



Letter No. 3663
Friday, April 27, 2012
Creative Media & Broadcast Center
202-720-7079

BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3663

Friday, April 27, 2012

(April 27)

LABOR DEPARTMENT DROPS CONTROVERSIAL CHILD FARM LABOR RULES

Those proposed controversial child farm labor rules are being scrapped.

Radio Story: [Labor Department Drops Controversial Child Farm Labor Rules](#)

INTERPRETING CLIMATE AND WEATHER PATTERNS FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES

Climate and weather related events directly impact how crop loss is assessed. Christopher Daly of Oregon State University explains the elements needed to draw weather and climate maps used by the PRISM Spatial Climate Knowledge System and Cropscape.

Radio Story: [Interpreting Climate And Weather Patterns For Insurance Purposes](#)
[ACTUALITY: What Goes Into Crafting Weather And Climate Maps](#)

ROW CROP CONSERVATION PRACTICES CAN SAVE MONEY TOO

The use of no till and reduced till in row crop management does more than conserve resources. Tony Vyn of Purdue University Extension explains the significance of row crop conservation practices on the bottom line of producers.

Radio Story: [Row Crop Conservation Practices Can Save Money Too](#)
[ACTUALITY: On Row Crop Conservation Practices And Benefits](#)

FORMER SECRETARY ED SCHAFER HAS HIS PORTRAIT UNVEILED AT USDA TO HANG ON THE WALL IN THE HALL OF AG FAME

It's a tradition that each Secretary of Agriculture have his portrait painted and hung permanently at the USDA. On Friday it was former Secretary Ed Schafer's turn.

Radio Story: [Ed Schafer Portrait Unveiled At USDA](#)

(April 26)

UPDATE FROM USDA REGARDING A DETECTION OF BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY (BSE) IN THE UNITED STATES

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service update on the BSE detection announced earlier in the week:

“On April 24, USDA confirmed the nation's 4th case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in an animal that was sampled for the disease at a rendering facility in central California. This animal was never presented for slaughter for human consumption, so at no time presented a risk to the food supply, or to human health in the United States. As the epidemiological investigation has progressed, USDA has continued to communicate findings in a timely and transparent manner.

“As a result of USDA's ongoing epidemiological investigation, more information about the history and age of the animal is now available.

“The animal in question was 10 years and 7 months old and came from a dairy farm in Tulare County, Calif. The animal was humanely euthanized after it developed lameness and became recumbent. The animal's carcass will be destroyed.

It is important to reiterate that this animal was never presented for slaughter for human consumption, did not enter food supply channels, and at no time presented any risk to human health.

USDA is continuing its epidemiological investigation and will provide additional information as it is available.

The positive animal was tested as part of targeted BSE surveillance at rendering facilities. Samples were sent to the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory for testing and forwarded to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) on April 20th for confirmatory testing. APHIS announced the confirmed positive finding April 24th.

Contact: USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

DOI Communications (202) 208-6416

FEMA Communications (202) 646-3272

More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

Radio Story: [Vilsack Says BSE Testing Procedures Do Ensure Safe Food Supply Proposed Livestock I.D./Traceback System Now At OMB For Review](#)

SECRETARIES VILSACK AND SALAZAR ANNOUNCE READINESS FOR 2012 WILDFIRE SEASON WITH A FORECAST SHOWING A POSSIBILITY OF SEVERE WILDFIRES IN SOME REGIONS

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar outlined the federal government's readiness for the wildland fire season to ensure protection for communities and restoration of forests and public lands across the country. The Secretaries were joined by FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell and National Predictive Services Program Manager of the National Interagency Fire Center Ed Delgado.

The Secretaries described federal capability to respond to wildfires that are becoming more complex, particularly in areas where urban populations are situated near forested and rangeland areas. Firefighting capabilities are available to handle the fire season, they declared, with more than 15,000 firefighters available in 2012, including permanent and seasonal federal and state employees, crews from tribal and local governments, contract crews, and temporary hires.

"We are ready to meet the challenge," said Vilsack. "[The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy](#) provides a strong, new blueprint to ensure community safety and the restoration of ecosystems to benefit all Americans, especially those who live in the urban-wildland interface areas. Our concern does not stop at the border of federal lands, but rather a strategy that is an all-lands approach for safety and wildfire management."

On average the [USDA Forest Service](#) and the [Department of the Interior](#) bureaus respond to more than 20,000 wildfires per year, suppressing all but a small percentage of them on initial attack.

"Regions across the country face serious risks of extreme wildfires this year because of the mild winter and low precipitation levels in many areas," said Salazar. "Knowing the risks and preparing for the wildfire season is a key part of a successful fire response, and Interior will continue to coordinate closely with federal, state, local and tribal partners to ensure we are ready for any fire scenario. Our thousands of firefighting men and women stand ready to suppress wildfires as early as possible to minimize human safety risks and prevent damage to the environment and our economy."

Much of the 500 million acres of public land managed by the Department of the Interior is in the low-elevation rangelands in the West, where grasses and shrubs provide an abundant wildfire fuel source – especially after mild winters. Together, USDA and DOI's wildfire prevention and suppression efforts employ 15,000 firefighters. DOI's fire funding availability for fiscal year 2012 is \$736 million and USDA's 2012 fire budget totals \$2.155 billion.

"We urge citizens in at-risk areas to take necessary precautions," said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. "That means stay informed and make a family plan. FEMA's Ready Campaign provides more information at www.Ready.gov. FEMA stands ready to support the Departments of Agriculture and Interior and our state, tribal and local partners should disaster strike."

Federal land managers are also helping communities prepare for wildfire. Federal partnerships with tribal, state, and local agencies strengthen preparedness programs, such as Firewise <http://www.firewise.org/> and Ready Set Go! <http://www.iafc.org/readySetGo> that help families and communities prepare for and survive wildfire.

Contact: USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

DOI Communications (202) 208-6416

FEMA Communications (202) 646-3272

More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

Radio Story: [Preview Of 2012 Wildland Fire Outlook](#)

[ACTUALITY: On Changing Weather And Wildland Fire Outlook Partnerships To Prepare For Wildfire Season](#)

[ACTUALITY: On Partnerships To Battle Wildfires](#)

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY VILSACK ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR SMALL, SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS AND COOPERATIVES TO CREATE JOBS AND BOOST LOCAL ECONOMIES

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA is accepting grant applications to assist small, socially disadvantaged agricultural producers and cooperatives in rural areas to spur job creation.

"The funding we are announcing today represents USDA's continuing investment in providing small business owners with the assistance they need to improve their business operations, and serve their communities by creating economic opportunity for residents and training new generations of rural Americans to succeed in business," said Vilsack. "The Obama administration is working to help these small-scale producers add profit and efficiency to their operations so they can grow, thrive and create jobs."

For fiscal year 2012, approximately \$3 million in grants are available through USDA Rural Development's Small, Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grant Program (SSDPG), which was authorized in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill). It is part of the Department's ongoing effort to expand outreach to rural residents to ensure that all communities have equal access to USDA programs and services. Funding is available to cooperatives or associations of cooperatives where at least 75 percent of the governing board or membership are small, socially disadvantaged producers. Grants can be used for product improvements, business plan development or economic development activities. The maximum grant award per applicant is \$175,000.

The grants assist eligible producers like the people of Winston County, Mississippi, who face many of the same problems as other rural communities across the nation: declining population, rising prices, and family farmers in need of capital, business tools, and new markets for their products. In 2010, the Winston County Self-Help Cooperative applied for and received a \$200,000 Small, Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grant to continue the work they started with local producers in the community. The co-op works with a consortium of local farmers that pool their resources to receive training in business development, conservation, health, and other topics of concern. The cooperative also has a youth program, which teaches vital skills to the next generation of Winston County farmers.

Applications for USDA Rural Development's Small, Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grants are due July 24. Application materials may be obtained at the Rural Development website <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/> or by contacting the nearest USDA Rural Development State Office. For additional information, see the April 25, 2012, *Federal Register*, page 24678, or click here <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-04-25/html/2012-9997.htm>

Contact: Weldon Freeman (202) 690-1384
More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

VILSACK SAYS CHILD LABOR RULE WILL INCORPORATE FARM INTERESTS

The Labor Department is listening to USDA and farm interests as it considers new child farm labor rules, according to Secretary Vilsack.

Radio Story: [Vilsack Says Child Labor Rule Will Incorporate Farm Interests](#)

OFFICIAL MAKES PLEA FOR SIMPLE FARM LEGISLATION

USDA officials are asking lawmakers to try to make any new farm legislation simpler and easier to implement than the 2008 bill. Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Michael Scuse says that it's vital that farmers have a new farm legislation as soon as possible. On Thursday the Senate Agriculture Committee did pass its version of the bill, clearing the way for possible floor debate at some point)

Radio Story: [Official Makes Plea For Simple Farm Legislation](#)
[ACTUALITY: A Plea For A Food, Farm And Jobs Bill This Year](#)

(April 25)

NATIONS CONTINUE IMPORTS OF U.S. BEEF PRODUCTS

Reassurances from the US and its beef trading partners continue after news of a BSE case found in a California dairy cow. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says consumer, market, and global reaction to a recent case of BSE in the US points to confidence in the safety of the US beef supply. The Agriculture Secretary gives an update on the proposed Animal Disease Traceability rule.

Radio Story: [Nations Continue Imports Of U.S. Beef Products](#)
[ACTUALITY: On Confidence In Us Beef Supply](#)
[Vilsack On Animal Disease Traceability Plan](#)

EXPERT SAYS BSE DETECTION SYSTEM IS WORKING AS IT SHOULD

An expert says this latest BSE case proves that the detection system is working as it should and that foreign customers of U.S. meat and dairy products should have no major concerns about those products. Former Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman and Dr. Martin Wiedmann a food science veterinarian and professor at Cornell University offer their input. Wiedmann explains that not all BSE is infectious, including so called "atypical" BSE.

Radio Story: [Expert Says BSE Detection System Is Working As It Should](#)
[ACTUALITY: Expert Explains "Atypical" BSE Versus The More Common BSE](#)

HOW THE CATTLE MARKETS REACTED TO THE LATEST BSE DISCOVERY

How have the cattle markets reacted to the BSE announcement this week? USDA Radio's Gary Crawford talks with livestock analyst Ken Mathews and Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack.

Radio Story: [A Look Into How The Cattle Markets Reacted To The BSE Discovery](#)

EXPERT SAYS BSE CASE NOT AN ISSUE FOR SAFETY OF MEAT AND MILK

An expert takes a look at the food safety aspect of this week's BSE case.

Radio Story: [Expert Says BSE Case Not An Issue For Safety Of Meat And Milk](#)

INVESTIGATORS TRACE THE HISTORY OF THAT BSE COW

Investigators are working on tracing the history of that California BSE dairy cow. USDA chief veterinarian Dr. John Clifford provides the details to USDA Radio's Gary Crawford.

Radio Story: [Investigators Tracing The History Of That BSE Cow](#)

(April 24)

STATEMENT BY U.S. AGRICULTURE SECRETARY TOM VILSACK REGARDING A DETECTION OF BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY (BSE) IN THE UNITED STATES

The beef and dairy in the American food supply is safe and USDA remains confident in the health of U.S. cattle. The systems and safeguards in place to protect animal and human health worked as planned to identify this case quickly, and will ensure that it presents no risk to the food supply or to human health. USDA has no reason to believe that any other U.S. animals are currently affected, but we will remain vigilant and committed to the safeguards in place."

Please visit www.USDA.gov/BSE to learn more about BSE and to find updates as USDA continues to investigate this incident and share information as it becomes available. Video of an interview with USDA's Chief Veterinary Officer John Clifford on the BSE case is available [HERE](#).

Contact: Office of Communication 202-720-4623

Radio Story: [Fourth Case of BSE Discovered In U.S.](#)

STATEMENT BY USDA CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER JOHN CLIFFORD REGARDING A DETECTION OF BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY (BSE) IN THE UNITED STATES

In his statement USDA Chief Veterinary Officer John Clifford assures consumers that existing safeguards are protecting the food supply and he reiterates the safety of consuming beef products.

"As part of our targeted surveillance system, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed the nation's fourth case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in a dairy cow from central California. The carcass of the animal is being held under State authority at a rendering facility in California and will be destroyed. It was never presented for slaughter for human consumption, so at no time presented a risk to the food supply or human health. Additionally, milk does not transmit BSE.

"The United States has had longstanding interlocking safeguards to protect human and animal health against BSE. For public health, these measures include the USDA ban on specified risk materials, or SRMs, from the food supply. SRMs are parts of the animal that are most likely to contain the BSE agent if it is present in an animal. USDA also bans all nonambulatory (sometimes called "downer") cattle from entering the human food chain. For animal health, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ban on ruminant material in cattle feed prevents the spread of the disease in the cattle herd.

"Evidence shows that our systems and safeguards to prevent BSE are working, as are similar actions taken by countries around the world. In 2011, there were only 29 worldwide cases of BSE, a dramatic

decline and 99% reduction since the peak in 1992 of 37,311 cases. This is directly attributable to the impact and effectiveness of feed bans as a primary control measure for the disease.

"Samples from the animal in question were tested at USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa. Confirmatory results using immunohistochemistry and western blot tests confirmed the animal was positive for atypical BSE, a very rare form of the disease not generally associated with an animal consuming infected feed.

"We are sharing our laboratory results with international animal health reference laboratories in Canada and England, which have official World Animal Health (OIE) reference labs. These labs have extensive experience diagnosing atypical BSE and will review our confirmation of this form of the disease. In addition, we will be conducting a comprehensive epidemiological investigation in conjunction with California animal and public health officials and the FDA.

"BSE is a progressive neurological disease among cattle that is always fatal. It belongs to a family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. Affected animals may display nervousness or aggression, abnormal posture, difficulty in coordination and rising, decreased milk production, or loss of body weight despite continued appetite.

"This detection in no way affects the United States' BSE status as determined by the OIE. The United States has in place all of the elements of a system that OIE has determined to ensure that beef and beef products are safe for human consumption: a mammalian feed ban, removal of specified risk materials, and vigorous surveillance. Consequently, this detection should not affect U.S. trade.

"USDA remains confident in the health of the national herd and the safety of beef and dairy products. As the epidemiological investigation progresses, USDA will continue to communicate findings in a timely and transparent manner."

Contact: Office of Communication 202-720-4623

Radio Story: [Impacts of BSE Announcement On U.S. Beef Trade Fewer Cases Of BSE Worldwide From Over A Decade Ago](#)

USDA MAINTAINS LEAN FINELY TEXTURED BEEF IS SAFE

USDA officials keep asserting that Lean Finely Textured Beef is perfectly safe, but they also say it's been a hard message to convey to the public. USDA Radio's Gary Crawford spoke with Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack and Deputy Under Secretary Brian Ronholm.

Radio Story: [USDA Keeps Saying Lean Finely Textured Beef Is Safe](#)

SECRETARY VILSACK GENERALLY PLEASED WITH PROPOSED SENATE LEGISLATION

What does the Agriculture Secretary think of the proposed Senate food, farm and jobs bill outline?

Radio Story: [Vilsack Generally Pleased With Proposed Senate Legislation](#)

(April 23)

**SOUTH FLORIDA HISPANIC BUSINESS LEADERS AND
USDA UNDER SECRETARY ED AVALOS SHARE IDEAS ON HOW
TO BOOST SMALL BUSINESSES AND CREATE JOBS**

Agriculture Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Ed Avalos met with the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to gather input on how the Obama Administration can work with local businesses to improve economic conditions and create jobs. The event is one in a series of roundtables being held across the nation with senior Obama Administration officials on behalf of the White House Business Council.

"The White House Business Council is working to build a robust economic strategy to ensure that continued federal investments in rural communities and to connect rural businesses and farmers to consumers create maximum benefit for Americans," said Avalos. "That includes creating jobs by modernizing critical infrastructure, expanding educational opportunities, supporting initiatives that connect farmers and consumers, and promoting the domestic and international marketing of U.S. agricultural products."

The roundtable discussions offer government leaders the unique opportunity to hear directly from business leaders around the country to gather their ideas on how to grow the economy. They also are intended to educate participants about USDA programs and other federal resources that help businesses, residents, and communities.

Contact: Office of Communications (202)720-4623

More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

**PRODUCERS WELL AHEAD IN THEIR
PLANTING PACE FOR MOST CROPS**

Most crop producers are doing their planting well ahead of the usual pace.

Radio Story: [Producers Well Ahead In Their Planting Pace For Most Crops](#)

**LACK OF COOKING SKILLS CAUSING BUDGET
PROBLEMS FOR MANY AMERICANS**

If your meal preparation skills consist of eating out, getting takeout or microwaving frozen dinners, you are not alone. Dr. Karen Ensle, Rutgers University extension nutrition expert, says more and more Americans have no clue as to how to plan or prepare meals at home. Ensle adds it's a myth that cooking takes too long for today's super busy families.

Radio Story: [Lack Of Cooking Skills Causing Budget Problems For Many Americans](#)

[ACTUALITY: Meal Preparation Skills Lacking For Many Americans](#)

[ACTUALITY: It's A Myth That Cooking Takes Too Much Time](#)

For more agriculture news visit USDA.GOV and click Newsroom on the toolbar



[The Latest USDA Blog Posts](#)



[USDA Celebrates 150 Years](#)

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

(Feature Line-Up Subject To Change Prior to Update On May 1, 2012)

AGRICULTURE USA CD # 18.12 – Another case of BSE in the US, the fourth since 2003, was announced recently ... found in a California dairy cow. But unlike the high concern of the first case, this time BSE safeguards to prevent the disease from entering the food supply, and proactive reassurance to consumers and markets appears to have calmed concerns and keep markets stable. Rod Bain and Gary Crawford look at these efforts in this edition of “Agriculture USA”.

CONSUMER TIME CD # 18.12 – Latest BSE Case Demonstrates Safeguards And Confidence, 2012 Wildland Fire Outlook And Plans To Battle Fires, A Regional Approach To Rural Economic Development, Many Of Us Waste Money By Not Planning Our Meals, Here's What To Do If You Find A Tick On You.

AG UPDATE CD # 18.12 – Confidence In US Beef Shows After Latest BSE News, USDA Officials Talk More About Farm Bill Proposals, Crop Germplasms Key To Fight Food Insecurity, The Future Water Users, How Climate Change May Impact The Ag Economy.

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – May 1 – Crop Weather Report (WAOB). May 7 - Crop Progress Report (NASS). May 10 - Crop Production Report (NASS) and World Agricultural Supply And Demand Estimates (ERS – WAOB). **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. The USDA Radio Newsline carries many stories every day that are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA Radio Newsline, 202-720-6776, 5:00pm ET

Or go to www.usda.gov, click on Newsroom at top of the page, scroll down on right side of page until you see Radio and TV. Then click on Daily Radio News Service or Weekly Radio Feature Service. For questions about USDA Radio's Features, fax name, station, and address to 202-690-2165.

[USDA Radio and TV Programming](#)

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

USDA Chief Veterinary Officer On BSE Case

FTP Download instructions:

The host: <ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com>
User name: usdanews
Password: Newscontent1

Filename for **TV Actuality**: Clifford BSE
The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264).

YouTube: [Clifford on BSE Case](#)

USDA Chief Veterinary Officer On Surveillance And Milk Safety

FTP Download instructions:

The host: <ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com>
User name: usdanews
Password: Newscontent1

Filename for **TV Actuality**: Clifford safeguards
The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264)

YouTube: [Clifford Safeguards](#)

ACTUALITY – FDA Official Says U.S. Milk Is Safe

**A new actuality is available on the USDA FTP site.
The actuality can also be seen on USDA's YouTube channel.**

FTP Download instructions:

The host: <ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com>
User name: usdanews
Password: Newscontent1

Filename for **TV Actuality**: Taylor on milk
The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264)

YouTube: [Taylor on milk](#)

Secretary Vilsack On Senate Ag Committee Farm Bill Proposal

FTP Download instructions:

The host: <ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com>

User name: usdanews
Password: Newscontent1

Filename for **TV Feature**: Vilsack NAFB
The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264), MPEG 4, MPEG2 and HDV

YouTube: [Vilsack NAFB](#)

Video Podcast: [Vilsack NAFB Podcast](#)

RSS Page: [Vilsack NAFB RSS](#)

Please email bob.ellison@usda.gov if you have problems or suggestions.

Also, use this free ftp client if you have problems.

<http://filezilla-project.org/download.php?type+client>

**Broadcasters if you have any humanitarian or community service events
you'd like to share please forward to susan.carter@oc.usda.gov.**

**We love to hear about what you're doing and
share it with others in the farm broadcaster family.**

From all of us to all of you ... thank you for what you do



United States Department of Agriculture
Office of Communications
Room 402-A
Washington, DC 20250-1300

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write:
USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or
call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).*