

The National Producer

National Livestock Producers Association

Volume 13, No. 5 • November/December 2003

Beefmobile to Reach Grassroots Producers, Consumers

Colorado Springs, CO (Oct. 3, 2003)—Beef producers across the country will soon receive firsthand information about how their beef checkoff dollars are used. The delivery vehicle: a “Beefmobile,” a van emblazoned with beef art that will travel across the United States and visit livestock marketing facilities.

In addition to delivering information to beef producers, the Beefmobile will have a consumer component and whet consumer appetites for beef. As it travels along the nation’s highways, the Beefmobile will serve as a rolling billboard. It will also reach out to consumers at retail stores and food festivals and stop by schools to provide teachers with literature about beef.

The proposal to fund a Beefmobile with checkoff dollars was brought before the Cattlemen’s Beef Board by National Livestock Producers Association.

“The Beefmobile idea began as an outreach program to grassroots producers—those who contribute to the beef checkoff but are not fully informed about how their checkoff dollars are used,” R. Scott Stuart, president and CEO of NLPA, said.

“As a livestock marketing organization, NLPA wanted the everyday beef producer to have direct access to the results of beef checkoff research and promotional information. The Beefmobile means producers will no

longer have to attend a specific meeting to obtain information about their beef checkoff. They can simply stop by the van when they visit their local livestock marketing facility.”

Stuart noted that the consumer component of the project—the stops at supermarkets, food festivals and schools along the way—was added to the Beefmobile to leverage checkoff dollars to the greatest extent possible.

“When the Beefmobile is traveling from one livestock marketing facility to the next, it just made sense to include stops at retail stores, food festivals and schools,” Stuart explained. “The more information producers provide to consumers about beef safety, nutrition and value for their food dollar, the more likely consumers are to purchase beef.”

Funding this innovative, multi-purpose promotional vehicle is the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, which comprises 108 beef producers who oversee the \$1-per-head Beef Checkoff Program.

“Reaching out to grassroots producers who market through livestock marketing facilities is refreshing,” Shawn Madden of Torrington Livestock Market, Torrington, Wyo. said. “These individuals who have

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been contributing to the beef checkoff deserve attention, and this shows a terrific attitude by those who oversee the spending of checkoff dollars. It also seems a wise use of checkoff dollars to use this beefmobile as a tool for consumer promotion," he added.

Under funding approved by the Beef Promotion Operating Committee for fiscal 2004, which began Oct. 1, the Beefmobile will visit 100 livestock marketing facilities and make 100 consumer stops. The Operating Committee left the option open for state beef councils to add to the number of stops in their respective states by providing additional funding when the van is in their area.

Livestock marketing facility owners and managers have expressed excitement about this new beef checkoff project.

Bobby Eslick of Tennessee Livestock Producers, Fayetteville, Tenn., said this type of beef checkoff program has been needed for a long time; and George Gookin of Producers Livestock Marketing Association, Oakdale, Calif., said funding of the Beefmobile is a strong indication that all producers

are considered important to the checkoff.

The Beefmobile will make its debut in mid-January. Beef producers will recognize this rolling billboard by its beef-oriented design and prominent beef checkoff logo.

"As a livestock marketing organization, NLPA wanted the everyday beef producer to have direct access to the results of beef checkoff research and promotional information."

-- **Scott Stuart**
NLPA, CEO

Coordination and promotion of the Beefmobile will be handled by NLPA of Colorado Springs, Colo.,

and Charleston|Orwig of Hartland, Wis., NLPA's marketing communications agency of record.

"Funding of the Beefmobile by the Cattlemen's Beef Board sends a clear message to beef producers," Stuart concluded. "Those overseeing the beef checkoff want all beef producers to know how their checkoff dollars are being used for research and promotion. This effort also allows consumers to receive information emphasizing that beef can be nutritious, safe and a terrific value."

The National Producer

Bi-monthly newsletter of the
National Livestock
Producers Association

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JANUARY 15-17, 2004

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NLCA Purchases Sale Barn in Ada, Okla.

In a time when many livestock auctions are shutting their doors, the National Livestock Commission Association (NLCA) made a bold move by purchasing the Southern Oklahoma Livestock Auction in Ada, Okla.

“So far it has been a very good venture for us,” Jim Reynolds, NLCA’s General Manager, said. “Before we purchased the facility, it was running about 70,000 head through annually. Since NLCA purchased the barn on April 1 we’ve had about 102,000 head through. The barn has been very profitable in these first months.”

The barn was built in 1984, according to Reynolds. At the time there were a few other barns in the area that have since closed. The barn sold 160,000 head annually at its peak performance, but had a few rough years when the numbers started to dwindle.

“The location is in the crossroads of an area that has done a lot of business in the past and should continue to do well with the proper management and solid solicitation skills,” he said.

Ada is a regional market that has customers from southeast Oklahoma, northeast Texas, and southwest Arkansas. The area supports mostly cow/calf business, which creates a majority of the barn’s business selling calves. But the area also supports a number of feeder cattle that are on grass and wheat and NLCA is working to garner some of that business as well, he said.

Reynolds cited solid financing with CoBank as a factor of the barn’s potential.

“CoBank was very cooperative in putting together a finance package on favorable terms – they were very easy to work with,” he said.

The high market has also contributed to the auction’s success.

“We’ve only had three sales where the livestock reporter has reported a down market,” Reynolds said. “We couldn’t ask for a better market to start a new venture like this.”

Eddie Wollenberg manages the market, which employs approximately a dozen people full-time. Stockerfeeder sales are held every Wednesday and cows and bulls are sold on Thursdays.

“We sell 700 to 1,200 head on Thursdays, which is enough to make a second sale day profitable,” he said.

Reynolds said he expected this new operation to complement NLCA’s current business in the Oklahoma City Stockyards.

“We are still the number one firm on the Oklahoma City market, but this new barn gives our customers another marketing option,” Reynolds said. “I am personally excited because I have an



existing customer base in that part of the state that normally comes to Oklahoma City, but now they can do more business closer to home and save in freight, shrink, etc... We can open our doors to even more people. To me the biggest strong point is getting to talk to more customers.”

Finally Reynolds expressed his appreciation to NLCA’s board of directors in supporting the purchase and to Robert York, CEO of National Livestock Credit Corporation.

“Robert lives near Ada and got us excited to talk to the folks who were selling the market. He has also taken care of the books for the auction for the past seven months,” Reynolds said. “We would never have gotten this project put together and make it work without Robert’s help.”



Iowa Lamb Strives to Create Case-Ready Lamb Program

The market for case-ready meat products is becoming more prominent in the sheep industry. Long on shelf life, short on in-store labor, case-ready meat brings advantages to a rising number of regional, local and chain stores across the country.

Iowa Lamb Corporation, a lamb processor located in Hawarden, Iowa, expanded its facilities to help meet the growing demand for case-ready lamb products in the Midwest.

“Case-ready meat products are the way of the future,” according to Bill Brennan, plant manager at Iowa Lamb Corporation. “In the United States, the demand for case-ready meat products is on the rise. There is already a trend in other processing industries to produce ready-for-market products.”

Brennan said he felt the key to the successful integration of case-ready meat products is to educate processors, distributors and consumers about the benefits and features of case-ready products.

“By implementing this case-ready program, Iowa Lamb has increased the demand for lamb production in the Midwest,” he said. “The case-ready program introduces new products to the consumer and allows the grocer to offer more variety.”

Iowa Lamb harvests live lambs and processes them into whole, chilled or frozen carcasses or vacuum packaged subprimals. Before the expansion, these vacuum packaged and boxed subprimals were sold to

retail companies, then portion-cut and packaged by the retail butcher and placed in the display cases. According to Rick Harbaugh, sales representative for Iowa Lamb, with case-ready technology, the entire process is completed in the packing plant.

Iowa Lamb completed its expansion into case-ready production with the help of a low-interest loan from the National Livestock Producers Association’s Sheep & Goat Fund. Harbaugh said the case-ready expansion added 10,000 square feet to the facilities and was launched in January 2002.

“NLPA’s Sheep & Goat Fund has been very helpful; it came at a good time,” Brennan said. “We have been happy to work with NLPA and would recommend the Fund to anyone else in the sheep or goat industry who is considering expanding operations.”

The NLPA Sheep & Goat Fund is a revolving fund established within NLPA to assist the U.S. sheep and goat industries by strengthening and enhancing the production and marketing of sheep and goats and their products in the United States.

Iowa Lamb also used NLPA Sheep & Goat Fund financing to enhance its case-ready capabilities by purchasing an additional state-of-the-art packaging machine. This machine helps address Iowa Lamb’s customer demand for its box sales by significantly increasing Iowa Lambs average daily processing capabilities, Harbaugh said.



IOWA LAMB CORPORATION

Iowa Lamb Corporation has more than 100 employees throughout the harvesting and processing facility; five to 10 were added as a result of the case-ready expansion. According to Kelly Bultman, sales representative for Iowa Lamb, the value-added case-ready program has offered employees added benefits and opportunities through education and training programs, such as HACCP (hazard analysis and critical control point) training, and training on portion control and how to properly cut retail products.

Iowa Lamb Corporation was established in 1983 and is one of the largest lamb processors in the United States, Brennan said. Iowa Lamb is partially owned by lamb producers - there are 13 owner/producers of Iowa Lamb. Another 500 producers in 14 states provide 430,000 live lambs annually. By controlling the product from live lamb to case-ready cuts, the company can give more detailed feedback to its producer-owners.

“With the producers directly involved in the packing company,

continued on page 5 . . .

Iowa Lamb, continued from page 4...

we can give them more detailed information as to the type of lamb to raise, feeding and maintenance requirements and how to ideally determine harvest," Brennan said. "This information allows the producers to improve the consistency of the raw materials in order to satisfy customer demand."

Kaitlyn Bartling, Executive Director for the Iowa Sheep Industry Assn., commended Iowa Lamb Corporation.

"The Iowa Lamb Corporation expansion has been a positive economic attribute for the state of Iowa and the Midwest," Bartling said. "Case ready products keep more of the consumer dollar in Iowa."

The NLPA Sheep & Goat Fund is the result of a joint effort of the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center (NSIIC) and the National Livestock Producers Association (NLPA). The NSIIC made funds available to NLPA, which serves as a liaison and established the Sheep & Goat Fund.

For more information about the NLPA Sheep & Goat Fund, please call 1-800-237-7193 or visit NLPA's web site at www.nlpa.org. Applications are also available online.

By Sally Bush and Melissa Schneider, NLPA Correspondents

Senate Approves Ag Appropriations, Includes Several Key Issues for Livestock Producers

The Senate approved 93-1 the fiscal year 2004 USDA appropriations bill on Nov. 6th. According to AgricultureLaw.com, the \$79.7 billion measure now goes to conference committee where the differences between the House and Senate versions will be reconciled.

The Senate approved the so-called country of origin labeling provision, rejecting a provision in the House version that would halt implementation of the COOL program for red meat for one year. The language supporting continued implementation of mandatory country-of-origin labeling was contained in an amendment offered by Senate Minority Leader Daschle (D-SD) and Sens. Tim Johnson (D-SD) and Michael Enzi (R-WY). The Senate voted 58-36 in favor of COOL and now the COOL section of the appropriations bill.

Scott Stuart, CEO of the National Livestock Producers Association (NLPA), said he was disappointed by this news.

"Country-of-origin labeling is a misguided law that will cost the livestock industry millions of dollars without reasonable evidence that producers will realize tangible benefits," he said. "Our organization is more interested in developing a national animal identification system that can be used more effectively for many of the same purposes and can be tailored to benefit producers in a larger way."

An amendment to prohibit USDA from using any appropriations to

approve downed animals for human consumption was also passed. The downed animal amendment was linked to animals that may be dying from infectious diseases and that present the potential the disease may be spread. Of special concern was bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

This action bypasses the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 which required the Secretary of Agriculture to investigate: (1) the scope of nonambulatory livestock; (2) the causes that render livestock nonambulatory; (3) the humane treatment of nonambulatory livestock; and (4) the extent to which nonambulatory livestock may present handling and disposition problems for stockyards, market agencies and dealers. The slaughter and rendering of all livestock is covered by government inspection. With the passage of this amendment, nonambulatory livestock are to be euthanized immediately and not moved.

"This action goes against the normal legislative process that is in place to determine if these laws are reasonable when put into practice," according to Sam Philips, NLPA's Chairman of the Board. "This ruling makes it impossible for downer livestock to exist without immediate euthanization. This ignores the fact that livestock producers strive to maintain the health of their livestock and avoid downers as much as possible. Such a law will have very little affect on the number of downer cases that occur."

U.S. Animal Health Association Accepts Animal Identification Plan

San Diego, CA (USAIP) – At its 107th Annual Meeting, the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) accepted the draft U.S. Animal Identification Plan (USAIP). The plan defines the standards and framework for implementing a phased-in national food animal and livestock identification program. It was developed

over the past year by 95 individuals representing several industry groups as well as State and Federal animal health officials working collectively as the National Animal Identification Development Team.

The USAHA is a non-profit organization that works with state and federal animal health officials, veterinarians, livestock producers, national livestock and poultry organizations, research scientists, cooperative extension, and seven foreign countries to control livestock diseases in the United States. Acceptance by the USAHA was a crucial step in moving the development of the plan forward.

“We are pleased with the action of the USAHA,” said Robert Fourdraine, co-chair of the National Animal ID Steering Committee. “With USAHA’s acceptance, the next steps of finalizing the Plan may be taken. Specifically, comments on the USAIP are needed from individuals or groups within the

animal agriculture industry and government so the Development Team may address suggestions and concerns as implementation plans are being developed.”



In addition to the comment period, Species Working Groups are being formed to advance the USAIP through development of more precise

details of transition, implementation, and continuity within a timeframe consistent with the goals of the Plan.

“Recognizing the differences in how various species are raised and marketed, these working groups will be vital in developing the steps necessary to transition into a national identification system within the overall standards of the USAIP,” Fourdraine said.

A 60-day comment period, ending Dec. 31, 2003, is now open for all interested individuals and groups to present their input and suggestions. A copy of the Plan is available at www.usaip.info. Comments may be emailed to Communication@USAIP.info, faxed to 719-538-8847, or mailed to USAIP Comments, 660 Southpointe Court, Suite 314, Colorado Springs, CO, 80906.

The National Animal Identification Development Team comprises a diverse group of livestock industry

USAIP General Info:

Three Implementation Phases:

Phase I -- Premises identification

Phase II -- Individual or group/lot identification for interstate and intrastate commerce

Phase III --Retrofitting remaining processing plants and markets and other industry segments with appropriate technology that will enhance the ability to track animals throughout the livestock marketing chain to protect and improve the health of the national herd.

The USAIP currently supports the following species and/or industries: bison, beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, sheep, goats, camelids (alpacas and llamas), horses, cervids (deer and elk), poultry (eight species including game birds), and aquaculture (11 species).

participants including producers, producers organizations, breed associations, marketers, and processors as well as State and Federal animal health officials committed to the goal of developing a standardized national identification system to assist in rapid animal traceback in the event of an animal health emergency.

For more information contact: Scott Stuart, USAIP Communication Subcommittee Co-Chair, 719-538-8843, or email at Communication@USAIP.info.

United Producers, Inc. Introduces New Managed Beef Alliance Program

Columbus, OH (United Producers) – United Producers, Inc. is pleased to introduce their new Managed Beef Alliance (MBA) program. The MBA is a producer-owned, source and process verifiable beef supply network designed to create new marketing opportunities for beef producers of any size.

The Managed Beef Alliance will allow for greater access to higher value domestic and export markets, an increased ability to manage risk and the opportunity to utilize modern technology to improve benchmarking among participants. Improved benchmarking capabilities will also allow producers to create improved production efficiencies resulting in increased profitability for individual producers.

“United Producers is focused on providing new and related services to our members. This innovative beef supply network is an exciting way to improve marketing relationships and meet the consumers demand for safe food,”

said Mike Bumgarner, Vice President, Marketing Services, United Producers, Inc.

“This innovative beef supply network is an exciting way to improve marketing relationships and meet the consumers demand for safe food.”

**-- Mike Bumgarner,
VP, Marketing Services,
United Producers, Inc.**

“United Producers’ Managed Beef Alliance program is consistent with the vision established by the Five State Beef Initiative (FSBI) and utilizes many of the tools that have been developed to strengthen economic opportunities for beef producers in the five state region,” said Ron Lemenager, FSBI Executive Director. “We are fully supportive of responsive production, marketing and information programs, such as MBA, that will add value to beef products that meet consumer demand for safe, quality beef.”

United Producers, Inc. will be working with the contract provider, AginfoLink, for MBA’s data collection and secure data transfer. AginfoLink Global, Inc. is a worldwide company specializing in designing and developing secure, high quality and low-cost traceability tools for the world’s food supply.

United Producers, Inc. serves nearly 70,000 livestock producers throughout the Midwest. Producers Credit Corporation, a wholly owned credit subsidiary, provides financing to farmers for livestock, equipment, crop inputs, facility construction, real estate and other operating needs. Producers Technologies, Inc., another subsidiary, was formed to deliver ancillary services such as risk management, production coordination, marketing agreements, insurance and financial services. United Producers, Inc. was formed in 1934 and is headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. For more information, visit the cooperative’s web site at <http://www.uproducers.com/>

Cattleman's Calculator Introduces New Cost Management Software

Denver (Cattleman's Calculator) – Cattleman’s Calculator, Inc., announced the introduction of a new version of its successful and industry accepted Cattleman’s Calculator livestock cost projection software that can now be used on the popular Palm Powered hand-held computing devices. Using the technological features of the Palm hand-held computing device, the

new Cattleman’s Calculator software program enables cattle ranchers and bankers to make accurate cost calculations about livestock operations in seven program modules: Feedlot Break-Even Costs, Grazing or Pasture Break-Even Costs, Feedlot Profit & Loss, Grazing or Pasture Profit & Loss, Cow Herd Yearly Feed Cost, Cow/Calf Profit & Loss, and Purchase Price.

The new software version for the Palm operates on any Palm, Handspring, or Sony handheld PDA model that has the Palm Pilot Operating System Version 3.3 or higher.

For more information, visit www.cattlemanscalculator.com. NLPA is offering special prices on the Cattleman's Calculator program, visit www.nlpa.org for a price list.

Harold Thompson

Harold W. "Breezy" Thompson, 80, Mound City, Mo. died on May 21, 2003. He was born July 30, 1922 in Forest City. He is survived by his wife, Bette, a son and daughter-in-law, James and Lisa Thompson of Mound City and a grandson, Monty James Thompson of Mound City.

A lifelong resident of Holt County, he lived in the Bellevue community more than 30 years. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He loved farming and his horses. He was very active in Producers Livestock Marketing Association on the St. Joseph livestock market and served on the board of directors for 40 years. He served 11 years as chairman of the board for St. Joseph and Omaha Producers and 10 years as president of the National Livestock Producers Association. Memorials may be made to Shriners' Hospital for Children.



**Harold
Thompson**

James McPhaul

The National Livestock Producers Association would like to extend its deepest condolences to Scharee Atchison, NLPA's Director of Member Services, on the loss of her father, James "Evander" McPhaul. Mr. McPhaul passed away on Oct. 19, 2003 in Fort Collins, Colo.

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