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## **Canadian Cattlemen's Association Monthly Report** **March, 2006**

By Cindy McCreath, CCA Communications Manager

### **Legal Update**

There have been no major developments in R-CALF's legal challenge seeking a permanent injunction against Canadian live cattle and beef imports into the U.S. On February 7, R-CALF filed in U.S. District Court, Montana Division, its opposition to the request for leave to file information (amicus) briefs filed earlier by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA)/Alberta Beef Producers (ABP), Government of Canada, and a consortium of U.S. beef processors. On February 21, CCA and ABP filed a reply memorandum.

Judge Cebull of U.S. District Court, Montana Division, will decide whether or not to accept the briefs, and may render his decision on a permanent injunction without further hearings, hold further hearings, or refrain from making a decision indefinitely. There is no timeframe in which he must take any particular action.

An update on legal activities is maintained on the CCA website [www.cattle.ca](http://www.cattle.ca) under BSE Updates.

### **North American Trade**

On February 1 Mexico announced it was resuming imports of bone-in beef from both Canada and the U.S., moving North American trade a step closer to normalization. While the U.S. began accepting bone-in Canadian beef in July 2005, the Mexican market had remained closed to this product.

Ted Haney, President of the Canada Beef Export Federation (CBEF), says Mexican consumers have a strong preference for bone-in products and he expects this move to increase Canadian exports to Mexico by 10 – 15 percent above current levels. CBEF promotes Canadian beef in Mexico and other non-U.S. markets. The Canadian Cattlemen's Association is a member of CBEF.

The Canadian beef cattle industry is continuing its efforts to remove all remaining restrictions on beef and live cattle trade in North America, including restrictions preventing export of breeding cattle to Mexico and the U.S.

### **CCA Meets with New Agriculture Minister**

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) has been very active in presenting its priority action items to the new Conservative Government. In the days after the new Government was sworn in, President Stan Eby and other CCA representatives met with the new Minister of Agriculture, Chuck Strahl, as well as Members of Parliament from Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta.

Issues raised with the Minister include working to reopen the U.S. border to over 30 month cattle and beef and breeding cattle, harmonization of animal health and regulatory issues between Canada and the U.S., resolving income problems faced by grain and oilseed producers, and lowering tariff barriers for beef in international markets. Early meetings provided the opportunity to give Minister Strahl and MPs an overview of the cattle and beef industry's priorities. CCA will work to ensure that awareness and understanding transforms into action and resolution.

### **U.S. Lobbying**

Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) representatives attended the U.S. National Cattlemen's Beef Association convention in Denver in February. Maintaining relationships with the organization officially representing U.S. cattle producers is the goal of lobbying activities such as this. CCA Vice President Hugh Lynch-Staunton was one of those attending. "The biggest reason is the U.S. is still our biggest and most important customer and it's likely to be that way for some time," he says. "There's an on-going need for us to be there to maintain our friendship and to monitor issues."

Lynch-Staunton says while most NCBA members understand the benefits of trade, he senses that any lingering opposition to live cattle trade is dissipating. He adds that Canadian regulations that put restrictions on feeder cattle coming into Canada continue to create strong feelings and is an issue that needs to be resolved.

### **Explaining Greenhouse Gas, Agriculture Link**

A new booklet that explains the basic relationship between Canadian cattle production and greenhouse gas emissions is now available to beef producers and the general public. The *Greenhouse Gas Sinks and Sources Tour Guide for Canadian Beef Producers* is a user-friendly, 50-page booklet that lays down the fundamentals of the greenhouse gas issue. Production of the *Sinks and Sources Tour Guide* was funded by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada's Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Program (GHGMP). The beef sector of the GHGMP, administered through the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, provides education and awareness of greenhouse gas issues.

The guide describes with cowboy common sense and in basic language what is often viewed as the complicated interaction between agriculture and greenhouse gas emissions. It explains the various naturally occurring cycles - the mineral cycle, energy flow, the forage and grass succession cycle and the water cycle. It also explains terms such as carbon cycle, methane cycle and nitrous oxide cycle. Methane and nitrous oxide are the two most common greenhouse gases related to agricultural activity, while carbon is always in a state of flux, sometimes being stored in and sometimes being released from agricultural soils.

The guide also provides several worksheets so producers can evaluate their current production practices. Free copies of the *Sinks and Sources Tour Guide* are available through provincial beef producer associations and from the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (403) 275-8558 or online by visiting [www.cattle.ca](http://www.cattle.ca) and requesting the guide through Contact Us.