

Full length version of articles abbreviated in TCFA *Newsletter* print edition.

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TCFA Submits Comments On COOL And Other Rules

The comment period for the interim final rule on country-of-origin labeling (COOL) implementation closed Sept. 30. TCFA's comments focused on the following points: (1) USDA has little or no jurisdiction over recordkeeping required of producers of live animals; (2) USDA should recognize the recordkeeping documents and interpretations adopted by the industry in order to meet COOL's audit requirements; (3) USDA should clarify that PVP and QSA programs with an origin requirement should be considered recognized official identification programs that can be used to comply with COOL; (4) USDA should clarify that violations of COOL will not trigger recall provisions; and (5) USDA should allow processors and retailers maximum labeling flexibility to reduce costs in the production and marketing systems. (Late last week USDA issued guidance that it is not permissible to label meat from U.S. livestock with a mixed origin label if solely U.S. origin meat was produced during the production day.)

Along with COOL, the comment period also closed on a proposed rule regarding disposition of cattle that become non-ambulatory following an initial, ante-mortem inspection by a veterinarian, and a request for stakeholder input on the development of rules for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program. Comments submitted by TCFA this week are available at www.tcfa.org/COOL/TCFA-COOL-Comments-93008.pdf, www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/TCFA-CommentsVetLoan093008.pdf, and www.tcfa.org/Newsletter/TCFA-NonAmbulatoryCattleComments100208.pdf.

U.S. District Court Rules Against Oklahoma Attorney General

This week, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma rejected a request by Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmonson for an injunction that would immediately prohibit using poultry litter as fertilizer. The court also discounted testimony presented by several so-called expert witnesses that environmental activists had hoped would bolster support for more stringent pathogen controls in the impending EPA CAFO rule.

The court has yet to consider Attorney General Edmonson's underlying lawsuit against several Arkansas-based poultry companies, which was filed in 2005. The suit claims that the companies violated state and federal laws and polluted the Illinois Watershed by improperly disposing of poultry litter.

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New Penalties For Animal Rights Radicals who target the homes and families of academic researchers is the purpose of a new state law in California. "The Researcher Protection Act" makes it a misdemeanor to trespass on the home property of an academic researcher "for the purpose of chilling, preventing the exercise of, or interfering with the researcher's academic freedom." The law also makes it a misdemeanor to publish personal information about a researcher or his or her family, in order to encourage others to commit or threaten violence against them. According to a University of California-Berkeley news release, a benefit of the law is that it makes it possible to punish perpetrators whose actions do not rise to the level of prosecution under the federal law known as the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act.

Providing Young People An Opportunity to help shape the future of the beef industry, NCBA has created the Young Producers' Council (YPC). YPC encourages NCBA members ages 18 to 35 to be involved on policy committees, interact with other young producers, enhance leadership abilities, further professional development and take advantage of regular NCBA benefits. Joining YPC is free to NCBA members. More information can be found at <http://www.beefusa.org/membYoungProducersCouncil.aspx>.