Cow Country Reporter

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News from your CEO

A lot of "events" have happened leading up to September. This month historically in Louisiana is mainly filled with cow/calf producers selling their Spring-born calves. This year the majority of our Louisiana cow/calf producers sold their calf crop early taking advantage of higher prices. Speaking of higher prices, since the week after the 4th of July, prices for all classes of cattle in the U.S. were lower and in the last week in August "fat" cattle prices dropped $40.00 cwt. and calf prices were $50.00 cwt. plus lower compared to July. To add to this dilemma, the U.S. border opened up to receiving Mexican cattle August 24, 2026, and Trump announced that the U.S. would receive 300,000 metric tons of beef from foreign countries for 90 days. This event prompted U.S. Cattlemen's Association to write a letter requesting he change his mind, with Farm Bureau, LMA and NCBA signing on the letter. Many other organizations sent letters as well, including R-Calf U.S.A. Feel free to call your congress representatives and encourage them to put a stop to this situation. If these events were not enough, severe drought throughout almost half of the U.S. has hindered forage growth and many wheat grazing states have not planted wheat as of the end of August. Receipts at the local stockyards are low, little herd building is happening, and many cattlemen are in a "wait and see" position. Keep in touch with your marketing agent. Enjoy the Labor Day celebrations and let's pray for rain and cooler temperatures.

Dave Foster, CEO

What to Expect from Mexican Cattle Imports

By: Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist

There is lots of speculation on both sides of the border about what to expect with the resumption of cattle trade between the U.S. and Mexico. How many cattle? What type of cattle? How fast?

There are many questions about if and how much the world has changed since the border closed and whether the impacts are long-lasting or perhaps permanent. We can't be sure, but history is probably still the best guide on what to expect.

Mexican cattle imports averaged 1.17 million head in the twenty years from 2004-2023 with a minimum of 702.6 thousand head in 2008 to a maximum of 1.47 million head in 2012. Mexican cattle imports are highly correlated to drought conditions in Mexico, with severe drought causing unsustainable spikes in cattle imports which tend to average out. A five-year moving average of Mexican cattle imports only shows about 222 thousand head variation across years.

On average, 36 percent of annual Mexican cattle imports cross from September through December. If the border was fully open, the average of 1.17 million head annually implies that roughly 421,000 head could cross by the end of the year. Based on history, it might be possible for 90-100 thousand head of cattle to cross at the Douglas port in the last four months of the year. If we suppose that Santa Teresa and Columbus, New Mexico open one month later, an additional 125-175 thousand head could be imported by the end of the year. It is unlikely that many, if any, spayed heifers will be imported initially, so the above estimates are likely too high. It will likely take several weeks for ports to return to full capacity. For the remainder of 2026, up to 250 thousand head total might be possible but 150 thousand head is probably a more reasonable estimate of Mexican cattle imports by the end of the year.

The majority of Mexican cattle imports are feeder cattle and generally lightweight. Table 1 shows the breakdown of Mexican cattle imports in 2023. Feeder cattle weighing less than 700 pounds accounted for 98.7 percent of Mexican cattle imports, including 29 percent under 440 pounds. Many of the lightweight feeders will be utilized in stocker programs before feedlot placement. Tight feeder cattle supplies in the U.S. may mean that more and lighter Mexican cattle may be placed immediately in feedlots. These cattle will

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What to Expect from Mexican Cattle Imports

be on feed for six to eight months with the first animals potentially available for slaughter by March 2027.

Table 1. Breakdown of 2023 Mexican Cattle Imports

Class	Weight Group	Steers	Heifers	Total	% of Grand Total
Feeder Cattle					
	<200 lbs.	0	57	57	0
	200-440 lbs.	325,418	35,879	361,354	29.0
	440-700 lbs.	584,713	283,735	868,448	69.7
	>700 lbs.	8,312	1,624	9,936	0.8
	Total	918,443	321,295	1,239,738	99.5
Fed		3,132	2,899	6,031	0.48
Sltr Bulls/Cows		562	223	785	0.06
Grand Total				1,246,554	

Dr. Peel discusses the continued decline in the U.S. cattle herd, signs that the herd may be trying to stabilize, and the cattle market's reaction to news of a phased reopening of the Mexican border for livestock imports on SunUpTV from August 17, 2026.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uPYm05EB9M

U.S. Cattle Industry Unites to Urge President Trump to Reverse 90-Day Beef Import Plan

Four major agricultural organizations warn that flooding the market with 300,000 metric tons of discounted foreign beef threatens long-term food security and undermines ranchers rebuilding historic low herds.

By: Angie Stump Denton

In an unprecedented display of industry-wide unity, four of the nation's largest livestock organizations have jointly petitioned President Donald J. Trump to immediately reverse his administration's proposed 90-day beef import initiative.

The joint letter — signed by the leadership of the Livestock Marketing Association (LMA), American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), and the United States Cattlemen's Association (USCA) — warns that the policy will devastate domestic cattle markets, discourage vital herd-rebuilding efforts, and ultimately compromise America's long-term food security.

A Disheartening Message to American Producers

The administration's plan, announced via Truth Social on Aug. 21, 2026, aims to import up to 300,000 metric tons (roughly 661 million lb.) of foreign lean beef trimmings over the next 90 days to drive down domestic grocery prices. To achieve this, the plan suspends the standard 26.4% "out-of-quota" tariff, allowing importers to bring in massive volumes of duty-free beef promised to retail at 25% below current rates.

For domestic cattle producers, the timing could not be worse.

"The stated purpose of driving down beef prices and the commitment to sell it at a price that undercuts domestic supply send a disheartening message to farmers and ranchers across the country," the coalition writes. "This announcement has already driven cattle markets sharply lower and undermines producers at a critical time of year when they are marketing cattle and making herd-building decisions."

The Realities Behind Current Beef Prices

While the coalition shares the President's goal of keeping groceries affordable for American families, they argue that flooding the market with heavily discounted foreign product is a short-sighted strategy.

Current market prices for beef are not driven by packer or producer greed, but rather reflect the cumulative pressures of a highly challenging economic cycle. Following years of severe multi-state droughts, record-high feed and forage costs, and supply chain disruptions, the U.S. beef cow herd has contracted to its lowest level in more than 70 years.

Just as ranchers are beginning to see the sustained demand needed to justify reinvesting in their herds and restoring domestic supply, this sudden flood of duty-free imports threatens to dry up capital.

"Ranchers and farmers are finally experiencing the strong beef demand needed to invest in their operations," the letter states. "This announcement will discourage investment in the U.S. cow herd and undo the progress producers have made. We are deeply concerned that this import strategy sacrifices long-term food security for a short-term solution."

Demanding a Fair and Competitive Market

The joint letter emphasizes that long-term consumer affordability can only be guaranteed by protecting the viability of the domestic supply chain. If domestic producers are driven out of business by artificially cheap, tariff-free foreign imports, the U.S. will become increasingly reliant on international supply chains — leaving consumers vulnerable to future global disruptions.

"There is nothing more American than beef, and we look to your leadership to ensure resilience for our farmers and ranchers, which is the only long-term way to prevent higher grocery costs and maintain control over our food supply," the coalition urges.

Rather than executing a unilateral import plan, the LMA, AFBF, NCBA and USCA are calling on the administration to sit down with the industry to develop structural solutions that strengthen — rather than weaken — America's capacity to feed itself.

"American cattle producers are asking you for a fair and competitive market, honest price signals, and policies that put U.S. farmers, ranchers, and consumers first," the letter concludes.

U.S./Mexico Border Opens

For the first time in more than a year Mexican feeder cattle—692 head to start—are headed north.

By: Clint Peck

8/24/26—The U.S./Mexico border at the Douglas, Arizona, port reopened to cattle imports from Mexico today. USDA reported 692 head of Mexican feeder cattle crossed the border into the U.S. today. Douglas is directly across from Agua Prieta in Mexico's Sonora state.

A total of 716 head of Sonoran feeders were presented for entry, but veterinarians rejected 24 head due to cuts, scratches, and other lesions. There were no details on the size and sex of the feeders, or the destinations.

The U.S./Mexico border closed to cattle trade most recently in July 2025 (with a prior temporary closure starting in November 2024 and earlier restrictions), driven by concerns over the spread of the New World Screwworm (NWS) in Mexico.

Since June 3, 2026, when the USDA reported the first active NWS case in the U.S., a total of 46 NWS cases have been reported—with all but one in Texas. Of those 46 cases, only two are reported as "active" today.

For the first month, the reopening is beginning with 700 head per day during the first week, increasing to 900 head the second week--gradually rising to around 1,300 per day, according to Mexico's National Confederation of Livestock Organizations.

The cross-border trade is "guided by overlapping safeguards and a science-based import protocol" agreed upon by the two countries. The USDA will next evaluate the reopening of ports in Santa Teresa and Columbus, New Mexico, to cattle, bison, and horses.

Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock specialist, predicted that for the remainder of 2026,150,000 head is probably a reasonable estimate of Mexican cattle imports by the end of the year. Outside chances are that up to 250,000 head total might cross, Peel added.

Mexican cattle imports averaged 1.17 million head in the 20 years from 2004-2023, with a minimum of 702,600 head in 2008 to a maximum of 1.47 million head in 2012.

Cee Arnett of Bovina Feeders, Bovina, Texas, said his 60,000-head feedyard and others around him have been feeling the pinch of tight cattle supplies, partly caused by the halt in imports from Mexico.

"For 80 to 90 years, our feeding industry has been built around having Mexican cattle to fill the gap when we can't get native cattle," explained Arnett. "We have to get those Mexican feeders back into the pipeline as soon as possible.

The USDA plans to open two more New Mexico ports, one in 30 days and another in 60 days, said USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins. The opening of ports may be paused if USDA identifies increased risk in Sonora or Chihuahua via post-opening audits or other observations or information.

"We don't plan to open any Texas ports anytime soon just because that is where the real (NWS) activity is," said Rollins. But she said USDA feels it has taken every step to protect the American cattle herd and the American consumer, "and so now we can slowly begin to reopen the ports."

FDA issues EUA for ivermectin injection against screwworm in cattle

Emergency use authorization is FDA's 14th against New World screwworm.

U.S. Food & Drug Administration

The U.S. Food & Drug Administration today issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for Bimectin (ivermectin) injection for the prevention of New World screwworm (NWS) infestations (myiasis) in cattle when administered within 24 hours of birth, at the time of castration or at the appearance of a wound – advancing the Trump Administration's goal of safeguarding American agriculture from NWS.

Bimectin injection is not authorized for use in lactating dairy cows or in calves that will be processed for veal.

"This authorization reflects the FDA's commitment to expanding generic drug options against New World screwworm," said Timothy Schell, Ph.D., director of the FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine. "By authorizing both generic and pioneer products, the agency is ensuring producers aren't dependent on a single manufacturer or product to protect their herds."

To maintain the continued safety of the food supply and avoid drug residues, it is critical that cattle producers carefully follow the 35-day slaughter withdrawal time and not administer this drug in lactating dairy cows and calves that will be processed for veal.

Based on the totality of the scientific evidence available, FDA has concluded it is reasonable to believe that Bimectin injection may be effective for the prevention of NWS myiasis in certain cattle when used as authorized, and the known and potential benefits of the product outweigh its known and potential risks.

Bimectin injection is a generic version of Ivomec, which was authorized in February 2026 for the prevention of NWS myiasis in cattle. FDA previously approved Bimectin injection for the treatment and control of various parasites in cattle. This EUA is only for the Bimectin injection and does not authorize other dosage forms of Bimectin.

Bimectin injection is available over the counter without a prescription. Cattle producers are responsible for using Bimectin injection in accordance with the product labeling and fact sheet.

This EUA will be effective until it is revoked or the Health & Human Services secretary terminates the declaration that the potential public health emergency presented by NWS justifies the emergency use authorization of animal drugs for NWS.

Bimectin injection is sponsored by Bimeda Animal Health Ltd. based in Ireland.

R-CALF USA Calls for MCOOL Following President's Proclamation

WASHINGTON, D.C., Aug. 27, 2026 — In a proclamation signed yesterday, President Donald Trump memorialized his earlier Truth Social announcement in which he stated he would allow up to 300,000 metric tons of lean beef trimmings to enter the United States within the next 90 days free from out-of-quota tariffs. The president said the plan is intended to lower ground beef prices for consumers.

The United States maintains a tariff rate quota (TRQ) system for beef for countries that do not have a trade agreement with the United States, allowing unlimited access to the U.S. market, such as with Canada and Mexico. The TRQ system provides a limit on the volume of beef a country can import under two tariff rates. Tariffs for beef imported within the established volume limit are low, generally around 4.4 cents per kilogram. However, imports in excess of the volume limit are subject to the over-quota tariff rate of 26.4 percent. The purpose of the over-quota tariff rate is to discourage additional

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R-CALF USA Calls for MCOOL Following President's Proclamation

imports above the established volume limit.

Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Uruguay, and the United Kingdom have country-specific volume limits, while all other countries not subject to a trade agreement are classified as "other countries or areas." This "other countries or areas" category has a volume limit of 52,005 metric tons and includes the countries of Brazil, Paraguay, Japan, Ireland, and other EU countries, all of which provided imported beef to the United States in 2026.

The proclamation applies to this "other countries or areas" category, for which the volume limit had already been met with beef imports from Brazil in January. The suspension of the over-quota tariff rate for an additional 300,000 metric tons of lean beef trimmings over the next 90 days means that any country or combination of countries within the "other countries or areas" category can, on a first-come, first-served basis, fill the new 300,000 metric ton limit.

The proclamation further encourages beef importers to sell the additional imports at a price 25 percent below the market price for lean beef trimmings. Given that lean beef trimmings are a wholesale product used to manufacture ground beef, the 25 percent below-market price requirement effectively applies to ground beef manufacturers, not retailers.

While the administration's action is intended to introduce additional lower-priced foreign beef into the U.S. wholesale market, beef sold at retail is not required to disclose the country where the animal was born, raised and slaughtered. As a result, consumers will not be able to distinguish beef produced from these additional imports from beef produced exclusively by U.S. ranchers from U.S. cattle.

In response to the proclamation, R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard released the following statement:

"We are disappointed that the president has taken action to increase the domestic supply of beef with foreign beef that will now compete directly with beef produced by America's ranchers. What makes this particularly concerning is that American consumers still are not afforded the means to distinguish ground beef manufactured with imported beef from ground beef produced exclusively from cattle born, raised and harvested in the United States.

"Without mandatory country-of-origin labeling, lower-priced foreign beef can enter the U.S. market and compete directly with American beef without being clearly distinguished from it at retail. This denies American ranchers the opportunity to capture the value consumers may place on U.S.-produced beef while forcing them to compete with increased volumes of lower-priced foreign beef.

"The White House itself recognizes the growing consumer awareness of the quality of U.S.-produced beef. If foreign beef is going to compete on price, American beef must be allowed to compete on its U.S. origin.

"We urge President Trump to support the immediate restoration of mandatory country-of-origin labeling for beef and urge Congress to act swiftly to make it law, so American ranchers can differentiate their U.S.-produced beef from imported beef and consumers can make an informed choice about whether the beef they purchase for their families is American or foreign beef."

Ranchers Cattlemen Action Legal Fund United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF USA) is the largest producer-only lobbying and trade association representing U.S. cattle producers. It is a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring the continued profitability and viability of the U.S. cattle and sheep industries. For more information, visit www.r-calfusa.com or call 406-252-2516.

One last reminder about dues.
If you have not contacted me about renewing your dues this may be your last newsletter.

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