



Beef Business

► A look at current events affecting the cattle industry

Superior Livestock under new ownership

Superior Livestock Auction Inc. is under new ownership. Superior Livestock is now owned by SLAI LLC, which is a wholly owned entity of Farm Credit West, ACA. Farm Credit West is a strong supporter of the livestock industry and says it is proud to be the new owner of Superior Livestock — the largest livestock auction company in the U.S. and No. 1 in the livestock marketing industry.

Superior Livestock continues to perform at record levels, both in terms of number of head sold and profitability. Superior offers more than 1.5 million cattle annually. To continue to build upon this success, Farm Credit West has asked Jim Odle to come back to Superior Livestock as general manager. Jim was one of the co-founders of Superior Livestock and played a significant

role in building it into the livestock marketing industry leader.

Cassady takes reins as executive director of Beef Improvement Federation

Joe Cassady of Raleigh, N.C., took the reins as executive director of the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) during the organization's midyear board meeting.

In his role as BIF executive director, Cassady will coordinate the activities of the board and ensure that its directives are properly executed. He will be responsible for documenting the activities and finances of the federation and fostering its long-term vision by keeping abreast of the industry, monitoring new technologies and assisting the board in incorporating those technologies into its overall mission.

Washington Watch

EPA greenhouse gas ruling could be devastating to agriculture

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is extremely concerned about the potential effects that the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent greenhouse gas (GHG) ruling could have on agriculture operations. EPA's decision, announced on Dec. 7, claims that GHG emissions are an endangerment to public health and the environment. This sets the stage for greenhouse regulation under the Clean Air Act (CAA) and would give the EPA unprecedented control over every sector of the U.S. economy.

While agricultural sources are currently generally not required to obtain permits for greenhouse gas emissions, regulation of GHGs under the CAA may for the first time trigger such regulation. Given the fact that America currently has more than 2,000,000 farms, it would be virtually impossible to permit a majority of them. It would also impose massive regulatory compliance costs on producers, which could force many operations out of business.

USDA launches toll-free help desk for small meat and poultry processors

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced the opening of its new small plant help desk, which will provide for operators of small and very small meat, poultry and processed egg product establishments seeking help with agency requirements with direct access to knowledgeable staff specialists. The help desk also will provide assistance to state and local food regulatory agencies — FSIS' partners in keeping meat, poultry and egg products safe for consumers.

The new help desk will support the USDA "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" initiative by helping small processors reduce the time and expense of dealing with agency requirements. "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" is designed to continue the national conversation about developing local and regional food systems and finding ways to support small and mid-sized producers.

NCBA opposes House proposal to extend current estate tax law

The NCBA is extremely disappointed that Congress has ignored repeated calls for estate tax ("death tax") reform. The House Rules Committee announced Dec. 3, that H.R. 4154 by Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND) will be considered under a closed rule. The Pomeroy bill would permanently extend the death tax at 2009 levels, without indexing for inflation.

According to the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS), farm estates are 5 to 20 times more likely to incur estate taxes than other estates. In fact, according to ERS estimates, one in 10 farm estates (farms with sales of \$250,000 or more annually) are likely to owe estate taxes in 2009. Farmers and ranchers are often forced to sell off land, equipment, or even the entire ranch just to pay off tax liabilities. This is money that could otherwise be re-invested to grow the family business and hand it down to future generations.

Most cattle producers have businesses that have been passed down through the generations for more than 50 years, and 15% of producers have operations that have been in the family for more than 100 years. Most of the time, these assets have already faced taxes two or three times over the course of a lifetime.

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