

MIDWEST DIGEST

S.D. Cattle Feed Inventory Up 10,000 Head

SIoux FALLS (AP) — South Dakota feedlots with capacities of 1,000 or more head had 200,000 cattle on feed for the slaughter market as of Aug. 1.

The Agriculture Department says the inventory was up 10,000 head over the year.

Placements in feedlots during July totaled 33,000 head, up 4,000 from 2009.

Marketings of fed cattle during July totaled 47,000 head, also up 4,000 from last year.

Scientists: Cracked Wheat's Genetic Code

LONDON (AP) — British scientists say they've decoded the genetic sequence of wheat and are posting the data online.

The plant is among the world's most important crops and the researchers say the information could help farmers create disease-resistant strains of the global food staple.

University of Liverpool Scientist Neil Hall says the wheat genome was far longer than the human genome first unraveled 10 years ago. But he says the techniques used to decode genetic information have improved considerably, meaning the process took only about a year.

Hall and others worked on a strain of wheat known as Chinese Spring. Hall said Friday that his team would soon work to decode other varieties.

Berenstain Bears To Talk In Lakota

SIoux FALLS (AP) — The Berenstain Bears cartoon characters will soon be helping bring the Lakota language to life in homes across the region.

Twenty episodes of the animated series will be translated into Lakota and broadcast on South Dakota Public Television starting in the fall of 2011.

Lakota Language Consortium director Wilhelm Meya says it's the first time in the United States that a cartoon series has been translated to a native language and widely distributed.

The consortium partnered with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe to co-produce the series. A DVD and teacher's guide also will be released next summer for schools.

Meya says less than 10 percent of the 125,000 Lakota people in the region, primarily in South Dakota and North Dakota, speak the language. The goal is to use the modern cartoon as an educational tool.

Fewer Dollars In Neb. On Keno, Other Games

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Money wagered in Nebraska on keno, pickle cards, bingo and lotteries continues to slide.

The state Department of Revenue said earlier this week that \$58.1 million was wagered from April through June, a decrease of almost 7 percent from the previous quarter.

Tax receipts from charitable gaming totaled \$1.2 million from April through June, which is nearly 8 percent less than the previous quarter.

During the fiscal year that ended June 30, about \$232.5 million was wagered. That's nearly 10 percent less than the \$257.5 million that was wagered the previous fiscal year.

Chadron State Sees More Students

CHADRON, Neb. (AP) — Enrollment at Chadron State College has grown for the fifth consecutive school year.

College administrator Randy Rhine says preliminary data shows 2,783 students were enrolled for classes that began on Monday. Last year, there were 2,775 students.

Rhine says enrollment will fluctuate some in the first weeks of the fall semester.

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Ranchers Differ On Benefit Of New Antitrust Rules

BY CATHERINE TSAI
Associated Press Writer

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — Meatpackers, feeders and hundreds of ranchers from around the country packed a workshop Friday to voice concerns about a proposed federal rule that aims to preserve competition in an industry increasingly dominated by a handful of corporate giants.

Attorney General Eric Holder and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack opened the daylong workshop at Colorado State University, one of five the administration set this year to hear about competition in a consolidating agriculture industry.

Since the workshops began, the Obama administration has proposed new antitrust measures for meat companies that reflect a willingness by the USDA to shift the balance of power between farmers and processors.

Vilsack said he is "deeply concerned" about consolidation's impacts on rural America as the number of processors, feedlots and producers shrinks.

"At that point, consumers will suffer as well," Vilsack said.

The proposed rule would make it easier to file suits under the Depression-era Packers and Stockyards Act by stating that farmers don't need to prove industrywide anticompetitive

behavior to file a lawsuit under the act.

Other provisions are aimed at keeping markets fair and competitive for livestock producers dealing with meatpacking giants that, ranchers say, have increased their bargaining power over them through consolidation.

Since 1980, the number of hog farms has dropped from 660,000 to 71,000, according to the Department of Agriculture. The number of cattle farms has fallen from 1.6 million to 950,000. While hog farmers got 50 percent of the retail value of a hog in 1980, their share was 24.5 percent in 2009, the USDA says.

Per-capita incomes in rural areas largely lag those in more urban areas, the average age of ranchers is rising, and young people aren't sure if they can make a living producing raising animals and crops, Vilsack said.

"Producers are worried whether there is a future for them and their children in farming," he said.

Meanwhile, companies like U.S. meatpacking giants Cargill Inc., Tyson Foods Inc. and National Beef Inc. and Brazil's JBS SA, have been growing.

Cattlemen, though, heatedly disagree on whether the rule would help or hurt them.

In the past few decades, processors have consolidated

and many operations are signing contracts to sell their livestock to certain buyers rather than sell through the cash market.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association says the contracts, known as alternative marketing agreements, allow ranchers to manage risk. Plus, they can earn lucrative premiums for high-quality cattle, even if they have to accept steep discounts for inferior beef.

Other ranchers represented by Montana-based R-Cal USA contend the contracts thin the cash markets, which help determine prices for those contracts, thereby depressing prices for everyone.

The USDA says the proposed rule finally offers a clearer definition under the law of what practices are considered unfair, discriminatory or deceptive. It would prevent packer-to-packer sales, which could potentially tip packers off to what prices competitors offer producers, and it would require packers to make sample contracts available online, so markets are more transparent. Buyers would have to keep records justifying any differential pricing to producers.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the National Pork Producers Council say the rule could lead to unintended consequences, including more lawsuits, damage to pro-

ducers who process some of their own meat, and the public release of information that should be a confidential part of business contracts.

"Claims by the rules proponents that somehow this proposal will help rural America simply don't stand up to scrutiny," said Mark Dopp, general counsel for the American Meat Institute, a trade association for processors. R-Cal USA President Max Thornsberry wasn't surprised processors oppose the rule. "It's a whammy on the packers because they won't be able to buy as cheaply as they have," he said.

The night before Friday's workshop, a couple hundred supporters of the beef association and pork producers council held a meeting in a hotel ballroom to rail against the proposed rule.

Later, a few hundred producers with R-Cal USA filled a ballroom at another hotel for a gathering that was part pep talk, part revival meeting, to support the rule. A crowd dotted with cowboy hats and checked shirts gave standing ovations and hearty applause.

"We don't want to put anyone out of business. We just want a fair price for our product," Thornsberry said.

S.D. Pheasant Count Up

SIoux FALLS (AP) — The annual roadside survey shows a slight increase in pheasants per mile as a statewide average, but winter storms and spring rain reduced the population of the state's most popular game bird in some areas, the state Department of Game, Fish and Parks said Friday.

The statewide average is 6.45 pheasants per mile, compared to 6.26 last year and the 10-year average of 5.71, the agency said.

GF&P crews count adult pheasants and chicks each summer on 110 established routes to estimate pheasant reproduction and calculate a pheasants-per-mile index used to establish trends.

Department Secretary Jeff Vonk said a "roller coaster" of weather the past year means fewer pheasants in some areas

but healthy reproduction in areas with good habitat.

The central region and James River Valley have good pheasant densities, but some parts of the southeast are down for a third straight year, the GF&P said.

The highest counts were 17 birds per mile in the Chamberlain area, 13.95 per mile at Pierre and 10.85 per mile at Moberly. Sioux Falls and Yankton had the lowest counts at 1.45 pheasants per mile.

The department doesn't estimate the pheasant population until after the hunting season, which opens Oct. 16.

Last year's population estimate was 8.4 million birds. The 2009 season drew 69,959 South Dakota hunters and 97,350 non-resident hunters.

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Meet Dr. Kudera, Orthopedic Surgeon


YANKTON MEDICAL CLINIC, P.C. IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE ASSOCIATION OF **Jeremy Kudera, M.D.**
Board Eligible Orthopedic Surgeon

Dr. Kudera is originally from Dell Rapids, SD and completed his undergraduate degree at The University of South Dakota where he was a student-athlete. He is a graduate of Sanford School of Medicine-University of South Dakota. Dr. Kudera completed his Orthopedic Surgery residency training at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN, and is board eligible.

Dr. Kudera will provide care for a multitude of musculoskeletal conditions including joint replacement of the knee, hip, and shoulder, treatment of athletic injuries, adult and pediatric fracture care, rotator cuff repair, and treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome.

Please join with us in welcoming Dr. Kudera, his wife, Jennifer, and their son, Jackson, to Yankton.

Dr. Kudera began seeing patients at **Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C. August 23, 2010.**
Appointments can be made by calling 605-665-1722.


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