....9	Auctioneers/Sale Mgmt.....26
Buildings.....10	Services.....27
Business Opportunities.....11	Trucks/Trailers.....28
Dogs.....12	Transportation.....29
Equipment.....13	Semen/Embryos.....30
Equipment Wanted.....14	Real Estate For Sale.....31
Fencing.....15	Real Estate For Lease/Rent.....32
Financial.....16	Real Estate Wanted.....33
Hay/Feed/Seed.....17	Fuels.....34

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# NCBA delivers Introduction of House Companion HAULS Act

Washington -- The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) endorsed the Haulers of Agriculture and Livestock Safety (HAULS) Act of 2021. Introduced in the House by Rep. Rose (R-TN-06) and Rep. Soto (D-FL-09), the bipartisan bill would deliver much-needed flexibility for livestock haulers. The House bill introduced this week is a companion to S.792, which NCBA worked to get introduced in the Senate last month.

"In times of crisis and in times of normalcy, livestock haulers are a critical part of the supply chain keeping grocery stores stocked with beef. The full year of disruption due to COVID-19 has only underscored the need for further flexibility in livestock hauling regulations," said NCBA President Jerry Bohn. "NCBA is encouraged by the bipartisan and bicameral support for this commonsense legislation. Livestock haulers don't need more regulatory hoops to jump through — they need the freedom and flexibility to continue transporting animals safely and humanely."

Current hours-of-service (HOS) rules allow for 11 hours of drive time, 14

hours of on-duty time, and then require 10 consecutive hours of rest. When transporting livestock, there is a real need for further flexibility beyond the current hours-of-service. Unlike drivers moving consumer goods, livestock haulers cannot simply idle or unload their trucks when drive time hours run out without jeopardizing animal health and welfare.

"Transporting live animals is not like transporting a truckload of toilet paper — and nobody knows that better than livestock haulers. When one-size-fits-all government mandates fail to account for expertise on the ground, haulers are put in the impossible position of either complying with regulations or doing what they know is best to humanely and safely complete their haul. The HAULS Act represents a step in the right direction — an extension of a current ag exemption to existing hours-of-service regulations that preserves animal welfare as well as safety on our roads, while also making sure producers can keep our grocery stores stocked with beef," said NCBA Executive Director of Government Affairs Allison Rivera.

**Background**

This legislation is the latest of many steps NCBA has taken to win greater flexibility for livestock haulers and producers. Since the pandemic began, NCBA has successfully fought every month for a renewed emergency declaration which provides an exemption from hours-of-service for livestock haulers, while also working with Congress to maintain the ELD delay for livestock haulers until Sept. 30, 2021.

NCBA is also working with Congress to ensure that any infrastructure spending package reflects the unique needs of rural communities and agricultural producers.

The HAULS Act would

add a 150 air-mile radius exemption under HOS regulations to the backend of hauls for those transporting livestock or agricultural commodities. This legislation also eliminates the seasonal harvest requirements

for the agriculture HOS exemption (making the exemption available year-round in all states), and updates and clarifies the definition of an agricultural commodity.

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## Crops...

(Continued from page 17)

Pastures continued to decline due to severe drought. The cattle were still in overall good condition due to supplemental feed and ranchers avoiding overstocking. However, many producers were starting to ship calves early. Producers continued to work lambs and kid goats. Water was an issue in the Rio Grande Valley. Crops, including alfalfa, oats, wheat and some pecan orchards, were suffering as temperatures continued to rise and less water was coming down the main irrigation canal. Low-quality well water and effluent water were the moisture sources in a majority of the Valley. Some farms without wells had not received any rainfall or irrigation water this year. Those who received water pre-irrigated row crop fields and pecan orchards. Rio Grande Project Water was expected to be released in late-May, which will put water in the El Paso area around the first of June.

**WEST CENTRAL:** Rain showers and thunderstorms occurred in isolated areas. Some areas received up to 2 inches, while others received only traces of rain. Drought conditions continued through much of the district. Rangeland and pasture conditions were mostly good as spring green-up of warm-season grasses and forages continued. Winter wheat progressed rapidly and was in mostly good condition. Forage and grain sorghum crops were planted. Some

spring cattle work began. Producers were selling cull animals, and continued supplementing diets with feed and hay.

**SOUTHEAST:** Some rainfall was received, but conditions were still abnormally dry. Cooler temperatures arrived mid-week. Rice planting was progressing, but some areas received enough rain to postpone planting for a couple of days. Rains were expected to help pastures that were in bad shape. Livestock were in good overall condition, and grasses were growing well. Rangeland and pasture ratings were fair to very poor, with good ratings being the most common. Soil moisture levels ranged from adequate to surplus, with adequate levels being the most common.

**SOUTHWEST:** Scattered showers were reported but overall dry conditions continued across the district. Rangeland and pastures continued to decline, and dryland crops were beginning to show moisture stress. Crops under irrigation looked good. Most corn, sorghum and cotton were planted. Cattle markets remained steady while sheep and goat markets were steady to high. Producers were still supplementing livestock and wildlife diets.

**SOUTH:** Conditions were very hot and dry. Temperatures were milder in Frio County with some light drizzle reported. Jim Hogg County reported some rainfall improved crop and pasture conditions slightly. Hidalgo County reported up to half

an inch of rainfall, and Brooks County reported that areas received 0.5-2 inches. Promising forecasts called for rainfall in some areas of the district. Strawberries were being harvested and doing well. Winter forages were being rolled up into bales, and hay producers were watering and preparing for their first major cutting. Wheat was cut and baled, and the rest of the wheat crop was starting to mature and turn color. Corn fields were under irrigation. Crop conditions continued to decline. Cotton planting continued. Pasture and rangeland conditions were poor, and livestock supplemental feeding continued. Pictures of deer at feeders showed very poor body conditions, and cattle were receiving heavy supplemental feed, including hay and prickly pear. Cactus were blooming and about to put on their fruit. Beef cattle conditions were declining, and sale volumes were increasing. Producers were culling deeper and weaning calves early. Local auctions were selling 2,000-2,500 head of cattle per week. Prices on feeder cattle and cull cows were steady to slightly higher. Feed prices increased due to demand. Hay prices were \$100 per round bale. Summer grasses were emerging in pastures with enough moisture. Irrigated pastures were cut, baled and fertilized. Fire threat increased as standing grasses dried out. Crops irrigated by the local water canal system looked good. Onion harvesting continued.

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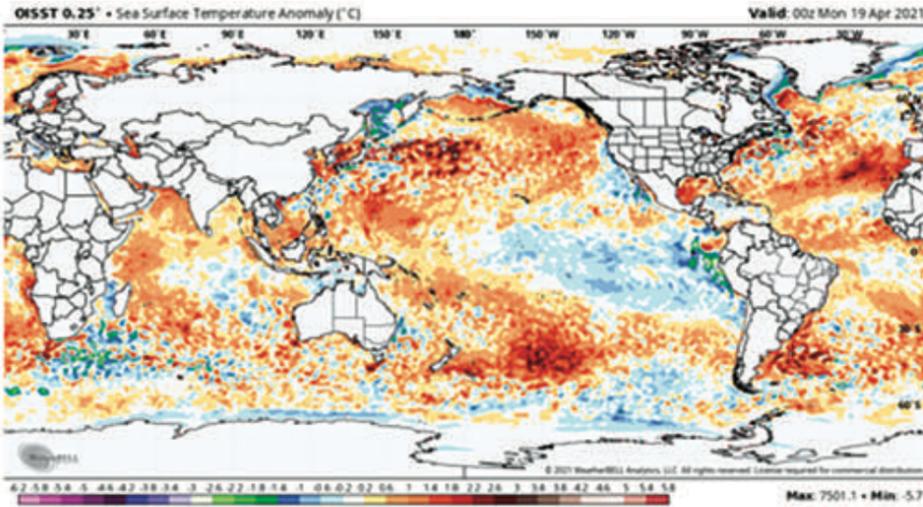


# WEATHER WISE

By Brian Bledsoe

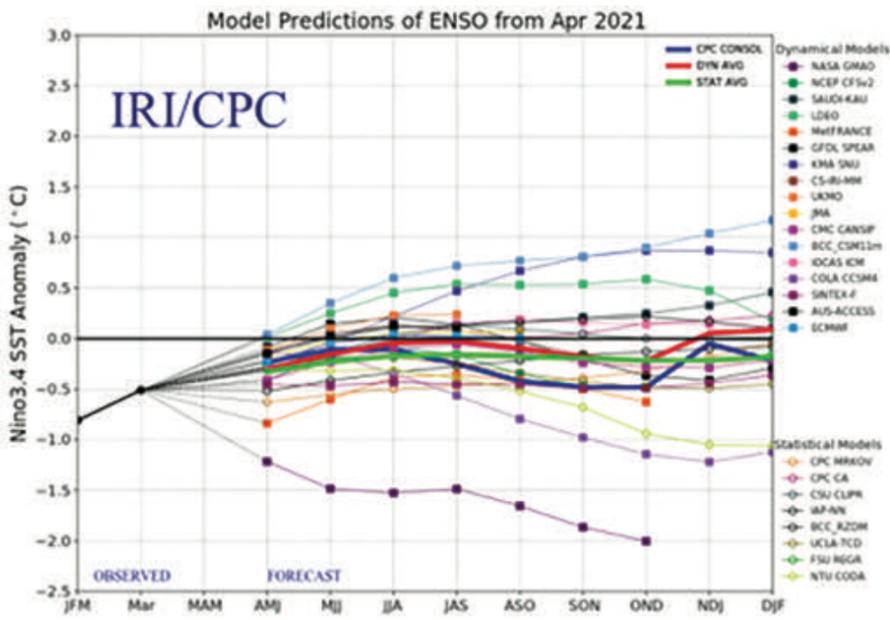
## Will La Niña redevelop this fall?

My article last month talked about the current La Niña and how it was likely in the dying stages. How is that trend going this month?

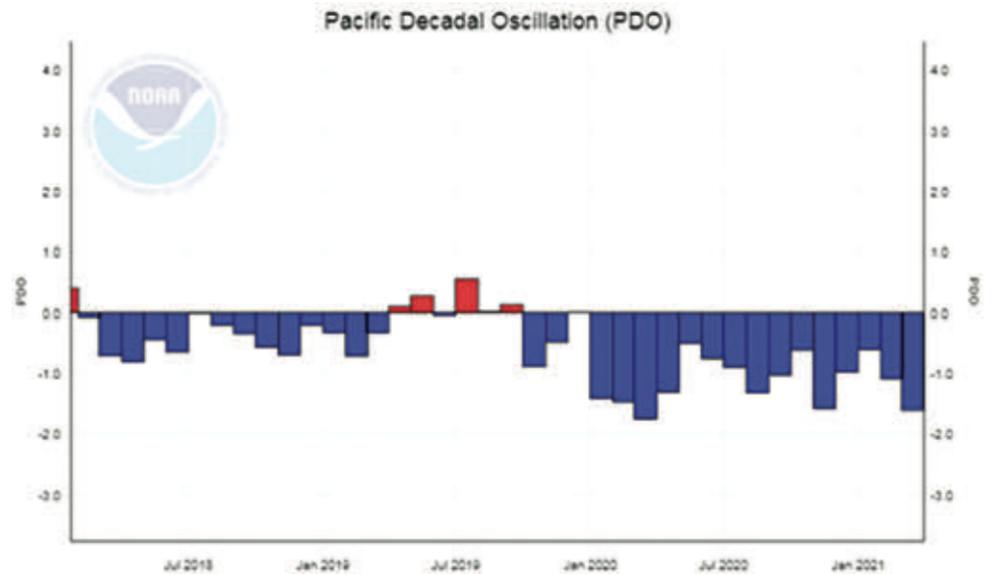


There is still some cooler than average water off the west coast of South America, but it isn't pronounced at all farther to the west. As I said last month, the water beneath the surface was warming, too. That trend has continued. So while this event technically isn't completely done, it isn't flexing enough to have a big impact. While this may seem like a good trend, I am also worried about what happens later in 2021 that could allow La Niña to come back.

As of right now, the computer models are in the "spring unpredictability period", which keeps most of the ENSO models in check with their accuracy. The chart below shows the latest model forecasts for the next several months.

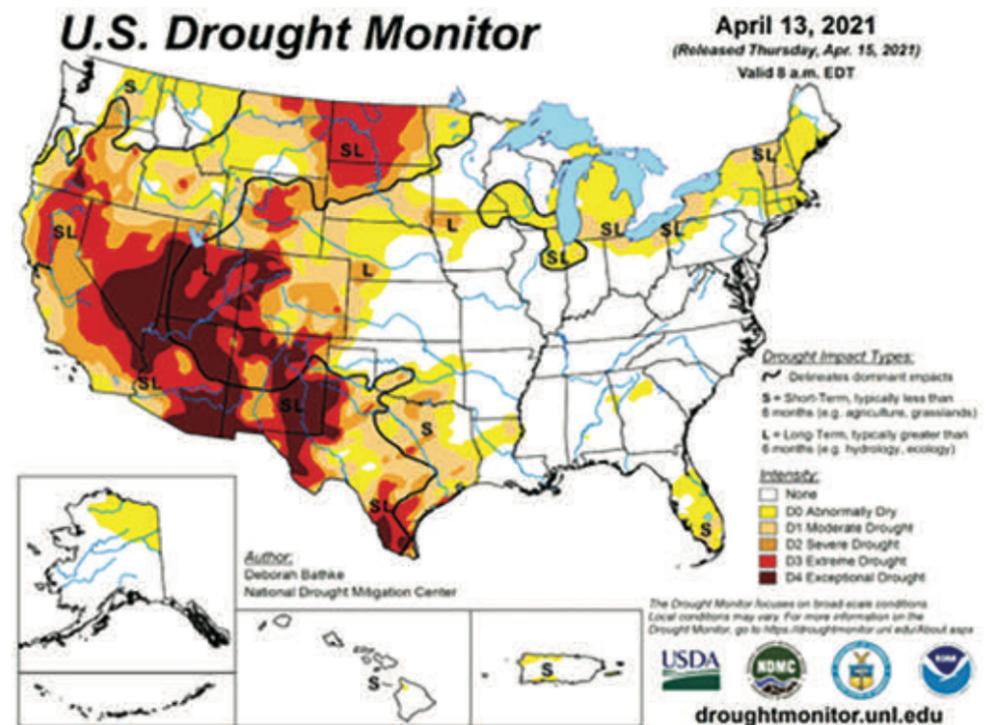


Most of the colored lines are at or below the "zero line", which indicates the chance of La Niña possibly redeveloping later this year. While that is far from certain, there are a few other things that have me interested. The Pacific Decadal Oscillation is quite negative right now, and has been negative for quite some time. See the image below.



The PDO has essentially been negative since December of 2019, and at times, it has been quite negative. Whenever the PDO is negative, the chances for La Niña development and continuation are better than when it is positive. So while this current La Niña event has weakened considerably and almost disappeared, it is possible that it may come back later this year.

Another thing...the Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation is quite positive right now. For years now, I have told you that drought frequency is enhanced for those in the Plains and The Southwest whenever the AMO is negative and the PDO is positive. See the map below;



Right now, our current phase is in the lower right hand part of the above graphic. Where is drought currently most prevalent?

While it isn't a perfect match, it is very close for many areas. At this point, I remain concerned about areas of West and Southwest Texas, and all of the southwestern states. The storm track has not been kind to those areas, and a recent increase in wind and warmth does not bode well going forward. Drought creep is very evident for some areas a bit farther east, and those that border those extremely dry areas should remain concerned and vigilant.

If you have any questions or comments, please drop me an email... Brian Bledsoe, [brianbledsoewx@gmail.com](mailto:brianbledsoewx@gmail.com)

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