



**National Cattlemen's
Beef Association**



VOLUME 3, ISSUE 48

JANUARY 09, 2014

In this Issue

[2014 Brings Permanent Flexibility to School Meals](#)

[The Case for Trade Promotion Authority](#)

[Secretary Jewell Rescinds Troubling National Blueways System](#)

[New on the Web](#)

[Beef: It's What's for Lunch](#)

[Cattle Fax Update](#)

[NBCA's Cattlemen to Cattlemen](#)

[Legislative Watch](#)

[Your NCBA](#)

Contact:

Chase Adams
cadams@beef.org
202-879-9125

Shawna Newsome
snewsome@beef.org
202-879-9138

Beltway Beef is a weekly report from Washington, D.C., giving an up-to-date summary of top policy initiatives concerning the cattle industry; direct from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). Please feel free to reprint in full or in part. If you would like to include NCBA's logo, contact us at 303-694-0305.

Cattlemen's Capitol Concerns

2014 Brings Permanent Flexibility to School Meals

Reforms to the National School Lunch Program and the National School Breakfast Program have been a topic of interest to NCBA's membership for the better part of three years. On Jan. 13, 2011, the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service issued a proposed rule to revise the meal patterns and nutrition requirements for the lunch and breakfast programs and align them with the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. On April 13, 2011, NCBA submitted comments on the proposed rule emphasizing the importance of lean beef in the diets of school-aged children and outlined concerns with the Agency's proposal.

Just months after implementation of the proposed rule, USDA issued a guidance to school food authorities to allow flexibility in the meat/meat alternates and grain maximums for the 2012-13 school year by removing the maximum quantity requirement. The caps contributed to significant challenges for schools that provided meals to students of multiple age groups, as requirements varied by age. As a result, many popular food items such as sandwiches, hamburgers and pasta were limited or taken off of the menu. By removing the maximum quantity requirements, USDA gave schools the flexibility to offer a greater variety of food choices while still adhering to the calorie maximums.

At last years' Cattle Industry

Convention, Registered Dietitian and Nutrition for the Future President Dayle Hayes joined cattlemen and women to discuss USDA's new guidelines, the implications, and how as an industry, we could work together to incorporate beef into school meals. The Beef Checkoff took action developing new recipes, taste-tested and approved by children, which were full of nutrient-rich beef and met the requirements of the new guidelines.

NCBA has been diligently working with members of Congress to raise awareness with the introduction of legislation and has supported congressional efforts to encourage Agriculture Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Kevin Concannon to make the flexibility permanent. On Feb. 25, 2013, the service extended the flexibility for the following school year, stating they received significant feedback from schools requesting an extension and long-term clarification.

Last week, Concannon stated that USDA made a promise to school nutrition professionals and is following through by

making the flexibility permanent. A victory to not only the school nutrition experts, but the students that were left hungry as well.

USDA received over 133,000 comments both for and against their proposed guidelines. For public policy, it is critical for those on the ground to be engaged alongside the national groups. This is great example of all stakeholders weighing in with USDA and USDA listening to schools and students to better meet their needs.

This announcement is an important but small piece to a bigger nutritional policy puzzle. Looking ahead, next week will bring the first public meeting for the 2015 dietary guidelines. NCBA and our members have been engaged and will continue to be involved throughout the next year of meetings and discussions held by USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services as they evaluate the guidelines.



Photo courtesy of the Beef Checkoff

The Case for Trade Promotion Authority

January is set to be a very busy month for the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. In the first week back from Christmas break both houses are already discussing potential votes on the Farm Bill, an omnibus spending bill, and a tax extenders package. While there is growing support for each of these measures, there is one other piece of legislation that has strong bi-partisan and bi-cameral support that has a good chance of being approved before Ground Hog's Day—Trade Promotion Authority (TPA). Also known as “fast-track”, TPA creates an expedited process for Congress to consider trade agreements. TPA gives the President the authority to negotiate trade agreements that reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers with other countries while giving Congress the final say over the trade agreements. TPA is called “fast-track” because it requires Congress to consider trade agreement legislation within mandatory deadlines, with limited debate and without amendment.

TPA was last authorized in 2002 and expired in 2007. The recently-enacted trade agreements with Korea, Colombia and Panama were all negotiated under TPA which allowed for faster-than-usual passage of each agreement. Without TPA, each of the agreements could have been

held up by numerous amendments that may have fundamentally changed the terms of the agreement or procedural delays that would have stalled final consideration by Congress. Instead, the Administration worked with Congress to address major concerns before finalizing terms of the agreement. As a result, each of the free trade agreements passed with bipartisan support and have opened up markets for many U.S. exports.

Fortunately, most of the Republicans and Democrats in both houses support TPA. But why is TPA necessary and why is this an urgent matter for Congress? Congressman Dave Camp (R-Mich.), Chairman of the House Committee on Ways & Means has stated that the completion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and other trade agreements rests on the passage of TPA. How can other countries work with our negotiators in good faith to hammer out an agreement that could be twisted and torn apart by parochial political interests back home? That is certainly a fate that the beef industry does not want to suffer. NCBA policy fully supports the renewal of Trade Promotion Authority, and we stand by Chairman Camp, Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and all Members of Congress who support TPA.

Secretary Jewell Rescinds Troubling National Blueways System

Last week, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell halted and rescinded the blatant federal overreach of the National Blueways System created by her predecessor Secretary Ken Salazar through the controversial Secretarial Order 3321.

Issued on May 24, 2012, the program was designed to “recognize river systems conserved through diverse stakeholder partnerships that use a comprehensive watershed approach to resource stewardship.” The system was theoretically intended to provide a new national emphasis on the unique value and significance of a “headwaters to mouth” approach to river management, while also encouraging stakeholders to integrate their land and water stewardship efforts by adopting a watershed approach. Instead, the new system fell outside any authority granted by Congress, was not implemented in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act or the Administrative Procedures Act, and proposed to redirect agencies' missions without the consent of Congress.

Furthermore, it was riddled with broad and ambiguous language that opened the door wide to over-regulation of our members' businesses and way of life.

It goes without saying that both NCBA and PLC work to maintain a stable business environment in which livestock producers can continue to be stewards of the country's natural resources while they feed the nation and world. Since learning of this program, our organizations have worked to

oppose this program including weighing in with Congress. Without doubt, the National Blueways System could not have been implemented without jeopardizing our ranchers' ability to stay in business and would have expanded federal jurisdiction over waters never intended or authorized by Congress.

As an example, consider the proposal to designate the White River as a National Blueway, which would have encompassed 17.8 million acres in Arkansas and Missouri—much of it agricultural land. The proposal, which was rightfully withdrawn, cited agriculture-related “pollution” and “overutilization” as reasons for the designation. No scientific evidence was provided. This was clearly a baseless call for new regulations on the agriculture community. Meanwhile, no input from the affected states, local citizens or local governments was solicited. The congressional delegations of Arkansas and Missouri were not consulted.

While this is not the first attempt by the Obama Administration to rule by executive fiat, we must not allow dogged repetition of poor practices to prevail over the principles of federalism and limited government. This Secretarial Order flies in the face of the balance of power between the three branches of our federal government and the various governments at the federal, state and local levels.

Fortunately Secretary Jewell saw the error of the Blueways Order. NCBA and PLC applaud Secretary Jewell's decision.

New on the Web

Check out the [Beltway Beef blog](#) for inside perspectives on issues affecting U.S. cattlemen and women. You can sign up on the blog to receive an email when new information is posted. You can also follow us on [Twitter](#), be a fan of us on [Facebook](#), check out our latest photos on [Flickr](#) or watch video updates on our [YouTube](#) page. For audio, visit and subscribe to the Beltway Beef [Podcast](#). You can also subscribe to

Beef: It's What's for Lunch

By Shelley Johnson
Associate Director, Food & Nutrition Outreach
National Cattlemen's Beef Association



High-quality protein, like lean beef, is especially important for children because it supports the growth, repair and maintenance of all body tissues, makes red blood cells and boosts the immune system. Many research studies show a direct link between nutrient intake and academic performance. Zinc, iron and other nutrients are critical for brain development and function. In addition, sufficient protein is

essential for children to perform their best both physically and mentally. These benefits provide excellent reasons schools across the nation can feel good about serving beef in school meals.

Back in 2012, the USDA updated its meal patterns and nutrition standards for the National School Lunch and National School Breakfast Programs to align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and expert recommendations from the Institute of Medicine. Though the standards for the National School Lunch and Breakfast program are supposed to be updated consistently with the Dietary Guidelines in order to reflect the latest nutrition education and science, these changes were the first in more than 15 years. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association, along with many other organizations, including the non-Checkoff/policy side of NCBA, submitted comments on the guidelines as far back as April 2011 in order to ensure that beef continued to be a part of the school lunch program.

A temporary modification to those standards was issued shortly after the implementation of the new rule that allowed schools the flexibility to serve larger portions of lean meat and whole grains in meals. Last week, USDA made the temporary rule final when they permanently removed the weekly maximums for grains and meat/meat alternates. The decision provides much needed stability for long-term meal planning, a promise the agency made to school nutrition professionals, according to USDA Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Kevin Concannon.

Schools can feel good about continuing to include high-quality protein, like beef, on the menu to help children get the essential nutrients they need for optimal health while still meeting the requirements for healthy school meal patterns. Schools are encouraged to build healthy menus that incorporate lean nutrient-rich protein, like beef, along with more fruits and vegetables and whole grains to help kids meet Dietary Guidelines and MyPlate recommendations.

Let's face it: eating healthfully is tough to do. According to the annual International Food Information Council Foundation Food & Healthy Survey, more than half of Americans (52 percent) say that filing their annual income taxes is easier than knowing what to eat (and what to not eat) for optimal health.

As a result of changes to USDA's National School Lunch Guidelines, the Beef Checkoff developed a series of ground beef recipes and a beef nutrition content to enable cafeterias across the country to serve entrees that feature nutrient-rich lean beef and meet the requirements for whole grains, vegetables, fruits and dairy. Each recipe was tested by school-age children, and included cost-effective ingredients that are easy to source for most schools.

The Beef Checkoff is continuously working to make sure that beef stays a central part of the healthy meals offered at school and is working with school foodservice operators to better understand the challenges they may be facing. We encourage parents to talk with their children about what they're eating at school and even accompany them to school on a regular basis if possible (not just one day — the standards are meant to reflect a week of meals) to see what kids are eating, and whether they are eating food that's on their plate.

By working together to bring these types of practical solutions to the table — such as hosting school meal taste tests for kids, incorporating foods they love, like lean beef, into menus or having conversations with our kids about the foods they're eating and helping them understand the importance of choosing nutrient-rich foods—we can truly make a positive difference in the future of our children's health.

Click [here](#) to see new kid-friendly recipes and to learn more about the power of beef.

CattleFax Update

On Wed., Jan. 9, the USDA estimated daily beef cattle slaughter continues to run below the pace needed to reach the industry estimated 604,000 head level for the week. Three-day average slaughter is at 107,000 head per day. This compares to pre-holiday levels around 120,000 head per weekday. Commodity markets were generally mixed at today's close, while equities fell as speculation increased regarding an accelerated tapering of the Federal Reserve bond-buying program. Most live cattle futures contracts closed around \$0.50/cwt. higher, but February live cattle ended steady. January feeder cattle futures closed \$0.425/cwt. higher with gains in deferred contracts as high as \$0.78. The CME reported seven-day average Feeder Index continued to make new all-time highs at \$171.04/cwt., up \$0.17. Wholesale boxed beef values ended the day around \$3/cwt. higher. Grain markets closed mostly lower. Corn futures prices ended the day around \$0.08/bu. lower. Soybean futures dropped around \$0.08/bu., but the January contract ended \$0.0125/bu. higher. Chicago and Kansas City wheat futures dropped around \$0.10/bu.

For recent market news and analysis, visit www.CattleFax.com.

Don't Miss Out on NCBA's Cattlemen to Cattlemen!

Next week on NCBA's Cattlemen to Cattlemen, we'll have a special program focusing on the 2013 Regional Winners of the Environmental Stewardship Award. Join us for a special look at ways to make your operation more environmentally-sustainable.

NCBA's *Cattlemen to Cattlemen*, your source for cattle industry information and stories, debuts each Tuesday at 8:30 p.m. The show also airs Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. and on Saturday at 9 a.m. (all times are Eastern). Don't forget that you can also [watch NCBA's Cattlemen to Cattlemen online](#) anytime by visiting our website. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and become a fan on [Facebook](#).



Legislative Watch

S. 258 and H.R. 657— Grazing Improvement Act

To amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to improve the management of grazing leases and permits, and for other purposes. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on S. 258 and H.R. 657. Key Sponsors: Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), Rep. Raúl Labrador (R-Idaho)

H.R. 1462 — Renewable Fuel Standard Reform Act

Amends the Clean Air Act to revise the renewable fuel program. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on H.R. 1462. Key Sponsor: Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.)

S. 1343 — Farmer Identity Protection Act

Protects the personal information of livestock producers from being distributed to third parties. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on S. 1343. Key Sponsors: Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.)

S. 1630 and H.R. 3189 — Water Rights Protection Act

Provides a means to combat the recent directive that allows the United States Forest Service (USFS) to seize private water rights without just compensation. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on S. 1630 and H.R. 3189. Key Sponsors: Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), Rep. Scott Tipton (R-Colo.)

H.R. 311 — Farmers Undertake Environmental Land Stewardship (FUELS) Act

Directs EPA to change the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) rule to consider a producer's risk when it comes to maintaining costly oil storage facilities. The bill would allow EPA to create practical exemptions for small farmers and ranchers. NCBA urges a **YES** vote on H.R. 311. Key Sponsor: Rep. Rick Crawford (R-Ark.)

Your NCBA

Environmental Stewardship Award Program - This program recognizes environmental stewardship practices and conservation achievements of U.S. cattle producers. Applications for the 2014 ESAP award are due Mar. 7, 2014. For more information and a complete application packet, click [here](#).

Register NOW for the 2014 Cattle Industry Convention: Registration and housing is now open for the convention in Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 4-7, 2014! If you're in the cattle business then you need to be there. Click [here](#) to register today!

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) has represented America's cattle producers since 1898, preserving the heritage and strength of the industry through education and public policy. As the largest association of cattle producers, NCBA works to create new markets and increase demand for beef. Efforts are made possible through membership contributions. To join, contact NCBA at 1-866-BEEF-USA or membership@beef.org.