

# Trade Agreement With Chile Will Benefit Farmers/Ranchers

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Secretary Ann Veneman released the following statement Tuesday, Dec. 11, after the conclusion of the trade agreement with Chile

"Today's announcement that the United States and Chile have concluded a free-trade agreement is good news for America's farmers, ranchers and exporters who are eager to take advantage of the new and promising export opportunities that the agreement will bring.

"Under this FTA, our access to Chile's market will improve for a variety of U.S. agricultural products, including durum wheat,

pork, beef, feed grains, and dairy, horticultural, and high-value food products. Over three-quarters of U.S. farm goods will enter Chile duty-free within four years and all duties on U.S. products will be phased out over 12 years.

"U.S. wheat, wheat flour and vegetable oils will now receive the most preferential rate available and will be duty-free at the conclusion of the transition period. In the past, Chile's price band system sharply constrained export opportunities for these products.

"Both of our countries have renewed their commitment to continue the work on resolving im-

portant sanitary and phytosanitary issues that inhibit market access.

"While U.S. tariffs will also be eliminated over time under the FTA, the agreement has a provision that will help protect farmers and ranchers from sudden surges in imports from Chile. When the safeguard is triggered, additional duties will be applied. "This FTA is another step toward this Administration's goal of harmonizing market access abroad for U.S. agricultural producers and exporters. The agreement will give America's farmers and ranchers and the businesses they support improved, and in many cases, new access to a market of 15 million consumers.

"I want to extend my thanks and appreciation to Ambassador Zoellick as well as the team of negotiators from both countries, who have worked long and hard for two years to make this FTA a reality. Cooperation in trade in this hemisphere will benefit all of us. Today's agreement moves us closer to that goal."

## USDA Issues New Scrapie Eradication Program Recordkeeping Guidelines For Markets, Dealers

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — New compliance guidelines to simplify record-keeping for sheep and goat dealers and markets have been issued by the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Veterinary Services (APHIS-VS) as part of the national scrapie eradication program.

The new record-keeping compliance guidelines require only standard business practices of recording buyer, seller, the number of animals, date, species and breed or class of animal. No longer will dealers and/or market operators be expected to record individual identification information unless individual "IDs" are inserted or replaced by a dealer or market.

The record-keeping change is important to all segments of the sheep and goat industries, according to Dr. Cindy Wolf, Sheep Health committee chairperson for the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) and a small ruminant specialist with the University of Minnesota. "It allows market channels to operate normally and still be in compliance with the scrapie eradication program."

The new guidelines will not affect existing ID and record-keeping requirements for most producers. The exceptions are for owners of low-risk commercial sheep and owners of goats that have been commingled with low-risk commercial sheep. These producers may now identify their sheep and goats with an official premises ear tag rather than a registered brand or ear notch.

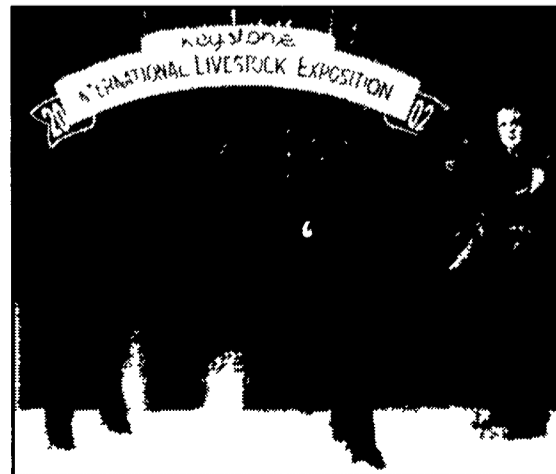
More information on these and other topics relating to the scrapie eradication program is available on the Internet at [www.animalagriculture.org/scrapie](http://www.animalagriculture.org/scrapie), or call toll-free (866) 873-2824.

## Winners Named In KILE Junior Steer Show

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The HJM Cattle Company of Richland was selected as the grand champion winner in this year's Keystone International Livestock Exposition (KILE) Junior Steer Show. Megan Fuls, 16, exhibited her champion crossbred market steer for the competition. She has been showing at KILE for eight years.

The breeds of the champion steer were Paul and Beth Wingard of Sunrise Club Calves, Shippenville.

The reserve grand champion steer was owned and exhibited by Red Rock Farm, Etters.



Megan Fuls, Richland, exhibited the champion market steer.

## NACD Calls On President To Stop Cuts In Conservation Funding

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) has called upon President Bush to stop the Office of Management and Budget's redirection of conservation technical assistance funding.

An NACD analysis shows that OMB has redirected at least \$75 million of technical assistance funding in 2002. These actions undercut the role farmers and ranchers play in protecting the nation's natural resources. The magnitude of the problem will only grow as funding for the Farm Bill is ramped up over the next five years.

"These conservation programs are crucial to achieving a cleaner, healthier environment on the nation's private working lands — benefits that translate to an improved quality of life for all Americans," said NACD's President Read Smith. "The public will be the ultimate losers if the administration does not fully fund these programs."

At the heart of the issue is whether the base conservation technical assistance funds that support private lands conservation in every county in the country should be redirected. Despite clear direction from Congress in the Farm Bill law, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) wants to redirect funds intended to support non-Farm Bill conservation programs, and use them to fuel the technical assistance needs of the new Farm Bill conservation programs.

NACD is calling upon the Administration to fully fund the technical assistance component of the 2002 Farm Bill conservation programs enacted by Congress earlier this year. "America's farmers and ranchers are counting on these programs to help assure their economic future and improve their ability to protect the environment for all," Smith said.

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