

Cattlemen's Newsletter

Groups Welcome JBS' Withdrawal from Proposed Merger

Billings, Mont. / Lincoln, Neb. (February 20, 2009) – R-CALF USA and the Organization for Competitive Markets (OCM) are pleased with today's announcement reported by Reuters, Sao Paulo, that Brazilian-owned meatpacker JBS has abandoned its bid to take over National Beef Packing Co. (National Beef), the fourth largest U.S. meatpacker. According to the Reuters article, JBS abandoned the takeover due to a "lack of satisfactory conditions."

R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard said this takeover bid was defeated by a combination of aggressive opposition from R-CALF USA and OCM, which led first to a hearing by the U.S. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights last May and then to an unprecedented enforcement action by the U.S. Department of Justice and 17 state attorneys general against the merger.

"R-CALF USA and OCM members should be proud that they have achieved their goal of blocking this monumental, anticompetitive merger," Bullard said.

OCM Executive Director Fred Stokes said this news is extremely welcome and represents a very positive start on what will be a long, hard fight to restore competition to the U.S. cattle market that has already been lost due to previous mergers, which resulted in the U.S. cattle market being one

of the most concentrated markets in the U.S. economy.

"Now that we've stopped this ongoing merger, we must focus our collective efforts on reversing the anticompetitive mergers of the past, including JBS' 2008 acquisition of the nation's largest feedlot company when it acquired Smithfield Beef Group," said Stokes.

Since March 2008, R-CALF USA and OCM aggressively opposed the JBS/National Beef merger on the grounds that it would exacerbate the distortions already evidenced in the U.S. cattle market and would strengthen JBS' ability to use packer-owned cattle and other forms of captive supplies to manipulate prices paid to hundreds of thousands of independent cattle producers.

"Given the unbridled concentration and consolidation that has occurred in our markets over the past two decades, this is a David versus Goliath type of victory," said Bullard. "JBS and National Beef are among the most powerful and influential food manufacturing corporations in the world and their attempt to lock up our cattle market has now been defeated by U.S. family farmers and ranchers."

"U.S. cattle producers should express their appreciation to the Department of Justice and the 17 state attorneys general that stepped up to help our industry preserve the competitiveness of our markets," concluded Stokes.

Members, U.S. Manufacturers Join Forces To End Skyrocketing U.S. Trade Deficit

Washington, D.C. (March 4, 2009) – Last week, R-CALF USA members and numerous manufacturing, labor and raw material interests teamed up to lobby Congress on the need to reverse the United States' skyrocketing trade deficit. The effort was sponsored by the Coalition for a Prosperous America (CPA) – a relatively new organization that consists of agricultural, manufacturing and labor interests, which collectively seek reform of U.S. trade policy. R-CALF USA is a founding member of CPA and holds a seat on its board of directors.

"U.S. manufacturers and U.S. cattle producers share a common interest in reversing the U.S. trade deficit," said Mike Callicrate, a member who also owns Ranch Foods Direct. "The same failed trade policies that are driving cattle prices below the cost of production are driving U.S. manufacturers out of business. We must restore U.S. productivity if we are to reverse our failing economy, and addressing our failed trade policy is where we must start."

"As a rancher, I was pleased to work directly with domestic manufacturers from across the U.S. to jointly offer solutions to Congress on how to reverse our nation's trade deficit," said William Bledsoe, a member and a Colorado rancher. "Together, we urged Congress to immediately require all imports – including food and manufacturing components – to strictly meet U.S. standards and to take immediate steps to end the ongoing practice of currency misalignment."

Bledsoe explained that U.S. cattle producers, manufacturers and consumers are being harmed by trade policies that allow products into the United States that are only *equivalent* to U.S. standards.

"This 'equivalent' standard means it can be *different* than our U.S. standard, and that is why we're importing un-

safe food and other substandard products into our country," he said.

R-CALF USA Co-Founder Herman Schumacher, who feeds cattle in South Dakota, said R-CALF USA's new partnership with manufacturing interests raised more than a few eyebrows in Congress.

"Members of Congress are not used to hearing the same message from both the cattle industry and the domestic manufacturing industry, and I think we were successful in explaining how current trade policy is hurting our economy," Schumacher said. "Just like in the U.S. cattle industry, the voice of independent manufacturers has been overshadowed by their conventional trade associations that are dominated by large, multinational corporations. Our message to Congress was to quit listening to the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), as these trade organizations are dominated by multinational corporate members who have different interests than independent domestic producers."

R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard said CPA was formed to help develop a comprehensive U.S. trade strategy that would promote domestic food production and domestic manufacturing.

"The U.S. has never had a comprehensive trade strategy other than to blindly follow a flawed free trade mantra," he said. "Now that the ground has fallen out from under this free trade ideal and our trade deficit has become unmanageable, we're hopeful that our joint lobbying effort with manufacturers will encourage Congress to begin dealing with our crushing trade deficit and outsourcing of vital wealth-creating industries so we can start rebuilding our weakened production base."

Promise for Change? Not for U.S. Livestock Producers When It Comes to NAIS

Washington, D.C. (March 12, 2009) – "It's business as usual in Washington, D.C., regarding how Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) continue to ignore the interests of hard-working U.S. livestock producers," said R-CALF USA President/Region VI Director Max Thornsberry, after testifying yesterday on USDA's proposed National Animal Identification System (NAIS) before the U.S. House Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry.

"It is unbelievable, but true, that the new USDA was represented by the very people who already spent over \$100 million in taxpayer dollars during the old Administration to coerce U.S. livestock producers into surrendering their

private property rights just to appease the international World Trade Organization (WTO), which wants every U.S. farm and ranch and every U.S. farm animal to be registered in a federal database," Thornsberry said.

Also yesterday, Congress passed the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009, which awarded USDA an additional \$14.5 million so it could continue its pursuit of NAIS.

Veterinarian John Clifford, who is the Deputy Administrator of Veterinary Services for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), testified in support of NAIS on the grounds that, "Establishing an internationally recognized system of traceability will enhance the competi-

(Continued on next page)

Group Strongly Supports Secretary Vilsack's Call for Changes to Final COOL Rule

Billings, Mont. (February 18, 2009) – On Tuesday, at the invitation of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard participated in a conference call with the Secretary, along with representatives of the National Farmers Union, Consumers Union, the Consumer Federation of America, Food & Water Watch and the American Farm Bureau Federation, to address problems with loopholes in the final mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL) rule, originally scheduled to take effect in March.

Today, R-CALF USA wishes to thank Vilsack for contemplating issuing a letter to the industry, asking participants to comply with Congress' intent when it wrote the law, and specifically to correct the following three issues:

* *The use of a mixed-origin label on meat from U.S. animals does not provide the specific information that Congress intended to provide to consumers.*

* *The exemption of commodities from labeling requirements because they had been cooked, roasted or cured does not comply with Congress' intent to inform consumers of the origins of the food they purchase.*

* *The provision that allows meat processors to include a country's name on ground meat even when no product is sourced from that country for 60 days does not provide accurate information to consumers as Congress intended.*

Secretary Vilsack said he has two choices to correct these deficiencies: 1) start a whole new rulemaking process, which would mean that these problems would persist until a new rulemaking could be completed (this could take five to seven months); or, 2) issue an official directive to the industry to immediately correct these problems.

"We are extremely pleased that Secretary Vilsack recognizes that the final COOL rule does not meet the intent of the COOL law passed by Congress and also that he realizes his responsibility is to implement the COOL law as passed by Congress, not to make a new law in the rulemaking process," said R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard.

"Secretary Vilsack asked R-CALF USA and the other participants for their input on the two options based on his belief that the problems in the COOL rule could be corrected much quicker by informing the industry that if they don't immediately comply, a new rulemaking would immediately be initiated," he continued. "The Secretary believes the industry will want to comply with his request, and R-CALF USA agrees that if the industry does comply, then consumers would be provided accurate labels sooner than if a new rulemaking were initiated as the only solution."

"We hope that industry participants will honor the requests of Secretary Vilsack to provide accurate COOL labels to consumers at the earliest date possible," Bullard emphasized.

Promise for Change? Not for U.S. Livestock Producers When It Comes to NAIS *(Continued from page 1)*

tiveness of U.S. exports and animal products."

But Thornsberry testified that imposing costs on U.S. livestock producers and requiring them to surrender their personal and real property to a federal database in order to comply with international edicts is "a wholly inappropriate consideration for the exercise of APHIS' authority pursuant to the Animal Health Protection Act of 2002...It is clear that USDA decided to conform to international standards and is now working backward to invent the need to impose this burdensome NAIS on U.S. livestock producers."

Thornsberry said he was particularly disheartened by the fact that comments and questions made by members of Congress at the hearing demonstrated a belief that NAIS would miraculously address food safety problems.

"NAIS is *not* a food safety issue," he emphasized. "If Congress wants to solve the food safety problems associated with the unprecedented recalls involving meat contaminated by pathogens such as *E. coli*, then it needs to trace these problems to their source: the unsanitary conditions at corporate meatpacking plants, which are not being properly policed by USDA. Holding livestock producers accountable for meat recalls caused by corporate meatpackers is, unfortunately, business as usual."

Thornsberry also criticized USDA's continued use of what he called "fear tactics."

APHIS' Clifford testified that if foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) were introduced into the U.S., the U.S. would not be able to get ahead of the disease without NAIS.

"This is absurd," said Thornsberry. "When a fast spreading disease like FMD is found, the way to control the disease is to immediately draw a geographical circle around the outbreak and restrict any livestock movement beyond the circle. You certainly don't want to waste precious time trying to identify where every individual animal was born."

Clifford also testified that the current U.S. animal disease system has not worked, and NAIS is now needed to protect the U.S. livestock industry from the

spread of disease. Thornsberry countered that the current system has worked well to control and eradicate many serious diseases, including brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis (bovine TB).

"If USDA would quit allowing Mexican cattle with bovine TB into the U.S., we could prevent the 75 percent of bovine TB detected in U.S. slaughtering plants that are known to originate in Mexico," Thornsberry pointed out.

"If Congress and USDA are serious about preventing the spread of animal diseases, they first need to strengthen our border controls to prevent the continued reintroduction of diseases into the United States," he continued. "There is absolutely no need to require individual producers to register their livestock and their real estate in a federal registry."

Thornsberry testified that Congress and USDA should immediately cease all efforts to implement NAIS and should, instead: 1) *prevent the importation of serious cattle diseases and pests from foreign sources*; 2) *adopt the surveillance and identification components of the preexisting brucellosis program and require all breeding stock to be identified*; 3) *have States and Tribes maintain databases of breeding stock and allow local veterinarians to decide how best to identify the production unit where animals originate, without requiring federal registration of real property or livestock*; 4) *require the federal government to assist States and Tribes in maintaining their respective databases and in conducting more disease surveillance*; and, 5) *focus on eradicating diseases in wildlife populations*.

"Rather than listen to the recommendations of actual livestock producers, Congress and USDA are listening to the eartag companies and meatpackers that stand to make millions of dollars, if not billions, off NAIS," Thornsberry said.

"It truly is business as usual in D.C.," he concluded.

Note: A copy of Thornsberry's written and oral testimony is available under the "Animal Identification" link at www.r-calfusa.com.

CEO Discusses Industry Issues with Vilsack During Meeting

Washington, D.C. (February 27, 2009) – R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard on Wednesday met with Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and a senior adviser to discuss the challenges that face independent U.S. cattle producers, as well as to discuss the various remedies available to improve the U.S. live cattle industry.

Bullard explained to Vilsack how the unprecedented concentration in the feedlot and packing sectors of the industry that has occurred over the past 20 years has harmed producers and resulted in a significant exodus from the industry of many producers. Bullard also explained how current trade policies, the ongoing relaxation of border restrictions and USDA's ongoing efforts to implement a mandatory National Animal Identification System (NAIS) are disadvantaging the competitiveness of domestic cattle producers.

"While the cattle industry is in dire need of many reforms, it also is uniquely positioned to help revitalize the U.S. economy, without any government expendi-

tures, provided that fundamental changes are made to fully restore competition in the marketplace," Bullard said. "We wanted to demonstrate to the Secretary that we need his help to prevent the U.S. cattle industry from falling under corporate control by the multinational meatpackers, as has already occurred in the hog and poultry industries."

Bullard also urged Vilsack to continue with his efforts to end the mislabeling of USA beef under the mandatory country-of-origin labeling law and to make certain it is implemented in the manner Congress intended.

"The Secretary was not only attentive throughout the meeting, but he also asked numerous questions and took numerous notes," Bullard concluded. "In just his first few days in office, Secretary Vilsack has already given more consideration to the issues of importance to independent cattle producers than did any of the three Secretaries who preceded him."

CEO Participates in Trilateral Trade Conference

Billings, Mont. (February 17, 2009) – Just days ago, R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard participated in a two-day conference hosted by the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) that included representatives of the U.S., Canada and Mexico in discussions of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the negative ramifications the trade agreement has wrought on producers in all three countries, while the multinational corporations in each country have reaped the benefits. Each group's representatives made it clear that NAFTA should either be eliminated or renegotiated.

"R-CALF was originally viewed as a threat to cattle producers in Canada," said Neil Peacock, who represented the National Farmers Union of Canada. "There is always misinformation going around, and several years ago, there was the rumor that R-CALF was established by the big packers."

"What has happened is that the mind shift of livestock owners in Canada has turned around," he continued. "We no longer view R-CALF as a threat because our cattle producers are facing the same challenges as independent U.S. cattle producers. Just like R-CALF members in the U.S., we are fighting the packers, the mega-corporations and the ramifications of NAFTA and the WTO. It would be nice to unite with R-CALF to fight

the issues we have in common."

Jan Slomp, also of the National Farmers Union in Canada, said consumers in all three countries need to be able to know where their beef comes from and be able to support their domestic producers if that is what they wish to do.

"XL/Cargill keeps feeding us this line that R-CALF is just a protectionist organization against everything," Slomp said. "We've been fed this bull about continental integration, that increases in exports will benefit ranchers and farmers, and that's just not true. We've been sucked into this corporate structure that is very, very hard to correct. It's all about a forced food system now. Trade should not be so complicated. Every nation has the right to look after its own producers."

"Authorities here are influenced by the Cargills and make R-CALF the enemy and try to mobilize all the Canadian ranchers against R-CALF, which is not helpful at all," he continued. "I can totally understand and defend R-CALF in public now. We need to be allies with R-CALF."

Dennis Olson, a senior policy analyst at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) said that promises made by the proponents of NAFTA have not been kept and that new policies are urgently needed.

(Continued on next page)

Group 110% Against Mandatory National Animal ID System, President Testifies During House Sub-committee Hearing

Washington, D.C. (March 11, 2009) – R-CALF USA President/Region VI Director Max Thornsberry, a Missouri veterinarian who chairs the group's animal health committee, made absolutely clear in testimony today before the House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry today that the organization is 110 percent against the mandatory implementation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The Subcommittee held a public hearing today to hear various livestock industry viewpoints about whether NAIS should continue to be pursued.

"...being a veterinarian, I deal with food safety on a daily issue, but I also have owned...a meat-processing plant..., so I've been on the cutting edge of...food safety technology, and I, for the life of me, cannot come up with any idea or method or way that national animal ID is going to have anything to do with food safety," Thornsberry pointed out. "It (NAIS) would identify the animals and possibly allow a little quicker traceback, but every animal that goes through the livestock auction I work at gets a backtag that identifies it to the owner with (the owner's) name and address and phone number (and) where it came from before it goes to slaughter, so I cannot come up with any concept whereby this system would improve safety."

"The food safety issues we have in the livestock industry occur at the slaughter plants, and until the HACCP (hazard analysis and critical control points) plan is corrected, whereby you can trace the meat back to its point of slaughter, you're not going to have food safety where it needs to be in the United States," he continued.

"I (owned) a processing plant that traced it (*E.coli* O157.H7) back to me and closed *me* down, and yet, *E. coli* O157.H7 comes from a slaughter facility from meat that I would *purchase*, and yet they would not trace it back to that point. So, you know, there's a lot of hype about food safety, as relates to animal ID, but I've been involved in it for eight or 10 years now, and I can't come up with any relevance to it, period," Thornsberry emphasized.

Thornsberry also pointed out that after *millions* of dollars being spent nationwide to try to get livestock owners enticed to sign up for premises registration under NAIS, those livestock producers just are not interested in such a system.

"There are many (disease traceback) systems (already) in place," Thornsberry pointed out. "We do not oppose animal identification, but we do oppose it being *mandatory*. Our policy is very simple: if you want to participate, fine, and if you don't, fine. We've had very successful systems in the past that have worked and functioned to control and eradicate diseases, and those systems are being disingenuously negated by (USDA) indicating that we must have a National Animal Identification System in place. I do agree, that if we are going to have a system, it will be mandatory, and the cost of that mandatory system will be *many* times more than the \$200 million figure that you've been given."

Note: A copy of Thornsberry's written and oral testimony is available under the "Animal Identification" link at www.r-calfusa.com.

The Weekly Roundup with R-CALF USA

Now posted at www.r-calfusa.com every Friday afternoon, *The Weekly Roundup with R-CALF USA*. Tune in each week to hear a 3-minute interview with various R-CALF USA leaders on your organization's issues. If your local radio station isn't airing the *Roundup* yet, contact Communications Coordinator Shae Dodson at 406-672-8969. If you're interested in partnering with fellow R-CALF USA members to sponsor the show, call Shae!

CEO Participates in Trilateral Trade Conference

(Continued from page 2)

"As far as NAFTA goes, it's a failed agreement," Olson said. "It has not curtailed the growing power of the global meat cartels, both in our livestock markets and in our politics. NAFTA impedes the rights of all three countries to establish their own food and agricultural policies that provide farmers with the cost of production, as long as those policies do not result in the dumping of agricultural commodities into the other markets at below the cost of production. We commit ourselves to building an alternative food system that is designed to make safe, affordable food a higher priority than increasing the profit margins for the global meat cartels."

Patty Lovera, with Food and Water Watch, said she was at the meeting to talk about how to work together to stop the negative impacts caused by bad trade policies. She also noted that even as prices livestock producers receive continue to go down, retail food prices rarely do, and the result is that consumers do not end up spending less at the meat and dairy case.

"Consumers care about workers, farmers and the environment – all of which are damaged by trade policy that puts corporate controlled trade as its top priority," she said. "But consumers also are directly impacted when trade policy means they are exposed to unsafe food or lose the ability to know what they are eating, where it is from or how it was processed."

"The growing number of food safety scares, from both domestic and imported food, has made it very clear that regulators are not doing enough to protect consumers," continued Lovera. "Consumers have no way to influence the governments of other countries on what they do to regulate food safety, but have to live with the consequences of what those governments do, and there must be room in our trade policy for antitrust measures so we can restore competitive markets for producers and prevent a handful of corporations from calling all of the shots about how our food system works."

R-CALF shared with the producers from Canada and Mexico the work it is doing to prevent the proposed acquisition of National Beef Packing Co. by JBS, the world's largest beef packer based in Brazil.

"This merger would increase packer concentration to an unprecedented level, resulting in reduced competition that will harm both cattle producers and beef consumers," said R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard. "We were pleased to learn that Canadian producers support R-CALF's efforts to prevent further concentration in the meatpacking industry and to eliminate anticompetitive cattle procurement practices going on in each of our countries. We look forward to sharing information with Canadian producers that will help both Canada and the U.S. restore competition for all cattle farmers and ranchers."

Op-Ed: 10 Years Representing Independent U.S. Cattle Producers

This 761-word piece is authored by R-CALF USA Region I Director Margene Eiguren, of Jordan Valley, Ore., who, along with her husband Richard and three sons, runs a cow/calf operation. Eiguren has been a member of R-CALF USA from the start. She helped found the Oregon Livestock Producers Association, an R-CALF USA affiliate group, and has served on numerous committees within R-CALF USA. Region I includes: Alaska, Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Billings, Mont. – Jordan Valley, Ore. (February 16, 2009) – In 1999, R-CALF USA was formed as a nonprofit membership organization to ensure the continued profitability and viability of the U.S. cattle industry. We represent thousands of U.S. cattle producers on trade and marketing issues. Our members – primarily independent cow/calf operators, backgrounders and feedlot owners – are located in 47 states. We also have dozens of affiliate organizations. R-CALF USA is funded strictly with membership dues and contributions from cattle producers and main-street businesses. We receive no money from government, and unlike other organizations we have no multinational packers on our board.

During our first 10 years, R-CALF USA has taken on the toughest issues facing the profitability of cow/calf producers, stockers and feeders – the issues other industry groups were afraid to touch or simply didn't think they could win. R-CALF USA has been the only cattle-producer group fighting to end the packers' practice of accumulating captive supply cattle through packer ownership and formula contracts, both of which allow packers to manipulate prices by removing cattle from the competitive marketplace without ever establishing a price.

Nine years ago, when R-CALF USA supported the idea to require labels on beef products to differentiate USA beef from imported beef, the other cattle-producer organizations admitted that while it was a good idea, it could never be passed by Congress. R-CALF USA, however, said it was too important not to implement and fought to pass country-of-origin labeling (COOL) in Congress in 2002. We have since spent the past seven years fighting to implement COOL and we're about to get it done right, despite the ongoing opposition from both meatpackers and other beef industry trade groups.

Six years ago, when USDA tried to throw open our borders to Canadian beef and cattle while Canada continued to have outbreaks of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease), R-CALF USA was the only group to stand up to protect the health and safety of the U.S. cattle herd and U.S. consumers. We filed three lawsuits and won three injunc-

tions against USDA over the border issue and we delayed the government's efforts to expose our industry to unnecessary disease risks for many months. As a result of our efforts to protect the health of our cattle herd, U.S. producers experienced increased demand for their U.S. cattle, and prices jumped higher than ever in history. Your five-weight cattle increased \$27 per hundredweight (cwt) because consumers saw firsthand that we were fighting to protect the health and safety of U.S. beef.

Also six years ago, after Canada detected BSE, USDA announced it was going to impose a mandatory National Animal Identification System (NAIS) on every livestock producer, which would require them to register both their animals and their real property under USDA's premises registration scheme.

R-CALF USA stood up and said this was an infringement on private property rights and a violation of producers' constitutional rights. While other organizations have accepted millions of dollars to help USDA register their members' personal and real property under NAIS, R-CALF USA continues to fight against this over-the-top proposal and continues to prevent the government from making NAIS mandatory, which USDA tried unsuccessfully to do in each of the years 2006, 2008 and 2009.

In March 2008, when the Brazilian meatpacker JBS announced it was going to further concentrate and vertically integrate the U.S. cattle market by purchasing the nation's fourth and fifth largest meatpackers, all the other cattle-producer groups remained silent. R-CALF was the only cattle group to stand up and fight the merger. As a result, and in an unprecedented move, the U.S. Department of Justice and 17 state attorneys general filed an antitrust lawsuit to block the merger. This was the first meaningful effort to protect the competitiveness of the U.S. cattle market since Congress broke up the beef packer cartel in the 1920s.

Our cattle industry is the largest segment of U.S. agriculture and generates \$50 billion each year to our rural economy, which is over three times larger than the hog industry. This industry also happens to be the last frontier for the multinational meatpackers. Unlike the poultry and hog industries, the cattle industry is the last remaining livestock sector that is not yet controlled from birth-to-plate by multinational corporations. We must win this fight to preserve the economic independence of hundreds of thousands of U.S. cattle producers. The increased meatpacker control over U.S. cattle markets did not happen overnight, and the industry will not be able to free itself from this control overnight either. This is a long-term fight, and R-CALF is prepared to keep fighting until we win.

R-CALF USA's Debut DVD, "Your U.S. Cattle Industry"

For a Donation of Only \$10 or More—Get Yours Today! 30 Minutes of Industry Information You'll Get Nowhere Else!

Two Ways to Donate: Make Check Payable to R-CALF USA (Contributions May Be Tax Deducted as a Business Expense) or Make Check Payable to USA FREE (Contributions are Deductible as a Charitable Contribution) and send to PO Box 30715, Billings, MT 59107.

Unique Fundraising Opportunity: Your Ranch Featured in Living Cowboy Ethics Magazine

R-CALF USA is offering its members a unique opportunity with a two-fold purpose: First, to raise needed funds for our non-profit organization and second, to create more public awareness about how ranching is more than just a business, but also a way of life.

We are seeking donations in the amount of \$250 from each members who would like to both contribute to R-CALF USA and play a significant role in creating more public awareness about their ranching industry. From among all the contributors, R-CALF USA will decide which member's ranch will be featured in the R-CALF USA section of the PARAGON Foundation's award winning magazine *Living Cowboy Ethics*. The readership of this magazine goes well beyond R-CALF USA's members as it is actually sold at newsstands in several regions of the United States. The decision on which ranch will be selected will be based on photographs submitted along with each contribution. The feature article for the magazine will be written by me. And, I will have first-hand knowledge about the selected ranch because the ranch that is selected will get a very excited (and nervous) ranch hand, me!

Here's how the fundraising/awareness-creating program works: If you are interested in hosting me, your R-CALF USA Membership Coordinator, as your 7-day (or 5, whatever you choose) ranch hand, send a contribution of \$250 to R-CALF USA along with up to five photographs of your ranch to R-CALF USA post-

marked no later than April 30, 2009. R-CALF USA staff will then review the photographs and select a ranch to be featured in *Living Cowboy Ethics*. I will then travel to your ranch and be your ranch hand for the 7- (or 5) day period that you and I would work out after the ranch selection is made.

Here is how this fundraiser/awareness-creating idea came to be: I have been working at R-CALF USA for just over four years now, and I now have a confession – I've never been on a cattle ranch. I think, and you may agree, that it is time I visit one. And, as we all know, there are fewer and fewer people that have any connection to the ranching industry and they need to be reminded about the importance of maintaining a viable and profitable U.S. ranching industry.

You may be wondering how I ended up working for an organization who solely represents independent cattle producers if I have no connection to cattle. Well, I am glad you asked! My mom is a teacher in town and happens to work with Bill Bullard's wife, Jeanne. Jeanne knew my mom had college aged kids, and thought maybe my brother would be interested in working at R-CALF part time over Christmas break entering data. He wasn't at all, but I was because I had been praying for an opportunity to make more money over Christmas break to pay for the following semester of tuition.

R-CALF was willing to work my schedule around my other full time job, and I began long days of enter-

ing membership information. When it was time to head back to school, I had to decide which job I wanted to stick with and which one had run its course. I ended up quitting my other job and staying with R-CALF.

My passion has always been helping people. I spent much of high school and college volunteering with various organizations and events. I would be set if I could live off volunteering, but I guess then it wouldn't really be volunteering. I guess the next best thing is working someplace where you can make a positive impact for others. I firmly believe that R-CALF is doing just that. So I stayed, and as I got to know you, the members, more, the more I wanted to stay and do whatever I can to help keep you in the industry. An industry that I knew nothing about when I started at R-CALF, and that I am slowly learning more and more about.

I hope you will agree that this is a unique opportunity to make a worthwhile contribution to R-CALF USA, to better inform the public about the ranching business and way of life, and to help inform your R-CALF USA Membership Coordinator about the members I help to represent.

*You must have exclusive rights to the photographs you submit to R-CALF USA. By submitting the photographs to R-CALF USA, you are granting R-CALF USA the right to publish the photographs in *Living Cowboy Ethics*.

SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER TODAY!

Do you own cattle? Yes No

R-CALF USA Membership
 1 year \$50/member
 3 years \$140/member

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

County _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____

Credit Card # _____

Security Code _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Membership Information is kept confidential, and is used for official R-CALF USA purposes only.

- Voting members must own cattle. Annual voting dues are \$50 per year per member (one-member/one-vote).
- Associate members do not own cattle and do not have voting rights.

Please mail application and dues (check, money order, or credit card information) to:

R-CALF USA
 PO Box 30715
 Billings, MT 59107

Contributions or gifts to R-CALF USA are not tax deductible as charitable contributions. However, they may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses.

R-CALF USA
 IS NOW ON
 Facebook!

USTR Should Defend COOL

Says Coalition of Ag, Consumer Groups

Washington, D.C. (March 16, 2009) – Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement; the Missouri Rural Crisis Center; the National Family Farm Coalition; the National Farmers Union; the Organization for Competitive Markets; Public Citizen; Rural Advancement Foundation International—USA; and, the Western Organization of Resource Councils.

COOL originally became law in the 2002 Farm Bill, but opponents – including the huge multinational meatpackers who held significant influence over the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the Bush Administration – were successful in preventing implementation of the law. In the 2008 Farm Bill, COOL was passed yet again, but these same packers have managed to take advantage of loopholes in the law to avoid Congress' intent for the law to benefit consumers and U.S. livestock producers.

Earlier this year, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack sent a formal letter to the industry to request that retailers and packers change their behavior in order to meet the congressional intent of the legislation. "We appreciate the Secretary's efforts and we continue to ask USDA to make a priority the needs and desires of its constituency – U.S. citizens – and to not cater to the whims of foreign governments and multinational corporations, as has been the pattern for the last eight years," Bullard concluded.

"This WTO case is a kitchen-table issue that will affect every American, and we expect the Obama Administration to demonstrate the President's pledge to aggressively defend our rights' before WTO dispute panels," he continued. "This challenge, by two of our closest trading partners, undermines key trade policy objectives of the Obama Administration," Bullard pointed out. "Defending these rules would reaffirm the President's long-standing commitment to COOL.

The following organizations make up this particular COOL coalition, most of which have supported COOL for at least a decade: R-CALF USA; the Coalition for a Prosperous America; the Consumer Federation of America; Food & Water Watch; the Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy;

Note: To view/download a copy of the coalition's comments to USTR and/or USTR's Federal Register Notice dated Feb. 17, 2009, please visit the "Country of Origin Labeling" link at www.r-calfusa.com.

Health Insurance Now Available Through R-CALF USA

The R-CALF USA health insurance partnership with AHC offers members the ability to comparison shop for their health coverage. AHC negotiates with multiple insurance carriers to bring health insurance access to the self-employed and others at an affordable level.

In most states, AHC pledges to quote at least three insurance carriers. These can include Mutual of Omaha, Blue Cross & Blue Shield, Golden Rule, American Republic, PacificCare, Assurant, World, Conseco, Humana, Coventry, American Community and others.

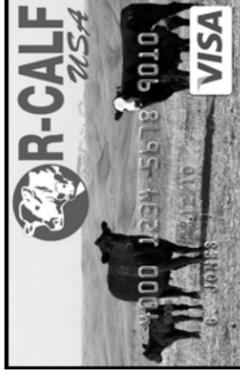
Take a look at some of the coverage offerings brought to you by AHC.

- Health insurance
- Health Savings Accounts
- Medicare, Medicare Supplement, and Medicaid
- Dental, Vision, Cancer, and Disability plans
- Wellness solutions
- Term, Whole and Universal Life Insurance

Please call 877-899-5325, or visit the Insurance' link at www.r-calfusa.com, to learn how these solutions may benefit you.

Make a big difference in your own small way.

Introducing the new R-CALF USA Custom Visa card.



- Contribution made with every purchase
- 5 custom designs
- Visa acceptance and security
- No additional cost

Go to www.r-calfusa.com or call 406-252-2516 today.

The R-CALF USA Visa card program is operated by UMB Bank, N.A. All applications for R-CALF USA Visa credit card accounts will be subject to UMB Bank N.A.'s approval, at its absolute discretion. Please visit www.cardpartner.com for further details of terms and conditions which apply to the R-CALF USA Visa card program.

United Stockgrowers of America

Cattlemen's Newsletter

R-CALF USA *Fighting for the U.S. Cattle Producer!*
 Phone: 406-252-2516 ♦ E-mail: r-calfusa@r-calfusa.com
 Fax: 406-252-3176 ♦ Website: www.r-calfusa.com

R-CALF USA
 PO Box 30715
 Billings, MT 59107

~Pres. Theodore Roosevelt, Paris, France, April 23, 1910

Food for Thought...

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.