



National Cattlemen's Beef Association

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Contacts:

Chase Adams,
cadams@beef.org
202-879-9117

Cristina Llorens,
cllorens@beef.org
202-347-0228

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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Beltway Beef

Cattlemen's Capitol Concerns

EPA Retains Dust Standard

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced last week that it would retain the coarse particulate matter (PM) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS), eliciting a positive response from the [National Cattlemen's Beef Association](#) (NCBA) on behalf of cattle producers across the country.

"NCBA is pleased that EPA has decided to retain the current coarse PM standard and did not make a bad situation worse," said NCBA Deputy Environmental Counsel Ashley McDonald. "Unfortunately, cattle producers did not get the permanent certainty they were seeking in the form of legislation and will again face a

review of this standard within five years. But for today, NCBA is relieved that EPA listened to rural America and realized that further tightening the dust standard would have disastrous effects on America's agricultural economy."

The PM standard, commonly known as the dust standard, remains one of the most important environmental issues facing cattle producers. Under the Clean Air Act (CAA), EPA is required to review the dust standard every five years to evaluate its protection of public health. Despite the lack of any scientific evidence finding any harm to human health from rural dust at ambient levels, agricultural

operations in arid parts of the country have a difficult time attaining compliance with the dust standard at its current level, and must implement costly practices in order to mitigate dust.

"For now, 15 mile-per-hour speed limits on dirt roads, paving dirt and gravel roads and a prohibition on harvesting or tilling during the day are not regulatory requirements in most states, but could easily become a reality if EPA continues to regulate farm dust." McDonald said. "Until legislation is passed by Congress giving cattle producers permanent relief from dust regulations, NCBA will continue to fight EPA's dust standard."

Dr. Lowell Catlett to Provide Keynote Address at NCBA's Cattlemen's College®

Cattlemen and women planning to attend the 20th anniversary of Cattlemen's College® can expect an innovative and educational program during the sessions which will take place Feb. 5-6 in Tampa, Fla., and is sponsored by *Pfizer Animal Health*.

All Cattlemen's College® attendees should look forward to the keynote address on Feb. 6, which will be given by internationally respected futurist Dr. Lowell Catlett, who will educate the audience with his predictions for the long range outlook for the agricultural industry and factors that influence profitability and sustainability of beef cattle production. Catlett is a regent's professor in agricultural economics, agricultural business and extension economics, and is the Dean of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and

Environmental Sciences at New Mexico State University (NMSU). His areas of expertise include marketing economics, futures markets and production economics.

"We are very pleased to have Dr. Catlett joining us for the 20th anniversary of Cattlemen's College®," said [National Cattlemen's Beef Association](#) (NCBA) Executive Director of Producer Education John Paterson. "I guarantee that you will come away from his thought-provoking presentation enthused to be a cattleman."

Catlett is the author of numerous books and articles and won NMSU's highest award to a professor, the Westhafer Award. He works nationally and internationally with corporations and organizations doing futuristic

planning concerning the impacts of technology on careers, lifestyles and the economy. Catlett earned his Bachelor of Science degree from West Texas State, a master's degree from NMSU and a PhD in economics from Iowa State.

Registration for Cattlemen's College® includes all classes along with a two-hour lunch program on Feb. 6. This schedule allows cattlemen to attend up to five 45-minute workshops. Cattlemen's College® registration also includes admission to the Cattle-Fax Outlook Seminar, which will be held on Fri., Feb. 9.

Cattlemen's College® registration information, as well as a complete schedule for the 2013 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show are available at www.beefusa.org.

Victory for Public Land Ranchers in Arizona Lawsuit

The [Public Lands Council \(PLC\)](#), [Arizona Cattle Growers' Association \(ACGA\)](#) and several individual Arizona ranchers announced victory in a recent case where a radical anti-grazing environmental group challenged in court the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) decision to continue livestock grazing on eight Arizona grazing allotments. The challenge was originally filed with the Arizona U.S. District Court by Western Watersheds Project (WWP) in August 2011. PLC, ACGA and two ranchers filed as intervenors in support of USFS and asked the court to grant summary judgment on the eight decisions, which allowed grazing to continue under the "categorical exclusion" parameters of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

On Monday, U.S. District Judge Neil V. Wake ruled in favor of USFS and the defendant intervenors, granting summary judgment on seven of the eight grazing allotments in question. On the eighth allotment he ruled that USFS' documentation of the impacts of grazing was insufficient, and asked the parties to submit proposed forms of judgment by early January. According to PLC Executive Director Dustin Van Liew, the judge's ruling on the seven allotments is a major win for the livestock grazing industry.

"Under 'categorical exclusion' provisions and the protections offered through appropriations language, land management agencies are

able to reauthorize grazing that is simply continuing under existing conditions, and rightfully so," said Van Liew. "Continuing grazing on western lands that, in many cases, have been grazed for more than a century does not constitute a 'major federal action' or fall under the agency's 'extraordinary-circumstances' definition that would require full NEPA review."

ACGA Executive Vice President Patrick Bray said the decision will benefit not just the ranchers in his state, but will potentially have positive west-wide implications.

"Federal land management agencies face a daunting backlog of regulatory paperwork under NEPA which, in the absence of the congressional language allowing for categorical exclusions, threatens ranchers' grazing rights— which could ultimately kill their businesses," Bray said. "With this and other similar challenges across the West, Western Watersheds Project makes a business out of adding burden to already-strained agency resources. Their taxpayer-funded strategy is focused on wiping out livestock grazing along with the families and communities that depend on it."

Van Liew said the livestock industry is "encouraged by this ruling, as it reinforces the rights of ranching families in Arizona and the West."

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. 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.)

H.R. 3098 — Renewable Fuel Standard Elimination Act

To amend the Clean Air Act to repeal the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) renewable fuel program. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on H.R. 3098. Key Sponsor: Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.)

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.

A Look Back at 2012



By J.D. Alexander, NCBA President

NCBA has a lot to be proud of in 2012. We continue to be the trusted leader and definitive voice serving the U.S. beef industry. We continue to successfully represent cattlemen and women in Washington, D.C., making sure that rural America's voice is heard loud and clear. As I look back on this year a few important events come to mind.

One of the highlights of this past year has been the great opportunity I have had to

travel the country and meet so many outstanding cattlemen and women. Over the past several weeks I have been fortunate to have a chance to attend a number of state conventions. Many of them have seen record attendance this year and it has been good to see old friends and make new ones along the way. Over the past several years I have traveled a great deal and attended more state events than I can recall. During that time, what always stands out the most is how strong and how important the state and national partnership is between NCBA and its affiliates. We may face a difficult political environment and challenges from Mother Nature, but because we face them together we have been able to put points on the board for the cattle industry despite those difficulties.

We have seen positive outcomes in many of the regulatory battles we fought this year. The most recent win came in the form of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) decision to retain the current dust standard. It wasn't the permanent solution rural America was hoping for and we'll face another review of the standard within five years, but for now it provides us with a solution. We've seen other important wins in 2012. We were successful in pushing back on the Department of Labor's proposed regulations to limit on-farm labor by our nation's youth. At a time when we need labor and young people need an opportunity to develop a passion for agriculture, it shows just how out of touch many in our government are with the needs of farm and ranch families across the country. Another regulatory victory was on the transportation bill. NCBA secured provisions to give farmers and ranchers relief from CDL and hours of service regulations, and we defeated attempts to criminalize hauling horses on double deck trailers.

Of course trade is a topic that is important to cattlemen. It is extremely refreshing to see more than five years of work on the free trade agreements with Panama, Colombia and South Korea paying off. Agreements with South Korea – the biggest bilateral trade agreement in my lifetime – and Colombia – an essentially untapped market – have been implemented. Also, the United States-Panama Free Trade Agreement (FTA), entered into force in October. This agreement immediately eliminates the 30 percent tariff on prime and choice beef cuts and all other duties will be phased out over the next 15 years.

But just because the year is over does not mean that we will rest on our laurels. As one year ends, another begins, with continuing issues that affect cattle producers. We hope to see a full farm bill in 2013, along with relief from the devastating estate tax. Our policy remains that we seek full and permanent repeal of this outdated, job killing tax. NCBA continues to work with our coalition partners to urge Congress to pass permanent estate tax relief.

Our team in Washington, D.C., is working hard to educate members of Congress and their staff members about the issues that are important to members of both NCBA and our state affiliates. By educating our regulatory agencies and legislators we're able to proactively work against damaging regulations that would hamper our ability to operate our farms and ranches. At the same time, we're able to build alliances that will benefit our members in the future. But it isn't just our staff in Washington, D.C., that can make a difference. By interacting with the district staff of our elected officials cattlemen and women can help educate them and strengthen NCBA's work at the national level.

I encourage all cattlemen and women to attend the [2013 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show](#), Feb. 6-9, in Tampa, Fla. You have a stake in the future of the cattle industry. By attending convention you are making sure your voice heard is in the decisions that shape our industry. Attending the convention is one of the most important investments you can make in your operation.

It has truly been an honor to serve the hardworking men and women of the cattle industry as NCBA president. I will be passing the reins of the organization to Scott George when we gather in Tampa for the convention, but I will continue to work on behalf of this industry and its great people.

CattleFax Update

On Wed., Dec. 19, equities traded softer, energy prices closed higher and agricultural commodities traded mixed. Live cattle futures traded \$0.40 to \$1.50/cwt. higher. Feeder cattle futures closed up around \$1.50/cwt. The CME reported the seven-day average Feeder Index at \$148.36, up \$0.01/cwt. Boxed beef values were uneven, and the Choice-Select spread narrowed to \$17.10/cwt. Corn futures closed more than \$0.16/bu. lower. Soybean futures closed down more than \$0.28/bu. Chicago and Kansas City wheat futures traded more than \$0.03/bu. lower.

For recent market news and analysis, visit www.CattleFax.com.

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

Don't miss a special edition of NCBA's *Cattlemen to Cattlemen* Dec. 25–29. Industry experts discuss strategies for helping farmers and ranchers cope with the impacts of the drought. Plus, learn more about how using feed alternatives can help producers fight the growing cost of traditional feeds.

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

Register Today for the 2013 Cattle Industry Convention: Did you know that your registration for the 2013 Cattle Industry Convention in Tampa, Fla., includes a ticket to the hottest show in town? The Cattlemen's Beach Bash! Wrap up convention with a night filled with great music from the legendary Beach Boys followed by an after party with the Bellamy Brothers. For more information or to register click [here](#) or call 303-694-0305.

NCBA Youth Contests: Helping young people prepare for future leadership roles in agriculture is a key part of ensuring the beef industry continues to be progressive. As part of its role in shaping the future of the cattle industry, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) will host a number of youth contests at the 2013 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show. NCBA encourages all youth interested in agriculture to participate in the NCBA youth contests that will be held Feb. 6-9, 2013, in Tampa, Fla. Visit www.beefusa.org for more information.



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.