

Press Release

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NORTH CAROLINA CATTLE INDUSTRY ASSESSMENT REFERENDUM VOTE SET FOR OCTOBER 4, 2012

FUQUAY-VARINA, NC -- The North Carolina Cattlemen's Association (NCCA) has announced that the N. C. Cattle Industry Assessment Referendum vote will take place on October 4, 2012. The North Carolina Cattlemen's Association requested permission from the N. C. Board of Agriculture to conduct a referendum to continue the N. C. Cattle Industry Assessment. Permission was granted by the Board of Agriculture and arrangements have been made with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service to facilitate the voting. The Extension offices in each county will be the polling places.

Bill Cameron, president of the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association, said that the referendum will be to assess all cattle sold and marketed in North Carolina one dollar per head for the purposes of advancing the cattle industry in the state. The money collected will be used to fund the following five areas: youth programs, cattle research, education, promotion of North Carolina cattle and beef, and issues management. The North Carolina dairy industry will also benefit from the funds collected, as a portion of the income will be allocated to the same areas within the dairy sector.

The referendum would continue the original state assessment program, which was first established in 1957. The national beef checkoff assessment of one dollar per head will still be collected and will be used according to the guidelines set forth in federal law. According to Mr. Cameron, "The national beef checkoff does a tremendous job of promoting beef and the beef industry, returning \$5.50 per dollar invested; however, these funds cannot be used for many of the production and regulatory-

oriented issues facing the industry today. The N. C. Cattle Industry Assessment Referendum would allow producers to continue to provide funds that would be controlled totally by the North Carolina beef and dairy producers to promote our product, our youth, our industry, and to provide research and advocacy to protect their way of life." Since the assessment was reinstated on January 1, 2010, research and education projects have been funded to deal with production issues facing North Carolina cattlemen in the areas of management, forage production, feed efficiency, and general input reductions. In addition, we have been able to provide additional services in issues management to help the public have a better understanding of our industry and training for farmers to help them reduce stress on both them and the cattle in their care. Youth programs have been a huge beneficiary of the investments from the assessment as we were able to support livestock schools, judging contests, Skip-A-Thon contests, leadership development, and the very popular Youth Beef Industry Tour, among many others.

Bryan Blinson, executive director of the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association, states that, "The assessment will be for a period of six years with a recurring referendum if requested. Also, Mr. Blinson states that producers will be eligible for a full refund of their North Carolina assessment by request within 60 days of the sale of the animal with proof of sale. This is a provision that is not available in the national program due to federal law."

All cattle owners who are at least 18 years of age as of October 4, 2012, will be eligible to vote. Voting will take place at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension offices. All eligible voters must vote in their county. Absentee ballots may be obtained by contacting the North Carolina Cooperative Extension office. The North Carolina Cattlemen's Association can assist with directing you to your local office.

For additional details on voting procedures or funding information, please contact your local county office of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, or the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association.

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