

# BEEF BUSINESS



Compiled by Julie Mais, Angus Journal editor

*July's "Beef Business" brings you an invasive tick species, good news for hauling livestock and rural electric customers, and an update on the current Farm Bill.*

## New exotic Asian tick species identified in U.S.

The *Haemaphysalis longicornis* (longhorned tick), an exotic East Asian tick, has been confirmed in four states (Arkansas, New Jersey, Virginia and West Virginia). The tick is known to carry a wide variety of pathogens and has many hosts.

The current host list from this introduction includes: dogs, cattle, goats, sheep, white-tailed deer, opossums, raccoons and horses. No longhorned ticks have been recorded feeding on people in the U.S.

Source: *Texas Animal Health Commission*

## Transporting Livestock Across America Safely Act

The *Transporting Livestock Across America Safely Act* was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives June 13, 2018.

According to National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) President Kevin Kester, this is an important step toward fixing the current Hours of Service rules for livestock haulers.

The House version of the act is the companion legislation to the Senate version of the bill, introduced by Senator Ben Sasse (R-NE).

Source: *NCBA*

## \$309 million invested in rural electric utilities

Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett announced June 7, 2018, that the USDA is investing \$309 million in 16 projects to improve rural electric infrastructure in 12 states.

"Robust, modern infrastructure is a foundation for quality of life and economic opportunity no matter the zip code you live in," Hazlett said.

The loans are made through USDA's Electric Infrastructure Loan and Loan Guarantee program. It helps finance generation, transmission and distribution projects; system improvements; and energy conservation projects in communities with 10,000 or fewer residents.

The investments will build or improve 1,660 miles of electric line serving rural homes, farms and businesses. USDA is funding infrastructure improvements for utilities in Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina, New Mexico, Ohio, South Dakota and Washington.

Funding for these loans was included in the FY 2018 omnibus

spending bill. It allocates significant resources for infrastructure investments, including \$6.25 billion to USDA for electric loans. The measure also directs Secretary Perdue to make investments in rural communities with the greatest infrastructure needs.

Source: *USDA*

## Senate Ag Committee passes farm bill

The Senate Agriculture Committee passed the 2018 Farm Bill on June 13 by a 20-1 vote. It will now go to the full Senate for a vote for which a date is not yet set.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has voiced his intentions of having the bill on the Senate floor before the July 4 recess, according to John Kran, national lobbyist with Michigan Farm Bureau.

Kran says the Senate bill continues much of the key programming agriculture has depended on since the 2014 Farm Bill. It also makes additional improvements to the dairy program, maintains sugar policy, allows for a new animal disease preparedness program, and guarantees future funding for programs critical to agricultural exports.

Source: *Michigan Farm Bureau*

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