

U.S. Works To Secure Poultry Exports To Mexico

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The United States trade representatives have successfully worked to ensure that U.S. poultry exports will continue to be exported to Mexico with preferential access, forestalling possible Mexican action that could have resulted in significant trade disruption.

On January 1, under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Mexican tariffs on U.S. poultry exports fell to zero. However, under NAFTA, Mexico could have taken action to impose a "safeguard" or emergency import tariff of up to 240 percent on U.S. poultry exports, which is the tariff that countries without a preferential arrangement with Mexico pay. Instead, Mexico will allow 50,000 metric tons of U.S. chicken leg quarters into Mexico duty-free over the next six months and will impose a temporary, or provisional, safeguard tariff of 98.8 percent on imports of chicken leg quarters above that level. All other U.S. poultry exports will continue to enter Mexico duty free.

"By working with Mexico, in consultation with the U.S. poultry industry, we've been able to ensure that U.S. poultry will continue to flow to Mexico at levels

comparable to the last few years, while we continue to work on larger issues related to NAFTA's implementation," said U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick. "Under NAFTA, Mexico could have imposed a safeguard tariff to protect its industry that could have seriously disrupted our poultry trade. Because of factors unique to the poultry industry, we preferred, in this case, to work on positive and practical solutions to keep poultry exports flowing. I'm pleased that the U.S. poultry industry supports our efforts and that Mexican consumers will have continued access to high-quality U.S. poultry."

"We have been working hard to keep the Mexican market open for U.S. poultry exports in the face of a number of recent challenges," said Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman. "This provisional safeguard will help to preserve preferential access for U.S. poultry in our third largest market. While the safeguard is in place we will continue to work with the Mexican Government and the poultry industry to ensure long-term access for U.S. exports."

The provisional measure will

take the form of a tariff-rate quota (TRQ). The first 50,000 metric tons of chicken leg quarters exported in the next six months approximately the same rate at which the United States exported chicken leg quarters to Mexico in 2001 will enter Mexico duty free.

Additional U.S. exports of chicken leg quarters in this six month period will be subject to a 98.8 percent tariff, which was the 2001 tariff level. Mexico's most-favored-nation (MFN) tariff rate for U.S. chicken leg quarters is 240 percent. Citing "critical circumstances," Mexico has decided to impose the provisional measure for six months, effective immediately, while its full safeguard investigation continues. The United States will continue to work with Mexico on a longer term measure, which under NAFTA rules would require Mexico to provide offsetting trade compensation.

The U.S. is fully committed to the effective implementation of NAFTA because of the benefits it provides to families, farmers, workers, businesses, and consumers on both sides of the border. The issue of the NAFTA poultry tariffs and the Mexican safeguard

is a novel and complicated situation, involving close cooperation between the U.S. government with the U.S. poultry industry. Therefore, it should be viewed as a unique approach designed to ensure that trade flows continue at high levels, and not as any new across-the-board approach to implementing NAFTA.

Unrelated to the safeguard ac-

tion taken by the Mexican Ministry of Economy, the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture (SAGARPA) maintains certain restrictions on imports of U.S. poultry due to animal health requirements. On January 21, SAGARPA announced that poultry from California and Nevada was banned due to an outbreak of Exotic Newcastle Disease.

Idaho Cattleman Becomes NCBA President

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Eric Davis, a beef producer from Bruneau, Idaho, has become the new president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA).

Davis took the position Saturday at the NCBA membership meeting during the 2003 Cattle Industry Convention and Trade Show in Nashville, Tenn.

For the past year, Davis has served as NCBA president-elect, and was NCBA's vice president in 2001.

Davis is past president of both the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association and the Idaho Cattle Association, where he also served as chairman of the Beef Quality Assurance Committee. He was also chairman of the Idaho Beef Council.

A graduate of the University of Idaho with a degree in Agriculture, Davis is president of the family-owned Bruneau Cattle Co., which includes a cow/calf operation near Bruneau. The family finishes its own cattle,

does custom feeding, and has irrigated grounds that grow mostly hay and corn silage. He and his wife Pam have a son and a daughter.

Jan Lyons, a beef producer from Manhattan, Kan., is the new president-elect for NCBA; she was formerly the organization's vice president. Jim McAdams of Lubbock, Texas, formerly vice president of NCBA's Policy Division, was elected NCBA vice president.

Elected as chairman of the NCBA Federation Division is Bob Schmidt of Greenback, Tenn.; Bob Rolston of Denver, Colo., is vice chairman. Joe Tugaw of Twin Falls, Idaho was elected chairman of NCBA's Policy Division, with Mike Byrne of Tulelake, California serving as vice chairman.

Ernie Reeves, Virginia, was elected to the NCBA Executive Committee to represent his region of the country in the Policy Division.

Angus Foundation Increases Scholarships For Youth In 2003

ST. JOSEPH, Mo. — The Angus Foundation will increase the amount of scholarships it awards in 2003. The Angus Foundation Board of Directors voted unanimously to increase the amount of scholarship monies awarded from \$20,000 to \$25,000, and increase the number of scholarships by three.

The top two scholarship recipients will receive \$3,500. Eighteen recipients will receive \$1,000 scholarships.

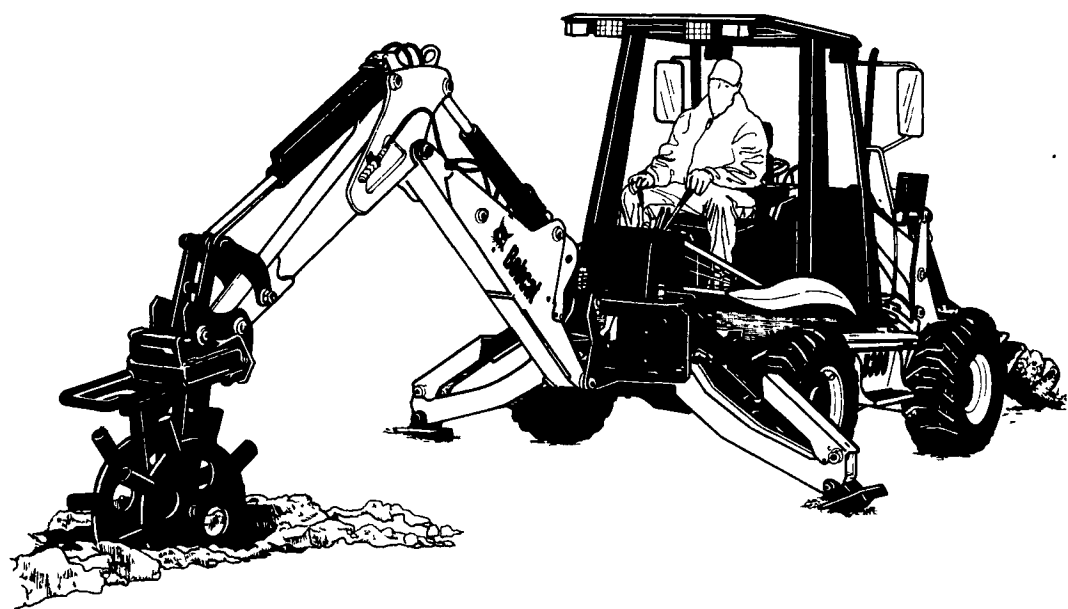
"Each year we have so many deserving applicants apply for the Angus Foundation scholarships," says James Fisher, director of activities and junior activities for the American Angus Association.

"With the decision of the Angus Foundation board, we will be able to award more of these youth scholarships to help them with their college education."

Angus Foundation scholarships are awarded at the National Junior Angus Show each summer. An application is due to the junior activities department with a postmark date of May 15. A committee of qualified individuals will decide on the scholarship recipients.

For more information about the Foundation or to obtain a scholarship application, log onto www.angusfoundation.org or call the junior activities department at (816) 383-5100.

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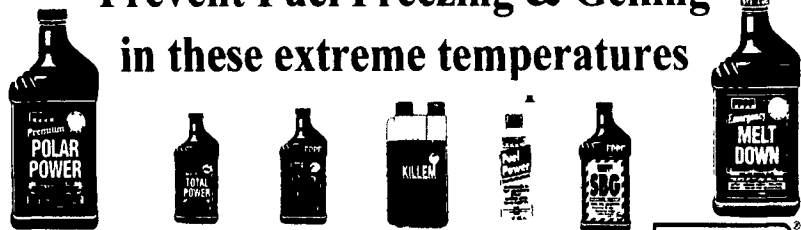
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