

## **01/04/2003 Entry: "R-CALF USA Convention to be Held in Kansas City on January 23-25"**

United Stockgrowers of America

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R-CALF USA Convention to be Held in Kansas City on January 23-25 (Billings, MT) The fourth annual R-CALF USA convention will be held in Kansas City, Missouri at the Airport Hilton Hotel on January 23-25, 2003.

R-CALF USA has become the fastest growing national cattle organization in the United States, due in large part to its common sense, grassroots-driven approach to trade and market issues. The R-CALF USA conventions have proven to be very informative and beneficial not only to cattle producers but also to government officials who speak at the conferences as there is always excellent two-way communication between the two groups. The conventions provide a rare opportunity for cattle producers to interact with government officials who are responsible for shaping laws that affect producers.

The 2003 R-CALF USA Convention will kickoff on Thursday with the day devoted to trade issues. Presentations will be given by officials from the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) office and USDA's Foreign Ag Service (FAS), as well as Terry Stewart of Stewart and Stewart Law Firm. Also on Thursday, Tom McDonnell with American Sheep Institute and David Anderson with Texas A&M will discuss the impact of the exchange rate on trade flow. R-CALF USA's Dennis McDonald and Brett DeBruycker will provide an update on FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas). Thursday's session will conclude with a representative from USDA speaking about Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) rulemaking and an opportunity to speak with the McGregor Brothers from Australia and Scotland on how trade impacts their countries.

Friday's session will open with Jim Robb, of the Livestock Marketing Information Center, who will present the market outlook. The rest of Friday's session will focus on marketing issues including restoring competition and reducing concentration. Specific presentations will include: David Domina, lead attorney in Pickett vs. IBP case; Dr. Robert Taylor from Auburn University, a leading ag economist dealing with market concentration; and Charles McVean of McVean Trading. Also on Friday, a representative from USDA Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Administration will address the conference. Friday's presentations will conclude with Chuck Wienries, who will provide an update on the Four State Market Task Force.

The convention will conclude on Saturday with presentations by Dr. Dick Bowman about animal identification tracking programs and by officials from USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service about SPS (sanitary and phytosanitary) issues relative to trade including the protocol for importation of live cattle from Australia.

For a complete schedule or more information, visit R-CALF USA's website [www.rcalf.com](http://www.rcalf.com) or call the R-CALF USA office at (406) 252-2516.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Airport Hilton, and reservations may be made by calling the Airport Hilton directly at (816) 891-8900. The block has been reserved for the use of R-CALF USA – please refer to this name specifically when reserving your room. Also, in order to reserve your room at the special low R-CALF USA rate, please call the Airport Hotel at the number listed above and reserve your room by January 10th.

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The Ranchers Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF USA) is a national cattle producers association representing over 7,700 independent cow/calf producers, backgrounders and feeders in 42 states. Over 30 state and local associations are affiliated with R-CALF USA, representing thousands of additional producers. For more information, go to [www.rcalf.com](http://www.rcalf.com).