



A PUBLICATION OF EQUITY COOPERATIVE LIVESTOCK SALES ASSOCIATION

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Industry Update

As your President and CEO, I strive to provide not only our patron members, but our livestock marketing industry with highly effective leadership, even in the midst of industry disruptions, staffing challenges, and the ongoing legislative and regulatory uncertainty. The executive team and regional board work together to anticipate and plan for such matters and turn them into opportunities, but sometimes other challenges will catch us off guard.

Your executive team and regional directors believe it is important to the cooperative, its employees, and patron members for us to develop and maintain industry relationships and be active in industry organizations. These provide the opportunities for us to be an influential voice in advocating for policies and staying informed on topics that impact our industry at the national, state, and local levels.

For the past year and a half, we have been advocating for a new Farm Bill and improvements to our immigration programs. We have seen little movement in Congress with either of these topics, but the Administration has been very busy issuing new regulations and rules that affect your cooperative. Here is a list of the major changes we are working to comply with:

USDA Federal Order Requiring Mandatory Bovine Influenza A Virus (BIAV) Testing for Interstate Movement of Dairy Cattle - April 24, 2024

April 24, 2024, the United States Department of Agriculture announced a new Federal Order requiring certain measures to be implemented, effective April 29, 2024. These measures are to further protect the United States livestock industry from the threat posed by the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza. These new measures include the following:

1. Mandatory Testing for Interstate Movement of Dairy Cattle
 - a. Lactating dairy cows moving interstate must adhere to conditions specified by APHIS, including a negative test for Influenza A and a certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI).
 - b. Owners of herds with positive tests will be required to provide epidemiological information, including animal movement tracing.
 - c. These steps are immediately required for lactating dairy cattle, these requirements may be implemented for other classes of cattle as scientific factors evolve.
2. Mandatory Reporting
 - a. Laboratories and state veterinarians must report positive Influenza A nucleic acid detection diagnostic results in livestock to USDA APHIS.



Curt Larson
President/CEO

b. Laboratories and state veterinarians must report positive Influenza A serology diagnostic results in livestock to USDA APHIS.

USDA APHIS has an exception for cattle moving interstate if their only destination after crossing the state boundary is a slaughter facility. In this situation, lactating dairy cows can be moved on an owner/shipper statement without a test or CVI, only if both the originating state and receiving state allow for this type of form to be used. Lactating dairy cows can move freely within their home state, but if they are leaving their home state to go anywhere except directly to a slaughter facility, they need a negative Influenza A test and a CVI.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) – US Department of Agriculture (USDA): <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock>

US Food & Drug Administration (FDA): <https://www.fda.gov/food/alerts-advisories-safety-information/updates-highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza-hpai>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) – US Department of Health & Human Services (HHS): <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/index.htm>

USDA APHIS Releases Final Animal Disease Traceability Rule, April 26, 2024

On May 9th, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) printed a final rule to amend and strengthen its animal disease traceability regulations for certain cattle and bison. These changes will be effective 180 days from that date.

The primary change is all official identification tags applied after November 5, 2024, will be required to be both, visually and electronically readable. USDA is not changing the type of animals requiring to be tagged, cattle and bison that move interstate and are sexually intact and 18 months of age and over, all dairy cattle, cattle and bison of any age used for shows, exhibitions, rodeos, or other recreational events must all continue to have official identification. USDA has said they

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Equity News



Industry Update

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will allow animals with current non-electronically readable tags to continue to use those tags for the life of the animal, however, any animal being tagged after November 5th will be required to use the updated visually and electronically readable tag.

In addition to updating the definition of “Official Eartag,” other definition changes include “Approved Tagging Sites,” “Interstate Certificates of Veterinary Inspections,” and “Dairy Cattle.” This change in the definition of “Dairy Cattle” is outlined here:

Prior definition: “All cattle, regardless of age or sex or current use, that are of a breed(s) used to produce milk or other dairy products for human consumption, including, but not limited to, Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn, and Red and Whites.”

New definition: “All cattle, regardless of age or sex or current use, that are of a breed(s) or offspring of a breed used to produce milk or other dairy products for human consumption, including, but not limited to, Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn, and Red and Whites.”

Result: USDA states in the rule this definition change is intended to capture those beef and crossbred calves born to a dairy cow and require those calves to be tagged under the dairy cattle definition.

The new rules refer to a database and data security for these electronically readable official identification tags but we are waiting on more guidance to fully understand what that is and the details associated with it.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) – US Department of Agriculture (USDA): <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/news/agency-announcements/aphis-bolsters-animal-disease-traceability-united-states#:~:text=The%20rule%20requires%20official%20eartags,record%20requirements%20related%20to%20cattle>

Federal Register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/05/09/2024-09717/use-of-electronic-identification-eartags-as-official-identification-in-cattle-and-bison>

USDA Inclusive Competition and Market Integrity Under the Packers and Stockyards Act

The Agricultural Marketing Service (“AMS”) Packers and Stockyard Division of the United States Department of Agriculture’s Inclusive Competition and Market Integrity Rule, Subpart O (“Rule”) goes into effect on May 6, 2024.

In summary, as provided by 9 Code of Federal Regulations 201, the Packers and Stockyards Act and the Rule are intended to “prohibit undue prejudice and unjust discrimination against individuals on a prohibited basis unrelated to the quality of the service or product provided. The [R]ule also identifies retaliatory practices that interfere with lawful communications, assertion of rights, and associated participation, among other protected activities, as unjust discrimination prohibited by the law. Finally, the [R]ule identifies deceptive practices that violate the Packers and Stockyards Act with respect to contract formation, contract

performance, contract termination, and contract refusal. The purpose of the [R]ule is to promote inclusive competition and market integrity in the livestock, meats, poultry, and live poultry markets.”

Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Association remains committed to conducting business fairly, honestly, and in compliance with the Packers and Stockyards Act. If you believe Equity has been in violation of the Packers and Stockyards Act or this Rule, please report the event directly to my office at mailbag@equitycoop.com or by calling the Ethics Line by dialing 1-800-362-3989 ext. 126. In addition, Producers who believe their rights under the Rule have been violated, whether specifically under this final Rule or in other circumstances, can report complaints to AMS at farmerfairness.gov. Additional information is available at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/enforcement/psd/reporting-violations>

A Copy of the Rule can be found at the following link: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/10/03/2022-21114/inclusive-competition-and-market-integrity-under-the-packers-and-stockyards-act>

USDA final rule on voluntary “Product of USA Label” – March 11, 2024

USDA’s Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) announced and printed final changes to rules for the voluntary “Product of USA” label. These changes basically closed the loopholes allowing imported meat to be processed and/or packaged in the USA to bear this label. The new rule requires that a product be from an animal that was born and raised in the United States in order to bear this label.

Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS): <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2024/03/11/usda-finalizes-voluntary-product-usa-label-claim-enhance-consumer>

Federal Register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/18/2024-05479/voluntary-labeling-of-fsis-regulated-products-with-us-origin-claims>

United States Department of Labor Updates Several Rules Requiring Employer Action

At the federal level, the Department of Labor (DOL) has been very busy with their Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issuing a couple of new rules on workplace inspections and hazardous communications. DOL’s Wage and Hour Division (WHD) issued some changes to employee wage requirements and the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) also finalized some retirement plan rule changes.

The executive team and regional board directors recognize the mutual accountability and shared purpose to not only ensure the cooperative continues to operate within the parameters set by our regulatory agencies, but to ensure Equity remains a strong voice for our producer members. Representing our members, and the cooperative as a whole, allows for optimal value and the ability to unlock what is possible within the cooperative.



2024 Board of Directors

Following our annual district meetings, Equity is pleased to announce our 2024 Regional Board of Directors. “Equity’s directors are always looking for creative ways to improve operations, serve members, and maintain a competitive advantage in the marketplace,” says Curt Larson, President/CEO. “Producer members play a vital role in Equity’s success.”



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ALTONA MARKET
BARRON MARKET



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DISTRICT 7
SPARTA MARKET



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DISTRICT 8
MONROE MARKET



BRAD SOLCHENBERGER
DISTRICT 9
RICHLAND CENTER MARKET
VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



ADAM QUANDAH
DISTRICT 10
WAUKON MARKET
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

“Equity’s directors are always looking for creative ways to improve operations, serve members, and maintain a competitive advantage in the marketplace.”

— Curt Larson, President/CEO

Paying Tribute to Lynn Merow

Lynn was involved with Equity for over half his life. Born in Sparta, Lynn operated a 980-acre farm with his two sons. His family had roots in the area since his great-grandparents started farming in the 1850s.

Lynn Merow began on Equity’s Regional Board in 1957 and finished his term in 1998, missing only two meetings in that 41-year span. He served as Board Chairman from 1981-1995. Lynn passed on his desire to contribute to agriculture by serving on the cooperative’s board when his son, Karl, was elected to the regional board in 1998. Karl served for 25 years as a regional board director.

In 1997, Lynn was asked what his perspective was on Equity, he stated:

“I think it’s the broad representation from this region that has made Equity so successful that it hasn’t died in 75 years! That success is due to the new ideas, the broad-mindedness of all my fellow directors that I have worked with over the years, developing the new ideas, the new things other than just marketing livestock because at one time we were just in the terminal market in Milwaukee.”

“I was with the original managers, C.F. Clafin and Russ Hvam and John D. Jenks. Now we are looking forward to a new CEO. To have been able to rub shoulders with all of these fantastic individuals has made my life seem rather unique!”

Equity meant a great deal to Lynn as he spent much of his life involved with guiding the cooperative to success. Lynn’s dedication and service to Equity’s patron members for so many years helped make Equity what it is today!

As we say goodbye to Lynn, we thank Lynn and the Merow family for the years of dedication and support to the cooperative. Lynn’s leadership will continue to be an example as we will always strive for the same excellence in service to our patron members as he did.



Lynn Merow

High in the Future

Earlier this spring, live cattle futures experienced a short scare in prices. Although cattle futures are not back to contract highs, futures have strongly retraced back to higher money. This uptick in prices continues to be fed with the lack of cattle inventory and high consumer demand in the marketplace. Higher cattle prices have attracted additional buyers, maintaining steady to higher markets. However, due to higher prices, financial risk exposure for producers has increased significantly.

Equity has numerous tools available to assist patron members in increasing their marketability and overall return to their pocket. Within the risk management division, we offer both feeder and finished cattle contracts. These contracts allow producers to ease price risk as well as reduce overall market pressure. Finished contracts give producers access to pricing cattle up to 18 months out. With several different contract options, our risk management team can further assist you in determining which contract may be suitable for your operation.

Our risk management team can be reached at 800-362-3989 ext. 132 or 131.



Abdullah Hussaini

2025 Calendar Theme: Livestock on the Land

In the heart of rural landscape, we often find livestock. Our 2025 calendar theme will be Livestock on the Land. We encourage our patrons to share photos of their livestock roaming the land in which farmers work hard to sustain.



A panel of judges will select a winning photo to be placed on this year's cover. They will also select winners for each of the 12 months. The top photograph will be awarded the calendar cover and a basket of Equity goodies. Digital images are preferred and need to be sent as high resolution via email to ccarpenter@equitycoop.com or mailed in on a CD or USB drive. Low resolution images will not be included in the contest. Printed images must be at least 8" x 10" and can be mailed to Equity Livestock, Cora Carpenter, P.O. Box 1003, Baraboo, WI 53913. The entry deadline is Friday, September 13, 2024. For each photo entered, please include name of photographer, address, phone, email, and description of the photo.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cora Carpenter at 608-356-8311 ext. 152 or ccarpenter@equitycoop.com. Good luck and happy photo taking!

All entries submitted will become property of Equity Livestock and could be used in future publications or projects. If you prefer to have your printed photo or CD/USB drive sent back to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Celebrate June Dairy Month

Kick off your summer by celebrating with America's family dairy farms. June Dairy Month is filled with fun and exciting events from on-the-farm breakfasts to dairy themed festivals. Farmers have a lot to be proud of as they produce healthy, wholesome and nutritious food that consumers depend on every day. Support our farmers by attending a local dairy event near you.

For a complete listing of June Dairy Month events in Wisconsin, go to www.wisconsinmilk.com/national-dairy-month. To learn more about June dairy celebration events in Northeast Iowa, visit www.iowadairycenter.com.

Equity Announces Mike Till as Maquoketa Iowa Market Manager

We are pleased to announce the hire of Mike Till as Market Manager at our new Maquoketa facility. With an impressive background in business management and livestock operations, Till will be integral in the opening of our new market.



Mike Till

He joins us with more than 10 years of experience in business and agriculture management, having previously held a management position at Redwood Logistics and running his own farming operation. “We are thrilled to welcome Mike Till as our Maquoketa Market Manager,” said Mark Clarke, Executive Vice President of Marketing and COO. “His deep agriculture roots in the area combined with his past employment experiences will bring strong value to Equity’s new market. Mike will be an asset to our cooperative as we continue to provide top quality services to livestock producers.”

In this role, Till will oversee the Maquoketa market operations and staff, as well as maintain relationships with producers, truckers, buyers and community members. He will work with member-owners to understand and meet their livestock marketing needs.

“I take pride in the area’s richness in agriculture and look forward to providing market opportunities for cattle producers through this region,” stated Till. “I enjoy visiting with other livestock producers and learning about how they manage and grow their operations.” Along with his wife, Kaitlin, Till is raising his three children on their cow/calf operation just outside of Andrew, Iowa.

Till holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration with an emphasis in management and marketing from Clarke University.

Equity looks forward to the valuable contributions Till will make to our team as we grow and expand our services into eastern Iowa. Stay connected for upcoming market events and future sale date announcements on our website at www.equitycoop.com.

Lomira Market Staffing Updates

Equity’s Lomira Market is excited to announce the promotion of Steve Moldenhauer to Assistant Market Manager and Melissa Batterman to Office Manager. Moldenhauer has been with Equity for 8 years having previously worked in both our Johnson Creek and Lomira Markets. In this new role, he will also be making farm visits and serving in a field representative role. Batterman has been with Equity for 2 years and is excited to take on the new role of office manager.



Equity Cooperative
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- Do you have the feed, facilities, and ability to feed livestock?
- Would you like to raise them without any initial capital outlay?
- Would you like to reap the benefits of potential profits?
- Do you have a solid farming experience with a good credit record?

If you answered “yes” to all of these questions- Equity’s Livestock Feeding Program (LFP) is for you!

- The Livestock Feeding Program is an alternative to conventional financing of livestock raising.
- The Equity Livestock Credit Corporation (ELCC) buys the livestock and retains ownership. On sale day, you sell the animal and pay back ELCC for the animal and a service fee. YOU keep the rest!



Gary Williams

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2024 Distinguished Patron Awards

As a cooperative that has been around for over a century, Equity takes pride in honoring those whose dedication and patronage have helped shape this cooperative. A cooperative provides the opportunity for its owners (patrons) to play a direct role in its management and operation. This award seeks to identify those patrons who have distinguished themselves in doing so.

Selection of an individual for this recognition is at the discretion of the local shipping association. A person can receive the award only once, but someone different may be selected each year if their shipping association so desires.

This year, three patrons were recognized during their local shipping association’s annual meetings. Join us in congratulating:

- **Ray Laufenberg**, Black River Falls Cooperative Shipping Association
- **Richard (Dick) Britzke**, South West Shawano Cooperative
- **Larry Drangstveit**, Beef River Livestock Cooperative

Visit us at the 2024 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days in Chippewa County

Farm Technology Days will be August 13-15 held at the Close Farms and the County Fest grounds in Cadott. This year, Equity’s booth will be located in Agribusiness Tent 2 on the south end of the grounds. Our staff will be there ready to chat with attendees about all the great services Equity has to offer. **Stop by our booth and mention you saw this article in our Equity News for a special prize!** We are looking forward to seeing you there in August.



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