



# E-Newsletter

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**Texas Brangus**

## Letter from the President

Dear TBBA Member,

I just had the best shower of my life! I'm saying that because I really should not have had a shower at all. Last Thursday afternoon I had a farm accident that could have taken my life, and if my girlfriend, Pam, hadn't been there, you would be reading my obituary. As you suspect by now, this week's subject is farm safety. Don't tune me out now because you think you know all this or have been told this before. This is very important in our line of work.

Pam and I were hauling hay in from one of our leased meadows when we stopped for lunch. While leaving the house I noticed that army worms had entered my prize Tifton 85 hay meadow. I knew that I had to get the pesticide on in a hurry as these worms can devour a meadow and ranch grass in a short time and it has taken us two years to get our ranch grass back to near normal after the drought. At that moment I changed my afternoon plans and told Pam that we had to start spraying immediately.

I rushed down to the barn to get the only tractor on the place that would work on the sprayer. The tractor was a 1967 John Deere 4020 with a broken starter switch and solenoid, a problem that was to be fixed later when time was available. The 4020 is a favorite among collectors. It is a well made, 90 horsepower model, and is a lot heavier made than modern tractors of that horsepower rating. To get this tractor started I had to cross two wires at the starter which bypasses the clutch and transmission safety features. The starter is located at the left rear of the tractor motor which means that to do this stupid operation you have to stand right in front of the left rear tire. All went well except for Dumb A\*\* here, didn't check that the tractor was out of gear! The picture of that wheel and tire full of water rolling over me will stick with me forever. Pam was about 50 yards away and sprung into action calling 911 and applying pressure to the areas needed to slow the bleeding. She absolutely saved my

## **Breeders Association**

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life and is my hero.

Some may say that the pain I am experiencing now is deserved for pulling such a stupid stunt just to kill a few worms. I don't know exactly where ranch and farm work fall with respect to the danger of being injured or killed, but I do know that it is very high. We in this occupation must be aware of this, at all times and must not by pass the safety features that are put on these machines to prevent these accidents from happening. Also, we are starting the fall calving season and a lot of the dams will defend these new born calves and can injure a person trying to weigh or tag the newborn.

How would you feel if because of your neglect, your hired help, your spouse or child, your best friend or anyone was injured or killed on your ranch? Take the proper actions to lessen the danger of an accident on your ranch.

I'll see you at the sale or show.

Sincerely,  
Russ Williamson, President TBBA

## **Farm Bill Discharge Petition Filed**

A discharge petition has been filed in the U.S. House to try to force a floor vote on the 2012 Farm Bill. Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) filed the petition on Thursday. However, a majority of House members must sign the petition for an immediate vote.

The Farm Bureau-supported version passed out of the House Agriculture Committee in July but is being held back from the floor due to politics, according to Braley.

"Games are being played in Washington, as Speaker Boehner is using all the moves in the procedural playbook to keep the farm bill off the House Floor. He has decided to personally overrule the bipartisan majority of the House Agriculture Committee by keeping the bill bottled up," Braley told The Hill.

House leaders doubt the farm bill will get the 218 votes it needs and could face an even bigger challenge if brought up in the lame-duck session, according to The Hill.

-Release by Texas Farm Bureau

## **BPI Sues ABC News**

NORTH SIOUX CITY, S.D. - Beef Products Inc. sued ABC News, Inc. for defamation Thursday over its coverage of a meat product that critics dub "pink slime," claiming the network damaged the company by misleading consumers into believing it is unhealthy and unsafe.

The Dakota Dunes, S.D.-based meat processor is seeking \$1.2 billion in damages for roughly 200 "false and misleading and defamatory" statements about the product officially known as lean, finely textured beef, said Dan Webb, BPI's Chicago-based attorney.

The lawsuit filed in a South Dakota state court also names several individuals as defendants, including ABC news anchor Diane Sawyer and the Department of Agriculture microbiologist who coined the term "pink slime."

The company's reporting "caused consumers to believe that our lean beef is not beef at all -- that it's an unhealthy pink slime, unsafe for public consumption, and that somehow it got hidden in the meat," Webb said before the company's official announcement.

ABC News, owned by The Walt Disney Co., denied BPI's claims.

"The lawsuit is without merit," Jeffrey W. Schneider, the news station's senior vice president, said in a brief statement Thursday. "We will contest it vigorously."

The 257-page lawsuit names American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., ABC News, Inc., Sawyer and ABC correspondents Jim Avila and David Kerley as defendants. It also names Gerald Zirnstein, the USDA microbiologist who named the product "pink slime," Carl Custer, a former federal food scientist, and Kit Foshee, a former BPI quality assurance manager who was interviewed by ABC.

Richard McIntire, a spokesman for the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, declined to comment and attempts to reach Foshee were unsuccessful. A spokesman for the Food Integrity Campaign, a whistleblower advocacy group that has worked with Foshee, said Thursday that he would attempt to contact Foshee. Spokesman Dylan Blaylock also said the Washington-based group may release a statement.

Although several news organizations used the term "pink slime," Webb said ABC was being sued for attacking the company "night after night." The "defendants engaged in a monthlong vicious, concerted disinformation campaign against BPI," the lawsuit claims, citing 11 TV 14 online reports from March 7 to April 3.

Craig Letch, BPI's director of food-quality assurance, said the company lost 80 percent of its business in 28 days. BPI has declined to discuss how much it lost in sales, but acknowledged it took a "substantial" hit. Some of the customers have returned, Letch said, but not enough to allow BPI to rehire former employees.

Webb said the reports had a "catastrophic" impact on the company, forcing it to close three of its four U.S. plants and lay off 700 workers.

ABC published a list of major grocery stores that stopped selling the product, pressuring others to follow suit by placing them on a "black list," he said.

BPI will have to prove the network intended to cause harm for the defamation lawsuit to succeed, said Patrick Garry, a media law expert at the University of South Dakota School of Law.

"The media -- regardless of your opinion of them -- don't usually print something that they know to be false," Garry said. "It may be negligent, but usually there's a malice requirement as well."

Critics worry about how the meat is processed. Bits of beef are heated and treated with a small amount of ammonia to kill bacteria, a practice that has been used for decades and meets federal food safety standards. Webb said that ABC ignored that information, instead giving the impression "that it's some type of chemical product ... some kind of repulsive, horrible, vile substance that got put into ground beef and hidden from consumers."

The name "pink slime" gained traction after The New York Times used it in a 2009 article on the safety of meat processing methods. Soon after, celebrity chef Jamie Oliver began railing against it. McDonald's and other fast food companies stopped using the product, and major supermarket chains including Kroger and Stop & Shop vowed to stop selling beef containing the low-cost product. An online petition calling for it to be banned from school menus, attracting hundreds of thousands of supporters.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has said the vast majority of states participating in its National School Lunch Program have opted to order ground beef that doesn't contain the product. Only three -- Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota -- chose to order beef that may contain it.

The uproar prompted Beef Products to suspend

operations at plants in Amarillo, Texas; Garden City, Kan.; and Waterloo, Iowa. Beef Products' plants in Iowa and Kansas each produced about 350,000 pounds of lean, finely textured beef per day, while the one in Texas produced about 200,000 pounds a day.

The company has won support from the governors of Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Texas and South Dakota. U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has also defended the product, saying the federal government wouldn't allow the product if it was unsafe.

The company has launched its own public relations offensive, including a website -- [www.beefisbeef.com](http://www.beefisbeef.com) -- to advocate for the product.

-Release by FOX News

## **Cruz to Speak at TSCRA Meeting**

U.S. Senate candidate Ted Cruz will speak at the general session of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) fall meeting Wednesday, Sept. 26, at the Sheraton Austin at the Capitol. Cruz is scheduled to speak at 9 a.m.

"We are honored to have Ted Cruz speak to cattlemen and women during the TSCRA fall meeting. As the largest and oldest livestock association in the state, TSCRA has a longstanding tradition of forming and maintaining good relationships with our elected officials," said Joe Parker Jr., rancher and TSCRA president. "We look forward to working with Ted Cruz on a number of different issues and are confident he will represent the Texas cattle industry well in Washington."

The TSCRA fall meeting begins Sept. 24 and runs through Sept. 26. Scheduled speakers include Comptroller Susan Combs; Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples; U.S. Rep. John Carter; Texas House Speaker Joe Straus; Texas State Sen. Tommy Williams; Texas State Rep. J.M. Lozano; and Texas State Rep. Harvey Hilderbran.

A full meeting schedule can be found at [www.tscra.org](http://www.tscra.org).

The Sheraton Austin at the Capitol is located at 701 East 11th Street.

The meeting is open to the press. Please register with Carmen Fenton at [cfenton@tscra.org](mailto:cfenton@tscra.org).

-Release by Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers  
Association

# Sept./October Calendar of Events

## September:

**22nd:**

Western National Brangus Show- Oklahoma City, OK

**29th:**

Star G Ranch Dispersal- Ben Wheeler, TX  
Southeast Brangus Breeders Association Female Sale-  
Lake City, FL

## October:

**7th:**

State Fair of Texas Junior Brangus Show- Dallas, TX

**10th:**

VI National Red Brangus Exposition- Tlaquepaque

**12th:**

Cow Creek "Own the Factory" Sale- Aliceville, AL

**13th:**

Cow Creek Ranch and Southern Cattle Co. Annual  
Production Sale- Aliceville, AL  
CX Advantage Sale- Weimar, TX

**19th:**

State Fair of Texas Pan American Red Brangus Show  
and Junior Red Brangus Show- Dallas, TX

**20th:**

Doguet Diamond D Sale- Poteet, TX

**26th:**

Salacola Valley Farms "By the Numbers" Sale-  
Fairmount, GA

Sincerely,

Texas Brangus Breeders Association

Serving and promoting the interest of its members specific to the breeding, raising, and marketing of Brangus cattle.