

03/14/2003 Entry: "NCBA: An Insidious and Dangerous Foe of U.S. Cattlemen"

By: Mike Callicrate

I was at NCBA's Joplin, Missouri, COOL bashing and fear mongering meeting this week. I heard the blatant lies of NCBA's Jay Truitt and the packers on the panel. Lies such as: "There is no money in this for the producer. We will sue you. The consumer will sue you.", to the scare tactics of requiring third party verification on U.S. born and raised livestock.

The post COOL war has begun and NCBA, disguised as the cattlemen's representative, is clearly the enemy of the U.S. producer. After reading the following article, there should be no doubt where NCBA stands - on the side of the big packers, processors, and retailers who import and control our markets.

NCBA opposes the best interests of U.S. cattlemen, who are either being forced out of the industry with low prices, or who are rapidly losing their independent status on their way to chicken-farmer serfdom under Lord Tyson..

During the last beef checkoff board reorganization, U.S. cattlemen lost three seats because of the declining U.S. herd. The importers gained one seat due to increasing imports. Importers now control the second largest voting block on the beef board behind Texas.

The consumer can't make the choice to to buy U.S. beef, helping their own U.S. industry, if NCBA insists on cloaking imported beef as U.S. production.

Cattlemen, it's time to stand up for yourselves. The Country of Origin Labeling law is now a law of the people. The packers and retailers will have to obey the law whether they like it or not. Consumers and producers worked together like never before to achieve this important Act of Congress. Now we must fight to keep it. As happened with the price reporting legislation, the intent of COOL will be reversed during rule making if we don't stay vigilant and oppose the power of NCBA and their comrades.

NCBA made their choice to oppose cattlemen's interests when they invited the packers to be on the NCBA and checkoff boards. Hopefully, their choice will not prove fatal for cattlemen.

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