

Beefmobile Debuts, Whets Appetite for Beef

Colorado Springs, Colo. (NLPA) – The Beef Checkoff Program’s new “Beefmobile” made its industry debut on Friday, Jan. 16, 2004 at the National Livestock Producers Association annual meeting in Phoenix, Ariz. After its inaugural run to various California livestock marketing facilities and retail stores, the Beefmobile will return to Phoenix for the Cattle Industry Convention, Jan. 28-31.

“It seems appropriate to introduce this new promotional vehicle at NLPA’s annual meeting, considering that NLPA is the organization that brought this concept to the Cattlemen’s Beef Board and is managing the project for the industry,” said Andy Tucker, chairman of the Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion and Research Board, which is funding the Beefmobile.

Tucker said producers can also get a chance to see the Beefmobile at the Cattlemen’s Beef Board booth during the trade show at the cattle industry’s annual meeting in Phoenix.

R. Scott Stuart, president and CEO of NLPA, said livestock marketing facilities and retail stores that have

been contacted to date are embracing the Beefmobile as a way for the checkoff to reach out to grassroots producers with information about the checkoff program and to consumers with information about beef and beef products.

Stuart also acknowledged state beef councils and American National CattleWomen members who are taking an active role in providing information during Beefmobile visits.

“Funding for the Beefmobile covers 100 visits to livestock marketing facilities and 100 stops at retail stores,” Stuart said. “Many state beef councils are helping identify target states and stops. We are taking every step possible to maximize exposure of the Beefmobile and spend beef checkoff dollars most efficiently.”

The goal of the Beefmobile, Stuart said, is to reach out to as many producers as possible, sharing information about checkoff-funded research and promotion efforts aimed at building beef demand. Another goal is to provide consumers with the information they want about beef safety, nutrition and value.

Beef producers unable to attend the Cattle Industry Convention in Phoenix should watch for the Beefmobile

continued on page 2 .



Scott Stuart, NLPA CEO; Scharee Atchison, NLPA's Director of Member Services; Raemarie Gordon, Beefmobile Wrangler and JackHanson, NLPA's new Chairman with the Beefmobile.

What's Inside?

- "Wrangler" Hired to Promote Checkoff 2
- NLPA, LMA Respond to USDA's Downer Policy .. 3
- Karoo Genetics Works to Improve Sheep Herd . 4
- Hanson, Bergquist to Lead NLPA in 2004. 5
- Animal ID Moves into the Limelight 6

Beefmobile "Wrangler" Hired to Share Checkoff Information

RaeMarie Gordon of Parker, Colo., a graduate of Colorado State University and a fourth-generation rancher, has been hired by National Livestock Producers Association as the Beefmobile Wrangler.

In addition to driving the beef checkoff-funded Beefmobile across the country, RaeMarie will share beef checkoff-generated promotional and research information with producers at livestock marketing facilities and beef nutrition and safety information and recipes with consumers at retail stores.

"RaeMarie has a degree in animal science with a beef industry

concentration and is passionate and knowledgeable about the beef industry," R. Scott Stuart, NLPA's president and chief executive officer, said. "She is highly qualified and will have the required training so she can serve the beef checkoff well during her travels as the Beefmobile Wrangler."

"I am excited to meet producers who primarily market their cattle through livestock market facilities and contribute with other producers to the beef checkoff," RaeMarie said. "Each dollar they contribute helps fund projects aimed at increasing demand for beef and beef products. The checkoff is designed to further improve our product and help create

a more favorable business climate for producers."

RaeMarie said she is also anxious to interact with consumers and provide them with beef recipes, information about beef nutrition and safety and various promotional items.

"The more consumers know about beef, the more likely they are to purchase and consume beef," she said.



The National Producer

Bi-monthly newsletter of the National Livestock Producers Association

Jack Hanson
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Keith Bergquist
Vice Chairman of the Board

Staff:

R. Scott Stuart
President & CEO

Scharee Atchison
Director of Member Services
& Corporate Secretary

Contact Us At:

National Livestock Producers Association
660 Southpointe Court, Suite 314
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
Telephone: (719) 538-8843
Toll-free: (800) 237-7193
Fax: (719) 538-8847
Web site: www.nlpa.org
Email: nlpa@nlpa.org

Prepared by Paige One Promotions

Beefmobile, cont. from page 1 . . .

in their local auction markets or on the nation's highways, where it will serve as a rolling billboard for the beef industry between stops, Stuart said.

"The design of the Beefmobile makes my mouth water, as it loudly and clearly shouts 'Beef. It's what's for dinner'," stated Lee McCoy, regional manager, Southeast AgNet Radio Network. "The design is positive, direct and classy, and it will definitely whet consumer appetites for beef."

Trent Loos with Faces of Agriculture, Loup City, Neb., agreed, stressing that the Beefmobile's design "puts our product front and center. Beef producers can take pride in having a vehicle traveling U.S. highways

that is labeled 'America's Beef Producers' and displays the Beef Checkoff logo on all sides," Loos said. "The message is clearly conveyed that beef producers feed people."

Funding for the promotional vehicle comes from producers through the Cattlemen's Beef Board, the 108 producers who oversee the \$1-per-head Beef Checkoff Program. Under checkoff funding approved for fiscal 2004, the Beefmobile will visit 100 livestock marketing facilities and make 100 consumer stops.

Coordination and promotion of the Beefmobile are handled by National Livestock Producers Association of Colorado Springs, Colo.

NLPA, LMA Respond to USDA's New "Downer" Policy

The recent finding of a single BSE-positive cow found in Washington State in December 2003 has resulted in new policies concerning non-ambulatory or "downer" cattle.

Ann Veneman made the following statement to the House Agriculture Committee on Jan. 21, 2004.

"On December 30th, one week after the find, I announced a series of actions to further enhance our already strong safeguards. These included an immediate ban on non-ambulatory, or so-called "downer" animals, from the food system and further restrictions on what we call specified risk materials – such as brain and spinal cord tissue – from entering the food supply. We also announced that meat from cattle tested for BSE will be held until the test is confirmed negative – so-called "test and hold" policy. These measures were published on January 12th as interim final rules."

After consulting with the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) regarding the markets' legal responsibility in accepting or handling cattle that become non-ambulatory at the market, National Livestock Producers Association (NLPA) and Livestock Marketing Association (LMA) developed sample letters for marketing facilities to share with consignors, truckers and buyers.

The USDA has defined non-ambulatory as disabled and unable to stand, walk or rise on their own. This ban is effective immediately

and, as a result, marketing facilities cannot permit non-ambulatory cattle to be off-loaded nor can they be sold for slaughter.

The sample letter states that, "For those cattle that go down after entering the market and assuming the market hasn't done anything to cause the animal to go down, USDA's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration has advised us that the consignor of that animal retains title to that animal until the gavel goes down and thus any cost associated with euthanasia and disposal of the animal is borne by the consignor."

The letter also suggests that consignors, truckers and buyers consult their local veterinarian and/or extension agent for advice on good husbandry practices to prevent injury or conditions that may weaken or cause livestock to become non-ambulatory.

"If the animal goes down after the gavel falls, the risk transfers to the buyer and again, assuming the market has not done anything to cause the animal to go down, the buyer is responsible for any cost associated with euthanasia or disposal of the animal," Scott Stuart, NLPA CEO, said.

NLPA and LMA suggest that prior to disposition of an animal that goes down in a facility, market operators attempt to contact the animal's owner to determine what disposition to be made of the animal, i.e. euthanized and disposed

of, or arrangements made to have the animal returned to the farm or ranch. If contact cannot be made by the close of sale day, the animal should be properly and humanely euthanized and disposed of, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and the animal's owner will be billed for any associated cost.

"While this letter represents the consignor and buyer's legal liability under the Packers and Stockyards Act and regulations, we realize that ultimately your relationship with your customers will determine what course of action you may take as a business owner in the event an animal becomes non-ambulatory at your facility," Stuart said. "Thus, market operators may wish to adapt this letter to your particular circumstance. It may be worth noting however that faced with their legal liability in this regard, consignors may be more cautious about marketing animals in a weakened or semi-debilitated state."

For more information regarding USDA's non-ambulatory policy or the sample letter, please contact NLPA at 800-237-7193.



**NLPA Sheep & Goat
Fund Applications are
available online!**

Visit the NLPA Web site at
www.nlpa.org
or call
1-800-237-7193

Karoo Genetics Works to Improve the U.S. Sheep Herd One Embryo at a Time

Named after the semiarid region of South Africa that is the birthplace of Dorper sheep and Boer goats, Karoo Genetics has become a producer of superior genetics (sheep, embryos, artificial insemination, and semen) for sale to an international market.

Dr. Chris Visser grew up on an extensive sheep farming operation in South Africa and came to the United States in 1980. After a year in New Jersey, Visser ended up in Scottsdale where he is a veterinarian who specializes in animal dentistry.

"Karoo Genetics started out as a hobby, but has grown into a full-scale operation," Visser said. Visser works with his wife, Dr. Ann Young-Visser, a physician, and their son, Christo Visser, who is the full-time ranch manager.

Karoo Genetics, based in Scottsdale, Ariz., was founded in 1995 for the

purpose of bringing top quality meat sheep genetics to the North American sheep industry. The company's primary focus has been the importation and production of Dorper sheep.

"Dorper/White Dorper sheep are an ideal breed for the North American industry," Visser said. "This breed produces animals that are very hardy, highly adaptable to different climates, nonselective grazers and year-round breeders."

"There has been a growing interest in this breed amongst U.S., Canadian, and Mexican sheep breeders, both as a primary breed and to use for crossing with their existing sheep to improve flock meat production," Visser said.

Karoo Genetics started by importing embryos from South Africa via Canada to develop a base flock. The company's

customers include both stud and commercial sheep breeders.

"Our customers are interested in improving their existing flock's meat production and quality and are attracted to the Dorper breed's hardiness and natural shedding - obviating the expense of shearing."

In 2000, Karoo Genetics moved its base flock and operations to Willcox, Ariz., in order to expand. About 250 ewes call the 155-acre ranch home.

"The business plan now includes both natural breeding, artificial insemination and embryo programs to increase flock size and sales of both Dorper animals and genetics," Visser said. "We have both Dorper, or black-headed, and White Dorper sheep available, thus meeting the needs of buyers with different preferences for their flocks."

continued on page 5



Karoo Genetics specializes in Dorper and White Dorper sheep genetics, such as the two rams shown above.



A few Dorper sheep graze on Karoo Genetic's ranch in Willcox, Ariz.

Hanson, Bergquist to Lead NLPA in 2004

Colorado Springs, Colo. (NLPA) – The National Livestock Producers Association elected Jack Hanson of Susanville, Calif., as their new chairman of the board.

The NLPA Board of Directors held their annual meeting in Phoenix, Jan. 15-17, 2004. Hanson represents Tri-state Livestock Credit Corporation in Sacramento, Calif. Also, Keith Bergquist, who represents Producers Livestock Marketing Assn. in Omaha, was elected as NLPA's vice chairman.

"This is an exciting time to serve as NLPA's Chairman," Hanson said. "The Beefmobile contract and our role in the development of an animal ID program bode well for NLPA's future. I am looking

forward to working with NLPA's capable and dedicated staff."

The board also elected John Frank, National Livestock Commission Association in Oklahoma City, Okla., and Rick Lovell, Producers Livestock Marketing Association in N. Salt Lake, as new members of the Executive Committee.

The Board also welcomed Robert Bergsten to their ranks. Bergsten is the President and CEO of Tri-state Livestock Credit Corporation.

Members of the board honored out-going chairman Sam Philips on Friday, Jan. 16. Philips served five terms as NLPA's Chairman. He represents Producers Livestock Marketing Association in Omaha.



Jack Hanson presents Sam Phillips with a plaque in honor of his five years of service to NLPA as Chairman of the Board.

"Sam has lead NLPA through some difficult issues and was key to many positive developments for the organization," Hanson said. "He has been a good leader and we appreciate all that he has done for NLPA."

Karoo Genetics, continued from page 4 . . .

According to Visser, of the ranch's 155 acres, about 140 acres are irrigated and the ranch is almost self-sufficient with its forage production. Visser said that his goal is to grow the operation to 500 ewes and to continue to produce the best genetics possible for the North American market.

"This year we plan to begin importing new genetics from South Africa via Australia," he said. "These are superior animals and we will import both live animals and the embryos and semen to improve our herd."

Visser credited some of Karoo Genetic's success to the National Livestock Producers Sheep & Goat Fund. The loan with the Sheep &

Goat Fund was established about 18 months ago and has been used to further develop the ranch and to enhance the embryo program.

"The NLPA Sheep & Goat Fund has been a tremendous asset in helping our business grow," Visser said. "Without the Fund, Karoo Genetics had about 15 ewes in its embryo program, but with it, we have 50 ewes in the program."

Visser has been instrumental in bringing the Dorper breed to North America and was cofounder of the American Dorper Sheep Breeder Association.

Karoo Genetics has also donated Dorper rams to several universities

including, Wyoming, Texas A & M and Chico, Calif., to be utilized in research crossbreeding programs designed to improve USA meat sheep carcass quality.

"Given the decline in the American sheep industry due to multiple economic and both internal and external industry forces, Karoo Genetics sees the future of the American Sheep industry as one which must promote and produce high quality meat for the market in order to remain viable," Visser said.

For more information on Karoo Genetics, please call 480-994-3909, email at KarooGenetics@cox.net or visit their website at www.karooGenetics.com.

Animal ID Moves into the Limelight Since BSE Discovery

When "Mad Cow" disease was found in a 6 1/2 year-old dairy cow in Washington state on Dec. 24th, 2003, the whole industry braced itself for change.

One immediate result of the situation was Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman's announcement calling for the immediate implementation of a national animal ID system. Thankfully, many livestock organizations have been developing an animal identification plan over the past few years.

The National Livestock Producers Association (NLPA) took the stance four years ago to support the development of a cost-effective, industry-friendly animal identification system. NLPA recognized that animal identification can be an important tool to help control such outbreaks and protect the livestock industry's domestic and foreign markets.

When Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman called for the immediate implementation of a national ID system, NLPA was ready.

Since 2002, NLPA has been an active member in the National Animal Identification Development Team. This team comprises a diverse group of livestock industry participants including producers, producer organizations, breed associations, marketers, and processors as well as State and Federal animal health officials committed to the goal of developing a standardized national identifi-

cation system to assist in rapid animal traceback regarding an animal health emergency.

"Maintaining the health of the U.S. herd is the most urgent issue for the industry and animal health officials to address, and therefore, is the most significant focus of the U.S. Animal Identification Plan," according to Scott Stuart, NLPA CEO and USAIP Communications Committee Co-chair.

The U.S. Animal Identification Plan (USAIP) defines the standards and framework for implementing and maintaining a phased-in national animal identification system for the United States. The plan has the following objectives:

- National animal identification will enhance disease preparedness
- ID will help gain market access and increase consumer demand
- Promote continued confidence in animal products
- Will reduce the financial and social impacts of animal health events

According to Stuart, the goal of the National Identification System is to have the capability to identify all premises that had direct contact with a foreign animal disease (FAD) within 48 hours after discovery.

Communications

The USAIP Committee members were prepared for the events on Dec. 24th. The committee has provided information through



internal communications among industry members and external communications through its website, news releases and fact sheets.

"Committee members have been answering questions from the Associated Press, Washington Post, National Public Radio, and CBS news, among other news sources," Stuart said.

Comments Needed

Even before Dec. 24th, the USAIP's Communications Committee has been busy collecting comments in regard to their drafted program.

Stuart, who is responsible for receiving and tracking all of the comments, said he has received more than 1,200 comments so far.

"We are appreciative of the fact that so many people have submitted their comments," Stuart said. "So far most of the comments have been in regard to the horse, goat, llama and alpaca industries because these are the areas of the draft program that are the least developed."

continued on page 7 . . .

Baker Family Receives Honors in 2003

Dean Baker and his sons - David, Craig and Tom - won the Nevada Rancher of the Year award for their the utilization and care of the natural resources on their farm/ranch, which straddles the Nevada-Utah border. Baker said that about five years ago they won the same award from the State of Utah.



Dean Baker

The award was given by the Nevada Bureau of Land Management & Forest Service, the Nevada Farm Bureau, Nevada State Extension, at the Nevada Cattlemen's Association's Convention in November 2003.

Together, Baker and his sons, farm approximately 2,000 acres of corn, alfalfa and barley. The family also runs approximately 2,000 cows that summer on private irrigated meadows and winter on deserts. The operation also includes a warm-up feedyard with a 3,000+ capacity. The ranch has been in the Baker family since 1959.

Baker was also honored for his many years of work on the Nevada Tax Commission when Nevada governor, Kenny Guinn, designated Oct. 30, 2003 as "Dean Baker Day."

Baker, and his wife, Barbara, live in Baker, Nevada. Baker represents Producers Livestock Marketing Association, N. Salt Lake, Utah, on the board of the National Livestock Producers Association.

PLMA-Utah Hires Fryer as Broker

Producers Livestock Marketing Association in N. Salt Lake Utah hired Jim Fryer as Commodity Broker at Producers Commodities in Greeley, Colo.

Fryer, who began working for Producers in July, not only works directly with Chicago to conduct trade, he also analyzes risk positions of producers seeking financing, and he discusses market situations and potential with producers.

Fryer grew up on several commercial cow-calf operations in Montana and Wyoming. He graduated from Colorado State University in 1999 with a double major in Animal Science and Agricultural Economics. He recently received his masters in Agricultural Economics from CSU. He lives in Ault, Colo.

Animal ID, continued from page 6

The committee extended the comment period to Jan. 31, 2004. All interested individuals or groups within the animal agriculture industry and government are invited to provide needed input to the on-going development of the USAIP.

Species working groups are being formed to provide needed detail. The group is also looking to solve issues regarding the cost of an animal identification system, who will cover the costs associated with a program, and the security of data.

A copy of the Plan may be downloaded at www.USAIP.info or a hard copy is available by calling (301) 734-5571. Comments, suggestions and questions on the USAIP may be submitted via the web at www.USAIP.info; faxed to 719-538-8847; or mailed to USAIP Comments, 660 Southpointe Court, Suite 314, Colorado Springs, CO, 80906.

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

PLMA Employees Receive Honors

Three employees at Producers Livestock Marketing Association's auction barn in Madera, Calif., received local awards this fall.

Jeanne Todisco, weighmaster, was named the Cattlewoman of the Year by the Madera County Cattlemen's Assn. (MCCA). MCCA also named Al Philp, yard backman, the Cowboy of the Year. Also, Betsy Noel, office clerk, won the carcass contest at the Madera County Fair this year. Good job guys!

Please Support the Beefmobile!



The National Livestock Producers Association's Board of Directors (shown above) hopes that you will help support the Beefmobile by attending any stops that it makes in your area at either marketing facilities or retail stores.

For more information about the Beefmobile's schedule, please call 1-800-237-7193.

What do you
need in your life?



Every day, Mutual of Omaha helps millions of people like you feel more secure about tomorrow. We offer insurance products that help protect your income, assets and lifestyle. And our business planning services can help you ensure a financially sound future.

NLPA members have access to a variety of Mutual of Omaha products and services - many with reduced rates or enhanced benefits not available to the general public. Call Mutual of Omaha at (800) 223-6927 for more information.

Begin today.



AEN 51576



National Livestock Producers Association
660 Southpointe Court, Suite 314
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80906
(719) 538-8843
www.nlpa.org