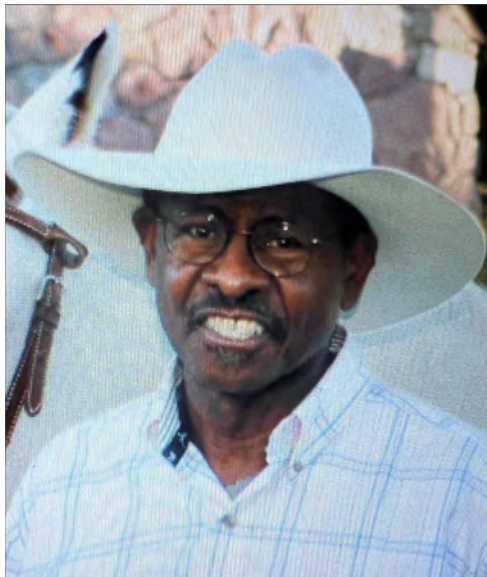




# MEMBER NEWSLETTER

Fighting for Economic Justice for  
America's Family Farmers and Ranchers



## From The PRESIDENT

Taylor H. Haynes MD

### Consumers to the Fore!

Autumn has left the stage in the northern climes of our Republic. Those of us still mired in a severe drought "somewhat" envy the recent snowfall in upstate New York. Thanksgiving has been celebrated and we have much to be thankful for. The Christmas season is upon us and all its merrymaking.

We reflect on the year just finished and look to the coming year with much optimism. The new Congress will be getting to work in the New Year. Of great importance to anyone who eats is the pending Farm Bill of 2023. The new Farm Bill, as have all its predecessors, effects food production. Clearly, we all agree the availability of wholesome affordable food is essential. Competition in a free-enterprise system ensures that principal.

True competition has been destroyed by the consolidation which the regulators have allowed, producing four (4) meat packers who control 85% of all meat packed. This chokehold has caused severe contraction at critical steps of the supply chain. For example, since 1988, there have been more than 82,964 small to medium sized family-owned feedlots that have gone out of business.

This reduces proportionately the competition for producers' cattle at sale barns. This decreased competition resulted in depressed prices for producers while consumers face record high prices at the supermarket. The shortages which appeared during the COVID 19 catastrophe, highlighted the dangers inherent in the existing concentrated system. It has long been known that the more local production can be to the consumer, the better. Small regional independent systems across the country would be much less vulnerable to disruption, thus, shoring up food security and National security.

In that vein OCM is endeavoring to facilitate the establishment of independent meat processing systems across the nation. This is to reintroduce competition and local production into the marketplace. The more locally food is produced, the more certain the consumer can be of its origin and production methods. This is also much more sustainable requiring less transportation.

Most do not know that Agriculture is the largest segment of our economy. Meat production is the largest segment of Agriculture.

Consumers must stand with farmers and ranchers insisting that Congress pass legislation to label beef and pork products accurately as to their country of origin. (Known as MCOOL).

The Beef Checkoff program is a fee charged to producers on a per head basis. It was purported to improve beef sales and help producers and consumers alike. Since its inception, over 200,000 independent family type cattle producers have gone out of business.

See **Consumers to the Fore!**  
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Competitive Markets

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## **Consumers to the Fore!** (continued from page 1)

This loss introduces more contraction in supply, opening the door to imports controlled by the big 4 meat packers.

There are other maladies plaguing meat production. They effect transparency and the soundness of the system. They are addressed in the new Agriculture & Meat Production Act (AMP Act).

Consumers must insist that the AMP Act is included in the new Farm Bill. Over the years, OCM has fought for a marketplace that serves both Consumer and Producer. However, it has become quite clear, that the political and market power of the consumer is critical to success. OCM members must encourage consumers to engage their congressional representation regarding the 2023 Farm bill and the items discussed in this note.



## **Competition & Competitive Marketing**

From Mike Schultz  
OCM Vice President

November hopefully found everyone well and able to enjoy some family time over Thanksgiving! I was asked by Pat Craycraft our Office Manager to write a short note for the newsletter. So, I will try!

It has been a great honor to serve as a board member with this great group of well-rounded thinkers and leaders. Our founder Fred Stokes had asked me to help years ago to serve on the board and help reunite this organization. I have always had a very good relationship and understanding with Fred and many others about the issues we face in this world with "COMPETITON AND COMPETITIVE MARKETING". I find that it has been another real challenge but worthwhile.

To those of you who are members WE cannot thank you enough! WE need you, your input and help financially to keep going. Cost for everything seems to be rising way faster than income. We are fortunate to have Mike Eby as our CEO. This man works 24/7, 365 for this organization. Please talk to Pat about making some donations that will keep the messages coming and this organization on the right path. This current board has been a pleasure to serve with since we all are from different areas and business models.

We have several issues ongoing with OCM leading the way. Our work on Dairy, Poultry, Pork, Beef, and business have been eye opening. We met at the convention this year with Affiliated Wholesale Grocers and have some real possibilities to expand markets and opportunities for producers from all levels. Mike Eby and Deborah Mills have been busy with the Dairy issues front and center. Mike has also been involved with a friend of mine who involved in a business that has a process to utilize meat packing plant offal rather than landfilling it. This adds value and profit back to those who can do it.

See **From Mike Schultz** on Page 3

**DISCLAIMER:** All author's written opinions are their own and are not intended to imply the organization's position. OCM has membership with diverse viewpoints on all issues and is committed to one principal; competition.

**From Mike Schultz ...** (continued from page 3)

We have been preparing to launch a new legislative bill for 2023 that has been taking about 8 months of weekly meetings to draft and put together. The group we are working with is the TAPPPS group (Texas Animal Protein Producers Prosperity and Security Group) and this group is national. We have reinvigorated ideas in this new bill called the AMP Act (Agricultural Marketing Protection Act). We have many sections that encompass most everything we all work for, and we are in hopes that we can get the legislators to accept this reform bill as presented when the time comes. It is solid, based with decades of data and factually correct. We could restore competition and competitive markets with this piece of legislation in short order. A few sections that are of high importance are 1. Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling. 2. Packers and Stockyards. 3. Meat Inspection. 4. Checkoff transparency reform. 5. Cattle Market Protection. 6. Price Reforms in the cattle market. 7. Food and Agribusiness Merger Moratorium and Anti-trust Review Title. 8. Meat and Poultry Special Investiga-

tor Title. For those that know me I have said that there are two bills that could change business overnight and not disrupt commerce. 1. MCOOL and 2. A Ban on Packer Ownership, Feeding or Control for more than 7 days. January 1, 2023, that could be put on the books and reinstate competitive markets overnight by these two items.

In closing, we have been working on funding with a grant writer and we NEED your help and financial support. WE need members and supporters! Spread the word and ask your neighbors to join us! We have so many issues here and abroad that it is going to take everyone to step up and get involved. Please let Pat or Mike hear from you and you can also contact your 2022 President of OCM, Mr. Taylor Haynes!!

**Mike Schultz**

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**"Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds!" ~ Albert Einstein**



**The 2022 Year is ending soon.**

**Please consider OCM as a tax deduction donation this year.**

I would like to make a **2022 Donation to OCM TODAY!**

All donations to OCM are recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 non-profit tax deduction.

Your support and donation can **MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

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Please send your donation to: OCM, P. O. Box 6486, Lincoln, NE 68506, OR pay by debit or credit card online through our secure, online system, at [www.competitivemarkets.com](http://www.competitivemarkets.com)

**Thank you.**





## Update on Legislation to End Corruption at the USDA Checkoff Programs

From Marty Irby - OCM Secretary

The bipartisan Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act led by Reps. Nancy Mace, R-S.C., and Dina Titus, D-Nev., and Sens. Mike Lee, R-Utah, and Cory Booker, D-N.J., has unfortunately seen no action in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress. Despite the 200,000 plus farmers and ranchers that support the legislation, "Big Ag" and groups like the so-called National Cattlemen's Beef Association and National Pork Producers Council continue to have a stronghold over the Biden Administration, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack and many of the House and Senate Agriculture Committee Members.

To my knowledge, I have been the only lobbyist in Washington, D.C. working to advance the OFF Act in recent years, and it has quite honestly been a very lonely road to travel with little support. That must change if we are to be successful in this effort moving forward. We need more people here on the ground in 2023. I am not discouraged one bit, but I am asking for your help. I am asking you to help yourselves. I have no personal vested interest in the checkoff issue other than to see justice served, and I have never benefited in any way from this work. If anything, it is what I consider my volunteer work and a small part of my ministry to help fulfill God's purpose for my life.

In the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress that begins in January we will be looking at a different landscape and much friendlier atmosphere for this legislation with the upcoming Farm Bill. The OFF Act was one of only three amendments afforded a vote on the U.S. Senate floor during the last Farm Bill that was signed into law in 2018, and while we lost that vote, we scared the hog mess out of the corrupt Commodity Checkoff Program leaders that have long utilized hard-earned farmer tax dollars to illegally lobby

against farmers' own interests and instead promote policies backed by JBS, Cargill, Tyson, and others. We had Chuck Grassley, Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, and so many others on our side during the last vote, and it was very encouraging. Big Ag did not expect us to bring the hammer down like we did, and they will be prepared to assault our efforts in 2023 – you can bet on it. And they will likely be using your very own checkoff dollars to do it and illegally lobby against our efforts.

The leaders of the OFF Act are prepared to launch a full-scale attack against the corrupt checkoff leaders that continue to perpetuate this disgusting injustice and we must all come together to support them. We cannot withstand internal dissension within our OFF Act coalition, and we are all going to have to put both our petty and legitimate differences aside for the greater good in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress. This is the only way we will achieve the desired result we seek. You can bet that those who want to maintain the status quo will be walking together lock-step, and holding hands to keep lining their fat cat pockets with cash. I see it here in Washington, D.C. every day.

I encourage everyone to begin to open dialogue with those we may have recently viewed as our enemies to defeat the greater and larger enemies of sustainable and regenerative agriculture and challenge each and everyone involved in this effort to rise up to a higher plane and shake hands, come together, and ultimately defeat the tremendous evil that exists within these corrupt Commodity Checkoff Programs by getting the OFF Act attached to the next Farm Bill and signed into law.

**You can and will make the difference.**





## USDA Needs to Move Ahead With Proposed Rules

From Mike Weaver - OCM Director

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed to strengthen the Packers and Stockyards Act by defining and clarifying their authority under the act to protect farmers and ranchers from abuses by meat processors and poultry integrators.

The first proposals by this administration were released several months ago and the comment period has expired. This set of proposals deals with fairness issues with the major one being the so called "tournament system" under which poultry integrators pay their farmers, typically called growers, for raising their chickens.

Under that system growers are forced to compete for their pay against all other farmers whose flocks are processed the same week as theirs. The travesty of that situation is that growers are forced to compete for their pay based on inputs from the company which they have no control over, those being the chick quality and feed quality. The industry's own studies have shown that chick and feed quality are as much as 97% of making a good chicken. If the company sends you bad quality chicks and/or bad quality feed, you cannot possibly make a good chicken out of it.

Beef and pork farmers and ranchers are faced with similar situations wherein packers dictate what they will be paid for their animals, delay processing which can cost farmers considerably more to feed the animals and impose other retaliatory measures on those who speak out about their abuses.

Under the Obama administration similar "rules" were proposed but nothing implemented. At the eleventh hour as the administration was leaving the Whitehouse two rules similar to what is currently proposed were released as proposed rules but were never implemented.

USDA and the Whitehouse need to do their job. We have been through this once with great hope and expectation on the part of farmers and ranchers and nothing happened. The USDA was set up by President Abraham Lincoln for the benefit of and to help independent farmers not giant multi-national poultry and meat processors.

President Biden and USDA it is time to put up or shut up on this issue!







## 2023 R-CALF USA Annual Convention

From Mike Eby - OCM Executive Director

I was once again privileged to attend the R-Calf convention in South Dakota this past August.

While boarding my connecting flight in Chicago who did I run into but Andy Green from USDA, who was also Rapid City bound. Andy suggested that we share a cab. I told him I would do him one better and told him to join Vaughn and me sightseeing at Mt Rushmore on our way to Deadwood.

During the three-day convention, the OCM board members took turns staffing the OCM booth. I was amazed at how many people knew our president, Taylor Haynes. He seemed to mirror that of a celebrity. It turns out Taylor has served on the R-Calf board in the past, so it was like a reunion for many visiting the OCM booth. An equally impressive response came from Vaughn Meyer OCM's former president and Mike

Schultz our current VP. I was honored to stand with them as OCM's executive director.

The hospitality of Vaughn and Lois Meyer was off the charts as they hosted me in their home. Vaughn was my chauffeur my entire stay. I have never met a more humble yet straight-talking man.

OCM is fortunate to have like-minded organizations surround us such as R-Calf speaking the same language. We cannot let up when it comes to informing the public and politicians the need for reform on issues such as antitrust, Checkoff and COOL, all of which were passionately presented at the R-Calf Convention.

I encourage our OCM members to attend R-Calf's 2023 convention and be sure to look us up in the foyer standing under the red and white OCM banner.



Mike Eby, Andy Green & Vaughn Meyer  
RCalf Convention August 2022



Mike Schultz, Vaughn Meyer, Mike Eby, & Taylor Haynes  
OCM Booth RCalf Convention August 2022

Happy  
Holidays

**OCM Board, Friends and Staff**







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#### MISSION STATEMENT

*"Keeping the spirit of Teddy Roosevelt, the original monopoly buster, OCM strives to foster and recreate food production locally, providing Consumers truly transparent "Farm to plate" food systems in communities across America. OCM's actions will stimulate local commerce while making food availability and food safety more certain."*

**OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2022**



*May your Holidays  
be filled with Joy  
and your  
New Year be Prosperous*



**OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2022**