

Iowa Gov., Vilasack Defend 'Pink Slime'

BY MIKE GLOVER
Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad and U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack joined Wednesday to defend a beef product known by its critics as "pink slime," calling the meat safe and nutritious.

Branstad and Vilsack said the product, sold by its maker as "lean, finely textured beef," has been unfairly maligned by the media, prompting a public uproar about how the meat is produced and then used in hamburger.

The concerns have led a number of supermarket chains to stop offering the meat and led its maker, South Dakota-based Beef Products Inc., to suspend operations at plants in Texas, Kansas and Iowa.

"I've said this hundreds of times," said Vilsack, a former two-term Democratic governor of Iowa. "This product is safe. There's no question about it. We've said that repeatedly and we'll continue to say it."

Branstad will join with other officials Thursday in South Sioux City, Neb., to tour the single Beef Products plant where the product is still made. He plans to eat some of



Branstad



Vilasack

the meat to demonstrate it's safe.

Under the system used to make what some have dubbed "pink slime," fatty bits of meat left over from other cuts are heated and spun to remove most of the fat. The lean mix then is compressed into blocks for use in ground meat. The product is exposed to ammonium hydroxide gas to kill bacteria, such as E. coli and salmonella.

"I believe the national media have permeated this issue with a poisonous tone that is detrimental to the beef industry," Branstad said.

Branstad said the process produces extremely lean beef that is healthier than regular cuts, making it a good choice for health-conscious consumers.

In response to complaints about its decision to remove the product, the West Des Moines-based grocery chain Hy-Vee said it will sell beef with and without the ingredient at its 235 stores.

Following questions about the product, the USDA announced it would offer schools a choice of taking 95 percent lean beef patties made with the filler or less lean bulk ground beef without it. The USDA this year is contracted to buy 111.5 million pounds of ground beef for the National School Lunch Program.

Earlier Wednesday, Branstad, along with the governors of Kansas, Nebraska and Texas as well as the lieutenant governor of South Dakota, issued a statement praising the meat product and urged supermarkets to again begin offering the beef. Failure to do so, they said, would lead to lost meat production jobs and higher prices.

"By taking this safe product out of the market, grocery retailers and consumers are allowing media sensationalism to trump sound science," the statement said. "This is a disservice to the beef industry, hundreds of workers who make their livings producing this safe product and consumers as a whole."

Airplane Crash Near Broken Bow Kills One

BROKEN BOW, Neb. (AP) — A plane crash near the Broken Bow airport in central Nebraska has killed one person and has left another hospitalized.

The plane occupants have not been identified. KNLV radio says the injured person was initially taken to the Broken Bow hospital but later airlifted by helicopter ambulance to an unknown destination.

The two-engine plane went down in a cornfield northwest of the airport. Emergency personnel have the roads barricaded to local traffic near a farmstead by the airport.

A spokeswoman for the Custer County Sheriff's Department says investigators from the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board are on their way to investigate.

Huron Woman Claims \$250K Lottery Prize

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota lottery officials say a Huron woman has claimed a \$250,000 Mega Millions prize.

Lottery officials say Linda Marcus and her husband Pete claimed her winnings from the March 23 drawing on Wednesday. Marcus purchased the winning ticket at a local Huron store last week. The store will receive a \$10,000 bonus for selling the winning ticket.

Marcus said she first heard that a \$250,000 winning ticket had been sold in Huron on the local radio station where she's worked for 30 years.

Mega Millions is played in 42 states, Washington D.C. and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Friday's jackpot sits at \$500 million.

Judge Suppresses Comment In Stabbing Case

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A judge has suppressed comments made by a man charged with killing a fellow prison inmate to a prison caseworker. That means the comments made shortly after the incident occurred at the Nebraska State Penitentiary will not be heard by a jury.

Mohamed Abdulkadir has been charged with first-degree murder for the June 30 stabbing death of 22-year-old Michael Grandon.

A case worker has said Abdulkadir talked to him after the incident. Abdulkadir's attorney says his client hadn't been read his rights so the comments shouldn't be heard at trial.

The Lincoln Journal Star reports that District Judge Steven Burns agreed.

Comments Abdulkadir made to another inmate and overheard by a corrections officer will be allowed. The judge says Abdulkadir had no reasonable expectation of privacy in the cell.

S.D. Woman Charged With Attempted Murder

ABERDEEN (AP) — An Aberdeen woman has been charged with attempted murder after she reportedly stabbed a man in the neck.

The American News in Aberdeen reports that 22-year-old Crystal D. Wettengel is charged with alternate counts of attempted murder and domestic aggravated assault stemming from the Saturday morning incident in Aberdeen.

Wettengel faces 25 years in prison and a \$50,000 fine for the attempted murder charge. The domestic aggravated assault carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and a \$30,000 fine.

Wettengel is being held in the Brown County Jail on \$500,000 bond. Her next court appearance is scheduled for April 5.

Minnesota Farmers Had Record Profits In 2011

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — A new report finds Minnesota farmers enjoyed record profits last year.

The survey of nearly 2,400 Minnesota farms finds median net farm income reached a record \$123,000 last year, up 1 percent.

According to the report, higher grain prices and more profitable livestock operations helped improve the 2011 numbers. But stressful weather and lower crop yields limited the gains.

Dairy farmers reported median net farm income of \$91,000, up from \$68,000 the year before. The median is the midpoint, where half the farm incomes in the survey were higher and half were lower.

The numbers were compiled by the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

The St. Paul Pioneer Press reports the 2011 edition of the annual report was released Wednesday.

S.D. Panel Ends Bid Seeking Assets Of Seed Co.

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — A South Dakota regulatory commission has abandoned its attempt to seek the assets of a sunflower seed company that owes farmers in South Dakota and North Dakota an estimated \$4 million.

The Public Utilities Commission decided two weeks ago to seek control of the company's assets in the hope it would provide money to reimburse farmers who have not been paid for sunflowers they delivered to Anderson Seed Co.'s operation in Redfield.

But the commission decided to end the effort this week after learning there are no assets left in Redfield that could be seized. All grain at the facility has been sold, and a Canadian company has signed an agreement that will eventually allow it to buy the Redfield operation.

PUC Chairman Chris Nelson said Wednesday it appears there will be no money left to pay farmers after the proceeds of the sale of the Redfield facility are used to repay a bank loan secured by a mortgage on the property. Farmers who have not been paid

for grain are unsecured creditors, meaning they get paid only after secured creditors.

"That doesn't mean there won't be some surprise down the line, but at this point it doesn't look likely," Nelson said of the prospects of farmers recovering the money owed to them.

The PUC has revoked Anderson Seed Co.'s license to buy grain in South Dakota and it still has the \$100,000 bond posted by the company, which is based in Mentor, Minn.

The problem was discovered when farmers notified the commission a month or two ago that Anderson Seed had failed to pay them. The PUC estimates Anderson Seeds owes South Dakota farmers \$2.6 million, and North Dakota officials have said farmers in that state have filed more than \$1.4 million in claims against the company.

Legumex Walker Inc., a grain processor based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, recently bought Anderson Seed's North Dakota facilities, but not the plant located in Redfield. A Legumex official told the PUC this week that it has an agreement to purchase the Redfield operation after a study is

done to determine if there are environmental problems at the site, built on top of a previous landfill.

In the meantime, the Redfield site has been transferred to a new Minnesota corporation, Binco Holding, because of the possibility of environmental problems. That transfer will protect other assets that could be used to pay creditors, said Anderson Seed's lawyer, Gary Leistico of St. Cloud, Minn.

Once the environmental review has been done and no problems have been found, the Redfield site can be sold to Legumex with the money going toward a secured loan held by US Bank and other secured creditors, Leistico told the commission. He said he doubts there will be any money left to pay farmers and other unsecured creditors.

Nelson said the PUC also decided that seeking control of Anderson Seed's assets in South Dakota would be a bad move because the state might wind up financially responsible if any environmental problems are found in Redfield.

One of the three PUC commissioners, Gary Hanson of Sioux Falls, has recused himself from

the case because his son works for US Bank, which holds the secured loan on the Redfield facility. Nelson and commissioner Kristie Fiegen voted to end the commission's bid to seize Anderson Seed's assets.

Ray Martinmaas, a farmer from Polo, asked whether he could recover the \$47,000 in sunflowers he delivered, but Nelson told him the grain is gone.

"I'm trying to understand how to protect myself in the future because apparently no one else is," Martinmaas said.

Nelson told Martinmaas he and other farmers who have not been paid for sunflowers should consult with their lawyers. Some farmers who have not been paid by Anderson Seeds have already gone to court in an attempt to recover money, he said.

Nelson said farmers should take care to check out the financial condition of any company that buys their grain.

However, the commission will look into whether state laws covering grain buyers need to be changed to prevent a similar problem in the future, Nelson said.

Filibuster Kills Nebraska Voter I.D. Measure

BY GRANT SCHULTZ
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — A bill that would have required Nebraska voters to show government identification at the polls was squashed Wednesday by a legislative filibuster, but the senator who introduced the measure said he'll likely introduce it again next year.

Lawmakers who backed the bill fell three votes short of the support they needed to stop debate on the measure. As a result, the matter is essentially dead for this legislative session.

The vote to end the eight-hour debate was 30-16. Bill supporters needed 33 votes. The divide in the officially nonpartisan Legislature fell mostly along party lines.

"That was unfortunate," said the measure's sponsor, Fremont Sen. Charlie Janssen, who wants to bring the bill back next year. "It wasn't put forward as a partisan issue. It was never intended to be a partisan issue, but in the end I think that's what happened. I think people closed their ears and didn't want to compromise, which was evident when we were trying to reach out to them."

The original bill would have required voters to show a driver's license or other federally recognized identification before they could cast a ballot. An amended version would also have let them use an "acknowledgment of registration" card issued by counties, or cast a provisional ballot that would be counted once voter eligibility was proven.

Critics blasted the proposal as an attempt to keep poor, elderly, disabled and college-aged voters from casting a ballot. In the heat of

the debate Tuesday, Omaha Sen. Tanya Cook likened the measure to old, southern Jim Crow laws designed to keep blacks and poor whites from voting. "This is Jim Crow light," she said.

A group representing Nebraska counties also opposed the bill, saying the verification requirements could cost counties tens of thousands of dollars in each election.

Janssen said the bill would apply to roughly 2 percent of Nebraska voters who lack a state driver's license or other acceptable identification. He said it would cost Nebraska's 93 counties a combined \$15,000 for each statewide election.

Sen. Steve Lathrop, an attorney from Omaha, said the bill seeks to address a problem that doesn't exist. He said anyone who impersonates a voter could face a felony charge under current law, and the bill runs afoul of a constitutional rule that bans voting obstacles.

"We cannot present any impediment or hindrance to somebody's right to vote," Lathrop said. "And we certainly can't justify it when we can't articulate a problem that isn't already addressed in the process we have."

Between 50,000 and 100,000 Nebraskans do not have identification that would qualify as valid for voting purposes, according to the group Nebraskans for Civic Reform, which opposed the bill.

Janssen said he had been looking at another amendment that would let voters cast a ballot without an ID, if poll workers who recognized them signed a sworn statement confirming their identity. He said he also considered a proposal to have the state cover the expense for counties.

Sixteen states have passed photo ID laws comparable to the Nebraska proposal, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

1st ANNUAL
River City
Cheer
Extravaganza

April 1, 2012
Yankton High School
Gymn

5pm-7:30pm

Open to the Public - Free Will Donation
Silent Auction • Chuck-a-Duck • Raffle

Raffle Items Include: American Girl Doll, Trampoline, Cheer Tie, Blanket, Remote Star/Window Tinting & much more....

KYNT
AM 1450

MORNING COFFEE
WEEKDAYS MONDAY-FRIDAY

Thursday, March 29
7:40 am Yankton Conv/Vis Bureau (Lisa Scheve)
8:20 am Yankton Chamber (Carmen Schramm)

Friday, March 30
7:40 am MMC Degrees (Dr. Nick Shudak)
8:20 am KYB CleanUp (Julie Peraklis)

LEWIS & CLARK
FAMILY
MEDICINE, P.C.

Allergy Testing
NOW AVAILABLE

Open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm • After Hours Clinic Saturday 9am-12noon
WALK-INS WELCOME

1101 Broadway, Suite 103A, Morgen Square • Yankton, SD
(605) 260-2100 • www.lewisandclarkfamilymedicine.com

Announcing... Yankton
Citywide
Rummage

MAY
3RD-6TH

Ask About Our On-line
Rummage Map!

Stop By The Press & Dakotan To Place Your Ad OR Place It On-line At www.yankton.net! \$27.00 prepaid (10¢ per word over 30 words)

Includes:
• Your ad (30 words, 1 address per ad) placed in the special Citywide Rummage Sale section published along with the P&D Locator Map on Wednesday, May 2 & Friday, May 4th
• Your ad will also appear on-line at www.yankton.net
• Garage Sale Kit: 2 Yard Signs with Stake, Stickers & Balloons

DEADLINE: Friday, April 27th

sponsored by the: PRESS&DAKOTAN

Banking That's Behind You All The Way...
Become a member today! What are you waiting for?

A Full Line of Products & Services
• Checking & Savings • Loans • Mortgage Loans
• Online Banking • E-Statements • AND MUCH MORE!

Services Center Federal Credit Union ...It's Where You Belong!

www.scfcu.net Yankton • Springfield • Parkston