

Kansas Cattlemen Pleased With Changes Coming to the Beef Checkoff

The Kansas Cattlemen's Association (KCA) is pleased that the USDA has approved a proposal to expand the contracting authority of the Beef Checkoff.

According to a release provided by the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB), "The proposal removes the requirement in the Beef Promotion and Research Order that limits eligibility for managing individual Beef Checkoff programs to only those national nonprofit beef organizations that were active and established when enabling legislation for the program passed in 1986."

In March, the KCA contacted USDA and stressed that expanding the contracting authority to other industry-governed organizations would be acting in accordance with the spirit of the regulation and be for the common good of the industry and Beef Checkoff program.

Since the Beef Checkoff was implemented, additional industry driven organizations have been organized and developed. As these organizations benefit the industry as much as or even more than organizations that are current eligible contractors, encompassing groups such as Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF USA) and United States Cattlemen's Association (USCA) help to strengthen producer confidence in the Beef Checkoff program. As well, allowing these younger organizations to compete as contractors provides for a more efficient and scrutinized bidding process.

In USDA's announcement, "With the goal of enhancing the overall success and support of the Beef Checkoff Program, several beef industry organizations met recently and agreed that it was necessary to expand the contracting authority established under the Act and Order to uphold the integrity of the Beef Checkoff Program."

"Accountability and diligence is important in any program, and by expanding the contracting authority for Beef Checkoff funds, contractors will be even more accountable and the program will become more efficient, more transparent, and Checkoff paying producers will have more confidence in the program that was initially meant to benefit the beef and cattle industry," explained KCA Executive Director Brandy Carter.

KCA Vice President Aaron Winter concluded, "This is what is accomplished through hard work and diligence while at the same time respecting other organizations. This is a move in the right direction for the Beef Checkoff, and it didn't happen because of litigation. This change has been in the works for months and occurred because industry groups came together with open communication to better the industry."