

NEWS & NOTES

Industry tidbits from around the country

Compiled by Shauna Hermel, editor

►►► Farm Bill to fund animal disease protection projects

The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced July 15 it was seeking project proposals supporting animal disease preparedness and response activities. The 2018 Farm Bill provided funding for these programs as part of an overall strategy to help prevent animal pests and diseases from entering the United States and to reduce the spread and effects of potential disease incursions through advance planning and preparedness, the agency explained. Up to \$10 million will be targeted toward National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program (NADPRP) projects, and up to \$5 million toward those for the National Animal Health Laboratory Network.

►►► Take it up a notch on National Angus Tour

The 2020 National Angus Tour, to be hosted by the Missouri Angus Association Nov. 6, will shine the spotlight on several innovative farm families in the Kansas City area.

The first stop on the tour is Valley Oaks Feedlot. Owned and operated by the David Ward family, the feedyard is housed near Lone Jack, Mo., and has a 4,500-head capacity.

The state-of-the-art feedlot was

custom-designed to provide optimal ventilation and temperature control in a low-stress environment. The safe atmosphere and feeding program, combined with a superior genetic platform, elevate their cattle in the eyes of packers and local butcher shops alike. The operation typically produces 25% Prime and 98% Choice or higher premiums.

The second stop on the tour is Mershon Cattle near Buckner, Mo. Owners Bruce and Tracey Mershon have been named commercial producers of the year by multiple organizations, including the Beef Improvement Federation and the Missouri Hereford and Angus associations.

This data-driven operation is backed by an Angus-based crossbred cow herd. They utilize Angus, Hereford, Simmental and Charolais sires that excel in carcass quality, feed efficiency, docility and fescue tolerance. Through careful genetic selection the past 15 years, they have seen harvest data steadily improve and are now consistently achieving 95% Choice or better and 5% Prime.

Attendees will learn about sexed semen and split-time artificial insemination (AI) trials, as well as hair shedding, use of commodity byproduct feed blends, the use of new technology in database management of herd performance,

►►► House passes land grab legislation

On July 22, the House of Representatives passed the *Great American Outdoors (GAO) Act*, eliciting strong response by Kaitlynn Glover, executive director of the Public Lands Council (PLC).

"This is a sad day for public lands and the American taxpayer," said Glover, who also serves as executive director of natural resources for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). "With [this] approval of the GAO Act, the House has chosen to willingly relinquish their responsibility to engage in important land conservation decisions far into the future. The bill will allow virtually unrestricted spending for lands and waters across the United States that will be added to a federal estate that is already in disrepair."

The GAO Act creates more than \$17 billion in new, mandatory spending through funding for federal agencies' deferred maintenance backlog and by converting funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The bill gives federal agencies free rein to spend a minimum of \$360 million per year of LWCF funding solely to acquire new private land without any oversight from Congress.

The Senate passed the GAO Act in June 2020, prior to the House vote.

"The ranching community urges President Trump to veto this reckless excuse for a land management bill," said Glover.

and the symbiotic relationship with their row crop and seed business.

Lunch will be served at Lone Summit Ranch, near Lee's Summit, Mo. Established in the early 1900s, the property has been home to outstanding pedigreed livestock of several species. Since their purchase of the property in 2015, Linda Sallee and her husband have worked tirelessly to restore the historic buildings and barns to their original

grandeur. Today, the facilities are available as a special-event venue.

The tour is limited to 200 guests, and spaces often fill up quickly. Visit www.angusconvention.com to register.

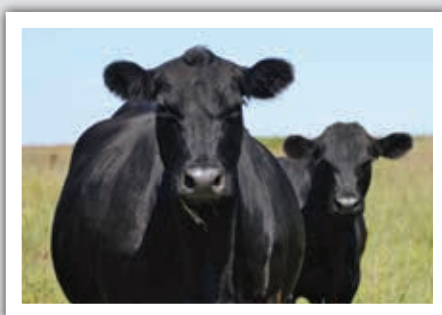
►►► Asian longhorned tick found in Kentucky

The Asian longhorned tick, which preys on a variety of hosts, including humans and wild and domestic animals, has been found in Kentucky. This new tick is known to attack animals in large numbers and will be a concern to livestock producers, wildlife enthusiasts and pet owners. It is a known or suspected vector of several important livestock viral, bacterial and protozoan agents.

"This tick is an aggressive biter and frequently builds intense infestations on domestic hosts that can cause stress, reduced growth and severe

►►► AGI unrolls Angus-on-dairy indexes

Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) launched two new indexes targeted to select profitable Angus sires to be utilized in beef-on-dairy breeding programs. A public index search for the Angus-on-Holstein (\$AxH) and Angus-on-Jersey (\$AxJ) indexes can



be found on the AGI website. Members can also download any indexes on owned, active animals in their herd inventory through Custom Animal Reports in AAA Login. For more information on these indexes, check out the video available at <https://bit.ly/AngusAoD>.

Continued on page 72

MARKETS UNDER INVESTIGATION

USDA provides update on investigation following 2019 Tyson beef plant closure and COVID-19 pandemic.

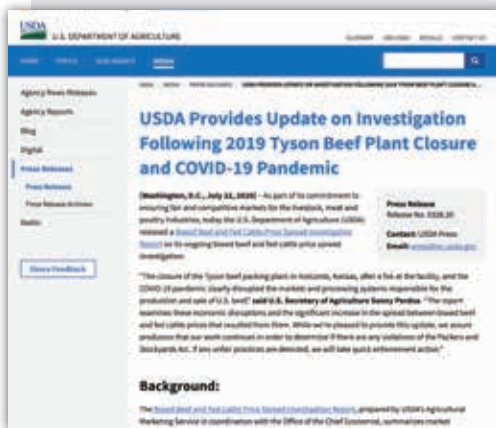
Industry response

“We appreciate the USDA’s thorough examination of the beef markets. There’s little doubt that something is wrong when consumers are paying higher prices for meat and, at the same time, America’s farmers and ranchers are being paid less,” said American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall in a prepared statement.

Though pleased USDA responded to calls for an investigation, scrutiny of the markets is not concluded, Duvall pointed out.

“USDA indicates their examination continues and investigations by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, as well as the Department of Justice, are ongoing.”

“We are pleased that USDA has produced a report into the market dynamics impacting cattle producers across the country,” said Ethan Lane,



National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) vice president of government affairs. “Since NCBA initially requested this investigation, this issue has remained a central topic of conversation for NCBA, our state affiliates and cattle producers throughout the country.”

Lane said that though the industry awaits results of the DOJ investigation, information in the report would be very helpful and timely to discussions of cattle markets and price discovery during NCBA’s Summer Business Meeting in Denver in late July.

“The top-line considerations detailed in this report provide a roadmap for returning transparency and true price discovery in the cattle marketplace,” said United States Cattlemen’s Association (USCA) President Brooke Miller. “USCA has long since advocated for making these changes through the reauthorization of Livestock Mandatory Reporting, a program which is due to expire on September 30, 2020.

“On July 1, USCA and 12 other organizations sent a letter to Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts requesting a hearing be held on the state of the U.S. cattle industry,” he continued. “It is simply unacceptable to be met with silence, while producers are asked to weather another year of declining farm and ranch income. Producer organizations have brought forth real, tangible marketplace solutions that are underscored in this report and that deserve to be brought forward for discussion on Capitol Hill.” |

Editor’s note: This article was compiled from news releases provided by the AFBF, USDA, NCBA and USCA.

blood loss,” said Jonathan Larson, University of Kentucky (UK) extension entomologist. “One reason for their rapid buildup is that the female ticks can lay eggs without mating. It only takes a single fed female tick to create a population of ticks. Potentially, thousands can be found on an animal.”

The tick has been found in small numbers on elk in Martin County and black bear in Floyd County. It was found in large numbers on a bull in Metcalfe County in the south-central part of the state.

“The Metcalfe County ticks were submitted by a veterinarian who answered a call about a bull so infested that it was showing signs of severe fatigue,” said Anna Pasternak, UK entomology graduate student who manages the Kentucky Tick Surveillance Program. “The tick samples that the veterinarian submitted for identification to the UK Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory contained Asian longhorned ticks.”

“With the first two findings being in Eastern Kentucky, the Metcalfe County finding is particularly troubling as it means the tick may

have already spread farther across the state,” Pasternak said.

Individuals who find an unusually large number of ticks on their livestock or pets should contact their local veterinarian. Those who find single ticks they think might be an Asian longhorned tick should work with their county extension agent to submit the sample to UK entomologists for identification.

Additional information on tick bite prevention and proper tick removal is available in UK entomology’s ENTFACT 618: *Ticks and Disease in Kentucky*. It is available online at <https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef618> or by contacting a local extension office.

▶▶▶ Missouri invests in meat and poultry supply chain

July 22, Governor Mike Parson and Director of Agriculture Chris Chinn announced the creation of the Missouri Meat & Poultry Processing Grant in an effort to quickly increase food supply chain resilience in the state. Established by the General Assembly through this

▶▶▶ Team Angus welcomes 2020 interns

Through its internship program, the American Angus Association allows students to explore their interests while developing the knowledge, skills and network to aid them in pursuing future careers. This summer, interns joined multiple departments and entities of the Association.

Events and Education

- ▶ Kacy Bland, Lubbock, Texas, Texas Tech University, animal science
- ▶ Calah Covey, Hamill, S.D., South Dakota State University, ag communications

Angus Genetics Inc.

- ▶ Sungbong Jang, Ilsan, South Korea, University of Georgia doctoral candidate, animal breeding and genetics
- ▶ Muhammad Yasir Nawaz, Pakistan, Michigan State University doctoral candidate, genetics and genome science

Angus Media

- ▶ Madi Baughman, Lone Grove, Okla., Oklahoma State University, ag communications and animal science

Angus Communications

- ▶ Peyton Schmitt, Nichols, Iowa, Iowa State University, ag communications

year’s budget process, \$20 million in *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* funds will be directed to meat and poultry establishments who employ fewer than 200 people. Approved projects will aim to increase food

supply resilience by increasing livestock and poultry processing capacity, and promote worker safety as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Applications must be submitted by Aug. 31. The deadline for all expenditure and reimbursement documentation, as well as final reporting, is Nov. 30.

To learn more, visit <https://bit.ly/MOgrant>.

▶▶▶ Novozymes partners with NC State to drive solutions

Global biotech company Novozymes is partnering with North Carolina State University to create a discovery-to-market pipeline that will create biological solutions for agriculture, animal and human health. The master research agreement will greenlight projects in N.C. Plant Sciences Initiative, which aims to redefine collaborative team science to feed, clothe and fuel the world.

▶▶▶ Grant to help harness biomass, manure to fuel farms

A new federal grant will allow a

▶▶▶ USDA posts final report of Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee

USDA posted the 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee’s final scientific report. The report’s evidence-based findings are intended to inform USDA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as they together develop the 2020-2025 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, which will provide recommendations on what to eat and drink to promote health and prevent chronic disease. The departments plan to publish the new guidelines by year’s end.

USDA and HHS were accepting written public comments on the committee’s final report through Aug. 13, 2020.

In addition to co-developing the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers 15 nutrition assistance programs that leverage America’s agricultural abundance to ensure children and low-income individuals and families have nutritious food to eat.

In response to the report, the NCBA launched a nationwide grassroots campaign to highlight the #BenefitsofBeef and called on cattle producers to submit public comments in support of federal dietary guidelines that recognize beef’s role in a healthy diet.



research team led by Iowa State University, Penn State and Roeslein Alternative Energy to develop new methods of turning biomass and manure into fuel.

The five-year, \$10 million grant from the USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) will power the Consortium for Cultivating Human and Natural reGenerative Enterprise (C-CHANGE) as it works to create new value chains on U.S. farms, with emphasis on the generation of renewable natural gas, improved rural economic outcomes and protection of the environment.

The project director on the transdisciplinary and multi-institutional grant is Lisa Schulte Moore, a professor of natural resource ecology and management and associate director of the Bioeconomy Institute at Iowa State. Schulte Moore said the consortium will innovate methods for farmers to make more efficient use of resources while maintaining current value

chains, resulting in an ag economy that's both more profitable and environmentally sound.

"Agriculture is always going to be vital to rural economies," Schulte Moore said. "The C-CHANGE team is trying to meet current societal demands while returning more value to people and the land."

In addition to Iowa State, Penn State and Roeslein Alternative Energy, other institutions involved with the new C-CHANGE grant include FDCE of New Albany, Ohio; the USDA Agricultural Research Service National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment in Ames and 33 partner organizations.

▶▶▶ **K-State professor wins innovation award**

A Kansas State University professor whose work focuses on improving the use of artificial insemination (AI) in beef cattle received the 2020 Mark and Eva Gardiner Innovation and Excellence Faculty award.



David Grieger has worked at K-State since 1992 to simplify the use of reproductive technologies so they are more economical and less time-consuming for cattle producers.

David Grieger, a professor in the Department of Animal Sciences and Industry, has worked at K-State since 1992 to simplify the use of reproductive technologies so they are more economical and less time-consuming for cattle producers.

Mark and Eva Gardiner, who own and operate Gardiner Angus Ranch near Ashland, Kan., established the award in 2019 to recognize faculty in the K-State College of Agriculture who are excelling through innovative

teaching, research or extension that positively affects the global food system.

The family's interest is to recognize faculty who not only educate, but who are innovative and motivate students to careers in agriculture, Mark explained.

"Reproductive technology is more important today than ever before," he said. "Successful applications on the ranch result in improved conception rates and can even affect female longevity, both translating into profitability. [David's] passion for science and research and his ability to effectively impact and motivate students is priceless. His body of research speaks for itself and his remarkable credibility as an educator speaks through those students fortunate enough to experience his classes."

In addition to his teaching success, Grieger has published 71 articles and had 671 citations during a 28-year academic career. |