

NEWS & NOTES

Industry tidbits from around the country

Compiled by Shauna Hermel, editor

▶▶▶ Trade notables

On Wednesday, Jan. 29, President Donald Trump signed into law the U.S.-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) trade agreement.

Brexit became a reality Friday, Jan. 31, following a vote by the European Parliament earlier in the week to ratify the withdrawal agreement. The United Kingdom is no longer a member of the European Union and can negotiate trade deals on its own.

China announced Feb. 6 that it would cut tariffs in half on \$75 billion of U.S. imports, promising by Feb. 14 to slash tariffs on some U.S. goods 5%-10%, and 2.5%-5% on others.

▶▶▶ BQA online training modules updated

Building on its updated National Manual launched in Summer 2019, the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program has updated its online training modules to make them more realistic and useful. The new modules are now available to those who are first becoming BQA-certified online and those who are getting recertified as required after three years.

First launched in 2017, the online training modules have been embraced by more than 100,000 in the cattle industry. BQA certifications are also available at in-person training events offered through state beef councils, cattlemen's affiliates, extension programs and other local efforts. Funded by the Beef Checkoff, the BQA program touches more than 85% of beef produced in the United States today.

"The new online modules maintain the program's integrity and make its lessons more real-life and user-friendly," says Bob Smith, veterinarian and chair of the BQA Advisory Board. "They incorporate a wealth of input from people who use the practices every day, as well as experts in the field, and share them in a way that is practical and understandable. We believe the improvements will make this successful program more enjoyable and an even better learning experience."

The online BQA experience is tailored to each participant by industry sector and interest. After registering, participants are taken through an interactive training

▶▶▶ New water rule

"This is the last regulatory step in a long-fought battle to repeal the 2015 *Waters of the U.S.* (WOTUS) rule and replace it with commonsense regulation," National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) President Jennifer Houston stated Jan. 23 in response to the finalization of a new water rule. "The 2015 WOTUS rule was an illegal effort to assert control over private property."

NCBA has fought to repeal the rule and replace it, Houston noted, calling the Jan. 23 action the last step in that process.

"President Trump, EPA

Administrator (Andrew) Wheeler, and Assistant Secretary of the Army R.D. James deserve a lot of credit for listening to cattle producers and for working with us to get us to this point," she said. "We look forward to working with EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to successfully implement this new rule in the years to come."

"NCBA relentlessly fought WOTUS on Capitol Hill, at the agencies, and in the courts. Today, we can rest a little easier knowing that some power has been put back in the hands of landowners."



module that can be completed online, anytime, with participants starting and stopping training at their convenience without losing

progress. Categories for training and certification include Cow-Calf, Stocker, and Feedyard. Online training and certification are available for free and accessible 24 hours a day, seven days each week, making it a convenient option for busy farmers and ranchers.

To find out more about BQA online certification, go to www.bqa.org/bqa-certification.

▶▶▶ Allied Angus Breeders Scholarship applications due May 1

To advance its mission of supporting education, youth and research, the Angus Foundation extends its scholarship program to young men and women involved in the Angus breed, but not necessarily

▶▶▶ BLM action to improve grazing regulations welcomed

Western ranchers welcomed a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Notice of Intent (NOI) published in the *Federal Register* Jan. 21, announcing that the agency is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on new grazing regulations. The NOI opened a public comment period and announced that in-person scoping meetings will be hosted across the West.

"This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for BLM permittees

to set the record straight," said J.J. Goicoechea who chairs the NCBA Federal Lands Committee and PLC's Grazing Regulations Working Group. "We have endured Bruce Babbitt's 'Range Reform' for over 25 years — and the land, native grasses and local ranching families have suffered as a result. This NOI is the first step toward righting that wrong. I cannot understate how important it is for ranchers to submit comments and participate in

these scoping meetings."

The public comment period closes 15 days after the conclusion of the final public scoping meeting. The dates and locations of scoping meetings will be announced at least seven days in advance through local media, newspapers and the BLM website. Ranchers are encouraged to participate in these meetings and to submit their comments during this EIS process.

Continued on page 101

active participants of the National Junior Angus Association. These youth and/or their parents/guardians must use Angus genetics throughout their breeding program, must be assigned a member or affiliate membership customer code, and must have transferred or received transfer of an Angus registration within the 36 months prior to the May 1 application deadline.

Applicants must be a graduating high school senior or must be enrolled in a junior college, four-year college/university or other accredited institution of higher education for the fall term in which the scholarship is to be awarded.

Once a qualified applicant's application has been determined complete and eligible for review, it will be considered by the Angus Foundation's Scholarship Selection Committee composed of two Angus Foundation representatives, two Angus industry representatives and

Continued on page 102

▶▶▶ **Wildorado documentary available online**

A forgotten town finds hope in a young cowboy and his class of high school ag students. Defying the odds, they become one of the first student-led cattle companies in the nation. *Wildorado*, an *I Am Angus*® documentary, premiered on RFD-TV and the Angus TV YouTube Channel Dec. 26 and is now available on Amazon Prime, YouTube and online at www.angus.org/Wildorado.

"Wildorado is a small town in the Texas panhandle, and it's just got an amazing story that's all centered around registered Angus cattle," said Josh Comminellis, American Angus Association video production director.

Like many rural towns across America, economic times and the ag lifestyle can be hard on residents and, in turn, the schools and students. The documentary sets the stage with the high odds

facing the town of Wildorado. The school board passes a bond and builds a school, where they hang their hat on an excellent ag program. Cody Joe Bonds comes on board to head up the Wildorado FFA, bringing an innovative approach to the program.

This innovative high school ag teacher and his ambitious students launch Wildorado Cattle Co., one of the first registered Angus herds in the nation to be managed by high school students. The film shows their first bull sale in March 2019 and the enormous effect this band of high school students and their relentless spirit have on their small Texas town.

For more information, visit www.angus.org/Wildorado or



contact the American Angus Association communications team at 816-383-5100. Subscribe to the Youtube channel — Angus TV — for updates on new content.

one beef industry leader. Emphasis will be placed on an applicant's knowledge of the cattle industry and perspective of the Angus breed.

Three \$1,000 scholarships are awarded annually. Winners will be notified in July.

For more information, including additional eligibility requirements and to download an application, visit www.angusfoundation.org.

▶▶▶ Stockmanship tour locations announced

Locations have been identified for five events on the Stockmanship & Stewardship Regional Tour, with the next stop in Ontario, Ore. Dates for that session and sessions in Bowling Green, Ky.; Durango, Colo.; Danville, Ind.; and Elko, Nev., have not yet been determined.

Stockmanship & Stewardship is a unique two-day educational experience featuring low-stress cattle handling demonstrations, BQA educational sessions, facility design sessions to fit your operation

and industry updates. The program is sponsored by the NCBA, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff; Merck Animal Health; and the Beef Checkoff-funded National BQA program.

The tour features events to be led by stockmanship experts Curt Pate, Ron Gill and Dean Fish. By attending a Stockmanship & Stewardship event, producers may also become BQA certified, network with fellow producers, be involved in hands-on demonstrations from the stockmanship experts and learn cutting-edge operation techniques.

To learn more about Stockmanship & Stewardship events, including seeing videos and photos from previous events and obtaining dates for programs in your area, or to register for an upcoming event, visit stockmanshipandstewardship.org.

▶▶▶ NCBA announces 2020 BQA award winners

NCBA announced the winners of

its 2020 BQA Awards during the 2020 Cattle Industry Convention in San Antonio, Texas.

The National BQA Awards annually recognize outstanding beef and dairy producers and marketers. Winners demonstrate high-quality animal care and handling principles as part of their day-to-day operations, and express a strong desire to improve their operations through BQA.

COW-CALF AWARD. The recipient of the 2020 BQA Cow-Calf Award is IX Ranch in Big Sandy, Mont. The 126,000-acre ranch has prioritized raising high-quality cattle throughout its history, and has found that having exceptional cattle goes hand-in-hand with training exceptional employees.

Implementing BQA fits right in with the ranch's goal to have a "blue-ribbon operation," as said by the Roth family, who have owned and operated IX Ranch since the 1950s. All full-time employees at the ranch are required to be BQA-

certified, and IX Ranch has seen improvement across its operations through low-stress animal handling and increased awareness of employee safety.

DAIRY AWARD. Boadwine Farms is the winner of the 2020 BQA-FARM Dairy Award. The Baltic, S.D., dairy cares for more than 2,000 Holstein dairy cows, with 2,500 acres planted feed and forage crops.

The dairy takes pride in opening its doors to educate interns at South Dakota State University, local students, and consumers across the state. Boadwine Farms' adoption of modern technology and animal handling practices, including following BQA and FARM guidelines across its facilities, ensures visitors gain a clear understanding of best practices and that cow comfort and care is always the No. 1 priority among its employees.

FEEDYARD AWARD. Bledsoe Cattle Co. is the recipient of the 2020 Feedyard BQA Award. The

company is headquartered in Wray, Colo., and has feedyards in several Colorado counties and a stocker ranch in South Dakota. The company places high value on BQA guidelines to ensure consistent, high-quality care for its more than 8,000 head of cattle.

Bledsoe Cattle Co. provides BQA training and certification every three years for its employees. The company also regularly provides BQA training to its contracted crews, sharing the benefits of proper chuteside BQA techniques with livestock operations across eastern Colorado.

MARKETER AWARD. The winner of the 2020 BQA Marketer Award is Western Video Market (WVM). Founded in 1989, WVM has been a proponent of BQA programs and guidelines for nearly as long as BQA has been around and encourages adoption of BQA practices with its producers, buyers and auction partners. During broadcast auctions where buyers are limited to seeing video of cattle, having a BQA certification shows that producers follow industry standards for high-quality animal handling and health care.

As BQA programs have grown in

recognition throughout the United States, WVM has seen that lots of cattle from BQA-certified producers are more likely to be sold at a premium, yielding benefits to both producers and buyers who recognize the value of the program.

EDUCATOR AWARD. The winner of the 2020 BQA Educator of the Year Award is Curt Pate. For more than a decade, Pate has educated tens of thousands of beef industry professionals on safe and effective stockmanship and livestock handling throughout the United States.

His insights on best practices for low-stress livestock handling have not only led more producers to embrace BQA, but shaped the program itself. Pate has been a major proponent in developing BQA's clinics and demonstrations throughout the program's history. He continues to advocate for the program's use to encourage improvement in cattle care throughout the industry.

Four National BQA Awards (Cow-Calf, Feedyard, Dairy and Marketer) are funded in part by the Beef Checkoff program with additional financial support provided by Cargill. The BQA

Educator Award is funded in part by the Beef Checkoff program with additional financial support provided by Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health.

To read more about each of the award winners' operations, visit <https://www.bqa.org/about/bqa-awards>.

▶▶▶ **Farr Scholarship winners announced**

Paige Stanley, University of California–Berkeley, and Jessica Sperber, University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL), have been awarded \$15,000 W.D. Farr Scholarships for 2019-20 by the National Cattlemen's Foundation (NCF). The awards, recognizing superior achievement in academics and leadership, were presented during the 2020 Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show in San Antonio, Texas.

The Farr Scholarships will allow Stanley and Sperber to further their study in fields that will benefit the cattle and beef industry. Stanley is seeking her doctorate in the UC–Berkeley Environmental Science Department, studying the relationship between grazing management and ranch viability. Sperber is pursuing a doctorate at

UNL in ruminant nutrition, focusing heavily on sustainability efforts in cattle feeding.

The annual W.D. Farr Scholarship awards were established by the NCF in 2007 to recognize outstanding students who plan to pursue careers in meat science and animal agriculture.

▶▶▶ **CattleFax elects officers for 2020**

Mark Frasier of Fort Morgan, Colo., was elected 2020 president of CattleFax at the organization's annual meeting, hosted in conjunction with the Cattle Industry Convention in February.

Frasier is a cow-calf, stocker operator and cattle feeder in eastern Colorado and is active in his community and local cattlemen's association. He is a past president of the Colorado Livestock Association. He serves on and has chaired the NCBA Resolutions Committee.

President-elect is Pono Von Holt of Kamuela, Hawaii. Von Holt is a cow-calf and stocker operator, as well as a cattle feeder. He has served as president of the Hawaii Cattlemen's Association, chair of

Continued on page 104

▶▶▶ **AGI launches research hair-shedding EPD**

The American Angus Association launched a research expected progeny difference (EPD) for hair shedding Feb. 5. The research EPD has been in development since 2011 and is now brought to fruition through the collaboration of the American Angus Association, Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI), Mississippi State University, North Carolina State University and the University of Missouri (MU).

Early summer shedding is an indicator for both heat tolerance and tolerance to fescue toxicosis, and it lends discussion to a genetic correlation between a dam's shedding score and the weaning weights of a calf.

"For producers in heat-stressed areas and producers grazing endophyte-infested (hot) fescue, hair shedding is an evaluation of environmental adaptability and cow performance," said Harly Durbin, past AGI intern and current MU doctoral student. "Cattle

that shed their winter coat earlier in the season are less stressed, and therefore can put the energy that might have gone to thermoregulation toward growth and taking care of a calf."

Hair shedding is evaluated on a visual appraisal scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is a full winter coat, and 1 is completely slick (see "Sorting Gate" in the January *Angus Beef Bulletin*, page 30). While there is some variability in shedding patterns between individuals, cattle tend to shed from front to back and top to bottom. Using Angus data, hair shedding has been found to have a moderate heritability of 0.42, falling between that of weaning weight and marbling.

Through the two different projects, 14,465 scores from 8,642 individual cattle have been collected, and submission of more data is being encouraged.

"The selection tool has the ability to help

Angus breeders who are concerned with heat stress develop registered Angus bulls better-suited to work in their commercial customers' environments," said Kelli Retallick, AGI genetic service director. "The entire concept of creating tools to select for increases in genetic potential for adaptability in a specific environment is exciting, and as an organization, we will continue to engage in these opportunities as they arise."

Hair shedding scores should be collected between mid-April and mid-June. Since regional climates exist, it is important to take those measurements when the amount of hair shed varies the most. It is important to note that age has a significant effect on hair shedding. For that reason, cattle must be at least a year of age before hair shedding scores are collected.

Visit [Angus.org](https://www.angus.org) for more information about the new research EPD.

NCBA Cow-Calf Council and president of the Ranchers Renaissance Cooperative.

Jeff Sternberger of Ingalls, Kan., was elected Central Region director while Jerry Adams of Broken Bow, Neb., and Dale Smith of Amarillo, Texas, were re-elected as directors for the Northern Plains and Southwest regions, respectively.

Other directors currently serving terms on the CattleFax board are: Don Quincey, Chiefland, Fla., Southeast director and immediate past president; Jeff Sparrowk of Clements, Calif., director for the Western Region; and Midwest Director Nick Hunt of Atlantic, Iowa. Chris Kalkowski of Omaha, Neb., serves as finance director.

▶▶▶ **Houghton named 2020 Stockman**

Patsy Houghton was recognized March 5 by the Kansas State University (K-State) Livestock & Meat Industry Council (LMIC) as the 2020 Stockman of the Year.

Houghton graduated from K-State in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in animal sciences and industry and in 1979 with a master's degree in reproductive physiology.

She taught at California State University-Fresno and served as a youth educator for the American Simmental Association, then obtained her doctorate from Purdue University in 1986. After serving as K-State Northwest Extension Beef Specialist for four years, Patsy started Heartland Cattle Co. near McCook, Neb., in 1990.

She innovated the "professional heifer development" concept. From 1990 to 2018, Heartland Cattle Co. turned out more than 125,000 heifers bred by artificial insemination (AI) that were placed across America. Between heifer rotations, more than 205,000 bawling calves were weaned and started, and multiple research projects completed, including FDA-controlled studies for clearance of product usage in

replacement heifers and feeder cattle.

▶▶▶ **Scholarship winners**

Nineteen candidates representing 11 states competed for the 2020-2021 Henry C. Gardiner Scholarship awards. Five students were selected and will receive financial assistance for their academic excellence and commitment to making a difference in agriculture:

COLTON IVERS, Austin, Minn., is a junior and a member of the K-State meats judging team. Colton plans to return to his family's farm and grow their seedstock operation.

KATIE LYBARGER, Garnett, Kan., is a junior and a member of the K-State meats judging team. Katie plans to pursue a master's degree in meat science.

ABBEY SCHIEFELBEIN, Kimball, Minn., is a junior majoring in food science. Abbey plans to work in research and development helping to create more nutritious and

affordable food, thereby decreasing food insecurity (see page 112).

ANNIE SCHOETMER, Batesville, Ind., is a senior planning to pursue her master's in meat science. Her interests and experience have influenced her decision to focus on developing more palatable lamb protein products.

HANNAH WILLIAMS, Kearney, Neb., is a junior meat science major. Hannah was raised on her family's generational Hereford operation and has diverse interests ranging from animal health in the cattle feeding sector to meat science research.

"The five students selected to receive scholarships for 2020-2021 represent everything we all want to believe about the future of agriculture. Their areas of interest represent the diversity our industry must embrace to bring about change," said Mark Gardiner.

More information can be found at www.gardinerangus.com. |