

# SAGE SIGNALS

*The Voice of the Nevada Livestock Industry*

Volume XLIX, #1 | December 2024

PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE NCA MEMBERSHIP

## NCA 2024 Year in Review

*By Martin Paris, Executive Director, Nevada Cattlemen's Association*

**H**appy December! Another year is coming to a close in what seems like the blink of an eye. Much like other years, 2024 has been filled with ups and downs along the way. Looking back at previous “year in reviews”, I have to say there’s a lot to be grateful for. I am happy to not be reporting on the impacts COVID has had on people and businesses, the brutal winter we had in early 2023, or a disastrous fire season. While we still faced unique challenges, it was nice of Mother Nature and the unexpected Black Swan events to take a bit of a break. Prices on most things remain high, but thankfully, a really strong cattle market throughout the year helped somewhat offset surging costs in other areas. I remain hopeful that cattle markets will continue to be strong as we enter into a new year.

NCA was engaged on a wide range of issues throughout the year, including animal disease traceability, lands bills, species management, the Farm Bill, grazing regulations, taxes, and more. In each case, we had a seat at the table, ensuring that our members’ voices were heard.

To highlight just a few- we continue to be heavily involved in discussions surrounding BLM’s Public Lands Rule. The BLM recently announced the creation of a federal advisory board that will guide the rule’s implementation. NCA is working hard to make sure we are well represented on the advisory board. We also laid out a scientifically sound argument regarding the benefits of grazing on Sage Grouse populations in response to newly proposed habitat management guidelines. NCA also played a major role in blocking an attempt from the United States Department of Agriculture to resume the importation of fresh beef from Paraguay, a country with a long history of foot-and-mouth disease.

We were well represented at several industry policy setting events, which always serve as a great opportunity for livestock producers to come together to learn new things and create paths forward regarding many of the issues facing our industry today. I want to thank all of our volunteer leaders and members who have spent countless hours throughout the year tirelessly working to promote a

dynamic and profitable Nevada beef industry.

As we look ahead to 2025, there is no lack of work to be done. The year will get off to a quick start with the beginning of the 83rd Session of Nevada’s State Legislature and a new Administration in Washington, D.C. No matter the make-up of the State Legislature or our representation in Washington D.C., we look forward to defending our industry’s ability to maintain and create healthy rangelands, support our local communities, and feed America.

Now more than ever it’s important that we protect, promote, and preserve our heritage and the ranching way of life. We encourage you to invite your friends, neighbors, and associates to join the Nevada Cattlemen’s Association and help shape the future of our industry. Please feel free to contact the NCA office for more information at 1-775-738-9214 or visit our web page at [www.nevadacattlemen.org](http://www.nevadacattlemen.org).

I hope everyone takes time to enjoy family and friends this holiday season, and I look forward to seeing you all in 2025!

## Governor’s Conference on Agriculture showcases impact of industry on Nevada

2024 marks the first Governor’s Conference on Agriculture since 2018

FALLON, Nev.—The Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) hosted the Governor’s Conference on Agriculture in Fallon, Nev. on Wednesday, November 22 facilitating discussions on economic impacts, business resources, and regulatory information for the agriculture industry. This was the first time the conference was held since 2018.

“Speaking directly with agriculture industry members is critical to fulfilling the NDA’s mission to preserve, protect and promote Nevada agriculture,” said NDA Director J.J. Goicoechea. “We were proud to welcome Chase McNamara from the Governor’s Office to be part of these conversations.”

In addition to representatives from the Governor’s Office, agriculture stakeholders, policymakers and local governments were in attendance, allowing for robust conversations, critical to the future of agriculture. Sessions included:

- Economic outlook for Nevada food and agriculture
- Business resources for agriculture/agribusinesses in Nevada
- NDA requirements, licenses, certifications, permits and fees
- Nevada pressing agricultural issues

More information and clips from sessions can be found at [agri.nv.gov/govcon](http://agri.nv.gov/govcon)

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— *Jaiden Drought, Auckland City*

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— *Graham Armstrong, Tutunup*

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— *Cam Scott, South Canterbury*



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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Hanes Holman, President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association

## If You're Going to Cross Fresh Feed, You Better Have Fresh Horses

Anybody that has cowboy'd very long knows the feeling of riding a tired horse trailing a bunch of hungry cows that waddle into fresh feed. All of the sudden the cows go to grazing instead of walking, scattering out like spilt milk. You can't hold them together, they have lost all respect for a person horseback, it's like moving chairs one at a time. You get that sinking feeling like Davy Crockett at the Alamo.

Nothing you can do! The harder you push the more they just spread out. You're exhausted, your horse is exhausted and it feels like you are sinking in quicksand! If you just had a fresh horse you might have a fighting chance to get where you are trying to go.

As I write this article on the morning of election day I feel like the aforementioned cowboy just in a political arena. We've worked at holding political ground, but it's been about like moving tired cows across fresh feed. No matter how hard we push we've struggled to make any positive ground with grazing regulations or about anything related to our industry, we can't seem to get any direction or traction until

the election is over. There are a lot of things "cooking" within our industry, but not much is happening until the election gets over with. According to our policies, Nevada Cattlemen's is politically neutral. We have a long-term strategy to be able to work across party lines for the good of our industry so I'm not just talking about candidates. It's more about uncertainty that seems to be holding things back.

I don't know how things are going to turn out but hopefully we all can feel like we are on fresh horses and moving in a positive direction when the election gets over!

Cheers

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### University of Nevada, Reno Cattlemen's Update

— January 13-17, 2025 —  
[naes.unr.edu/cattlemens/default.aspx](http://naes.unr.edu/cattlemens/default.aspx)

#### National Cattlemen's Beef Association Cattle Convention

— February 4-6, 2025 —  
San Antonio, Texas  
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center  
[convention.ncba.org](http://convention.ncba.org)

#### Great Basin Bull Sale

— February 15, 2025 —  
Fallon, Nevada  
Rafter 3C Events Center  
325 Sheckler Road  
[www.greatbasinbullsale.com](http://www.greatbasinbullsale.com)

#### National Cattlemen's Beef Association Summer Business Meeting

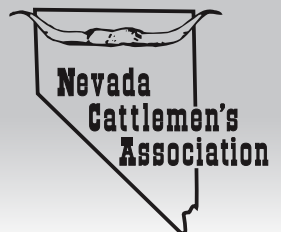
— July 7-9, 2025 —  
San Diego, California  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront  
[www.ncba.org/events/summer-business-meeting](http://www.ncba.org/events/summer-business-meeting)

### NCA MEMBERSHIP

We would like to thank the following people for joining or renewing their membership with Nevada Cattlemen's Association between October 26 and November 22, 2024.

(New members are in bold.)

- **8-Mile Farms, LLC, Bevan Lister**
- Joe & Meghan Brown
- Double Arrow Cattle LLC, Patrick Countryman
- Chris Jasmine
- Kirby Manufacturing, Inc., Steve Freitas
- Lawson Land & Livestock, Timothy Lawson
- Neil McQueary
- Ormat Technologies, Scott Nichols
- Spratling Ranch, Boyd Spratling, DVM, Blake & Sarah Spratling, Ian, Gabe, Isaac, & Quaid Spratling



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Hanes Holman, President | Dave Baker, Pres.-Elect  
Marlow Dahl, 1st Vice Pres. | Wade Small, 2nd Vice Pres.

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# 89th Annual NCA Convention Wrap Up

By: Martin Paris, Executive Director, Nevada Cattlemen's Association

From November 20th to 22nd, 2024, NCA members and affiliates gathered from across the state to participate in the 89th Annual Nevada Cattlemen's Association (NCA) Convention in Fallon, Nevada. The joint convention brought together cattlemen, cattlemen, and wool growers from all corners of Nevada.

This year, attendees had the opportunity to hear from Colin Woodall, CEO of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA); NCBA Vice President Gene Copenhaver; NCBA Senior Director of Government Affairs Tanner Beymer; and Public Lands Council (PLC) Executive Director Kaitlynn Glover. The NCBA and PLC team addressed a wide range of topics, including post-election developments, the complexities of Washington, D.C. politics, sage grouse land use plans, the Farm Bill, fake meat, taxes, and more.

Attendees also heard from leaders of various agencies that impact Nevada's livestock sector daily, including the Nevada Bureau of Land Management, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Nevada Department of Agriculture, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Nevada Division of Water Resources, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and USDA Agricultural Research Service. We value our collaboration with these agencies and look



forward to finding new ways to improve and support Nevada's livestock industry. The convention concluded with an update from Terrel Platt of CattleFax on current market conditions and future expectations.

This year's trade show was filled with outstanding businesses and agencies dedicated to supporting and enhancing the livestock industry. The Nevada Cattlemen's Association extends its gratitude to the following trade show participants:

- American AgCredit
- Boehringer-Ingelheim
- Elanco
- Ellis Equipment
- Envu Range & Pasture

- Gallagher North America
- Greenway Seeds
- Kirby Manufacturing Inc.
- Knipe Land Company
- Laird Manufacturing
- Nevada Department of Agriculture
- Nevada Land Trust
- NW Mixer Feeders
- Ormat Technologies
- Pro Group Management
- S & L Trailers
- Scales Unlimited, Inc.
- Simplot Western Stockmen's
- Snyder's Pinenut Livestock Supply
- USDA Agricultural Research Service
- USDA APHIS Wildlife Services
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- University of Nevada, Reno: College of Agriculture, Biotechnology, and Natural Resources
- University of Nevada, Reno: Agriculture, Veterinary, and Range Science
- WSR Insurance

Additionally, the Nevada Cattlemen's Association extends its heartfelt thanks to our generous spon-



Goat Roping

Photo: Leana Carey



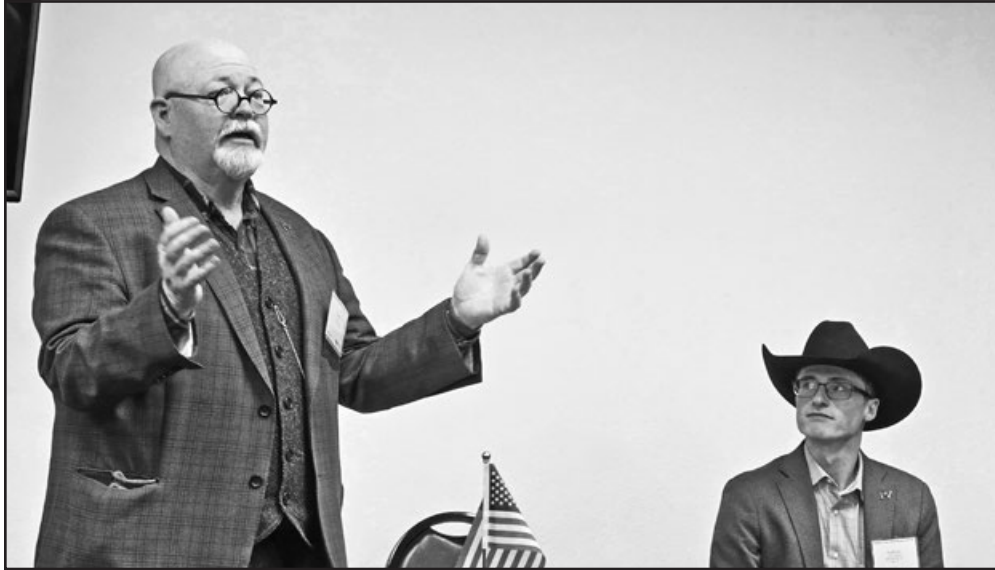


Photo: Leana Carey

Legislative Affairs Co-Chair, Davy Stix, speaks to attendees about the upcoming Legislative Session.

sors, who made this convention a success:

- Agri Beef/PerforMix
- All American Hay LLC
- American AgCredit
- Big R
- Envu Range & Pasture
- Great Basin Bull Sale
- Intermountain Farmers Association
- Laird Manufacturing

& Environmental Management, Legislative Affairs, and Animal Health & Livestock Issues. In addition to reviewing and updating policy, these committees hosted a series of speakers who presented on timely and important topics.

We look forward to collaborating with all of you throughout the year. Please don't hesitate to contact the NCA office at 775-738-9214 with any suggestions, comments, or concerns to help make next year's convention just as successful—or even better!

- McMullen McPhee & Company LLC
- MWI Animal Health
- Nevada Agricultural Foundation
- Nevada Gold Mines
- Western Video Market
- WSR Insurance
- S & L Trailers
- Snyder's Pinenut Livestock Supply
- Utah Wool Marketing

We encourage everyone to support these businesses and thank them for their contributions to our industry.

Lastly, we recognize the dedication and hard work of the NCA policy committee chairs in organizing the committee meetings. Five committees convened at this year's convention: Public Lands, Research & Education, Private Lands, Wildlife



Photo: Leana Carey

NCA President Hanes Holman introduces guests from the Public Lands Council and National Cattlemen's Beef Association during General Session. Left to right: Kaitlynn Glover, Tanner Beymer, Gene Copenhaver, Colin Woodall, and Hanes Holman

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and TRADE SHOW

## NCA Honors Awardees During 89th Annual Convention



Photo: Leana Carey

**NCA Teacher of the Year Award—Rachel Gonzalez.** Left to Right: Candace Lopez, Rachel Gonzalez, Catherine Guild, Martin Paris, and Hanes Holman



Photo: Leana Carey

**100,000 Mile Club Award—Dave Stix.** Left to Right: Candace Lopez, Davy Stix, Therese Stix-Ure, Dave Stix, Martin Paris, and Hanes Holman

During the Nevada Cattlemen's Association (NCA) Annual Convention held in Fallon, Nevada, President Hanes Holman announced this year's recipients for the 2024 President's Award, 100,000 Mile Club Award, Allied Industry Award, Teacher of the Year Award, and Cattleman of the Year. These awards are given annually to individuals in recognition of significant contributions to NCA, their community, the land, and the beef industry.

### Teacher of the Year

NCA would like to congratulate the 2024 Teacher of the Year, Rachel Gonzalez. Mrs. Gonzalez teaches Kindergarten at Lahontan Elementary in Fallon, NV. Teacher of the Year candidates must utilize agricultural information and/or materials within their classroom curriculum in an effort to assist students in learning the importance of agriculture. NCA salutes Mrs. Gonzalez in educating the students in her classroom on where their food comes from and her efforts to expand and develop agriculture instruction at the elementary school. NCA would also like to thank the



Photo: NV Department of Agriculture

**NCA President's Award—Governor Joe Lombardo.** Left to Right: Chase McNamara (accepting on behalf of Governor Lombardo), and Hanes Holman



Nevada  
Cattlemen's  
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89<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL

# CONVENTION

and TRADE SHOW

Nevada Agricultural Foundation for their continued partnership in recognizing outstanding teachers throughout Nevada.

### President's Award

Each year, the President honors an individual who they feel have served the industry with dedication and passion by presenting them with the President's Award. The 2024 President's Award was given to Governor Joe Lombardo. NCA thanks Governor Lombardo for his continued commitment to Nevada agriculture and the livestock industry.

### 100,000 Mile Club

Since 1980, the 100,000 Mile Club Award has been given out to dozens of cowboys and cowgirls that have traveled 100,000 miles horseback over their lifetime. This year NCA would like to congratulate Dave Stix on receiving the award. Dave has spent much of his life on the back of a horse and NCA congratulates him on 100,000 miles well spent!

### Allied Industry Award

The 2024 NCA Allied Industry Award was presented to the Great Basin Bull Sale operated by Charlie Hone, Kris Gudel, and Dave Holden. Born out of the former Snyder Livestock's Bulls for the 21st Century Sale and the NCA Fallon All-Breeds Bull Sale, the Great Basin Bull Sale continues the legacy of providing a combination of performance tested and range bulls for the most discerning of bull buyers.

### Cattlemen of the Year

The 2024 Cattlemen of the Year Award was given to two longtime Nevada ranching couples, Pete and Kathi Marvel and Bert and Jill Paris. The award was established to recognize beef producers who have made significant contributions to the industry. Both families have embodied the spirit of Nevada ranching through their stewardship, collaboration, and community engagement. NCA is proud to recognize them as the 2024 Cattlemen of the Year recipients and appreciates their commitment to Nevada's livestock industry. A special thank you goes to American AgCredit for sponsoring the Cattlemen of the Year Award.



*Photo: Leana Carey*

**Allied Industry Award—Great Basin Bull Sale.** Left to Right: Candace Lopez, Dave Holden, Paula Holden, Vicki Hone, Charlie Hone, Martin Paris, Hanes Holman, and Audrey Paris



*Photo: Leana Carey*

**Cattlemen of the Year—Bert & Jill Paris/Pete & Kathi Marvel.** Left to right: Candace Lopez, Audrey Paris, Bert Paris, Jill Paris, Martin Paris, and Hanes Holman (not pictured: Pete and Kathi Marvel)

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# Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Releases Aerial Application of Herbicide Project's Draft Decision Notice

Sparks, Nev. – The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest has released the Aerial Application of Herbicides Project draft Decision Notice/Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment for a 45-day formal objection period. This decision authorizes the use of aircraft to manage the spread of non-native invasive plant species across National Forest System lands in Nevada.

The Forest has approximately 5.6 million acres in Nevada that lie in 13 counties: Carson, Clark, Douglas, Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Washoe, and White Pine. Non-native invasive plant species have a high potential to expand on lands within and adjacent to the Forest, degrading desired plant communities valued by local communities. Current ground-based treatment options are limited by reach (hose length), access, topography, and cost. Additional methodologies are needed to address the threat of expanding non-native invasive plant species.

“Expanding populations of invasive plants, like cheatgrass and medusahead, are outcompeting native plants and carrying fire across the landscape and into rural and urban communities,” said Forest Supervisor Jon Stansfield. “The ability to use airplanes, helicopters, and unmanned aerial vehicles for herbicide application will allow us to increase the pace and scale of our work with partners.”

The Aerial Application of Herbicides Project draft Decision Notice/Finding of No Significant Impact and final Environmental Assessment and other project documents are available at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/htnf/?project=64139>.

Objections will be accepted for 45 days following publication of the legal notice in the Reno Gazette-Journal from anyone who previously submitted specific written comments during designated comment periods. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted comments unless based on new

information arising after designated opportunities to comment.

Objections must be mailed to Reviewing Officer, Aerial Application of Herbicides Project, USFS Intermountain Region Office, 324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401, or facsimiles can be sent to 801-625-5277. Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an email message, pdf, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/htnf/?project=64139>. Please put “Aerial Application of Herbicide Project” in the subject line.

For more information on this project please contact Botanist/Invasive Plant Program Manager Heidi Guenther at 805-697-6886 or [heidi.guenther@usda.gov](mailto:heidi.guenther@usda.gov).



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# Interior Department Proposes Strengthened Protections For Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat

Proposed management updates employ science and partnership to balance development and conservation

WASHINGTON – The Department of the Interior announced today that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has published proposed updates to strengthen conservation and management of greater sage-grouse habitat on public lands, informed by the best available science, collaborative work with states, and input from local, Tribal and federal partners. The proposed updates, outlined in a final environmental impact statement and amendments to 77 resource management plans, incorporate new sage-grouse conservation science and lessons learned and accommodate changing resource conditions while increasing implementation flexibility. The proposals balance a consistent west-wide management approach with unique policies in the individual states that are responsible for managing wildlife populations.

Updated habitat management plans will protect greater sage-grouse habitat in 10 Western states. Sage-grouse populations have continued to decline, largely due to habitat loss exacerbated by climate impacts such as drought, increasingly intense wildfires, and invasive species. Conserving sagebrush habitat benefits more than 350 other wildlife species and supports the livelihoods and traditions of Western communities. Species like elk, mule deer, pronghorn and pygmy rabbit rely on the same habitat to survive, and sagebrush lands contain headwaters for some of the West's major river systems and the aquatic species they sustain.

“Guided by the best available science, we are committed to the continued balance in our multi-use mandate for America’s public lands,” said Secretary Deb Haaland. “For too long, a false choice has been presented for land management that aims to pit development against conservation. This Administration’s collaborative work has demonstrated that we can do both successfully. Through collaborative work in local communities, developed over decades, we are presenting science-based and thoughtful proposals to protect the greater sage-grouse and its habitat.”

The BLM manages the largest single share of greater sage-grouse habitat in the United States—nearly 65 million acres of 145 million total acres. The proposal released today builds on a number of collaborative efforts undertaken by the Biden-Harris administration – including the Public Lands Rule, renewable energy rule, and the proposed Western Solar Plan – to strengthen protection for sagebrush habitat while retaining flexibility to coordinate with state government partners and account for variations in local habitat conditions. Today’s proposal will help ensure that other uses of BLM sagebrush lands, including clean energy projects, move forward in a manner that limits impacts to sensitive resources



Photo: BLM

The BLM and its partners conduct research and to better understand the needs of greater sage-grouse and manage its habitat on public lands accordingly.

and mitigation requirements and supported updates to the boundaries of habitat management areas. The BLM engaged in government-to-government consultation and held informational briefings for Tribal governments throughout the process. Planning documents are available for review at the BLM National NEPA Register.

Protests of the proposed amendments may be filed until Dec. 16, 2024 at the BLM National NEPA Register. Following resolution of valid protests and responses to governors’ reviews for consistency with state and local plans, the BLM will issue Records of Decision for each state where habitat management plans are being updated.

In addition to management decisions guided by the habitat plans, the BLM is actively restoring and conserving sagebrush habitat across the West through the President’s Investing in America agenda. For example, as part of the Department’s new Sagebrush Keystone Initiative, the Department has identified “Sagebrush Collaborative Restoration Landscapes” as areas to collaborate with ranchers, state and local leaders, Tribal Nations, conservation and sportsmen organizations, the outdoor recreation economy, private landowners and others to strategically deliver restoration actions in sagebrush country for the people, wildlife, and economies that depend on them. The Department’s National Seed Strategy Keystone Initiative is also devoting resources to ensure a ready source of native plant seeds to further enhance landscape resilience and has identified five areas of greater sage-grouse range in which to fund habitat restoration and conservation.

and can also help combat climate change—a main driver of greater sage-grouse habitat loss.

“This remarkable species and the people who live, work, and play alongside it deserve management that will sustain sagebrush habitat across the West for years to come,” said BLM Director Tracy Stone-Manning. “Our environmental analysis, aided by a wealth of information from our partners, indicates that these proposed updates—which are the result of decades of sustained collaborative efforts—are the best way to ensure the health of these lands and local economies now and into the future.”

The BLM considered roughly 38,000 comments from the public on the draft environmental analysis, along with information shared by state, local, Tribal and federal partners during more than 100 meetings held over two years. States also contributed data and scientific information that helped frame direction on adaptive management





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# Taxes Are Our Focus in 2025

By Mark Eisele, NCBA President

In last month's issue, I shared my personal story of how the Death Tax almost killed my dream of ranching with my family. The Death Tax, and higher taxes as a whole, are some of the biggest threats facing our farms and ranches. That is why NCBA is leading the fight for lower taxes and making this issue our priority for next year.

Back in 2017, NCBA helped pass legislation called the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. This bill reduced taxes on farms and ranches, limited the impact of the Death Tax, and helped cattle producers save more of their hard-earned money. Unfortunately, this bill is set to expire at the end of 2025, and we cannot afford to lose these good tax provisions.

NCBA has already started meeting with policymakers to make sure Congress passes new legislation to reduce taxes. This fight is deeply personal for me because I know what can happen if the government sees our farms and ranches as a way to increase tax revenue.

One of the biggest challenges in this fight is ensuring policymakers actually understand our way of life. Too often, D.C. lawmakers think the value of our land and equipment means we have big bank accounts ready to pay tax bills. The truth is that assets like land and equipment might look like big numbers on a balance sheet, but those resources are not easily liquidated, and they are necessary for our operation to function.

To help educate policymakers, NCBA spent several months conducting a tax survey of cattle producers to give us accurate data on how tax provisions impact our businesses. The data showed that the cattle industry is clearly unique. We are a family-driven industry with 99% of respondents running family farms or ranches and nearly two-thirds being the third generation or more on the operation. That legacy is important to defend.

NCBA also noted that a third of producers have paid the Death Tax and, of that group, 35% have paid the Death Tax more than once. When a family member



passes away and leaves the farm or ranch to the next generation, that is already a deeply challenging and emotional time. Imagine having to go through that process multiple times, and each time as you mourn a loved one, the IRS shows up to collect a bill.

What truly concerns me from our survey is the burden taxes place on the day-to-day management of your operation. Eighteen percent of producers sold land or other assets to pay a tax bill, 9% took out a loan or lien, and 25% were not able to invest in their operation because of their tax bill. A quarter of producers are also budgeting at least \$10,000 annually just on tax preparation and filing, not even counting the tax bill.

I never want to see a producer be forced to sell off assets, take on debt, or be unable to expand their business because of crippling tax bills. NCBA has always led the fight against taxes, and we will continue fighting to protect your farming and ranching

legacy.

To win in Washington, D.C., we need two things on our side: data and a story. We have data from the NCBA tax survey showing the urgent need for tax relief to keep farms and ranches in business and we have your story about the values, hard work and dedication you bring to your operation every day. Together, that is the winning combination that will help us secure new tax relief for cattle producers in 2025.

## NCBA and PLC Welcome Nomination of Gov. Burgum as Interior Secretary

WASHINGTON (November 15, 2024) – Today, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and Public Lands Council (PLC) congratulated Gov. Doug Burgum on his nomination to lead the Department of the Interior:

"Governor Burgum's experience navigating natural resources issues in North Dakota, coupled with his business acumen and extensive agriculture background, make him uniquely qualified to be Interior Secretary," said Kaitlynn Glover, NCBA Executive Director of Natural Resources and PLC Executive Director. "Ranchers across the country congratulate Governor Burgum on his nomination and are excited to see a return of common-sense and science-based analysis to Interior's rulemaking process. The Governor understands that grazing is a key tool and economic driver to prevent catastrophic wildfires, boost wildlife conservation, and support rural communities. Burdensome Endangered Species Act and NEPA rulemakings have led to the increased prevalence of wildfires, degradation of rangeland, and reduced wildlife conservation efforts. NCBA and PLC support the Governor's nomination and look forward to a swift confirmation process."

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# Making Friends

By Colin Woodall, NCBA CEO

The 2024 election is one that will be studied for years to come. A former president comes back to run for a second term. An incumbent president is forced to back down to make room for his "more electable" vice president. An assassination attempt. Then another. Insanely wrong polling. More than \$16 billion spent. This election was the stuff of movies, but the result was about as definitive as you could expect in American politics today. Instead of waiting days or weeks to see who would move into 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, we knew on election night. Something that is increasingly rare. When the smoke cleared, former President Trump won 312 electoral votes, 42 more than the 270 needed to win, and eight more than he won in 2016. He also won the popular vote by more than three million votes.

Now, President-elect Trump and his team are working feverishly to prepare for the transition. He is quickly nominating individuals to serve in his Cabinet and in appointed positions throughout the federal departments. He is also working on his list of priorities to tackle as soon as he is sworn in on Jan. 20. We are at the table with the transition team to ensure NCBA's policy priorities are included. Leading that list is a push for quick action on the expiring tax provisions from the 2017 Tax Cut and Jobs Act. In particular, the improvements we secured in the Death Tax exemption levels and tax rates expire at the end of 2025. We need quick action on these expiring provisions, so you have time to plan and prepare. Waiting until the end of 2025 to act is unacceptable. Since he was president and signed the 2017 bill into law, we expect President Trump will act quickly. It is important to remember that these are no longer tax cuts, this is an extension of current U.S. tax policy.

Another priority will be getting the Trump administration to fix the 2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Under President Biden's leadership, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has allowed agenda-driven "science" to influence the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to a point where they are recommending beans and lentils over beef. The new Trump administration will be able to reinsert evidence-based, peer-reviewed science to keep us at the center of the plate. Taxes and Dietary Guidelines are just two priorities we know the new administration will support. We have a long list of overburdensome rules and regulations we will work with President Trump to roll back.



To help achieve his priorities, he will have a Republican-led Senate. The Republicans gained four seats to have a 53 to 47 majority. While this gives them the opportunity to lead, they will still need to work with Democrats to reach that magic 60 vote threshold required in many instances to consider and pass legislation in the Senate. That won't always be easy, especially since moderate Democrats like Joe Manchin from West Virginia are no longer in the Senate. As I am writing this a week after election day, control of the House of Representatives has not been called. Republicans are getting close, and if they retain control, it will be by a slim margin.

Between now and the end of the year, we need Congress to fund the government for fiscal year 2025. Funding currently runs out on Dec. 20, 2024. We also need them to pass a Farm Bill. Agriculture needs certainty, and the bill passed by the House Agriculture Committee last spring contains all of NCBA's requests. It would be nice to allow the new Congress and

administration to start fresh in January.

It is important to remember, though, President Biden is still in charge and will be until Inauguration Day. That means he and his team are trying to finalize as many rules and regulations as they can. We have talked previously about the changes they are proposing to the Packers & Stockyards Act. These proposals would roll back 40 years of value-added marketing programs. We continue to fight back against President Biden and Secretary Vilsack taking your marketing options away from you. The "Bidenomics" approach to cattle marketing will not be beneficial to your bottom line.

Regardless of the election outcome, we will be working on making friends among the new Trump team, the new Senate offices, and the new House offices. We need friends on both sides of the aisle to be successful in securing our policy priorities. Any organization or group that works with only one party will be sorely disappointed in what they can achieve. Washington, D.C., is still a place where face-to-face meetings make the most impact, and nobody covers Capitol Hill better than NCBA. This is why we have an office on Pennsylvania Avenue and a full-time staff to build relationships and be your voice. We are ready to work with all members of the new Congress, and we will look at every opportunity to keep the government out of your business.



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