

R-CALF USA's Accomplishments

1998—R-CALF USA was formed when U.S. cattle producers filed and initially won a lawsuit against Canada for dumping cattle into the U.S. market. Temporary tariffs were implemented, U.S. cattle prices increased, and a year later R-CALF USA formed into a membership-based organization.

2002—R-CALF USA led the victory to pass mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL). Although beef suffered a setback in 2015, our efforts still help fruit, vegetable, fish, chicken, lamb, and nut farmers win back their markets because all these remain under COOL.

2004 to 2008—R-CALF USA significantly reduced the risk of mad cow disease infectivity in the U.S. cattle herd by stopping Canadian cattle imports while multiple mad cow disease outbreaks were still occurring in Canada. As a result, U.S. cattle prices increased to their highest nominal levels.

2008—R-CALF USA blocked a merger between 2 of the “Big 4” Packers. Brazil-owned JBS was prohibited from buying National Beef.

2010—R-CALF USA caused the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) to propose rules to implement provisions of the Packers & Stockyards Act that were designed to stop unfair and anti-competitive cattle buying practices by the “Big 4” Packers.

2011—R-CALF USA stopped the USDA's first attempt at a mandatory radio frequency national animal identification system.

2013—R-CALF USA defeated the lawsuit brought by the multinational meatpackers and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) to remove mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL) on beef. The courts ruled that COOL complied with our Constitution and U.S. cattle prices increased to their highest nominal levels.

2016—We caused a Senate investigation into the 2015-2016 cattle price collapse which worsened after Congress repealed the COOL law for beef. The investigation found that cattle prices had dropped 40% from late 2014 to 2016 and that *imports contributed to the price decline.*

2016—We filed and won a preliminary injunction against the USDA for its unconstitutional operation of the beef checkoff. Our case has already achieved progress in reforming the beef checkoff program by causing the USDA's issuance of a final rule that allows cattle producers to redirect their mandatory checkoff dollars away from the state beef councils that continue to use their money to fund the activities of third parties, like the NCBA and the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), two entities that continually lobby for the consolidation of the U.S. cattle industry. After, and in direct response to, R-CALF USA's checkoff lawsuit, the USDA and the 15 private state beef councils realized they had been caught violating constitutional rights of cattle producers and the USDA entered into contractual agreements called memorandums of understandings (MOUs) with each of the 15 state beef councils. The District Court ruled that because of these recently executed MOUs, the speech of those councils is now the governments speech and no longer that of private corporations. R-CALF USA is planning to appeal the district court decision.

2017—We filed a lawsuit to restore COOL on imported beef. The courts ruled that COOL requires Congress to pass new legislation. Importantly, the ruling also stated that the lack of origin labels caused financial harm to U.S. cattle producers.

2019—We filed a historical class action antitrust lawsuit in federal district court in Minnesota. The suit alleges the nation’s four largest beef packers violated U.S. antitrust laws, the Packers & Stockyards Act, and the Commodity Exchange Act by unlawfully depressing prices paid to American ranchers.

2019—We filed a lawsuit to stop the USDA from pursuing its RFID mandate set to begin Jan. 1, 2023. Soon after we filed our lawsuit, the USDA removed the mandate from the website and stated it was no longer pursuing its RFID mandate. The lawsuit is ongoing, we have asked the court to prohibit the USDA from using any work product, reports and materials that assisted in formulating the unlawful RFID mandate in the first place.