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May 13, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue, Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

Please consider opening the approximately 24 million acres of land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to help alleviate the backlog in the live cattle supply chain caused by reduced slaughter capacity. It is estimated that 500K or more of fed cattle are currently backed up in feedlots with no immediate prospects for harvest.

This fed cattle backup requires the entire upstream live cattle supply chain to hold lighter-weight cattle out of the feedlot sector of the supply chain until the current backlog of cattle can be processed. To hold these lighter weight cattle back, more grazing land than normal is needed to maintain their health and measured growth. Unfortunately, some areas of the country are now experiencing drought conditions.

Consequently, the industry is faced with the urgent need for more grazing land than normal at the same time that some grazing lands are producing less forage than normal. An immediate solution to this challenge would be to open CRP lands for emergency grazing and making accommodations so non-CRP landowners can rent CRP land from others for a reasonable fee.

By opening CRP lands to emergency grazing, America's cow/calf producers, backgrounders, and stockers can potentially slow the conventional time continuum from weaning to slaughter long enough for the bottleneck between the feedlots and packers to be eased. This could well eliminate any present or future need to euthanize any cattle prior to their scheduled harvest for food consumption.

Please let me know if there is any additional information R-CALF USA can provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Bullard". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Bill Bullard, CEO

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