

# Industry Link

Compiled by **SHELBY METTLEN**,  
assistant editor

## Industry groups react positively to Pruitt's EPA confirmation

There was no shortage of praise from the agricultural community upon former Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt's confirmation as Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator for the Trump administration Feb. 17.

Craig Uden, president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), said, "For far too long, the EPA has been a runaway bureaucracy largely out of touch with how its policies directly affect folks like cattle ranchers, who use — and responsibly care for — the environment while providing the safest and most abundant food supply in the world. Scott Pruitt will restore some common sense to environmental policy, and we look forward to working with him on restoring regulatory sanity to Washington, such as by killing the onerous 'Waters of the United States' rule."

National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) President John Weber said, "NPPC congratulates Scott Pruitt on his confirmation as EPA administrator. He's a

champion for American agriculture who relies on science and supports the rule of law in advancing commonsense regulations that will protect our environment without overburdening farmers.

"As Oklahoma attorney general, he struck a balance between protecting the environment and protecting the livelihoods of farmers and business owners. Everyone, particularly farmers, wants to have clean air and water and to preserve and protect our natural resources, but you don't achieve those goals by piling regulations on the very people who are the stewards of the land, air and water. Scott Pruitt understands that, and that will serve him well as EPA administrator."

Zippy Duvall, president of American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), hailed Pruitt's confirmation, saying, "Scott Pruitt's confirmation to lead the Environmental Protection Agency will bring a breath of fresh air to the post. America's farmers and ranchers look forward to working with Administrator Pruitt as he leads the EPA with a welcome level of common sense in the important job of protecting the environment.

"For too long, farmers and ranchers have been victims of EPA's harsh regulatory overreach. Farmers are conservationists to the core, and we want to play a positive, cooperative role in protecting the environment we rely on to produce food for this nation."

He added, "But what we truly look forward to is working with someone at EPA who understands how farmers and ranchers care for our nation's natural resources each and every day."

Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) President Richard Thorpe said, "The EPA has long been an agency in need of cultural and regulatory reform to ensure it protects all Americans, in all professions and in all regions of the country. I applaud the Senate's confirmation of Scott Pruitt as the next administrator of the EPA. His record and experience as Oklahoma's attorney general gives me great confidence that he is the right person to lead the EPA to a new era of commonsense regulation.

Sources: NCBA, NPPC, AFBF and TSCRA.

## Record-low veal production for January

Commercial red meat production for

the United States totaled 4.29 billion pounds (lb.) in January, up 6% from the 4.06 billion lb. produced in January 2016.

Beef production, at 2.12 billion lb., was 8% above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.58 million head, up 9% from January 2016. The average live weight was down 11 lb. from the previous year, at 1,370 lb.

Veal production totaled 6.3 million lb., 5% below January a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 46,600 head, 12% above January 2016.

The average live weight was down 39 lb. from last year, at 235 lb.

Pork production totaled 2.15 billion lb., 3% above the previous year. Hog slaughter totaled 10.1 million head, 4% above January 2016.

The average live weight, at 284 lb., was down 1 lb. from the previous year.

Lamb and mutton production, at 12.3 million lb., was 9% above January 2016. Sheep slaughter totaled 177,000 head, 10% above last year. The average live weight was 138 lb., down 1 lb. from January a year ago.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service.

## NFU: Trump administration building positive record on renewable fuels

In a recent letter to ethanol industry leaders, President Trump acknowledged that renewable biofuels are critical to his vision for American energy.

"The advent of a strong renewable energy industry has been a boon to our

nation's farm and rural economies, energy independence and environmental footprint," said National Farmers Union (NFU) President Roger Johnson. "Because the administration is ultimately responsible for ensuring proper implementation of the Renewable Fuel Standard and similar biofuel policy measures, it is important for his administration to build a positive record on renewables and provide much-needed certainty to the industry."

In his letter to the National Ethanol Conference, President Trump noted that ethanol and the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) are vital to rural economies, but focused primarily on his intent to reduce regulatory burdens facing the industry.

"NFU recognizes the president's intent to cut unnecessary regulations that hinder the growth of the biofuels industry," said Johnson. "We stand behind this notion, and stress the importance of also upholding the RFS law as written by Congress. While the RFS has provided tremendous gains for the renewables industry, as well as family farmers and rural communities, it has been surrounded by uncertainty."

*Source: NFU.*

### **Capturing value of genetics and management**

Two cow-calf producers shared their perspectives on "capturing value" for calves during a Cattlemen's College® session Feb. 1 at the 2017 Cattle Industry Convention in Nashville, Tenn. Making remarks were Richard Meadows of Alabama-based Meadows Creek Farm and Sam Hands of Kansas-based Triangle H Grain & Cattle Co.

Meadows shared how his family operation has grown into a seedstock and commercial entity over the past three decades by working with others and looking for opportunities to add value. What began as a small herd from 4-H show animals has now evolved into working with cooperator herds and marketing 150-170 2-year-old Angus and Charolais bulls via three annual sales.

Meadows credited their growth to "finding the right people" with whom to work. This has included establishing the Southeast Alabama Feeder Calf Sale, which he and a majority of his customers sell calves through as a means to offer uniform lots in greater quantities. During the years they've added protocols for vaccinations, preconditioning and, most recently, even offering promotion for genetic data on calves.

For more information, view the Angus Media news article online.

*Source: Kindra Gordon for Angus Media.*

### **President reconsiders WOTUS rule**

NCBA President Craig Uden released a statement in response to President Donald Trump's executive action ordering the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to reconsider their controversial *Waters of the United States* (WOTUS) rule.

"This extremely flawed rule would force ranchers and feedlot operators to get permits or risk excessive federal penalties despite being miles away from any navigable water," said Uden. "It would be one of the largest federal land grabs and private-property infringements in American history, and the President should be applauded for making EPA and the Corps reconsider this debacle. Ultimately, this

rule should be taken out behind the barn and put out of its misery."

Describing the flawed WOTUS rule as nothing more than a federal land grab, AFBF President Zippy Duvall said President Trump's executive order to ditch the rule "is a welcome relief to farmers and ranchers across the country."

He continued, "The Environmental Protection Agency failed to listen to

farmers' and ranchers' concerns when drafting the rule and instead created widespread confusion for agriculture. Under the rule, the smallest pond or ditch could be declared a federal waterway."

*Sources: NCBA and AFBF.*

