

# Cow Country Reporter



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## NEWS FROM YOUR CEO

What a difference green grass, sunshine, warm temperatures and higher cattle prices makes in one's mood. Yes, we will not forget the ugly winter we just went through, but at least we have something to look forward to. Those cows that made it through the winter who are a little "long in the tooth" may need to be turned into cash. The slaughter cow market is high right now (mid 50's to low 60's for the better end of the cows) with cows in body condition score 2 and 3 bringing in the 40's. How long will this market last? I am not sure, but packers are needing cows with the imports of foreign beef down from this time last year. Rye grass cattle for April/May delivery have sold well, over 100.00 cwt., and demand for this class continues to remain good. Calf prices have increased, 15.00-18.00 cwt. higher than the same time a year ago. We will certainly be looking at lower numbers of calves this fall as many cow/calf producers suffered heavy death loss this winter. We have seen calves marketed through Superior Video for July/Aug. delivery bringing 10.00-13.00 cwt. more than they did

last year at this time.

Speaking of markets, have you called our toll free number ( 888-528-6999) and hit option 3 for the market report updated every week? Try it, you may like it!

Also, our classified section is available on our website, [www.lacattle.org](http://www.lacattle.org), see what you think about it. Let us know your thoughts and feel free to suggest improvements. Remember CPL is only as strong as it's members. Membership renewals went out this month, so please renew and sign up some new members. Our member year runs from June 1 to May 31. Thank you for your support and with your help CPL will make a difference.

*Dave Foster*



## Don't forget!!

Market updates are available weekly on our toll free hotline. Call 1-888-528-6999 and hit 3 for market information. This message is updated every Saturday. The market info line is open to all members. Be sure to take a look at the free classifieds.

**Don't wait! Check it out today.**

***Be sure to check you mail for your renewal notice.***

## CATTLE UPDATE: CALVES FROM DECADES-OLD FROZEN SEMEN BORN AT LSU AGCENTER

--Cattle Network

LSU AgCenter scientists have produced calves from Angus bull semen that has been frozen for more than 40 years. Some of the calves were sired by semen collected and frozen from bulls in the late 1960s, said Robert Godke, a professor of reproductive physiology at the LSU AgCenter.

"These calves are from frozen Angus bull semen stored in liquid nitrogen," Godke said. The semen was thawed, and beef cows were artificially inseminated at the LSU AgCenter's Central Research Station.

Semen from 25 bulls – some now deceased – was collected, processed and stored in liquid nitrogen in the 1960s and in succeeding years into the 2000s, said Godke, who led the research team that conducted the study.

The frozen semen, which came from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, was stored in the USDA National Germplasm Conservatory – a sperm and embryo cryobank – in Ft. Collins, Colo., Godke said.

"We believe these normal, viable calves have been produced from some of the longest-stored frozen semen ever reported in the scientific literature," he said. "This helps verify that semen properly processed and stored can last for decades without losing its ability to fertilize and produce viable offspring."

David Carwell, an LSU graduate student from Arkansas, was in charge of artificially inseminating more than 200 cows. The results show that pregnancy rates were greater than 50 percent for semen from each decade, which indicates the stored samples maintained their viability, Carwell said.

"We are pleased with these results," said Glen Gentry, a reproductive physiologist at the LSU AgCenter's Reproductive Biology Center in St. Gabriel. "That is what one would expect with good-quality semen used to inseminate synchronized cows with frozen-thawed semen stored in liquid nitrogen for only a month.

"All indications are that the early scientists, who had proposed that properly frozen semen stored in liquid nitrogen at minus-360 degrees would subsequently be viable for many years, appear to have been correct," Gentry said. "We're happy to have had the opportunity to use some of this long-term stored bull semen to verify what was proposed by the theoretical scientists decades ago."

Now that the researchers have shown frozen semen can remain viable over extended times, Gentry said he sees two positive effects for the beef and dairy industries.

"First, these germplasm banks that are storing frozen semen have a product that we know will work well for livestock producers," he said. "Second, strides have been made in genetics, and some small differences in DNA – single nucleotide polymorphisms or SNPs – have been shown to be positive production modifiers that can and likely will be used to increase animal production performance."

SNPs can act as biological markers, helping scientists locate genes that are associated with a variety of traits, such as growth, milk production and disease susceptibility.

"Some of the older bulls in our joint USDA study may have had these SNPs, but science during these animals' lifetimes had not progressed enough to identify and take advantage of the SNPs," Gentry said.

"Now, because we can use semen that was stored years earlier, we could use that genetic material to identify production traits and hopefully make improvements in our more modern cattle."

For the long term, Godke said, "The valuable male sperm stored in the semen tanks will produce babies for a long time."

The first calf produced from frozen and thawed semen in the United States was born in Janesville, Wisc., May 29, 1953.

"It was just one of many thousands that have come from frozen semen over the years," Godke said. "This important finding was discovered by Dr. Chris Polge and his colleagues at Cambridge University in England in the early 1950s."

Polge was then invited to the United States and shared his findings with colleagues in Wisconsin, Godke said. "And this discovery subsequently changed cattle breeding management and production efficiency for the years to come."

Today, dairymen can produce as much milk with half as many dairy cows as they did four decades ago, said Ken Bondioli, also a reproductive physiologist and member of the LSU AgCenter research team.

"This is a result good nutrition and genetic improvement through the genetic selection of bulls to use in artificial insemination with frozen-thawed semen on their farms," Bondioli said. "With frozen semen and artificial insemination, the top, genetically proven bulls can be used to inseminate cows all over the world."

Records verify that insemination of dairy cattle with frozen semen has resulted in a marked increase milk production per cow since the mid 1960s, he added.

"This is an excellent example where agricultural scientists have developed technologies that have improved animal production efficiency for our livestock producers," Godke said.

"I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to go to Cambridge and work with Dr. Polge in my younger days at the LSU AgCenter," he added. "He was a very creative, hard-working scientist. I think about him and the impact that his research has made on producers when I see these calves produced by semen that has been frozen for more than 40 years."

Source: LSU Ag Center, Rick Bogren

## 4-H THE LATEST BATTLEGROUND OVER ANIMAL CARE

By Gary Truitt, Hoosier Ag Today, 04/11/2010

The 4-H program is one of the best youth leadership development organizations in the world. Now I admit I am biased, being a 4H leader and having two of my children go through the program. So I guess that is why my green clover turned red when I learned that the National 4-H organization had climbed in bed with one of the most radical and insidious animal rights organizations in the country. Furthermore, when this issue came to light and the farm community expressed outrage, the National leadership refused to back down. This continued association has allowed the Humane Society of the United States to use the name and reputation of 4-H to advance its radical agenda. Despite demands from local and state 4-H leaders, the national organization has turned a deaf ear to the interests and concerns of agriculture.

During the National 4-H Congress in Washington last month, a breakout session was held on animal care. That is not unusual, but the sponsoring organization certainly was. HSUS and American agriculture are locked in a pitched battle on the local, state, and national levels over the future of animal agriculture. So, to have them involved with an organization like 4-H, with deep roots in farming, does not smell right. At the end of the session, the 25 youth that participated in the workshop were provided with resource material that included HSUS propaganda. The 35-page HSUS Mission Humane Action Guide, which encourages youth to set up animal protection clubs and devotes pages to researching animal issues, "making your voice heard," and raising funds. If you throw a party, the material suggests showing videos from the HSUS Web site and serving vegan refreshments. And just about every page plugs information available on the HSUS Web site. "You'll also learn about lobbying, one of the most effective ways of making change for animals," says the guide's message from CEO Wayne Pacelle.

When word of this event began to leak out in the ag media, the reaction was quick and virulent. Instead of admitting they had made a seriously bad mistake, the National 4-H organization defended their association with HSUS, "The workshop was approved by the planning committee because the proposal aligned with the goals of the 4-H conference and did not present any indication of anti-animal agriculture views or positions." Leaders on the state and local levels took strong exception with the position of the national office. OSU Extension Director Keith Smith issued a statement April 2 saying Ohio's 4-H program was "very distressed that this happened at a national 4-H event," and that the Ohio 4-H organization had expressed that dismay to the 4-H National Headquarters and USDA-NIFA, "The primary concern about this distribution is that HSUS is well known for its anti-animal agriculture views and positions, and 4-H has a long tradition of providing education in the animal sciences, which includes the dimension of positive animal welfare." Individuals blasted the National 4-H Facebook fan page with even stronger statements. One poster called it an "irresponsible decision."

What makes the attempt by HSUS to use 4-H, and the National organization's apparent willingness to be used, even more despicable is that 4-H livestock programs are the best example of humane animal care there is. 4-Hers in the livestock programs are models of good animal husbandry. If you want to see animal care at its best, visit your county fair this summer and spend a few minutes in the barns and talk with the 4-Hers about their animals and how they care for them.

To allow this radical, anti-agriculture organization - which spends less than 1% of its funds on caring for animals - influence our youth is unconscionable. Local 4-H leaders, state officials, and every 4H parent, should demand more accountability by the national organization. They should also demand current leadership be replaced. Clearly national leadership has forgotten the part of the 4-H pledge that talks about pledging your "head to clearer thinking."

*Don't forget to visit us on the web!*

**WWW.LACATTLE.ORG**

### BUTCHER ESTABLISHES MEATSHOP 101 FOR CONSUMERS (continued from page 4)

information in a way that is visually pleasing, accurate, enjoyable and easy to learn.

"My great hope is that consumers will come to think of meatshop101 as the place to go for whatever they want to know about any cut of meat," said Turner. "My goal is that they will feel they can trust this information because it comes from someone who has had considerable experience as a real, honest-to-goodness butcher! I want my visitors to never feel that they are getting stale, textbook-style information, but that they can rely on my site for information and tips they can really trust and use at the supermarket. Nothing would please me more than to hear folks say, 'Before I buy another cut of meat, I'm going to check it out on [meatshop101!](#)'" I hope you will share this [website](#) with your friends, family and customers because an educated and informed consumer is a happy one who will continue to purchase meat with confidence down the road. Help spread the positive and delicious news about the meat we eat and tell someone new about this educational website.

## RETIRED BUTCHER ESTABLISHES "MEATSHOP 101" FOR CONSUMERS

By: Amanda Noles, Beef Daily Blog

Eric Turner got his start in the meat business in high school. He had a job sacking groceries in his hometown of Crossville, TN. One day in the summer of 1987, Turner's store manager asked him to help fill in for a worker in the meat department. Never having set foot in a meat shop, he was a little nervous but was surprised to find out he found the work interesting and challenging. Slowly, he began earning the respect of the meat cutters as they taught him the cuts of meat, how to use the machines and how to work with customers.

"I really put my heart into it, and not long after, my store manager offered me a full-time position in the meat market," said Turner. "Needless to say, I took it. Over the next 20 years, I worked for several regional and national retail grocery chains including Publix, Kroger, Bi-Lo and Food Lion, as meat cutter and then as a meat market manager. I also proudly served as the meat production manager for Performance Food Group, a Fortune 500 wholesaler based in Richmond, VA."

After a long and well-rounded career in the meat business, Turner retired but quickly started missing the interactions with customers at the meat counter. Because of his love of educating consumers, he established meatshop101, a forum where the average meat consumer can go to find useful and easy-to-understand information about the meats they are buying.

"I know from experience that many shoppers at the supermarket feel butchers can be a little intimidating, so they may hesitate to ask their questions at a store," admitted Turner. "This is a shame because you really need quality information in order to make the best choices when buying meats. meatshop101 is a place where anyone can go and get this information before they head to the supermarket."

The goal of meatshop101 is provide a method for anyone to learn their meat cuts, where they come from, what to do with them, creative ways to cook them and more. Turner aims to provide this

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