



Beef Business

► A look at current events affecting the cattle industry

USDA approves instrument systems for marbling scores

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Livestock and Seed (LS) Program announced approval of two image-based instrument grading systems for the determination of beef carcass marbling scores for use in the evaluation of official USDA Quality Grades for carcass beef.

The two instruments approved are the VBS2000 (E+V Technology, Oranienburg, Germany) and the Computer Vision System [Research Management Systems (RMS), Fort Collins, Colo.]. The systems were found appropriate for objectively predicting marbling scores accurately and precisely for use in the evaluation of beef carcasses for quality grade, certification programs and carcass data information programs.

Both systems were previously approved for the assessment of USDA yield grades in addition to another RMS system that utilized a prediction algorithm developed by

National Beef Packing Co. of Kansas City, Mo.

Although these systems have been approved, their use in the official grading process is contingent upon users having a written plan approved by the LS Program to verify the instrument's ongoing, in-plant operational accuracy as outlined in Phase III of the approval procedures for yield grading and PRIME II requirements for instrument marbling evaluation.

For further information on instrument systems for beef carcass evaluation, contact Martin O'Connor at martin.oconnor@usda.gov or at (202) 720-4486. The standards for the instrument grading of beef carcasses may be found at www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/lst-st.htm.

Columbia, Peru open border to U.S. beef

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns and U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab announced early November actions by

Colombia and Peru to lift their bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)-related bans on U.S. beef and beef product imports.

"We are very pleased to see the Peruvian and Colombian markets reopened to U.S. beef and beef products," Johanns said. "We look to other trading partners to similarly make trade decisions in accordance with science-based international standards," Ambassador Schwab said.

In 2003, the United States exported a combined total of more than \$4 million worth of beef and beef products to Colombia and Peru. The reopening of these two markets restores two-thirds of the market access for U.S. beef and beef products in South America, according to USDA.

Researchers measure cattle sweat rate

Using a device resembling an electric razor, University of Missouri (MU) researchers are measuring sweat rate in cattle in search of ways to help producers overcome heat stress in their herds.

According to an MU release, heat stress can be a major factor in limiting cattle growth and reproduction. Don Spiers, associate professor of animal science, and other researchers studied three groups of cattle: Angus raised in Missouri, and Angus and Romosinuano raised in Florida. They compared sweat rates and corresponding body temperature of the three groups.

According to the MU release, the Romosinuano, which are noted for heat tolerance, sweated less than Angus cattle from either state, but maintained a lower body temperature. "That means they must be doing something else to lower body temperature. These animals are slower-growing than Angus, which suggests lower metabolic rate," Spiers said.

The lower sweat rates may be the animals' attempt to preserve body moisture, making hydration a critical factor. "We are going to look for genetic markers for animals that will do better in the heat, and sweating is one of the parameters we are looking at," he said.

USDA releases animal health report

USDA released the *2005 U.S. Animal Health Report*, a national overview of domestic animal health in the United States.

The report addresses the many components of the U.S. animal health infrastructure, animal population demographics, approaches to foreign animal disease surveillance and new initiatives. As an annual publication, the *U.S. Animal Health Report* is updated and refined each year. It provides a valuable method to communicate with stakeholders and the

U.S. cattle on feed up 9%

Cattle and calves on feed for harvest in the United States for feedlots with capacities of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.4 million head Oct. 1. The inventory was 9% above the same time last year and 8% above Oct. 1, 2004, figures. This is the highest Oct. 1 inventory since the series began in 1996.

Placements in feedlots during September totaled 2.23 million, 5% below 2005 figures and 6% below 2004. Net placements were 2.16 million head.

Marketings of fed cattle during September totaled 1.77 million, 3% below 2005 and 2% below 2004 figures. This is the second-lowest fed-cattle marketings for the month of September since the series began in 1996. Other disappearance totaled 68,000 head during September, 19% above 2005 figures, and 11% above 2004.

Table 1: No. of cattle on feed, placements, marketings and other disappearance, 1,000+-head-capacity U.S. feedlots, Oct. 1, 2004-2006

	No. of head (1,000 head)			2006 as % of	
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005
On feed Sept. 1 ^a	9,988	10,000	10,986	110	110
Placed on feed during Sept.	2,375	2,355	2,232	94	95
Fed cattle marketed during Sept.	1,800	1,816	1,765	98	97
Other disappearance during Sept. ^b	61	57	68	111	119
On feed Oct. 1 ^a	10,502	10,48	11,385	108	109

^aCattle and calves on feed are animals for harvest being fed a ration of grain or other concentrates and are expected to produce a carcass that will grade USDA Select or better.

^bIncludes death loss, movement from feedlots to pasture and shipments to other feedlots for further feeding.

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service.

public about the status of animal health in the United States.

The 2005 U.S. Animal Health Report is available on the APHIS web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/content/printable_version/2005_us_animal_health_report.pdf.

Survey results released, property rights a concern

The Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF USA) Property Rights Committee released results of a survey measuring farm- and ranch-related concerns of its members.

Committee Chair Kimmi Lewis said the survey revealed that 98% of respondents thought threats against their private property rights would increase in the future, while 95% agreed government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) — often for environmental reasons — take an adversarial position against property owners and their rights.

“When asked if government had ever pressured or threatened one’s land rights or water rights, 35% of respondents said their land rights had been threatened, while 42% indicated they felt like their water rights had been jeopardized,” Lewis said.

According to Lewis, 33% of respondents believed their land rights had been threatened by private entities, and 29% thought their water rights had been threatened.

Industry Events

2006 Missouri Livestock Symposium

Dec. 1-2, Kirksville

The two-day event will take place at the Kirksville Middle School in Kirksville. The program will begin at 6 p.m., Friday, with a free beef dinner, followed by recognition of the Northeast Missouri Livestock Person of the Year, as well as a presentation by farm broadcaster Orion Samuelson. Saturday’s schedule includes presentations and panel discussions separated into different tracks, including beef cattle and agribusiness, beef cattle and stock dogs, equine, sheep and meat goats, forages, renewable resources, wildlife and conservation, and around the home.

There are no registration requirements or costs for the event; however, tickets to Saturday night’s entertainment, presented by Baxter Black, are available for purchase at \$10 per person. Call (660) 665-9866 to reserve tickets.

Visit <http://missourilivestock.com> for further information.

Ag marketing short courses December-March, Texas

As part of Texas A&M University Extension’s Master Marketer Educational System, the Advanced Topic Series will feature nine short courses designed to help producers get up-to-date marketing information from experts. The short courses combine lectures, small working groups and simulation exercises into one- and two-day courses.

Courses are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and registration is required one week prior to the course.

For more information and a complete schedule, contact Steve Amosson at (806) 677-5600 or Mark Waller at (979) 845-1751, or any Extension economist or educator. A brochure and registration form can be found at <http://mastermarketer.tamu.edu>.

Third National Conference on Grazing Lands

Dec. 10-13, Saint Louis, Mo.

The Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) will host the conference, designed to provide a forum for exchange of information, an opportunity to identify grazing land research and program needs, and a chance to see new products and learn about new services.

Presentations will focus on building partnerships among agricultural, grazing and urban communities; successful management technologies for grazing practices; economic, marketing and public policy implications; and optimizing grazing land health for environmental and social benefits.

More information and registration information is available at www.glci.org.

2007 Master Marketer program

January-February, 2007, Lubbock, Texas

The Texas Cooperative Extension is recruiting for its 2007 Master Marketer risk management education program at Lubbock. The in-depth, intensive program teaches participants how to identify and evaluate marketing opportunities, then design and follow through with sound marketing plans.

The 64-hour curriculum is offered in four, two-day sessions held every two weeks. The first of four sessions begins Jan. 3-4, 2007, and subsequent sessions are slated for Jan. 17-18, Jan. 31-Feb. 1, and Feb. 14-15.

Registration is \$250 per person, payable to the Texas Extension Education Foundation. The registration deadline is Dec. 20, 2006. Those with an intermediate to advanced knowledge of marketing are encouraged to attend. Anyone not meeting such a description may attend a free futures and

options leveling workshop set for Jan. 2 in Lubbock.

For further information visit <http://mastermarketer.tamu.edu> or call (806) 746-6101.

Southwest Beef Symposium Jan. 16-17, 2007, Amarillo, Texas

The Texas and New Mexico Cooperative Extension agencies will present the third annual Southwest Beef Symposium at the Fifth Season Inn in Amarillo.

The symposium, tailored for Southwest beef producers, centers around three educational sessions and a trade show.

The first session targets critical success factors in ranching and beef production, while the second session addresses current issues such as ethanol production, source-verified markets, trichomoniasis management and pregnancy-testing. The final session will look at beef market trends from the consumer, producer and packers’ viewpoints.

Registration is \$50 if registering by Jan. 5, and \$60 thereafter. The fee includes a prime rib dinner, lunch, refreshments and printed proceedings.

Call (432) 336-8585 or (505) 646-8022 for more information. Visit <http://cahe.nmsu.edu/ces/swbeef> for a complete schedule, speaker and lodging information, and registration materials.

R-CALF USA National Convention

Jan. 17-20, 2007, Denver, Colo.

R-CALF USA will host its 2007 National Convention and Trade Show at the Doubletree Hotel in Denver.

For more information visit www.r-calfusa.com or call (406) 252-2516.

2007 Cattle Industry Annual Convention & Trade Show

Jan. 31-Feb. 3, 2007, Nashville, Tenn.

The meeting will feature joint and individual meetings by five industry organizations, including NCBA, CBB, American National CattleWomen Inc. (ANCW), Cattle-Fax and the National Cattlemen’s Foundation (NCF).

Angus Productions Inc. (API) will provide real-time coverage of the event, including a schedule and news coverage, at www.4cattlemen.com. The 2007 site is scheduled to be available online by publication.

Visit www.beefusa.org for additional details and schedule updates as they become available. If you have questions, call the NCBA Convention & Meetings Department at (303) 694-0305.

