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POLICY BOOK

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ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE - 2007 & 2009

Resolution #1:

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 #2:

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

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE - 2008

Resolution #1—FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

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

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; and

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

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; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Cattlemen's Association passed a resolution in July 2007 opposing the APHIS/USDA plan because it is unworkable and could create gateways for diseased Brazilian and Argentine beef; and

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

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.

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.

Resolution #2—PLUM ISLAND FACILITY RELOCATION

WHEREAS, zoonotic diseases are a threat to both animal and human health; and

WHEREAS, the Animal Disease Center currently located on Plum Island is important for research in zoonotic diseases; and

WHEREAS, the current location of the facility is ideal for isolation and containment of any disease releases/outbreaks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the United States Cattlemen's Association opposes relocating the Animal Disease Center from Plum Island; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, any funding allocated for a new facility be rather appropriated to upgrade the current facilities on Plum Island.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE - 2009

Resolution #1:

BE IT RESOLVED, USCA opposes legislation that would restrict antibiotics for veterinary and farm use.

Resolution #2:

BE IT RESOLVED, USCA opposes the enhanced feed ban as enacted in 2009.

Resolution #3:

WHEREAS, USCA supports continued research on Brucella abortus;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, USCA supports the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) Resolution #36 for removal of Brucella abortus from the Toxic Substances and Disease Control and Prevention Select Agent List.

ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION - 2007 & 2009

Resolution #1:

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 #2:

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

Resolution #3:

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 IDENTIFICATION - 2008

Resolution #1—NAIS

WHEREAS, USCA opposes mandatory participation in NAIS; and

WHEREAS, the USDA statement issued by APHIS in September 2008 mandates a premise locator for producers participating in certain animal disease control programs; and

WHEREAS, this may impede a producer's right to commerce;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, USCA urges USDA to utilize a locator identifier that relates to the animal owner and not to the animal owner's property.

BEEF CHECKOFF - 2007 & 2009

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 periodic referendum.
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.

BEEF CHECKOFF - 2008

Resolution #1—STATE BEEF COUNCIL FUND ALLOCATION

WHEREAS, qualified State Beef Councils may direct that a portion of their funds be forwarded for use in national Checkoff programs; and

WHEREAS, the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB) is presently authorized to receive such funds from State Beef Councils; and

WHEREAS, the CBB provides oversight and recommendations for distribution of all national Checkoff funds and is the mandated funding conduit for national Checkoff dollars; and

WHEREAS, the Beef Checkoff Operating Committee, which is composed of both CBB and Federation of State Beef Council members, is charged with considering budget recommendations proposed by the CBB and with the awarding of national Checkoff contracts funded by national Checkoff dollars;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the U.S. Cattlemen's Association urges that all State Beef Council funds forwarded for use by the national Checkoff program should be forwarded to the CBB and awarded by the Beef Checkoff Operating Committee, in a like manner as the national Checkoff monies expended by the Cattlemen's Beef Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, State Beef Councils at their direction be allowed to earmark such funds to certain specific programs.

Resolution #2—BEEF CHECKOFF

BE IT RESOLVED, USCA recommends the Cattlemen's Beef Board terminate contractor participation in all Beef Checkoff functions such as governance, leadership selection, administration (except for execution of contracts), advisement, and contracting selection, so that the contracting process is transparent and understandable, and so that the financial trail of Beef Checkoff funds is easily traceable by all parties.

1. Remove the Federation of State Beef Councils from NCBA.
2. Require the Cattlemen's Beef Board to meet separately from NCBA and all other policy driven organizations.
3. Remove all NCBA policy representatives from joint checkoff committees and make the representation on those committees reflect the makeup of the Checkoff Operating Committee.

BEEF CHECKOFF - 2009

BE IT RESOLVED, USCA supports assessment exemption on animals that are sold for less than \$50;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, USCA supports the opportunity for a periodic referendum to allow changes in the Checkoff, with the first referendum being held within one year of the amendment of the current marketing order;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, USCA supports CBB officer terms be extended if the officer term goes beyond the member's second consecutive term.

COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING - 2007 & 2009

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 2007 Farm Bill.

EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACT - 2009

WHEREAS, the Equal Access to Justice Act passed in 1980 was enacted to restrain overzealous regulators and reimburse parties subjected to unreasonable government action by providing equal access to court; and

WHEREAS, the statute was designed to reimburse attorney's fees so that a party that otherwise would not be able to afford litigation against the government could have an opportunity to justify its position in court and recover attorneys fees afterward; and

WHEREAS, environmental groups have greatly abused the original intent of this Act so that they are able to find procedural flaws in agency actions, sue the government, and receive millions of federal taxpayer dollars in attorney fees for settling or winning these cases which in turn, allows them to continue litigating the government; and

WHEREAS, ranchers must pay their own attorneys' fees in order to attempt to participate in the litigation as interveners,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the U.S. Cattlemen's Association shall support efforts to bring substantive reform to the Equal Access to Justice Act; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the U.S. Cattlemen's Association will seek for the following changes to EAJA and its implementation:

1. There should be better oversight in how EAJA fees are distributed.
2. There should be complete transparency and reporting on the government's expenditures of taxpayer dollars when EAJA fees are awarded.
3. A change in the "for-profit v. non-profit" inequities.
4. Any other amendments which would level the playing field for ranchers and prohibit the abuse and overuse of this law.

ESTATE TAX - 2009

Resolution #1:

BE IT RESOLVED, USCA supports raising the unified credit to \$5,000,000 in 2010 and adjust it for inflation thereafter;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, USCA supports the reduction of the estate tax rate from 45% to 35%;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, USCA supports retaining the stepped up basis;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, USCA supports increasing from \$960,000 to \$2,000,000 the valuation discount available under section 2032A (special use valuation) and a decrease in the percentage of farm assets required to qualify from 50% to 40% of the gross estate;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, USCA opposes preferential estate tax treatment for farms or ranches with environmental easements, or legislation creating new tax incentives that would encourage more environmental easements, unless those easements are donated and not purchased;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, USCA supports holding capital gains rates at their current levels.

Resolution #2:

BE IT RESOLVED, USCA supports the Blumenauer legislation HR 3050.

MARKETING - 2007 & 2009

Resolution #1:

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

BE IT RESOLVED that USCA supports the continued 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 any 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 or 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 that a majority of the weekly cattle procurement for packers with processing capacity over 500 head 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 #2:

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

Resolution #3:

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.

RURAL BROADBAND - 2009

WHEREAS, universal access to broadband is essential to the prosperity of rural America; and

WHEREAS, spurring broadband access and adoption in remote areas of the country will build a stronger foundation in which future generations can experience the benefits of broadband enabled technologies and will allow our country to reach its full potential,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the U.S. Cattlemen's Association resolves to work with Broadband for America, and it's members, to achieve its primary goals of:

1. Educating policymakers and stakeholders on key fundamentals of how the internet and wireless networks work;
2. Leading the policy discussion and driving the debate on how we as a nation can achieve broadband everywhere; and
3. Working with the Administration, key agencies like the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), and Congress to develop and promote policies that maximize access and adoption through increased investment in better and smarter wire line and wireless network technology.

TRADE - 2007 & 2009

Resolution #1:

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 #2:

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 to the United States;

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 #3:

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 #4:

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. Enforcement of mandatory country-of-origin labeling as passed in the 2007 Farm Bill.

TRADE - 2008

Resolution #1—COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the Colombia Free Trade Agreement does not contain any environmental or labor standards; and

WHEREAS, the Colombia Free Trade Agreement does not prohibit transshipment of cattle; and

WHEREAS, the Colombia Free Trade Agreement fails to provide phytosanitary safeguards to protect the U.S. cattle herd from disease; and

WHEREAS, the Colombia Free Trade Agreement does not contain special rules for perishable and cyclical agriculture products such as a “snap back” provision that would curtail imports of cattle and beef when feeder cattle in the U.S. dropped below the cost of production;

BE IT RESOLVED, the United States Cattlemen’s Association opposes the Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

Resolution #2—UPDATED ARGENTINA POLICY

WHEREAS, Argentina has taken steps to harm the livelihood of ranchers and the economic viability of rural communities across the country; and

WHEREAS, Argentine government officials are pressuring the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allow shipments of Argentine meat to enter the U.S. market despite Argentina’s documented problems with Foot and Mouth Disease; and

WHEREAS, Argentina has sided with Brazil in targeting U.S. farm policies in the World Trade Organization; and

WHEREAS, Argentina has ignored court orders and refuses to repay billions in sovereign debt obligations—a default that gave Argentine ranchers an unfair trading advantage; made capital harder to obtain for foreign customers of U.S. goods; and financially harmed everyday Americans, U.S. taxpayers, U.S. businesses; and even teacher pension accounts; and

WHEREAS, lawmakers introduced legislation in the 110th Congress to hold Argentina accountable for its actions and to protect U.S. interests;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the United States Cattlemen’s Association requests the 111th Congress and the Obama Administration to expeditiously enact the Foot and Mouth Disease Prevention Act and the Judgment Evading Foreign State Accountability Act.

WATER RIGHTS - 2009

Resolution #1:

WHEREAS, SB 787, the Clean Water Restoration Act, would increase federal regulations and control over water which would adversely impact ranchers;

BE IT RESOLVED, USCA opposes SB 787.

Resolution #2:

WHEREAS, USCA opposes the expansion of Federal authority by codification by Executive Order,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, USCA supports the involvement of agricultural interests in developing policy in protecting waters of the United States.