



2012 Priority Issues

Ensuring a Sustainable U.S. Beef Industry for this Generation and the Next



Death Tax

- ◆ In rural America, the death tax is one of the leading causes of the breakup of multi-generation family farms and ranches.
- ◆ In December 2010, Congress passed temporary estate tax relief effective through Dec. 31, 2012. For now, estates worth more than \$5 million per individual or \$10 million per couple are taxed at a 35 percent rate. The current estate tax package also includes a spousal transfer, a stepped-up basis and indexes the estate tax exemption for inflation.
- ◆ Congress must act this year to provide permanent estate tax relief and certainty to America's farmers and ranchers. NCBA supports the Death Tax Permanency Repeal Act, introduced by Rep. Kevin Brady (R-Texas). If a full and permanent repeal is not possible, NCBA supports making the 2010 package permanent. If Congress fails to act, the death tax will revert back to staggering pre-2001 levels where estates worth more than \$1 million were taxed at a 55 percent rate.

Farm Dust Regulation

- ◆ The current dust standard requires cattle producers in arid parts of the country to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to mitigate dust. While EPA has indicated it will not propose to lower the standard for farm dust in 2011, this does not solve the problem for all cattle producers.
- ◆ Unfortunately, EPA does not always do what it says it will. For example, in 1996, EPA proposed to remove the dust standard altogether, only to bring it back in the final rule. Then, in 2006, EPA proposed to exempt farm dust. That exemption disappeared in the final rule.
- ◆ The Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act of 2011, which provides permanent relief and regulatory certainty, passed in the U.S. House. Cattlemen urge the U.S. Senate to pass this legislation.

Equal Access to Justice Act

- ◆ The Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) was designed to level the playing field between small businesses and individual citizens and the federal government. EAJA allows plaintiffs to recover legal costs from the federal government when they prevail in a case against the government.
- ◆ Although EAJA was intended to protect citizens' rights, it has become a means for radical groups to target ranchers by challenging in court their rights to natural resource uses.
- ◆ Cattlemen support the Government Litigation Savings Act to bring transparency and accountability to EAJA. It would prohibit organizations with a net worth exceeding \$7 million from filing for EAJA funds; require that EAJA filers show a "direct and personal monetary interest" in the action to be eligible for payments; and cap the attorney fees activists claim to be owed.

2012 Farm Bill

- ◆ Cattle producers support a reduction of the federal deficit while assuring funding for farm bill priorities. NCBA believes the farm bill should minimize direct federal involvement in agricultural production and preserve the individual's right to manage land, water and resources.
- ◆ Cattlemen's top priority for the 2012 Farm Bill is to eliminate the livestock title, which resulted in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration's (GIPSA) livestock marketing rule as well as Country-of-Origin-Labeling. In addition, cattlemen urge Congress to include a permanent fix for the remaining GIPSA rule provisions that were not finalized in 2011.
- ◆ Conserving and sustaining the land and its resources is a priority for cattlemen across the nation. That is why NCBA supports improving the attractiveness, accessibility and efficiency as well as maintaining funding of existing conservation programs to encourage voluntary participation by beef producers.

Transportation

- ◆ NCBA supports making transportation policies more efficient for cattle producers by supporting legislation to create uniform transportation laws across all states and helping states adopt transportation laws that increase allowable weight, length and trailer requirements.
- ◆ NCBA supports giving states the option to increase truck weights with an additional axle to livestock and semi-trailers. This will increase braking power and place less total weight on each axle, making livestock transportation safer and less stressful on U.S. roadways.
- ◆ NCBA supports uniformity and reciprocity of farm exemptions across state lines for drivers' licenses and opposes federal requirement of commercial driver's licenses for farmers and ranchers.