



July 26, 2011

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA) and National Farmers Union (NFU) want to thank you for meeting with our representatives last week respective to the recent controversy surrounding the beef checkoff. The discussion was constructive and helpful.

After conferring with you, as well as a number of other national cattle, farm & marketing groups, NFU and USCA have decided, in light of the controversy surrounding the national, mandatory beef checkoff, that we will proceed with plans to host an industry-wide meeting on the beef checkoff. It is our intention to seek consensus on the divisive issues that are eroding investor trust and confidence in the beef checkoff and thereby threatening the very future of the program.

The upcoming Farm Bill process in Congress presents an excellent legislative opportunity to make enhancements to the beef checkoff. The planned industry-wide meeting will provide an opportunity for an agreement within the cattle industry on amending the Beef Promotion Act and Order to achieve the changes necessary for meaningful reform of the program.

While it is our hope that the Cattlemen's Beef Board's (CBB) meeting next week in Florida is a productive, positive one resulting in adoption of the proposed "Roles and Responsibilities" recommendations, we believe the time has come for an expanded cattle industry-wide discussion of the checkoff that will go beyond the policy changes being addressed by the CBB next week at their meeting in Florida.

As details of the industry-wide meetings are confirmed, we will keep you informed. We are counting on USDA's involvement in these industry meetings to ensure compliance with federal requirements and we look forward to working with you to make the Beef Checkoff Program the dynamic, robust program that checkoff investors want and deserve.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Wooster".

Jon Wooster
President
U.S. Cattlemen's Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Johnson".

Roger Johnson
President
National Farmers Union