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Kansas Cattlemen's Association Comments on Checkoff Litigation and HSUS

Kansas Cattle Association (KCA) has received several calls from a number of cattlemen asking for details and explanations regarding the Organization of Competitive Markets' (OCM) announcement of a lawsuit filed against USDA, the CBB, and the Operating Committee of the CBB. KCA has no affiliation with OCM or the lawsuit and is not privileged to any information that has not been announced by OCM, Mr. Callicrate, the only currently known plaintiff, or that has not been in the press.

"There have been concerns raised regarding various issues within the Checkoff. The CBB is addressing those issues internally. It's a process that doesn't happen overnight. They don't need to sue us," stated KCA Board member D. Hermann.

"I don't trust the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), and I don't think, as an organization or an industry, we should put a lot of faith into what they say they are doing when they are showing us time and time again that they are working against us," explained KCA Vice President Aaron Winter.

KCA, by member policy, supports a mandatory/refundable producer controlled Beef Checkoff which will provide funding for efforts having the effect of increasing profit per head to the producer, such as research, promotion and funding for other efforts including the preservation and maintenance of competitive markets. KCA seeks involvement in all Checkoff issues, state and national, and seeks representation on the Kansas Beef Council. KCA recognizes issues within the administration of Beef Checkoff funds and how those funds may be used. However, all parties involved are bound by the Congressional Act and Order. KCA has and continues to communicate with the CBB and USDA to address the concerns of the organization. Of the six CBB seats held by Kansas, KCA is proud that three of those seats are held by KCA members. As well, KCA is a certified nominating organization for the CBB.

In relation to any coalition or partnership with the HSUS, KCA has policy on that as well. Extremists under the guise of animal rights groups are trying to force their agenda on the current mainstream livestock industry. KCA is opposed to working with these groups as their actions often result in political action, increasing costs of production and unreasonable expectations that have no actual benefit to animals. KCA promotes animal welfare and good stewardship, such that is offered in the Beef Quality Assurance guidelines.

Wayne Pacelle, the President of the HSUS, is the former president of the Animal Rights Alliance and the former chairman of the Animal Rights Network, Inc. A July 2012 article of Sportsmen's Daily referenced Pacelle's blog stating that he was upset "because a recent meeting of the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization would not permit him to present his meatless manifesto-or totally vegan agenda-before the group. Pacelle claims meat is responsible for environmental problems on Earth and climate change."

Quoting Pacelle, "From our perspective, climate change is an animal welfare issue as much as an environmental one, and it's an increasingly important focus of work for both the HSUS and Humane Society International. Rising meat consumption is also a significant driver of factory farming which threatens food security (especially for the poor), water security, public health, and the sustainability of rural communities."

HSUS has a history of opposing production agriculture. The HSUS now has a lobbyist in Topeka at the statehouse, where last session its animal rights initiative was pursued. KCA and other ag groups intensively worked to combat the efforts of HSUS. KCA has no intention of aligning or working with any agenda pursued by the HSUS, and unless the KCA membership votes otherwise, that position will stand.

All of KCA's member policies, are developed and approved by the vote of the membership and can be found on the KCA website at www.kansascattlemen.com.