



Transportation

Getting Beef from the Pasture to Your Plate



The Highway Bill

- The Surface Transportation Act of 2009—also known as the Highway Bill—is up for reauthorization.
- This legislation is critical for cattle producers, who require timely and safe methods for transporting cattle from farm to market.
- The truck weights legislation ties safety with productivity to save businesses and consumers billions in transportation costs.
- And using fewer trucks to haul the same freight reduces energy consumption and helps out business's bottom line.
- Because of the short time left for reauthorization and the many other bills before Congress, it is likely that Congress will have to extend the current bill for 18 months.

Transportation Needs for Cattle Producers

Agriculture and cattle production are unlike the manufacturing industry. During busy seasons, our transportation needs don't comply with normal working schedules. For that reason, cattle producers need Congress to increase the allowable truck weight limits for certain agricultural vehicles.

Increasing truck weights will increase productivity and make us more competitive with Mexico and Canada, which allow 97,000 lb trucks.

Additionally, because of the varying conditions needed for pasturing cattle versus feeding cattle, livestock must frequently be transported across state borders. Uniform standards are critical for a smooth flow of commerce.

Maintaining the integrity of our infrastructure is important. According to the Department of Transportation, there would be 20-year pavement restoration costs savings of nearly \$2.5 billion dollars if 5-axle 80,000 lb trucks were replaced by 6-axle 97,000 lb trucks.



Favorable Legislation

- H.R. 1799—The Safe and Efficient Transportation Act of 2009—would allow states to permit vehicles to haul agricultural products up to 97,000 pounds with the addition of a third axle. Allowing each state the right to increase single-trailer weights from 80,000 to 97,000 pounds reduces the number of vehicle miles traveled on our interstates
- HR 1220—the Farm Truck Bill—would exempt agricultural haulers from federal commercial motor vehicle and operating regulations, as well as raising the federal definition of commercial vehicles from 10,001 pounds to 26,000 pounds. S.639 is a Senate bill which would provide similar measures.
- All of these bills would help cattle producers raise healthy animals and get quality, affordable beef to consumers.