



Happy New Year!!

January 9, 2009

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Robert Named Next NCBA CEO

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association announced today Forrest L. Roberts will be its next chief executive officer. Roberts, 42, will start January 20, 2009.

"We are thrilled Forrest will be joining us as CEO of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. We are certain Forrest brings the right experience, vision and optimism to lead the nation's oldest, largest and most respected cattle organization," said Andy Groseta, rancher from Cottonwood, Ariz., and NCBA president.

Roberts grew up on a family-owned, diversified livestock operation in Uvalde, Texas. He worked side-by-side with his family when the operation expanded to include a retail meat market for "locally grown, corn-fed" beef and pork. Forrest went on to earn a Bachelors of Science in Animal Science from Texas A&M University and a Masters of Business Administration from University of North Carolina.

Roberts has held several marketing and sales positions in two animal health companies. He started with Upjohn Animal Health in 1992, and he remained with the company through its two mergers to Pharmacia Animal Health and later Pfizer Animal Health. In 2004, he left Pfizer to join Elanco Animal Health where he most recently served as the Marketing Manager for Elanco's Beef Business Unit.

The search for NCBA's next CEO was competitive, attracting more than 70 applicants. A 12-member producer committee reviewed the applicants, interviewed several candidates and selected two among the 70 for NCBA's officers to consider.

"Forrest's agriculture background, business experience and his passion for the industry clearly made him the candidate we wanted to lead our association into the future. Forrest is a goal-oriented and dynamic leader, who will take NCBA to the next level to better serve the cattlemen of this country. We fully expect him to meet the challenges of our industry head-on with innovative solutions that will help producers succeed in the global marketplace," said Groseta.

In addition to his agriculture and beef business experience, Roberts has served in several volunteer positions in NCBA. He has been a member of NCBA's Executive Committee, Board of Directors, Allied Industry Council, Long-Range Planning Committee and the National Cattlemen's Foundation Board of Trustees.

Missouri Cattlemen's Association

Missouri's Cattlemen Foundation

Missouri Beef Industry Council

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Missouri Department of Agriculture

"My roots, my education, my passion, my career - they're all linked to the cattle industry. I can think of no greater honor than to be CEO of NCBA. I look forward to working with NCBA's staff, members, leaders, state and industry partners to ensure the future strength and sustainability of the U.S. cattle industry," said Roberts.

Terry Stokes stepped down as NCBA's CEO in September, after serving in the role for nearly seven years. Stokes has stayed on in the role during the search and will work with Roberts through the end of January to ensure a seamless transition. Both men will be present at the 2009 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show in Phoenix, Ariz. Jan. 28-31.

Released by NCBA 1/3/09.

Windett Testifies before the Interim Ag Committee

On Monday, January 5th, Jeff Windett, Executive Vice President of Missouri Cattlemen's Association, testified before the Missouri House of Representatives Interim Agriculture Committee. The special committee was formed last summer to investigate and gather information about making Missouri agriculture more profitable.

Over the course of the last 6 months, there have been six hearings around the state. On Monday, the state's agricultural commodities testified as to the conditions of their respective industries. MCA's testimony included the drastic loss of cows due to high input costs and available, affordable haying and grazing acres. Windett testified the economic stress producers are under is taking a toll on the industry and producers ability to make a living. Recognizing agriculture as the largest economic driver to the state and the beef industry as the largest segment of agriculture, this has a huge bearing on the economic health of the state's economy! Windett went on to say the livestock industry is undergoing a restructuring in the state given high input costs and excessive regulations. Pointing to the recent Arrow Rock judgment rendered from the bench, CAFO regulations hamper the growth of the livestock industry. It is casting an uncertainty of the future to livestock producers and lenders as well!

Also in his testimony Windett stated that MCA would like to promote the elimination of personal property tax on livestock, propose full funding for the Beef Tax Credit, and provide incentives to keep land in haying and grazing acres. Furthermore, MCA would like a "Right to Farm" Legislation that calls for anyone purchasing property to sign a disclosure form acknowledging the buyer is moving a farming area and they accept normal farming and agricultural practices.

Recession? Not for PETA and friends

In 2008, there appeared to be an increase in well-funded animal-rights activities directed at animal agriculture. Based on their research, the Animal Agriculture Alliance understands why. In 2007, the latest reporting period available for review, charitable donations to animal-rights groups rose 11 percent, providing activist groups with more funds to develop wide-ranging activities such as California's Proposition 2, undercover video operations, legislative initiatives and legal actions. Donations to the extremist People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and its subsidiaries increased 11 percent.

The alliance research used a variety of sources including independent examinations of some groups' Internal Revenue Service Form 990, which the IRS requires non-profits to file, and the 2008 Animal People Watchdog Report on 150 Animal Charities - the newspaper Animal People's annual review of animal-charity budgets. Donations to Humane Society of the United States, the largest animal-rights activist group in the United States, remained about the same as 2006 when including its subsidiary organizations, the Fund for Animals and Doris Day Animal League.

On the international front, the World Society for Protection of Animals, a relatively moderate animal-rights group, increased its donations 80 percent, displacing PETA as the third-largest activist group targeting modern animal agriculture. However, in terms of assets, PETA and FSAP combined still can claim being the third-largest animal-rights groups with assets of \$34.5 million. Additionally, UK-based Compassion in World Farming raised revenues 60 percent.

A very significant increase in charitable donations to an animal-rights group was to Acton, Calif.-based Animal Acres which increased donations 443 percent. Animal Acres was founded by Lorrie Bauston, a co-founder of the East Coast animal-rights group Farm Sanctuary. For all who value animal agriculture, this group warrants watching.

Total donations to the most significant domestic and international animal-rights groups reached nearly \$330 million in 2007. This level of funding will only improve the ability of animal-rights groups worldwide to continue their multi-dimensional efforts, attacking animal agriculture and other animal-use businesses. Below is a comparison of 2007 and 2006 fundraising for some of the most notable activist groups' funding.

Given/Earned: 2007 (\$millions) / 2006 (\$millions) / Change

Humane Society of the United States/Fund for Animals/DDAL: 130.0 / 130.2 / 0%

Massachusetts SPCA: 47.9 / 46.9 / 2%

World Society for the Protection of Animals: 33.5 / 18.6 / 80%

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals /Foundation to Support Animal Protection: 28.9 / 26.0 / 11%

Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and subsidiaries*: 7.5 / 7.0 / 7%

Farm Sanctuary: 5.1 / 4.5 / 14%

Compassion in World Farming: 4.9 / 3.0 / 60%

Friends of Animals: 4.7 / 5.6 / -16%

Animal Legal Defense Fund: 3.5 / 3.8 / -8%

Humane Farming Association: 2.4 / 2.1 / 16%

Animal Acres: 1.5 / 0.3 / 443%

*Includes Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, the PCRM Foundation, the Cancer Project and the Washington Center for Clinical Research.

Though revenue for groups with animal-rights and anti-animal agriculture programs was up in the low double-digits, total assets expanded 31 percent, due to conservative spending by the groups. Animal-rights behemoth HSUS had assets increase about 5 percent, slightly less than the S&P 500 gain of 6 percent for the year. However, the group still retains enough assets to fund itself for over two years and four months at its 2007 budget level.

"Much of this increased funding is attributed to donors who are not fully aware of the anti-animal use campaigns of many of these groups," Alliance Executive Vice President Kay Johnson Smith said. "It's unfortunate many portray themselves as mainstream and working to improve animal care, yet their funding is primarily spent on campaigns to ban or restrict essential uses of animals such as being raised for food or for research to find cures for diseases. Even worse, many of their campaigns demand changes that are actually harmful to animals' overall health and well-being."

The alliance encourages all potential donors to thoroughly evaluate the true goals and campaigns of all animal-rights groups before making a contribution. American farmers and ranchers work hard every day to provide consumers with wholesome products from humanely raised animals. Be sure your tax-deductible contributions are not going to groups working to eliminate your right to choose those products.

Released by *Drovers.com* 1/7/09.

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To get certified online, visit:
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For more information on BQA programs contact Missouri Cattlemen's Association
at (573) 499-9162 or cattleinfo@mocattle.com

Missouri Producers Encouraged to Attend Agritourism Industry Conference

The Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) is reminding producers to register for the 2009 Missouri Agritourism Conference, "The Future Looks Bright", Jan. 16-17, 2009 at Lodge of the Four Seasons in Lake Ozark, Mo. The conference will be a two-day learning experience for those who are looking to enter the agritourism industry, are agritourism operators or are extension agents. The conference is sponsored cooperatively by MDA, AgriMissouri and the Missouri Farmers' Market Association.

Conference participants will hear topics including: Identify Your Potential and Business Planning, How to Conduct School Tours, Running a Retail Shop on Your Farm, Romancing the Media, Bragging Rights: Successful Missouri Agritourism Operations, How to Use Social and Online Media to Brand Yourself, Adding Haunted Attractions: the Pros & Cons, Food Safety and much more.

The Missouri Farmers' Market Association will hold their annual membership meeting in conjunction with the conference on Jan. 17. Farmers' market masters and market vendors are encouraged to attend the meeting to learn more about growing heirloom tomatoes, gain salesmanship skills, innovative marketing ideas and hear the 2008 successes of markets and vendors across the state. Farmers' market participants need to register with Missouri Farmers' Market Association Secretary Eileen Nichols at eileennichols@sbcglobal.net.

For more information on the 2009 conference, visit www.mda.mo.gov or www.agrimissouri.com/agritourism.htm. For more information about the conference program, contact Sarah Gehring or Lane McConnell at (573) 751-4339 or via email Sarah.Gehring@mda.mo.gov or Lane.McConnell@mda.mo.gov.

New Rendering Rules Create Concern

Nebraska's state veterinarian is among those worried that dead cattle could be left to rot in windbreaks or ditches because of a federal regulation intended to prevent mad cow disease.

The new rule, which takes effect April 27, says cattle over 30 months of age can't be rendered for animal feed

unless their brains and spinal cords are removed first.

The Food and Drug Administration regulation is intended to prevent the prions that cause bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease, from slipping into livestock feed and causing an outbreak in cattle. Prions are found in the brain and spinal cord.

The rendering truck is a popular method for disposing of cattle that die before going to market. But some fear that rendering companies may stop picking up dead cattle or that higher fees will discourage farmers from calling a rendering company when an animal dies. The result could be dead cattle that are illegally dumped.

"It's going to be a major problem," said State Veterinarian Dennis Hughes, who works for the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. "We fear farmers are going to be hauling them into shelterbelts or ditches, to make good coyote food."

Although the rule will cause disposal challenges, the FDA maintains that the rule is needed to control the spread of mad cow disease.

FDA press officer Michael Herndon said more than 200 people have died worldwide from the human form of mad cow disease, including three cases in the United States that probably resulted from exposure outside the country.

"The FDA has an obligation to put control measures in place that will prevent the threats to public and animal health," Herndon said.

The regulation will have the most impact on the dairy industry - which accounts for about 300 farms and 60,000 cattle in Nebraska.

Milk cows, which are more likely to reach old age, are most productive after 3 years of age and can continue to produce until they're 15 or older. Beef cattle, in contrast, often go to slaughter before they're 2 years old.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, about 4.2 million cattle and calves died before slaughter during 2007, roughly 4 percent of that year's Jan. 1 cattle inventory. Nebraska saw about a 3 percent death loss, or about 200,000 head. Iowa experienced about a 4.6 percent death loss, or about 185,000 cattle and calves.

Between 45 and 50 percent of animals that die on the farm go to rendering companies, said Tom Cook, president of the National Renderers Association. Rendering trucks travel regular routes to pick up animals from large farms and feedlots. Smaller operations call for the service when needed.

In past decades, rendering companies paid farmers for animal carcasses, which they boiled down for animal feed and other products. Today, most companies charge about \$25 to \$30 per head to remove an animal.

A rendering industry study said costs could go to \$45 to \$50 per head to cover additional labor and specialized equipment required to remove brains and spinal cords.

"It's safe to say there will be changes across the rendering industry," said Ross Hamilton, director of government affairs and technology for Darling International, a national company that provides rendering services in eastern Nebraska.

Cook said rendering companies probably will begin eliminating the banned material in early February so that their supply lines will be clear by April 27. He said he didn't know how many companies will adopt procedures to remove the material from older cattle and how many will simply stop accepting carcasses of cattle that fall under the restrictions - those older than 30 months.

Lonnie Johnson, owner of Nebraska Byproducts of Lexington, said he intended to continue picking up dead animals for his customers.

"If we don't do that, I have a fear we're going to see a lot of dead stock lying in canyons and ravines and that type of thing," he said.

Alternative disposal options are relatively few. Farmers can bury dead animals, which is problematic in areas with high water tables or in situations where more than a few animals have died. In some areas, farm dead also can be sent to landfills or composted - a controlled decomposition process similar to home gardeners' treatment of yard and kitchen waste.

However, state law limits composting to carcasses of no more than 600 pounds because of difficulties in properly composting larger animals. Although incineration is allowed, the facilities are expensive to build and lacking in the region.

Representatives of the dairy and rendering industries question the need for the new FDA regulation. They said that the chance of humans contracting mad cow disease from U.S. cattle is minuscule and that the new regulation is intended more to soothe the concerns of U.S. trading partners like Korea and Japan.

Mike Roder, spokesman for the Nebraska Dairy Industry Association, said it will be increasingly difficult for dairy farmers to deal with "downer" cows - animals who through injury, disease or old age can no longer walk. Such animals aren't allowed to be slaughtered for their meat, because of the possibility they carry mad cow disease or some other disease.

"I can't take her to market, and I can't have her rendered," Roder said. "When you're doing this for a living, the rules seem to pile up."

Released by Omaha World-Herald 1/2/09. Written by Leslie Reed. Contact the writer: 402-473-9581, leslie.reed@owh.com

Mark Twain Grazing Council Announces 2nd Conference

Mark Twain Grazing Council will host their second Grazing Conference January 31, 2009. The Conference will be held at the Quality Inn & Suites, Hannibal, Missouri.

The one-day conference will feature experienced individuals describing their success in a variety of management procedures dealing with livestock production. Topics include: "Direct Marketing" by John Wood and Kevin Wolf who will be discussing their two different methods of direct marketing. Rob Kallenbach will present "Legume Inter-seeding and Management on how to get a good stand of legumes and keep them there. Deanne Hackman, Attorney for Barrow Law Firm of Moberly, session will be the "P's & Q's of Business Entities", information about Coops and Corporations including LLCs, which are the newest and most popular current organizations to fit your agriculture business needs. "Improving Pasture and Wildlife Habitat with Grazing" by Producer Jeremia Markway, explains how to get better pasture and benefit wildlife at the same time using untraditional methods such as high intensity grazing. Phil Lewis will cover "Mechanics of Organic" addressing what it takes to make organics profitable - from soil transitioning, to certification, to marketing! Specific information on producer's current soil test will be available following session if you bring your own soils test. "Co-Grazing Animals with Sustainability as the Major Goal," will be presented by Steve Wallace. Mr. Wallace believes sheep and cattle can graze together successfully and profitably. Mr. Wallace uses a variety of grasses, soils and animals to obtain his goal of developing natural resources without destroying the ecological balance of the area.

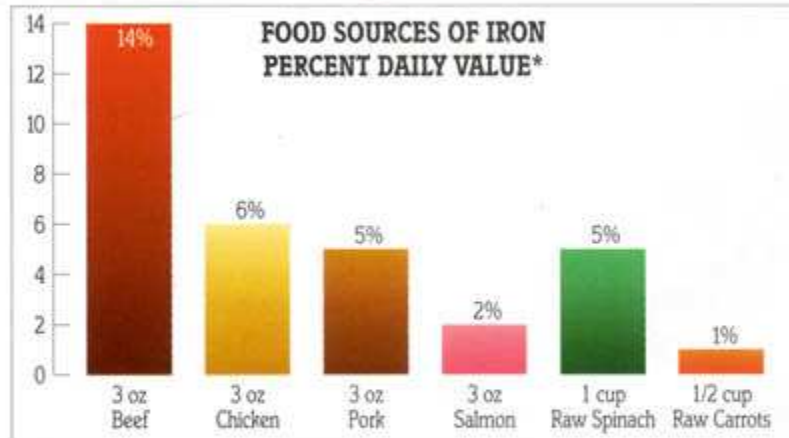
Harry Cope, from Truxton, will be the keynote speaker at the luncheon. Mr. Cope will discuss, Dollars & Sense of Grazing. Harry will be speaking about his fascinating use of forages and feeds to a variety of ruminant animals.

The Mark Twain Grazing Council is a group of livestock producers from Audrain, Marion, Monroe, Ralls and Shelby counties interested in gaining knowledge about grazing operations and improving profitability of those operations.

Registration, which includes admittance to the trade show, continental breakfast, and luncheon, costs \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. Registration and program information is available at area agribusinesses and SWCD/NRCS offices in the five counties. You may contact the Ralls county SWCD/NRCS office in New London, Missouri, at 573-985-8611 or lori.robinson@swcd.mo.gov. NRCS is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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Improving fertility rates in cows through feed

On a cellular level, it's something like the line of scrimmage on a football field. A hormone rushes toward an embryo, but for completion to occur - in this case a pregnancy in a cow - the hormone must be blocked.

The blocker is a fatty acid found in fish.

Serving as coach, so to speak, in this biological blend of hooves and fins is a biology professor at the University of Northern Colorado. Pat Burns hopes his latest research not only improves bovine fertility - which could save millions for U.S. beef and milk producers - but also yields applications to human fertility and health.

He recently won a \$98,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct a two-year study.

Burns said lab work done at UNC and other university studies have found that omega-3 fatty acids in fish oil, absorbed into the tissues of the cow, improved fertility rates 10 to 20 percent. They reduce the secretion of the hormone prostaglandin in reproductive tissues of pregnant cows, thereby improving the likelihood of a full-term pregnancy.

Currently, about 30-40 percent of early-term pregnancies are lost when signals get crossed inside the cow.

"If she's not pregnant, that hormone is released and that's what's going to allow her to come around for another opportunity of fertilization," Burns said. "If she's pregnant, the embryo must block that hormone. (Often) what happens is there's a miscommunication between an embryo and the mother when that prostaglandin is released, even though there's an embryo there. It's a spontaneous abortion."

And those lost pregnancies, when a cow's regular heat cycle is 21 days, add up to expenses.

"A 10 percent improvement (in fertility rates) could save potentially millions of dollars in lost meat and milk production," Burns said. "If it takes you 60 days to get her pregnant, that's a lot of production loss. So what we're trying to do is get them pregnant as early as possible."

Nicky White, a first-year biology graduate student at UNC, is intrigued by the potential - for both animals and humans - of the study. She is helping feed the fish oil meal, made from menhaden (a type of herring), to cows at the Agricultural Research, Development and Education Center at Colorado State University in Fort Collins. A couple of CSU scientists are collaborating on the study.

After the 60 days, allowing the oils to be incorporated into the cows' reproductive systems, the tissues will be examined for fish oil effects.

There will be a control group and a treated group of animals, each with 16 cows.

"There's so many aspects" to the research, White said. "I think that's what makes it really fun and interesting. We're not just sitting in the lab. We have our actual animals that we're experimenting on."

Burns has spent much of his career working on ways to ensure that the "critical window" in animal reproduction yields a healthy, growing embryo. He's worked mostly with cattle, but also sheep.

While omega-3 fatty acids are well-known to reduce heart disease, stroke, rheumatoid arthritis and some cancers, "we still don't know a lot of the mechanisms of how fish oil fatty acids work, actually," Burns said. Among the oils' benefits is a reduction in side effects for treatment of conditions like arthritis.

Large animals have always been an interest for Burns, who got his bachelor's in animal science at the University of West Virginia, and earned a doctorate in cellular molecular biology at Clemson University and performed post-doctorate work at the University of Kentucky.

He has previously received more than \$500,000 in external grants and published

25 peer-reviewed journal articles on reproductive biology.

Burns said it took three separate submissions to get this latest grant application approved by the USDA. As usual, it wasn't easy, especially because money is hard to come by in the down economy.

"I generated a lot of preliminary data to support that work - two or three years of preliminary data demonstrating that this will work," he said.

Released by Greeley Tribune, written by Chris Casey. Re-released by The Cattle Business Weekly 1/8/09.

Baby Calf Health: Using Fluids for Scours

Most calves are acidic (acidotic) at the start of scours but may become basic (alkalotic) in a short time with continual use of some products. Consult your veterinarian to select products that prevent this switch in pH balance from acidic to basic before starting and continuing treatment. The main goal of balancing electrolytes is to return a calf to near pH neutral.

Electrolytes mixed with milk often prevent curd formation and hasten the flow of feed through the calf. Therefore, decreased energy bearing nutrients can be absorbed by the calf. Never mix electrolytes with milk. Administer electrolytes in water 20 to 30 minutes after feeding milk to the calf.

Never mix half milk and half water. This practice prevents curd formation in the calf's stomach.

Never take milk away from a scouring calf. Feed 10 percent of the calf's body weight in milk divided into 4- or 6-times-a-day feedings. Also feed electrolytes in addition to milk. The goal is to replace fluid loss.

Feed electrolytes at full dose (6 to 8 pints per 100 lbs.) divided into 4 feedings for 1 to 2 days. Then cut the dose in half (3 to 4 pints per 100 lbs.) still feeding 4 times a day for 2 days. If diarrhea clears up, discontinue treatment.

Source: Oregon State Ag Extension

Released by CattleNetwork.com 1/8/09.

Upcoming Cattlemen's Events & Meetings

Dallas County - January 13, 6:30 PM

Simm's Restaurant
Sponsored by: Buffalo Livestock Market

St. Clair County - January 13, 7:00 PM
Smith's Cafe, Collins
Sponsored by: C and M Farm Supply

Greene County - January 15, 7:00 PM
Golden Corral, Springfield

Vernon County - January 15, 7:00 PM
Vernon County Fairgrounds

Sullivan County - January 16, Noon
Milan Livestock Center

Bates County - January 17, 6:00 PM
Adrian Optimist Building

Warren County - January 18, 5:00 PM
First State Community Bank, Warrenton

Cooper County - January 19, 6:00 PM
Pilot Grove Community Building

Newton County - January 20, 7:00 PM
Crowder College, Rm 103

Monroe County - January 22, 6:30 PM
Senior Center, Paris

Missouri's Cattlemen Foundation Board Meeting - January 22, 10:00 AM
Missouri Cattle Industry Headquarters, Columbia

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