



Jon Wooster

## FROM THE **COW BOSS**

Welcome to USCA. First and foremost I want to explain to everyone that this is an organization run by cattle producers. Because we are cattle producers, our operations come first and our volunteer efforts come after that. Now this may seem a little backwards to you, but it is exactly what makes our organization strong and credible.

We know what the problems are in the country, and we spend a lot of time in our own businesses trying to anticipate what our problems will be in the future. And we aren't forgetting what our problems were in the past because they hit

us right in the pocketbook and they are branded in our mind just like they are branded in our checkbook and on our loans at the bank.

When we send representatives to Washington, D.C. and they shake hands with Senators, Congressmen, Congressional aides and employees at the USDA, those people notice that the hands are calloused and used to work. Those people realize that our representatives are out in the country earning a living from raising cattle, and they respect our drive to make the extra effort to try to improve our industry and regain the economic viability that will sustain it. We have credibility.

One of my friends told me a few years ago, if you aren't going to do it, you can't expect anyone else to do it for you. That struck me as so true. Please help us make the cattle business stronger. Please give us what you can. A little time or a

*continued on page 2*

## A Checkoff 'Reality Check'

By Jim Hanna

The drums are starting to rumble in cattle country about making changes to the 20 plus year old Beef Checkoff program, especially about raising the \$1/head fee that you and I pay every time we sell a critter. Those supporting a 100% increase to \$2 on every sale, are trying to soften the sell by assuring producers that they will have a final say (vote) on any increase. I say let's step back for a moment and look at some realities.

Congress could, in fact, amend the Beef Promotion and Research Act of 1985 (the Act) to include the increase without polling producers. This seems a little unlikely however, given the fact that 85-90% of them (producers) don't support the increase without including

other significant modifications to the program.

Currently, the established process for a referendum (vote) on the Checkoff only allows for an up-or-down vote on the entire program. Congress would have to modify the Act in order to provide for approval or disapproval on individual amendments. One national organization who, by the way, handles nearly all of your checkoff dollars through the contracting process, and their state affiliates, are considering supporting the increase with the caveat that there would



*continued on page 4*

## The Wheel Team

### President

*Jon Wooster, San Lucas, CA  
831-385-5316*

### Director Emeritus Lifetime Appointment

*Leo McDonnell, Columbus, MT  
406-332-5597*

### Region 1

*Lee Engelhardt, Moses Lake, WA  
509-766-0161*

### Region 3

*Chase Carter, Clayton, NM  
505-374-2052*

### Region 4

*Doug Zalesky, Hesperus, CO  
970-259-7118*

### Region 5

*Chuck Kiker, Beaumont, TX  
409-842-5070*

### Region 6

*Dennis McDonald, Melville, MT  
406-537-2333*

### Region 7

*Jim Hanna, Brownlee, NE  
308-748-2233*

### Region 8

*Alan Sents, Marquette, KS  
620-241-7283*

### Region 10

*Danni Beer, Keldron, SD  
605-524-3383*

### Region 12

*Jay Miller, Washington, VA  
540-675-1674*

### Affiliate Council

*Bruce Dopslauf, LaGrange, TX  
979-247-4255*

### Washington D.C.

*Jess Peterson  
202-870-3867*

little money from a lot of people can make a big difference. Just working together to keep constant representation of our issues in Washington, D.C. will have a huge beneficial effect on our industry.

Speaking of a "little time," I would like to thank the people in this organization who have given a lot more than a little time to get this group off the ground. We have a dedicated board and each and every one of them have worked a lot of extra hours to put this group together. It just seems that they all understand one another and are a generous lot. When one board member is calving or feeding hay, another board member is willing to step in and pick up the slack. It's like working with one big generous family with a common goal and it is certainly a rewarding experience.

We also have many members whose

unselfish contribution of countless hours, have helped us on numerous issues. Judie Manuel, Lyle Peterson and Dort Goodman deserve a huge round of applause for jumping on membership like it was a new full-time job. And we know that there are many more people just like them waiting out there to do something. If you want to be more involved, email us, write us, call us, join the Horn Wrap call, or send us a check. If we don't answer, call us again. Hopefully we don't drop the ball, but once in a while there is a cow in the road and we get side-tracked.

Jess Peterson, "our guy" in D.C., sent out a New Year's email suggesting that you do something good for the cattle business in 2008 by joining USCA or by signing up your neighbor. Let's all make that a resolution. Best wishes for this New Year.

### in this ISSUE...

From the Cow Boss.....	1
A Checkoff Reality.....	1
Country Connection.....	5
USCA Testifies Before ITC.....	6
Cattle Call to Arms.....	7
Danni Beer on COOL.....	8
Affiliate Corner.....	10
USCA Washington DC Fly-in.....	12
USCA Annual Meeting.....	12
USCA Resolutions.....	13
Coming Events.....	16



# THE HORN WRAP

The Horn Wrap call is sponsored by USCA and is for non-members and members. It is an informal call held the first and third Tuesdays of every month at 7:00 AM Mountain Time.

Join Jess Peterson to discuss issues facing the cattle industry. Guest speakers on occasion will be asked to participate.

Just call 785-686-2400 then enter the access code 032007#. Join us early in the call as lines might not be available. Please email us at [usca@uscattlemen.org](mailto:usca@uscattlemen.org) if you have any problems getting on the call.

## USCA Founding Memberships

USCA has three different levels of membership:

- Founding Member - \$1000
- Cattle Producer - \$100/year
- Business Member - \$100/year
- College Student - \$25/year
- Junior Member - \$25/year

To all USCA Founding Members a huge

THANK YOU! If you aren't a Founding Member but would like to be, you may make payments to USCA to become one. Payments need to be fully made one year after you first joined USCA; just make a note on your check to let our Treasurer know. Founding Memberships will end June 1, 2008.

## USCA Committees

USCA has formed committees that will address the issues facing the cattle industry such as: COOL, Animal ID, Animal Health, Trade, Competition, and Checkoff. USCA also has a Membership Committee.

As an USCA member, you are welcome to join any committee. USCA welcomes your input and needs your help in driving this organization. Just let us know if you are interested by emailing [usca@uscattlemen.org](mailto:usca@uscattlemen.org)

## Welcome New Affiliates

USCA is pleased and proud to welcome its three newest affiliates:

- Montana Cattlemen's Association
- Southern Colorado Livestock Association
- Beartooth Stock Association, Columbus, MT

Thank you from USCA



P.O. Box 339 San Lucas, California 93954 email: usca@uscattlemen.org

### MEMBERSHIP - DONATION FORM

*PURPOSE STATEMENT*

*The purpose of the United States Cattlemen's Association (USCA) is to present an effective voice for the United States cattle industry. USCA is dedicated to, and focused on, efforts in Washington, D.C. to further the interests of cattle producers on mandatory country of origin labeling, international trade, market competition, reform of the mandatory beef checkoff, animal health, welfare and identification, private property rights and other issues that affect the United States cattle industry.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Ranch Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Own cattle:  Yes  No

Tribal Member:  Yes  No

Founding Member \$1000.00

College Student \$25.00 (school \_\_\_\_\_)

Cattle Producer \$100.00

Junior \$25.00 (age 18 & younger)

Business Member \$100.00

Donation Only \_\_\_\_\_ (I do not wish to become a member at this time)

Amount Submitted \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Only members owning cattle have voting rights. One member - one vote.

*Contributions are not deductible as a charitable contribution, but may be deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense.*

Please mail completed form along with your check to our Treasurer at:

**United States Cattlemen's Association**

P.O. Box 339

San Lucan, CA 93954

*Your Support Is Appreciated!*

*A Checkoff Reality, From Page 1*

be a vote, but only a one time vote on the increase only. No other amendments would be allowed and no other votes would take place. If they win, they win, if they lose, it's a push and we all know nobody gives those kinds of odds.

It may be such that if the Act was amended, it could be construed that it was no longer the same thing producers had supported in 1986 and any amendments would trigger an up-or-down vote on the whole program. Then you have to get enough votes to re-initiate the pro-

gram, which with the increase may be tough. In this scenario, I think you put the whole Checkoff in pretty serious jeopardy.

The United States Cattlemen's Association (USCA) believes it is time to re-examine the Beef Checkoff; however, a number of other priorities have been indicated by producer surveys. Priorities such as specifically promoting products from animals born and raised in the U.S., including a periodic mandatory referendum and restructuring the rela-

tionship between the Cattlemen's Beef Board, the Federation of State Beef Councils and the largest Checkoff contractor, the policy driven National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

The USCA invites you to join us in our efforts to make the Checkoff more responsive to those who fund it. For information on our Checkoff policies and initiatives, check out our website at: [www.uscattlemen.org](http://www.uscattlemen.org) and click on the "Checkoff Library".



P.O. Box 339 San Lucas, California 93954 email: [usca@uscattlemen.org](mailto:usca@uscattlemen.org)

### Support the U.S. Cattle Producer and Support a U.S. Product!

Dear Members of the United States Congress:

We are seeking an amendment to the Beef Promotion Act that will allow a portion of the Beef Checkoff dollars collected from U.S. cattle producers, to be used in the specific promotion of products derived from cattle that are born, raised and processed in the United States.

We, the undersigned cattle producers, encourage you to support the U.S. cattle industry!

Print Name	Signature	I own cattle: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Address	City	State
	Zip	Telephone
		email
Print Name	Signature	I own cattle: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Address	City	State
	Zip	Telephone
		email
Print Name	Signature	I own cattle: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Address	City	State
	Zip	Telephone
		email
Print Name	Signature	I own cattle: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Address	City	State
	Zip	Telephone
		email

Return completed form to: USCA, P.O. Box 339, San Lucas, California 93954

Form circulated by: \_\_\_\_\_

# COUNTRY CONNECTION

With  
**Jess Peterson**

## Country Common Sense Crossing Over to the Capitol!

The United States is a country built upon the hard work and sacrifice of individuals working together to achieve great things. One of my favorite lines of inspiration comes from a speech we all know;

*The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.* (Gettysburg Address, President Abraham Lincoln November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1863)

Granted President Lincoln spoke these words at a battleground in honor of lives lost and I would not try to link the struggle of American agriculture to the loss of human life, but I will say his vision, a vision of a united message being delivered in a noble manner is certainly one that the United States Cattlemen's Association is striving towards. Noble men and women died so that America can carry out a government by the people and for the people. It's with that in mind that USCA takes pride in being involved in Washington D.C.- participation in daily Hill and industry meetings, along with events, press conferences, and fly-ins- all a part of the process known as democracy in action.

The past few months have been busy. I have had the opportunity to balance meetings in the countryside and meetings in Washington D.C. A special thanks to the Cattle Producers of Washington (CPoW), the Independent Beef Association of North Dakota (I-BAND), and the Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas (ICA) for their generous hospitality at state meetings. I had the opportunity to attend and speak at these meetings, and more importantly – listen to folks at these meetings. I was impressed with involvement of these groups at both the state and national level. CPoW is very engaged in the animal ID discussions along with addressing the Canadian imports of cattle. I-BAND is very con-

cerned about a potential increase in the beef checkoff assessment. They were adamant that key changes need to be made to the checkoff before there is any attempt to increase the assessment. ICA is literally knee deep in addressing the fever tick problem, and I have learned a great deal about the plight of the Texas cattle industry as they battle fever ticks and its financial burden. It was an eye-opener for me, and since then USCA has increased its involvement on raising awareness for this issue and urging the USDA to increase fever tick eradication funding. If this problem is not dealt with in a timely fashion, this will soon become a national problem. All three groups did an outstanding job of signing up folks in support of changing the beef checkoff to promote US beef. Furthermore, these groups are teaming up with other states advancing the Farm Bill and blocking USDA's proposed rule to increase beef trade with Argentina, despite Argentina's known foot and mouth disease (FMD) problem.

It is with much gratification that I thank CPoW, I-BAND, ICA, Colorado Independent Cattle Growers Association, Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska, Montana Cattlemen's Association, New Mexico Cattle Growers, Kansas Cattlemen's Association, Mississippi Livestock Markets along with the American Agri-Women, Western Organization of Resource Councils, Women Involved in Farm Economics, the National Farmers Union along with several county and state cattle and farm groups for letters, meetings, and press regarding the team effort of advancing a Farm Bill that contains the proper provisions for cattle producers along with urging USDA to recall its proposed beef trade rule with Argentina.....*dedicated here to the unfinished work which ... thus far so nobly advanced.....*With a line-up of groups and committed individuals we can and will succeed on these issues!

A perfect example of this was the recent "USCA Line in the Sand Fly-In 2008".



Participants included: USCA Director Emeritus, Leo McDonnell, Columbus, MT; Patrick Becker, President, Independent Beef Association of North Dakota (I-BAND); Chris Abbott, President, Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska (ICON); Chuck Sylvester, former general manager of the National Western Stock Show and member Colorado Independent CattleGrowers Association, LaSalle, Colorado; Roni Bell Sylvester, co-founder Good Neighbor Law, LaSalle, Colorado; Hugh Broadus, Montana Cattlemen's Association, MT; Tony Belcourt, Inter-Tribal Agriculture Council, MT; Brian Malaer, Director, Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas (ICA), TX; Rosalee Coleman, Vice-President, Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas (ICA), TX; and Daryl Larson, Director, Kansas Cattlemen's Association, McPherson, KS.

On January 22, USCA representatives participated in a media luncheon at the National Press Club, a coalition event hosted by the American Task Force Argentina (ATFA) and USCA. The media luncheon was an opportunity to heighten awareness and create dialogue about the issues surrounding the USDA's plan to increase beef trade with Argentina.

During the following days participants met with House and Senate offices and with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) administrators. Among the issues discussed on Capitol Hill included USDA's plan to regionalize beef trade with Argentina, competition reform in the Farm Bill, beef

*continued on page 9*

# USCA TESTIFIES BEFORE INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

Colorado cattle producer, U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA) Director Region IV, and USCA International Trade Committee co-chairman, Doug Zalesky, testified before the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) on Thursday, November 15 in Washington, D.C. The hearing focused on the effects of animal health, sanitary, food safety and other measures on U.S. beef exports.

Zalesky provided an overview of the U.S. cattle industry to the ITC as well as the obstacles U.S. cattle producers face with regard to trade policy. Zalesky's testimony included the following comments.

"A brief review of global and U.S. statistics tell a grim story. Today, as global production and consumption rise, U.S. exports of both beef and cattle are barely more than half of 2002 levels. In contrast, U.S. imports of beef already exceed 2002 levels and are still rising. Meanwhile, though total cattle imports are lower than in 2002, imports from Canada - the source of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in North America - are rising and rapidly regaining 2002 levels. Behind these aggregate numbers, the economic effect of BSE can be more clearly seen. Although global markets have shown signs of warming up to renewed U.S. exports, the effects of BSE-related barriers continue to stifle U.S. export prospects. Japan and Korea, historically the two largest U.S. export markets by value, remain largely closed to U.S. beef."

"Unfortunately, BSE-related barriers are not the only regulatory barriers affecting U.S. exports of beef. The European Union (EU) has long banned U.S. exports of hormone-fed beef, despite a decision by the World Trade Organization (WTO) Appellate Body that the ban violates EU obligations under the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. The EU has remained defiantly out of compliance on

this since 1999.

"High tariffs and agriculture subsidies in other parts of the world also play a role in the global market. The U.S. maintains an open import market, through the use of a

generous tariff rate quota for beef, in which over-quota shipments face a 26.4% tariff. By comparison, tariffs elsewhere in the world average approximately 85%.

"Subsidies, too, are a major part of the problem. Several of the largest producing nations, including Brazil, Australia, Canada and the EU, directly subsidize cattle and beef production.

"Australia and Canada also operate state trade enterprises (STE) that enjoy monopoly control over grain production. Through these STEs, cattle producers in both countries enjoy access to cheap feed grains that artificially lower the costs of production.

"Finally, dozens of bilateral free trade agreements, particularly between the EU and other nations, fail to include agricultural tariffs. This failure exacerbates the closed nature of the global marketplace and further channel global exports to the open U.S. market that would otherwise be destined to third-country markets."

Zalesky noted that these problems could be solved by harmonizing BSE standards and allowing voluntary BSE testing of animals to strengthen consumer confidence and establish beyond reproach a U.S. commitment to transparency. "Furthermore, the U.S. should implement mandatory country of origin labeling for beef," he continued. "Labeling will provide transparency for consumers, enabling them to make



*Pictured are John Reid, USDA AMS Deputy Under Secretary Burton Eller, Doug Zalesky, USDA AMS Under Secretary Bruce Knight, Jess Peterson, and USDA NAIS Coordinator Neil Hammerschmidt.*

informed choices."

Zalesky, a veteran advocate of trade policy for the cattle industry, also had meetings on Capitol Hill where he informed congressional staffers about USCA's international trade policy, including USCA's opposition to regionalization of beef trade with Argentina related to animal health disease issues.

"USCA strongly opposes any attempt to weaken oversight or regulation of trade with Argentina because doing so could expose the American herd to foot and mouth disease, a highly contagious infection," said Zalesky. "We believe that proper enforcement of regionalized trade would be impossible, opening the door for these regions to become gateways for beef from non-approved areas of Argentina and Brazil, another country with serious foot and mouth disease issues. Time and time again, Argentina has proven that it cannot be trusted to live up to its promises. Let's not forget that this is a nation that heavily subsidizes its agricultural industries and routinely defaults on international loans."

Zalesky holds a PhD in bovine reproductive physiology from Texas A & M University and a masters degree in animal science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Zalesky is the immediate past president of Colorado Independent CattleGrowers Association.

# CATTLE CALL TO ARMS

## ARGENTINE FMD KNOCKING AT THE DOOR

Anyone who depends on the livestock industry for their livelihood should be aware of a little-known proposal by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that could cripple the U.S. beef industry by bringing diseased Argentine beef into our market.

Despite Argentina's well-documented problems with Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), the USDA is looking to allow beef and cattle imports from areas of Argentina deemed to be "safe."

Never mind the fact that FMD travels by air and can move freely from "safe" to "unsafe" areas. And never mind the fact that Argentina has proven it is no friend to the United States and cannot be trusted to keep FMD from spreading.

USCA is calling on all cattle producers to get involved to beat back USDA's proposal. We literally can't afford to be quiet and let some government bureaucrat decide the fate of the cattle industry.

Please contact your Congressional members to voice your concern about regionalized beef trade with Argentina. And, please sign our petition against the USDA scheme.

Feel free to include USCA's recently-passed petition in any Congressional correspondence. It can be found below.

If you have any questions, or if you'd

like additional information, please contact Jess Peterson, USCA's director of government affairs, at (202) 870-3867.

### Whereas:

Foot and Mouth Disease is considered by the American Veterinary Medical Association to be the most economically devastating of all livestock diseases.

### Whereas:

An outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in the United States could leave independent cattle producers in financial ruins as entire herds would need to be culled and international markets would be closed indefinitely.

### Whereas:

APHIS/USDA has proposed to allow beef and cattle imports from regions of Argentina despite Argentina's documented Foot and Mouth Disease problems.

### Whereas:

Argentina cannot be trusted to keep infected beef from entering the United States and has shown little concern for rural America by defaulting on loans made by U.S. companies and by opposing U.S. farmers in international trade



cases.

### Whereas:

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association passed a resolution in July opposing the APHIS/USDA plan because it is unworkable and could create gateways for diseased Brazilian and Argentine beef.

### Whereas:

APHIS/USDA has yet to rule out regionalized beef trade from Argentina despite an outcry of opposition from America's ranchers.

### Now be it resolved:

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association calls on APHIS/USDA to immediately reject the pending regionalized beef trade plan and reaffirm its commitment to protect the domestic herd from Foot and Mouth Disease.

### Now be it further resolved:

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association asks the United States Congress to take whatever steps necessary to block the proposed rule and to protect the domestic herd from Foot and Mouth Disease.

# AN INTERVIEW WITH DANNI BEER, USCA DIRECTOR AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING (COOL) COMMITTEE CHAIR

## Question:

If COOL language is not added in the next Farm Bill or if the Farm Bill is vetoed by the President this year, do we have to start over?

## Answer:

No. If the Farm Bill is not passed or the current COOL language is stricken, the 2002 Farm Bill language will stand as written and the appropriations delay language will stand with regard to the implementation date of COOL. COOL will have to be implemented on Sept. 30, 2008 under either circumstance unless, of course, further funding delays occur in the appropriations process.

## Question:

Do the House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill contain the same language?

## Answer:

No. The language is similar but not identical in the House and Senate versions. USCA was consulted while both versions were being drafted and we accepted these changes. We feel all the changes made were allowable under the original 2002 COOL law, however, the U.S. Department of Agriculture needed more guidance from Congress to implement it in a business-like fashion.

## Question:

I've heard recently that I will need to keep track of birth records for all cattle that I sell in order for them to be eligible for a U.S. label of origin. Is this true, and do I have to use an RFID tag to do this?

## Answer:

While it is always a good business practice to keep herd records, it is not necessary for cattle producers to document each calf birth on the ranch. USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) published a list of documents acceptable to verify U.S. origin in the event of a trace back. There are documents listed for each segment of the industry. AMS made every attempt to alleviate concerns

that were being raised by some segments of the food chain. You can see this list of acceptable documents at [www.ams.usda.gov/cool/coolbeef.pdf](http://www.ams.usda.gov/cool/coolbeef.pdf)

Tag and technology companies have tried to link the need to prove U.S. origin to use of their products. I believe, because of USDA's published requirements, some companies have abandoned this approach. The U.S. Cattlemen's Association has been successful at separating the actual need of proof of origin from any perceived benefits of an expensive identification system. We will continue our efforts to inform producers on what is required for proof of origin.



USDA's requirements for proof of origin will likely incorporate current industry practices if either the House or Senate Farm Bill language is passed. If passed, USDA will then write a final rule for M-COOL implementation within the guidelines of the new, more prescriptive language passed by Congress.

## Question:

Has chicken been added to the list of products under the House and Senate versions of the law?

## Answer:

Yes, in the Senate version of the Farm Bill. USCA was asked and we said we did not object to allowing chicken to be labeled. It will be interesting to see what USDA determines as 'processed' since there are considerably more processed

chicken items in the grocery stores than there are beef. Producers will need to be watchful on the final rule writing process to see how USDA addresses this issue. I think it is interesting that the chicken processors, which we know are also some of the same beef processors that opposed COOL, now support the law for chicken. This reaffirms USCA's conviction that there is value in the U.S. label.

## Question:

Is Canada threatening to file a lawsuit if Congress passes M-COOL?

## Answer:

I've read press releases lately that say some Canadian cattlemen's groups are pressuring their government to file suit, but I have not read any definitive statements from the Canadian government and it would have to be the Canadian government to file a lawsuit. Some Canadian officials have vowed to lobby Congress to oppose the current language in the Farm Bill, and I think it's safe to predict that they will carry out on that promise. This is why it is so very important for U.S. producers to unify on this issue and shepherd the law through the conference process.

## Question:

In the new language in the Farm Bill, it says that all foreign cattle in the U.S. as of January 1, 2008 are assumed to be domestic. Why did they do this?

## Answer:

This language was added to clarify how USDA should 'grandfather' in the products already in food chain. This language attempts to make it easier for packers and feedlots to clear out cattle and beef that are not identified by their country of origin before the Sept. 30, 2008 implementation date.





Dear Friends,

The United States Cattlemen's Association is pleased to partner with the Wagner Vogele Team at Merrill Lynch to provide the U.S. cattle industry with an exciting opportunity!

First, let me give you a little background on the newly formed United States Cattlemen's Association (USCA) and the Vogele Wagner Team. USCA is the newest national cattlemen's association and is leading the charge in Washington D.C. to pass a Farm Bill that meets the needs of U.S. cattle producers by including competition reform and country of origin labeling (COOL). USCA is the only cattlemen's group working to amend the beef checkoff to allow a portion of checkoff dollars to promote U.S. beef. USCA is also the only association that is blocking the USDA from increasing imports of Argentina beef, despite Argentina's continued foot and mouth disease (FMD) problem.

The Wagner Vogele Team is a part of Merrill Lynch that has a unique practice serving farmers, ranchers, and rural families. This Team will again be sponsoring cattle industry events across the country this year. Their focus is helping clients plan and manage all aspects of their finances and investments, from retirement income strategies to estate planning.

We are holding informational meetings across the country. Sale barns, feed stores, veterinary clinics, and the like are welcome to host a meeting. Several businesses are taking this opportunity to put on a customer appreciation event by mailing out flyers that invite customers to attend a dinner and informational meeting. If you or your business would like to host a meeting, USCA will provide an informational speaker on what our group does, and the Wagner Vogele Team will provide a free beef dinner and informational speakers about their program. If you are interested, call or email Jess Peterson (202)870-3867 [peterston.j2@gmail.com](mailto:peterston.j2@gmail.com) or Charles Wagner (866) 606-5544 [charles\\_wagner@ml.com](mailto:charles_wagner@ml.com).

Sincerely,

Jon Wooster  
President  
US Cattlemen's Association

Charles "CB" Wagner  
Financial Advisor  
Wagner Vogele Team

*Country Connection, from page 5*

checkoff reform, the OTM (over thirty month) rule, ensuring U.S. cattle and agriculture producers are not used as a bargaining chip in future trade agreements, and fever tick eradication.

I think Leo McDonnell wrapped it up perfectly with his statement, "These are important times for U.S. cattle producers. The opportunities to better position our industry to be competitive and profitable are endless. By keeping focused on the issues, communicating with decision-makers, and utilizing relationships, cattle producers are poised to make 2008 a memorable year."

The hard work is paying off and we are moving forward! USCA has the relationships, the credibility, and the ability

to make a difference for cattle producers. The only thing stopping it is you... Right now USCA is making its stand because a handful of members volunteer countless hours and loads of energy to carry out the needs of thousands in the cattle industry. If you think USCA is making a difference, please send your membership donation in today. If you think USCA is on the right track, please sign up your neighbor. We have waited decades for the legislative opportunities presented to us today. Find out the latest on the issues and opportunities facing the U.S. cattle industry. Join us the first and third Tuesday each month for the Horn Wrap conference call: 785-686-240, code: 032007#

If you would like to be on the USCA update list please email: [usca@uscattlemen.org](mailto:usca@uscattlemen.org) and type "subscribe" in the subject line. If you have a meeting you would like to have a USCA representative attend, please call 202-870-3867, and we'll work with you to set up a producer meeting. USCA is pleased to be working full time in the Nation's Capital. If you have a question about USCA's activities on the Hill, call or email me and I am happy to answer any questions you have.

Good luck with calving, stay warm, and keep engaged in the issues with USCA!

Ride Tall

# USCA's Affiliate Corner...Working Together to Build a Stronger U.S. Cattle Industry

## Independent Beef Association of North Dakota - I-BAND

I-BAND was formed in 2005, after realizing that North Dakota cattle producers needed to have their voice heard on not only a state level, but the national level as well. Up to this time we felt that the interests of the giant national meat packing industry was being represented over the interests of the North Dakota cattle producer. We were sick of hearing NCBA boast that they represented the entire U.S. cattle industry, when in fact they were selling us out.

One of our mottos is that we will



*I-BAND president Pat Becker accepting plaque for affiliating with USCA.*

work with any organization that represents the best interests of the United States cattle producer 100% of the time. We felt that USCA was doing just that. We became an affiliate of USCA in 2007 and have had the opportunity of working with them on various issues statewide as well as nationwide. Our hats are off to the individuals working up front as well as behind the scenes in this organization.

## Cattle Producers of Washington - CPoW

Cattle Producers of Washington (CPoW) has been busy with state issues. CPoW has been focused on Olympia and the legislative session, working on issues such as animal ID, property rights and the checkoff to name a few.

CPoW chose to affiliate with USCA because USCA was actively working on issues of concern to our members. USCA is driven from the grass roots with an open dialogue from the BOD all the way to the producers. USCA is not being run by packers or hired staff members. There is a nice cohesiveness which is necessary for strong state and national organizations to be a conduit for cow/calf producers to have their voice heard in the halls of Congress. USCA gave CPoW an instant presence in Washington D.C., which was respected and had influence with the congressional body. The cow/calf producers of our nation need and deserve an organiza-

tion in an ever-changing industry. Our segment of this business is changing rapidly and we as producers need to become involved and make our voices heard so that the change that comes is change that we have initiated, not change that is forced on us by government or by other segments of our industry.

Any idea or concern, no matter how small you may think it is, is important in shaping our future and giving our kids and the next generation opportunity in the cow/calf sector of this industry. We as producers must always remember that it is easy to follow a crowd and accept what is given to you, but it is difficult to stand up, especially if by one's self, to defend your position and state your ideas. That is a gift our forefathers gave us in this country, the right to stand up and voice our concerns and shape our destiny. Let's be sure and use this.

Here is a quote that I would like each of you to think about for a minute.

**Be who you are  
Say what you feel  
Because those who mind don't matter  
And those who matter won't mind**

CPoW and USCA have this thought in common. Those who are attacking you or your ideas probably don't matter because the ones that we as producers must reach won't mind hearing from you.

So take the time to belong to these organizations and help shape the destiny of our industry instead of accepting what is given to us. I guarantee other segments will take the time to shape it the way they would like it.

By the way, the quote was from Dr. Seuss, a children's book author. It's funny how well a children's book author understood what the forefathers of this country were trying to do. It was an easy decision to affiliate with USCA as we have a common vision. Together we can make it happen.



*There was a large crowd at the CPoW Annual Convention*

tional structure that serves only the cow/calf sector of the livestock business. This was one of the guiding principals when CPoW was started and USCA also adheres to this same principal.

The producers of Washington State as well as our nation need and deserve an avenue to voice concerns and promote new ideas

# USCA's Affiliate Corner...Working Together to Build a Stronger U.S. Cattle Industry

## Montana Cattlemen's Association - MCA

2007 has been a very successful year for the Montana Cattlemen's Association. We introduced two bills in the legislature. One was a bill to prevent the Montana Department of Livestock from actively promoting premises and animal ID. Unfortunately, this bill did not make it out of the House Agriculture committee. The second bill was the Montana Certified Natural Beef program. This bill establishes a "Natural" beef state-administered program in which a producer can certify that their cattle are raised natural.

Brucellosis was found in a Montana cattle herd last spring, so MCA passed policy to encourage the Montana BOL to pursue steps required to create a split-state status should another case be discovered; this solution may be a means to protect the majority of cattle producers who operate outside of the high-risk area around Yellowstone National Park.

In July, MCA President Brett DeBruycker served as a panelist during the U. S. Senate Farm Bill committee field hearing in Great Falls. The Montana Cattlemen's Brand Book and Reference Manual has been released. This 3-volume set contains all of Montana's 55,000 registered livestock brands.

MCA closed 2007 working with two projects with our sister organization—the Montana Cattlemen's Association Foundation (MCAF), a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Our first project, **BEEF-ON-EVERY-PLATE**, is aimed to feed Montana's hungry. Producers can donate a cull cow or bull, which will be processed into hamburger and distributed through the Montana Food Bank Network. Funding is also being solicited to pay the processing costs of the beef. The second project is the **KIDNEY-FOR-KATELYN**



USCA representatives Dennis McDonald, Jon Wooster and Leo McDonnell spoke at MCA's Cattlemen's Day

**DRIVE.** Twelve-year-old Katelyn Atkinson has developed life-threatening end stage renal disease, which requires daily dialysis while she awaits a kidney transplant.

MCA affiliated with USCA at our annual meeting. We have great respect for the leaders of USCA and look forward to working with them this year. Two MCA/USCA town hall meetings have been scheduled this month. The first is set for 2:00 p.m. on February 20 in Whitlash, Montana—near the Canadian Border. A second meeting is scheduled in Conrad on February 21 at 12:30 at the Lodge restaurant. Representatives from both MCA and USCA will be present. This will be a great opportunity to strengthen both organizations in Montana.

## Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas - ICA

The Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas, established in 1974, represents ranching families across Texas. The 7500 plus members of the association vigorously support private property rights and issues of concern to Texas cattlemen. With dual affiliation with both NCBA and USCA, the organization provides ranchers a voice on national issues as well as leading the charge on local and state agendas. The State Board of Directors, consisting of 33 men and women from across the state, provides a mix of ranching interests with varying opinions on many issues.

Recent issues for ranchers in Texas include the Mexican fever tick invasion, the Trans-Texas Corridor, brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication and the efficiency of the state brand inspection program. In addition, ICA worked hard to make sure the state premise registration program would remain voluntary. ICA is the only Texas cattle organization to support M-COOL and the use of Check Off dollars for promotion of US born and raised beef.

National issues concerning Texans include the proposed 2007 Farm Bill, voluntary NAIS, M-COOL, animal cruelty legislation, changes to the Beef Check Off program and a fair and transparent livestock marketing system. ICA believes all laws and regulations affecting agriculture should be fair and pass the common sense test.

Members of ICA support the work of USCA on the national

level and believe USCA is often the only 'Washington D.C. Voice' for ranchers. The ICA works closely with USCA lobbyist Jess Peterson on national issues and is represented on the USCA Board by former ICA presidents Bruce Dopslauf and Chuck Kiker. Recently two members of ICA, Rosalee Coleman and Brian Malaer, joined fellow USCA members in our Capitol to voice our opinion on regionalization of Argentina for FMD and other issues.

ICA is proud to be an affiliate of the United States Cattlemen's Association. USCA members in Texas are invited to join ICA and help ICA make the annual state convention in Galveston, June 25-27 a success.



Jess Peterson (far right) attended the ICA convention on behalf of USCA

# USCA WASHINGTON D.C. FLY-IN



*Back row: Tony Belcourt (MT), Chuck Slyvester (CO), Daryl Larson (KS), Chris Abbott (NE), and Brian Malaer (TX). Front row: Leo McDonnell, (MT), Roni Slyvester (CO), Rosalee Coleman (TX), Jerry Stodola (NE), Pat Becker (ND), and Hugh Broadus (MT).*

USCA members met in Washington D.C. in late January and spent three days visiting with government officials and legislators on industry issues. In addition, USCA representatives participated in a media luncheon at the National Press Club, a coalition event hosted by the American Task Force Argentina (ATFA) and the U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA).



*Left to right: USDA Under Secretary Burton Eller, Leo McDonnell, Tony Belcourt, Brian Malaer, USDA Under Secretary Bruce Knight and Pat Becker*

## USCA ANNUAL MEETING

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA), founded in March of this year, held its first annual membership meeting at the Orleans Hotel in Las Vegas, NV on December 7, in conjunction with the National Finals Rodeo. USCA members from Virginia to California and Montana to Texas met to review policy initiatives, discuss strategy and plan for the coming year.

USCA is a one-member, one-vote organization and only cattle producers are permitted to vote on policy.

USCA President, Jon Wooster, San Lucas, CA says members can expect to receive ballots by mail immediately after the first of the year. "Every USCA member will have an opportunity to vote on the policy affirmed by members present at the membership meeting," noted Wooster. "I encourage every USCA member to return their official ballot and participate in shaping policy for the national organization."

The day-long agenda included a

Capitol Hill update by USCA's Director of Government Affairs, Jess Peterson.

Peterson provided participants with an update on industry issues, but began by congratulating members. "It's been just a little over six months since this organization was established, and look at the difference USCA has made," noted Peterson. "When USCA was formed folks were concerned that cattle producers would lose their full-time voice in Washington, D.C.; that the national animal identification system would be "married" to country of origin labeling (COOL); that the COOL law would be weakened during the Farm Bill debate; and, of course, competition reform was a high priority. However, through USCA's efforts on Capitol Hill this course was changed," he said. "Congress is now supporting states in their work to create animal health trace back systems and COOL is on track for implementation in 2008. Because of a large coalition of committed individuals, cattle producers

are on track to gain meaningful competition reform in the new Farm Bill."

Peterson said U.S. cattle producers experienced a significant disappointment when the U.S. Department of Agriculture moved forward to resume trade in older cattle with Canada. "USCA urged the Department of Agriculture to change the effective date of Canada's feed ban from 1999 to 2003. This change would be consistent with the new OIE rules. Establishing 1999 as an effective feed ban date for Canada is a flawed decision and we continue to press the agency and Congress to correct this error."

"USCA worked diligently to shepherd a resolution of disapproval regarding USDA's OTM Rule in both the House and Senate, and USCA also urged Congress to remove funding for implementation of the rule," stated Peterson. "The partisan gridlock of this congressional session prevented movement on nearly every bill *continued on page 13*

*Annual Meeting, from page 12*

and, in fact, put the new Farm Bill in jeopardy for a period of time.”

“USCA has received overwhelming nationwide support for its checkoff reform initiative which would permit a portion of beef checkoff funds to promote U.S. beef,” noted Peterson. “Producers are on the cusp of seeing mandatory meat labeling implemented. Now it’s time to put a promotional program in place to support the USA label.”

Wooster told members that USCA will

continue to have a full time presence in Washington, D.C., and will be actively engaged as the House and Senate conference committees meet to reconcile differences in policy contained in the new Farm Bill.

Wooster told members that USCA has pegged USDA’s proposal to regionalize Argentina for foot and mouth disease as a target trade issue. “USCA urges all cattle producers and organizations to get involved in this critical issue. This oner-

ous proposal has to become a line in the sand. The U.S. has never imported fresh and frozen product from a country known to be infected with foot and mouth disease. It is not logical or reasonable for USDA to be proposing a policy that would leave the domestic livestock industry vulnerable to such a devastating disease. An outbreak in the U.S. would paralyze livestock commerce, resulting in devastating economic consequences.”

## **RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT ANNUAL MEETING DECEMBER 7, 2007**

### **CHECKOFF RESOLUTIONS**

#### **Resolution #1:**

WHEREAS USCA believes a producer-driven, beef promotion program is vital to the future of the cattle industry; and  
WHEREAS this program must be focused on promoting the products of the stakeholders, not just those of the beef-production sector;  
and

WHEREAS the majority of dollars collected by the Beef Checkoff come directly from U.S. cattle producers; and

WHEREAS the recent 8000 producer survey conducted by the USDA showed strong support for changes to the program;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED USCA finds the following to be vital and necessary amendments to the Beef Promotion and Research Act of 1985:

1. Sec. 2904, paragraph (6) be modified to eliminate the requirement that the Operating Committee contract only with “established, national nonprofit industry-governed organizations.” This would allow the Committee to contract directly with vendors and avoid possible conflicts of interest generated by the policy positions of any national organization.
2. Provide for a referendum every five years.
3. Direct that Beef Checkoff dollars collected from U. S. cattle producers, be used to promote products derived from cattle that are specifically born, raised and processed in the United States.
4. Remove the requirement that contracting organizations must have been in existence prior to the implementation of the current Act and Order.

#### **Resolution #2:**

WHEREAS USCA seeks to provide the motivation, information and support necessary to our members so they can become more involved in influencing decisions regarding the Beef Checkoff;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED USCA recommends the following:

1. All USCA affiliate organizations seek approval as qualified organizations or associations in their respective states, nominate from within their membership and actively promote those nominees for appointments to the Cattlemen’s Beef Board (CBB).
2. Those affiliate organizations also work diligently to obtain seats on their respective state beef councils by providing candidates for appointment or election.

#### **Resolution #3:**

WHEREAS USCA feels that the present National Beef Checkoff mechanism has created a framework that is far too complicated and excludes a large portion of U. S. beef producers; and

WHEREAS two segments – the Cattlemen’s Beef Board (CBB) and the Federation of State Beef Councils (Federation) – are mandated by the Beef Promotion Act and Order, and the third segment – the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) – is a policy-driven organization that also is the main contractor for the Beef Checkoff;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED USCA recommends that the NCBA, the CBB and the Federation each become individually independent and autonomous in order to alleviate the impression that they are operating as one entity.

#### **Resolution #4:**

WHEREAS certain entities within the beef industry are proposing an increase in the per head assessment on cattle sold; and

WHEREAS USCA policies outline a number of other needed producer-driven changes to the Beef Checkoff Act and Order including, but not limited to, promoting U.S. labeled beef, periodic referendums, and major changes to the organization and structural relationships between the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, Federation of State Beef Councils, and their contractors, including the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED USCA supports the current One Dollar per head assessment and will not support any increase until our policy recommendations have been implemented.

*Continued on page 14*

## **ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION RESOLUTIONS**

### **Resolution #5:**

BE IT RESOLVED USCA requests that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conduct a cost-benefit analysis of its proposed national animal identification system (NAIS).

### **Resolution #6:**

BE IT RESOLVED USCA opposes making premises registration or animal identification mandatory for 4-H and FFA, which are USDA driven programs.

### **Resolution #7:**

BE IT RESOLVED USCA does not support national mandatory identification and continues to support continued use of existing programs such as states with effective brand inspections, health certificates, brucellosis tags, tuberculosis tags, etc. for any animal health trace back programs.

## **ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE RESOLUTIONS**

### **Resolution #8:**

WHEREAS brucellosis is endemic to Yellowstone Park bison and elk herds; and

WHEREAS bison numbers within the park exceed forage production causing over-grazing and migration of infected bison and elk from park boundaries; and

WHEREAS cattle producers have eradicated brucellosis from their cow herds but are exposed to risk of infection from wild game;

BE IT RESOLVED USCA calls upon the Department of the Interior and USDA to reduce bison and elk numbers consistent with forage availability within park boundaries and to undertake an aggressive long-term brucellosis eradication program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED USCA urges the Department of the Interior and USDA to invest in more research to find an effective preventative vaccine for bison and cattle; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Department of the Interior and USDA indemnify cattle producers for losses suffered as a result of herds being infected by wild game, i.e., elk, bison, and moose.

### **Resolution #9:**

BE IT RESOLVED USCA opposes any efforts to restrict horse slaughter and/or transportation of horses.

## **COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING RESOLUTIONS**

### **Resolution #10:**

WHEREAS the amount of food and commodities the United States imports are increasing from sources other than the United States; and

WHEREAS United States citizens have the right to know where their beef and other food comes from;

BE IT RESOLVED that United States Cattlemen's Association supports Country of Origin Labeling information to the final consumer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that United States Cattlemen's Association supports mandatory Country of Origin Labeling language as passed in the 2002 Farm Bill and the compromise language in the 2007 House of Representatives Farm Bill and the Senate Agriculture Committee's Farm Bill language.

## **MARKETING RESOLUTIONS**

### **Resolution #11:**

1. WHEREAS competitive markets require participants with access to open and transparent market information;

BE IT RESOLVED that USCA supports the immediate implementation of mandatory price reporting.

2. WHEREAS large firms may exhibit pressure on producers to accept unfair production contracts or terms of sale;

BE IT RESOLVED that USCA supports the inclusion of a "competition chapter" in the 2007 Farm Bill.

3. WHEREAS recent rulings have negated the intent of the Packers and Stockyards act;

BE IT RESOLVED that USCA supports legislative clarification of the P&S Act.

BE IT RESOLVED that USCA supports legislative clarification of the P&S Act.

a. The Act differs from other antitrust law. Proof of intent to control or manipulate prices is not required; rather it is that outcome that must be prevented.

b. Business justification" is not a valid defense of actions covered in the Act.

c. "Captive supplies" negatively affect prices and must be controlled. Captive supplies include any livestock owned, committed to or otherwise under the control of the packer before fourteen days of slaughter, including non-negotiated transactions and imported cattle and beef.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that USCA supports the ban of packer ownership or control of cattle for more than 14 days before slaughter, except for those packers with processing capacity less than 500 head per day; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that USCA supports legislation requiring at least 75% of the weekly cattle procurement for packers with processing capacity over 500 per day, be obtained through negotiated sales; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that USCA supports legislation requiring all contractual and marketing agreements with producers be offered in ways open to all qualified producers and subject to negotiation.

### **Resolution #12:**

BE IT RESOLVED USCA supports legislation to accomplish interstate sales of state inspected meat.

*Continued on page 15*

**Resolution #13:**

BE IT RESOLVED USCA supports:

An act creating a USA-certified natural beef cattle marketing program to be administered by the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration; providing qualifications for the certification of USA natural beef cattle and USA-certified natural grass-fed beef cattle; and providing an immediate effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

**Section 1. USA-certified natural beef cattle marketing program.**

1. The Department of Agriculture shall administer a program to qualify and market beef cattle born, raised and processed in the United States that have been certified as natural.
2. To qualify as USA-certified natural beef cattle, the beef must be from cattle that have been born, raised, and processed in the USA and finished following naturally raised protocols. The beef cattle must be:
  - a. Raised in an environmentally prudent manner that is consistent with the best grazing standards;
  - b. Raised pursuant to beef quality assurance standards or similar guidelines;
  - c. Raised without subtherapeutic antibiotics, synthetic hormones, synthetic growth promotants, and ionophores; and
  - d. Fed only natural feeds that contain no drugs, chemicals, or animal byproducts.
3. To qualify as USA-certified natural grass-fed beef cattle, the beef must be from cattle that must meet the requirements of subsection (2) and must also have been finished on grass.
4. A producer who desires natural beef cattle certification shall maintain records of the birth of the beef cattle by month and keep health records for the beef cattle, including vaccine lot numbers, the vaccine manufacturer, and dates of vaccination.
5. To ensure compliance, the Department of Agriculture shall adopt rules requiring at least one inspection of the ranch of origin of the beef cattle as well as development of the necessary protocols for recordkeeping and verification for the certification of natural and natural grass-fed beef cattle.
6. The USDA shall include the promotion of USA-certified natural beef cattle in its agricultural product marketing programs.

**TRADE RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution #14:**

WHEREAS the long-term profitability of independent U.S. cattle producers is impacted significantly by international trade policy; and WHEREAS the Trade Act of 2002 outlines specific items to be included in all trade agreements;

BE IT RESOLVED USCA requires that the following provisions be included in all trade agreements:

1. Classification of cattle and beef as perishable and cyclical items, and considered like kind products,
2. Rules of origin (born, raised and slaughtered)
3. Quantity and price safeguards,
4. Upward harmonization of import and health and safety standards.

**Resolution #15:**

WHEREAS the health of the U.S. cattle herd is vital to the profitability of independent cattle producers; and

WHEREAS the US policy was built on protecting US producers of food and fiber, and not managing a disease once it gets here;

BE IT RESOLVED USCA opposes efforts by the government of the United States to allow regionalization of foreign countries with animal disease problems if such regionalization weakens animal health or food safety standards concerning importation of cattle or beef into the United States.

**Resolution #16:**

WHEREAS International Trade Agreements have a significant impact on independent cattle producers;

BE IT RESOLVED USCA opposes fast-track trade negotiation authority and believes that international trade policy and trade agreements related to that policy should reside in the hands of the U.S. Congress.

**Resolution #17:**

WHEREAS cattle and beef are imported into the United States from various foreign countries, and that many of these countries have histories of foreign animal disease problems;

BE IT RESOLVED USCA supports the following efforts to identify imported cattle and beef:

1. Removal of livestock from the U.S. Department of Treasury's J-List thereby requiring all imported cattle to be marked with a mark of origin as a condition of entry into the United States,
2. Restrict the use of the USDA grade stamp to only beef that is born, raised and processed in the United States,
3. Implementation of mandatory country-of-origin labeling.

*USCA's website is fresh and innovative. Check out  
www.uscattlemen.org often. The site is updated  
constantly with news and information to help inform  
you, the cattle producer.*



United State Cattlemen's Association  
P.O. Box 339  
San Lucas, CA 93954

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## USCA MISSION STATEMENT

*To present an effective voice for the United States cattle industry. USCA is dedicated to, and focused on, efforts in Washington, DC to further the interests of cattle producers on mandatory country of origin labeling, international trade, market competition, reform of the mandatory beef checkoff, animal health, welfare and identification, private property rights and other issues that affect the U.S. cattle industry."*

## Coming Events

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### February 20, 2008

Town Hall Meeting—Whitlash, MT  
Whitlash Community Center—2:00 p.m.  
Chili feed (\$8 donation to Whitlash Ladies Club & Whitlash Community Center) followed by MCA/USCA informational meeting with updates on the Montana cattle industry and legislative issues (Farm Bill) in Washington, D.C.  
Open to the Public—RSVP to MCA (406)259-5433

### February 21, 2008

Town Hall Meeting—Conrad, MT  
Lobby Cafe—12:30 p.m. (405 S. Main, Conrad. No host lunch followed by MCA/USCA informational meeting with

updates on the Montana cattle industry and legislative issues (Farm Bill) in Washington, D.C. Contact: MCA (406)259-5433

### March 3-4, 2008

USCA booth at the National Farmers Union Convention, Las Vegas, NV

### June 25-27, 2008

Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention and Trade Show

Galveston, TX June 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 2008

USCA 10:00 AM June 27<sup>th</sup>  
Contact: ICA (512)620-0162

**"Your true character is revealed by the clarity of your convictions, the choices you make, and the promises you keep. Hold strongly to your principles and refuse to follow the currents of convenience. What you say and do defines who you are, and who you are, you are forever." ~ Anonymous**