



June 20, 2008

AFTC TO DISCUSS LIVESTOCK ISSUES WITH AG SECRETARY

AFTC has been invited to present the views of livestock transporters to Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer. AFTC will participate along with several livestock industry groups in briefing Secretary Schafer regarding an overview of industry-led solutions in humane animal handling. The briefing will take place Monday, June 23, 2008 at 2 p.m. at the USDA headquarters building in Washington, DC.

The purpose of the briefing is to provide the Secretary an overview of industry-designed humane-handling education programs. Representatives of each segment of the industry will present their programs, from producers through marketing and harvest.

A similar briefing occurred last month for USDA Under Secretary of Marketing and Regulatory Programs Bruce Knight, along with several other USDA staff. Secretary Schafer requested that the briefing be presented for him and other high-level USDA staff. In addition to AFTC Executive Director Russell Laird, the industry representatives briefing Secretary Schafer will be:

- Dr. Jamie Jonker, Director of Technical Affairs, National Milk Producers Federation
- Dr. Elizabeth Parker, Chief Veterinarian, National Cattlemen's Beef Association
- Kirk Ferrell, Vice President for Public Policy, National Pork Producers Council
- Dr. Jen Greiner, Director of Science and Technology, National Pork Producers Council
- Nancy Robinson, Vice President for Government Affairs, Livestock Marketing Association
- Dan Harris, Chairman, LMA Government and Industry Affairs Committee
- J. Patrick Boyle, President and CEO, American Meat Institute
- Janet Riley, Senior Vice President for Public Affairs, American Meat Institute
- Barry Carpenter, CEO and Executive Director, National Meat Association
- Kelli Ludlum, Director, Government Affairs, American Farm Bureau Federation

HUMANE SOCIETY TO RELEASE MORE VIDEO ALLEGING ANIMAL CRUELTY

Following the briefing described above, Secretary Schafer also invited AFTC to a meeting Tuesday morning to discuss more livestock market video to be released by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

This will be the second such video focusing on livestock handling and shot at livestock markets to be released. Reportedly, this video recorded treatment of dairy cattle at a livestock market in Texas. HSUS representatives informed Secretary Schafer of their intention to release the video and he invited livestock industry representatives to meet together at USDA with HSUS representatives to discuss the video.

HSUS gained much media attention in February with undercover video from a slaughterhouse in California which showed cattle being forcefully moved into the facility. Last month HSUS held a press conference with much fanfare releasing video alleging cruelty at livestock auctions. The video showed sick cows lying down, which HSUS called “neglect,” but it could have been the best treatment for the animals at the time. No details of the new video are available.

BILL INTRODUCED TO REGULATE HORSE TRANSPORT

A bill was introduced this week in the U.S. House of Representatives to prohibit the transportation of horses in interstate transportation in a motor vehicle containing two or more levels stacked on top of one another. While H.R. 6278 should not have a significant effect on many in the livestock transportation industry, it is bad policy for various reasons. USDA has already prohibited the use of double-decker trailers for horses bound for slaughter. Congress regulating to this detail in legislation would be a very bad precedent. It is doubtful that the bill will move forward but we will monitor it closely.

The author of the bill is Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) and it is cosponsored by the following representatives: Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), Bill Foster (D-Ill.), Walter B. Jones (R-N.C.), Dennis Moore of (D-Kan.), David Reichert (R-Wash.), Chris Shays of (R-Conn.), Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.), Charles A. Gonzalez (D-Texas), Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio), Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.), Jose E. Serrano (D-N.Y.) and Ed Whitfield (R-Ky).

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