

# BEEF BUSINESS



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November's "Beef Business" brings you information on Canada and U.S. trade agreements, USDA animal traceability and North Carolina ag losses.

## Canada and U.S. trade agreements

After more than a year of negotiations, the U.S. has reached an agreement with Canada and Mexico on a new trade pact, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). This takes the place of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

This new agreement will improve access to Canada's dairy market, strengthen intellectual property provisions, and rein in rules of origin for auto production. However, lawmakers from all three countries will have to approve the agreement and U.S. Congress probably won't vote on it until 2019.

Source: National Farmers Union.

## USDA outlines animal traceability

The USDA announced four overarching goals for advancing animal disease traceability to protect the long-term health, marketability and economic viability of the U.S. livestock industry, which are:

1. Advance the electronic sharing of data among federal and state animal health officials, veterinarians and industry; including sharing basic animal disease traceability data with the federal animal health events repository (AHER).
2. Use electronic ID tags for animals requiring individual

identification to make the transmission of data even more efficient;

3. Enhance the ability to track animals from birth to slaughter through a system that allows tracking data points to be connected; and
4. Elevate the discussion with states and industry to work toward a system where animal health certificates are electronically transmitted from private veterinarians to state animal health officials.

These goals reflect the core themes resulting from a State and Federal Animal Disease Traceability Working Group that developed 14 key points for advancing traceability. They are also in keeping with feedback the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) received at stakeholder meetings held across the country to hear from industry and producers directly.

The USDA will not dictate the use of a specific tag technology. Producers will have the ability to decide what works best for their operations. Not only will electronic ID allow animals to move more quickly through ports, markets and sales, it will also help ensure rapid response when a disease event strikes.

Source: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA).

## North Carolina ag losses estimated over \$1.1 billion

Initial estimates for crop damage and livestock losses to North Carolina's agricultural industry are expected to be over \$1.1 billion, based on Hurricane Florence assessments.

"We knew the losses would be significant because it was harvest time for so many of our major crops and the storm hit our top six agricultural counties especially hard," says Steve Troxler, agriculture commissioner.

Estimates by crop:

- Row crop: \$986.6 million
- Forestry: \$69.6 million
- Green industry: \$30 million
- Vegetable and horticulture crop: \$26.8 million
- Livestock, poultry and aquaculture: \$23.1 million (4.1 million poultry and 5,500 hogs)

The estimates were based on the percentage of crops still in the field in the 35 most highly impacted counties. The calculations also looked at a five-year average for crop production and the prices of commodities. Assessment information from the department's regional agronomists, North Carolina State University agents and specialists, the USDA's Farm Service Agency, the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service and commodity associations were used to develop estimates.

Source: North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 