

Industry Link

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President vetoes resolution of disapproval of WOTUS

After bi-partisan passage in both chambers of Congress, President Obama vetoed Senate Joint Resolution 22, disapproval of the EPA's *Waters of the United States* (WOTUS) rule.

National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) President Philip Ellis said this is a clear indication the president does not understand the role America's cattle producers, land owners and state governments play in preserving our natural resources.

"We are extremely disappointed the president chose to side with the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), which has pulled out all the stops and shown an appalling disregard for the law throughout this rulemaking process," said Ellis. "In siding with the EPA, the president has ignored the will of Congress, including members of his own party. Moreover, he has taken side against the 32 states and countless stakeholders who have challenged the WOTUS rule. With Congress clearly showing their disapproval of this rule, the

consequences of WOTUS implementation now rest solely with President Obama."

The Senate voted 53-44 on Nov. 4, 2015, and the House voted 253-166 on Jan. 6, 2016, in support of S.J.Res. 22.

Source: NCBA.

RFD-TV and The Weather Channel partner to deliver weather forecasts to America's farmers and ranchers

Premiering Jan. 18, 2016, the RFD-TV/The Weather Channel *Farm & Ranch Forecast* is a new tool to assist those involved with production agriculture as they make the decisions so vital for the success of their operation. The daily feature will begin by delivering North America's most accurate seven-day forecast. It combines RFD-TV's vast knowledge of the variety and needs of worldwide agriculture with The Weather Channel's technology and production abilities.

The segment will air on RFD-TV's *Market Day Report*, as well as on the nightly broadcasts of *Rural Evening News* on both coasts, and throughout prime time programming. The updates will also be aired on *Rural Radio* (SiriusXM channel 147), and be available through digital means including the Country

Club on <http://rfdtv.com> and on mobile devices through RFD-TV's new app.

The partnership allows RFD-TV viewers to access customized weather news and forecasts in real time from The Weather Channel, while teaming up both organizations' expert meteorologists.

The RFD-TV/The Weather Channel *Farm & Ranch Forecast* marks the beginning of a long-term partnership to deliver integrated weather content to those whose livelihood depends on production agriculture. Plans are under way to provide even more in-depth weather news to farmers and ranchers via digital and other technologies as they develop.

Source: RFD-TV and The Weather Channel.

Missouri Senate votes 30-1 against tax hikes on farm families

The Missouri Senate passed *Senate Concurrent Resolutions 51 and 52* (SCR 51 and 52) Jan. 25, 2016, which disapprove the Missouri Tax Commission's recommendation of a 5% tax increase on Missouri farmers and ranchers. The resolutions, sponsored by Sens. Will Kraus (R-8) and Mike Parson (R-28), passed with a bipartisan 30-1 vote. The resolution is supported by the Missouri Cattlemen's Association (MCA)

and is a priority for members of the association. MCA President Keith Stevens said now is not the time to increase taxes on Missouri farmers and ranchers.

"It would be irresponsible for this association to compromise on yet another tax increase when we have members struggling to even make a loan payment," said Stevens. "The market is volatile, and we are seeing a dramatic downward trend that has some family farmers and ranchers in a very difficult situation."

The Missouri Tax Commission makes recommendations for tax adjustments on agricultural property every two years. Two years ago, the Commission increased taxes on farm and ranch ground by 5%. This tax hike went into effect in 2015. According to Stevens, the formula used by the tax commission when considering taxes on farm and ranch property does not take into account flooding — or weather of any kind, volatility in the market, or the value of the food produced from the land. Stevens said an increase of any rate could prevent expansion and growth in the state's top industry.

SCR 51 and 52 now move to the Missouri House of Representatives. The House passed an identical resolution by a 133-24 vote. The House version, *House Concurrent Resolution 58*, was to be

heard in committee on the Senate side in late January.

“We commend Senators Kraus and Parson for their leadership on this issue,” said Stevens. “The 33 senators who stood firm for Missouri’s food producers are not taken for granted. My goal as a farmer is to make a living for my family while also ensuring consumers in this state have access to nutritious and affordable food.”

Source: MCA.

Grace period gives brand owners more time

The deadline to renew North Dakota livestock brands was Dec. 31, 2015, but brand owners who missed the deadline can still secure their expired brands if they act soon.

Brands that were not renewed by the Dec. 31 deadline are considered expired, but state law provides a one-year grace period, which prevents an expired brand from being picked up by a new owner in that 12-month period. The grace period, which ends Dec. 31, 2016, aims to protect brand owners from losing their brands by mistake.

Brand owners who want to keep their brands, but who still need to renew them should complete the yellow brand renewal form that was mailed in August 2015 to the address listed on the brand recording.

North Dakota Stockmen’s Association (NDSA) Brand Recorder Rachael Preusse reminded brand owners to complete the renewal process as quickly as possible to avoid issues when marketing livestock.

“By law, brands that have not been renewed are expired,” she explained. “Therefore, sale proceeds on an animal with an expired brand will be held until the brand is renewed or other proof of ownership information is provided.”

Those who have opted not to renew their brand but still have livestock wearing the brand should contact their local brand inspector to have a local inspection done and to obtain the ownership paperwork they will need when marketing those animals.

To complete the brand-renewal process, brand owners must fill out, sign and return their renewal form to the NDSA office at 407 S. 2nd St., Bismarck, ND 58504. Those who have misplaced their forms can request a new one by calling 701-223-2522.

For more information, visit <http://ndstockmen.org>.

Source: NDSA.

USDA expands microloans to help farmers

Agriculture Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden announced Jan. 19 that the USDA will begin offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. These microloans will be especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.

The microloan program, which

celebrates its third anniversary, has been hugely successful, providing more than 16,800 low-interest loans, totaling more than \$373 million to producers across the country. Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment and living expenses since 2013. Seventy percent of loans have gone to new farmers.

For more information, please view the full USDA news release online.

Source: USDA Office of Communications.

Avian Influenza

According to USDA and media reports, the highly pathogenic H7N8 Avian Influenza was found present in a number of commercial turkey flocks in Dubois

County, Ind. The virus was confirmed in a 60,000-head turkey farm on Friday, Jan. 15. On Jan. 16, reports indicated another eight farms around the initial location also were affected.

At this point total figures for all the turkeys affected by the disease are not known, but it would appear that the

(Continued on page 108)

Industry Link *(from page 107)*

number is more than 100,000 head. The fact that the disease strain found is different from the one that caused so much destruction last spring does not appear to make much difference. They are both highly pathogenic, which means that aggressive culling of affected flocks is the best way to contain the spread

of the disease. Neither of these two strains, H5N2 and H7N8, has in the past been associated with human deaths. Rather, the primary impact of the virus is economic, causing significant losses for the affected farms.

For more information, please view the *Daily Livestock Report* online at

www.dailylivestockreport.com/.

Source: Steve Meyer and Len Steiner Inc.

Alltech acquires Masterfeeds

Alltech has acquired 100% of the outstanding shares of Masterfeeds Inc. in a share purchase agreement with Ag

Processing Inc. (AGP). Masterfeeds, a leading commercial animal nutrition company in Canada, is now part of the Alltech family of companies, which includes 12 other companies that Alltech has acquired globally since 2011.

The addition of Masterfeeds to Alltech's existing Canadian operations and another Canadian acquisition, EMF Nutrition, brings the companies' total presence to approximately 700 Canadian employees. Together they operate 25 feed manufacturing and premix facilities, nine retail locations and seven distribution centers in a business spanning the entire country. Alltech has a strong presence in all regions of the world with more than 4,700 employees worldwide.

Source: Alltech.

Plague-riddled prairie dogs a model for infectious disease spread

Every now and then, colonies of prairie dogs are wiped out by plague, an infectious disease most often associated with the Black Death of the 14th century.

Plague doesn't usually kill people these days, but it's alive and well among the millions of ground-dwelling rodents of Colorado and other western states, notably the black-tailed prairie dog. They're resilient critters, though: following wholesale destruction of colonies, they seem to repopulate with a vengeance.

Colorado State University (CSU) biologists say this sporadic ebb and flow of prairie dog plague is an ideal model for the study of rare infectious zoonotic disease — disease that can jump from wildlife to humans — like MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) and Ebola.

Plague, in all its terrible forms, is caused by the *Yersinia Pestis* bacterium, usually spread through flea bites. Last year in Colorado, there were a handful of human cases, including at least two deaths.

A multi-year, CSU-led study that involved trapping and testing thousands of prairie dogs across the Pawnee National Grassland, and tens of thousands of their plague-carrying fleas, was conducted by CSU biologists Daniel Salkeld and Michael Antolin, and was published online Jan. 13 in *BioScience*.

Source: Colorado State University.

AgriLabs unveils website

AgriLabs has announced the rollout of its completely redesigned website at www.agrilabs.com.

Visitors to the site can easily access relevant information about a broad range of products available, plus learn how other AgriLabs customers are using products to improve their animal care. The site also adopts a fresh, bold visual design for a more user-friendly experience with improved navigations and functionality.

Source: AgriLabs