



**National Cattlemen's  
Beef Association**

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*Beltway Beef is a weekly report from Washington, D.C., giving an up-to-date summary of top policy initiatives concerning the cattle industry; direct from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). Please feel free to reprint in full or in part. If you would like to include NCBA's logo, contact us at 303-694-0305.*



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## **Cattlemen's Capitol Concerns**

### **House Passes Continuing Resolution to Fund Government through March 2013**

As Congress comes back to Washington this week, keeping the federal government's doors open was at the top of their to-do list. The House of Representatives moved ahead today with a continuing resolution for fiscal year 2013 that would keep government spending at levels set in 2012 through Mar. 27, 2013. The resolution (H.J. Res 117) would prevent a government shutdown and continue federal operations until all appropriations legislation for fiscal year 2013 is enacted.

The House Appropriations Committee acted on all of its 12 annual spending bills, with the full House approving seven of those bills. However, the Senate has not passed any of its bills and because of their inaction, this continuing resolution will keep federal programs and services going until final

legislation can be negotiated and approved. As of now, it appears unlikely Congress will approve most spending measures either before Election Day or the November-December lame duck session.

"Keeping the federal government operating is critical to making sure that our farmers and ranchers continue to supply America and the world with safe, high-quality beef," said Kristina Butts, executive director of legislative affairs for the [National Cattlemen's Beef Association](#) (NCBA). "A government shutdown would mean that agencies such as USDA and FDA would not be able to perform their regulatory duties beyond the end of this month."

To meet the bipartisan agreement between the House and Senate, a government-wide, across-the-board

increase of 0.6 percent over the base rate is also included. In total, including all discretionary spending, the annual rate of the continuing resolution is \$26.6 billion below last year's level.

Following the expiration of any short-term continuing resolution, both chambers will resume consideration of their fiscal year 2013 agriculture appropriations bills. At that point, Congress could pass the bills individually or wrap them into a larger package with other appropriations bills. Since the resolution is set to expire next March, then the actual appropriations bill would be for only half a fiscal year, since the first half of the fiscal year would already be over.

The resolution will now go to the Senate, where it is not expected to be voted on until next week.

### **Keeping Good Records Makes Good Sense for Cattle Producers**

In light of recent natural disasters such as the drought that is plaguing most of cattle country and storms such as Hurricane Issac, which wreaked havoc through parts of Louisiana and the South, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) is urging livestock producers to keep good records on livestock and feed losses, including expenses for such things as feed purchases because of lost supplies.

"Natural disasters can cause significant damage and economic loss to cattle operations," said Kristina Butts, executive director of legislative affairs for the [National Cattlemen's Beef Association](#) (NCBA). "It is

important for livestock producers to keep detailed records of their losses, so that they can accurately assess the scale of the damage and determine the economic loss caused by the disaster."

The FSA recommends producers document the number and type of livestock that have been lost, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses; dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts; costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures; and feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed.

An "Ag Damage Assessment Form" created by Penn State University and funded by USDA provides guidelines for producers who choose to keep detailed records of losses should a disaster occur. By completing the form, producers and agencies will have more accurate information that could be used to make a state or federal disaster declaration. Information gathered by individuals and groups can be shared through the FSA, local cooperative extension offices and local emergency management agencies.

To download the damage assessment form, click [here](#). To download other disaster relief resources, click [here](#).

## PLC Meeting Stresses Need for Rancher Involvement — PLC Gathering Elects Leaders, Addresses Priority Issues

Public Lands Council (PLC) last week held its 2012 Annual Meeting in Winnemucca, Nev. Agenda items important to the public lands grazing industry, such as fire and drought; sage grouse planning; water rights; and local government participation in federal land use planning, drew a wide audience from ranchers to members of Congress.

“We had a lot of ground to cover in three days,” said PLC Executive Director Dustin Van Liew. “Our board of directors approved the first projects to be funded by the Public Lands Endowment Trust; we honored our retiring president, John Falen, and toured his ranch near Winnemucca; our members elected new leadership; and we joined the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in honoring the Kirby Creek Coordinated Resource Management Group from Worland, Wyo., recipients of the BLM Rangeland Stewardship Award.”

Colorado rancher Brice Lee officially began his two-year term as PLC president at the meeting, and Utah rancher Dave Eliason was elected as the new secretary/treasurer. Brenda Richards, an Idaho rancher, assumed the role of vice president. PLC members also voted on new policy to protect grazing preference numbers and help ensure continued permittee involvement in allotment management plan changes.

Issues affecting the roughly 22,000 public lands ranchers across the West were discussed by ranchers; elected officials; Washington and regional officials of the BLM and U.S. Forest Service (USFS); natural resource attorneys; and other industry experts.

“Utah State Congressman Ken Ivory spoke to us about Utah’s efforts to properly manage the federal lands Utahans rely on. We even heard from U.S. Congressman Mark Amodei of Nevada, a champion for our industry in Washington,” said Van Liew, who is also the director of federal lands for the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association.

Additionally, a panel of experts discussed the importance and legal right of local governments to act as cooperating agencies and coordinators in the federal land use planning process. PLC members discussed with agency officials the need to implement local and state sage grouse conservation plans. Those in attendance also conversed with local and state fire experts about improving fire prevention and fire suppression through cooperative, local efforts. Public lands ranchers made a point to stress to USFS officials the importance of preserving privately held water rights for ranchers grazing livestock on federal lands.

### Legislative Watch

#### H.R. 1259 / S. 2242 – Death Tax Repeal Permanency Act

To fully and permanently repeal the estate tax. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on the Death Tax Repeal Permanency Act. Key Sponsors: Rep. Kevin Brady (R-Texas), Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.)

#### S. 1129 – Grazing Improvement Act

To make improvements to the efficiency and stability of the federal lands grazing permit process. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on S. 1129. Key Sponsor: Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.)

#### H.R. 5961 – Farmer’s Privacy Act

To provide reasonable limits, control, and oversight over the Environmental Protection Agency’s use of aerial surveillance of America’s farmers. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on H.R. 5961. Key Sponsor: Shelley Moore Capito (R-W. Va.)

#### H.R. 6083 – Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act

The House version of the 2012 Farm Bill. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on H.R. 6083. Key Sponsor: Frank Lucas (R-Okla.)

*For a full list of legislation NCBA is monitoring [click here](#).*

### New on the Web

Check out the Beltway Beef blog for inside perspectives on issues affecting U.S. cattlemen and women. You will find updates on border security and a comprehensive rule for BSE. You can sign up on the blog to receive an email when new information is posted. You can also follow us on Twitter, be a fan of us on Facebook, check out our

latest photos on Flickr or watch video updates on our YouTube page. For audio, visit and subscribe to the Beltway Beef Podcast. You can also subscribe to our podcast on iTunes.

## Senate Candidate Deb Fischer Stands Up for Ranchers, Small Businesses



By Deb Fischer, Nebraska U.S. Senate candidate

This is an important election year. We have an opportunity to change the direction our country is headed. I entered the U.S. Senate race because I'm very concerned for the future of America and for our industry. My family ranches in the Nebraska Sandhills, south of Valentine. Our three grown sons have all chosen to return to the ranch and now manage the business.

As a rancher, I know how the current administration's policies have affected our industry. Burdensome regulations are choking our businesses; the estate tax makes it difficult to leave our operations to our children; and complicated red tape stymies emergency assistance in times of need.

The slow response of the federal government to this year's historic drought and wildfires illustrated the need for the government to make significant improvements in its response time to assist ranchers and farmers. For example, it simply took too long for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to allow emergency grazing and haying areas on Conservation Reserve Program land. In the future, we need to make sure that the FSA allows emergency grazing in a timelier manner.

As a U.S. Senator, I will seek to reduce and eliminate onerous regulations. Federal agencies have greatly overstretched their regulatory boundaries and I believe Congress needs to exert its authority by providing oversight of these agencies. Congress should establish an independent review to analyze each proposed rule or mandate prior to implementation to assess its impact on the economy. Rules and regulations should also have a sunset date. We need greater congressional oversight, transparency and accountability of these rules. Current regulations defy commonsense and put undue burden on our small businesses.

Congress must also reform and simplify the tax code, which includes eliminating the estate tax, repealing the alternative minimum tax (AMT) and lowering the business tax while closing loopholes. Businesses must have certainty in order to grow, and the current tax code is too complex, which poses a significant challenge for future planning by small businesses and individuals. The daunting task of trying to maneuver through the numerous provisions surrounding tax compliance drains small businesses of

resources. Small businesses spend almost \$19 billion and put in two billion hours annually trying to comply with the tax code. We need to reform the tax code to make it simpler for small businesses and individuals to plan and invest in the future.

Another priority is to modernize our nation's infrastructure. This is a priority on both the federal and state levels. A good transportation, telecommunication and broadband system is absolutely vital for expanding commerce, moving our products and keeping rural communities strong.

This is a serious time in our country. We are facing a deficit of over \$1 trillion and just reached \$16 trillion in debt. This is unacceptable. We cannot continue to spend money we don't have. We need to make the tough decisions necessary to move this country forward and I believe we will do that by cutting spending and growing our economy. We need to allow our businesses to create jobs, which will generate revenue. Government does not need to raise taxes. We will turn our economy around through the creation of jobs in the private sector, not public.

I released a jobs plan last fall that outlines my priorities for creating an environment that encourages small businesses to grow. I believe we need to reform the tax code, reduce regulations, lower energy costs, encourage free and fair trade and repeal the Affordable Care Act. America is a country whose people have exceptional talents and skills. America's brighter days are before us. I know we can get back on the right course and build a stronger country for our children and grandchildren.

*"As a rancher, I know how the current administration's policies have affected our industry. Burdensome regulations are choking our businesses; the estate tax makes it difficult to leave our operations to our children; and complicated red tape stymies emergency assistance in times of need."*

- Deb Fischer

## CattleFax Update

On Wed., Sept. 12, agricultural markets traded mixed following the USDA crop production report. Financial markets ended the day higher, while energies traded mixed. Live cattle futures traded more than \$0.60/cwt. higher on the front month contracts and a few cents higher on the deferred contracts. Actively traded feeder cattle futures contracts traded up to \$1/cwt. higher. The CME reported the Feeder Index at \$142.73/cwt., up \$0.07. Boxed beef traded at steady to higher values. Grains traded mixed, but relatively calm for a report day considering the circumstances of the supply uncertainty. Corn futures fell \$0.06 to \$0.11/bu. as 2012 crop production was higher than estimated. Chicago wheat futures fell about \$0.06/bu., while Kansas City wheat futures traded about \$0.08/bu. higher.

For recent market news and analysis, visit [www.CattleFax.com](http://www.CattleFax.com).

## Don't Miss Out on NCBA's Cattlemen to Cattlemen!

Don't miss NCBA's *Cattlemen to Cattlemen* Sept. 18-22. Hear from the experts about treating and controlling Bovine Respiratory Disease. Plus, see how a USDA-funded program is identifying ways to increase feed efficiency in cattle through genomics.

NCBA's *Cattlemen to Cattlemen* debuts each Tuesday at 8:30 p.m. The show also airs Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. and on Saturday at 9 a.m. (all times are Eastern). Don't forget that you can also [watch NCBA's Cattlemen to Cattlemen online](#) anytime by visiting our website. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and become a fan on [Facebook](#).



## Your NCBA

**National Cattlemen September 2012:** The September issue of *National Cattlemen* is now available online. The easy-to-read electronic format allows you to download the PDF version which subscribers can print and share with others before the issue arrives in the mail. *National Cattlemen* is an exclusive NCBA member benefit. [Join today](#) to receive your copy.



## National Cattlemen's Beef Association

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) has represented America's cattle producers since 1898, preserving the heritage and strength of the industry through education and public policy. As the largest association of cattle producers, NCBA works to create new markets and increase demand for beef. Efforts are made possible through membership contributions. To join, contact NCBA at 1-866-BEEF-USA or [membership@beef.org](mailto:membership@beef.org).