

From: Wade and Teresa King <wadek@centurytel.net>
Sent: Thursday, December 31, 2009 8:58 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Antitrust Division - DOJ comments

Dear Sir or Madam:

On behalf of Cattle Producers of Washington (CPoW) and our 400+ members, who annually produce and market nearly \$100 million dollars worth of cattle in Washington State, please accept the following comments:

Washington State currently has two large beef packers (processors) who have several small contract feeders. These contract feeders are merely feeding the packer owned cattle. With only two major players feeding and processing cattle, there are little or no competitive prices offered. It is simply; take the offered price or look to the Midwest.

By allowing the feeder/packer to purchase unlimited inexpensive and heavily government subsidized cattle from Canada, makes this situation devastating for Washington cattle producers. In 2008 Washington State imported from Canada over 404,000 live cattle, mainly for direct slaughter. The beef packer is the only entity benefiting from Canadian cattle imports. The non-beneficiaries (losers) are cattle producers, consumers, farmers and rural economies across the U.S.A. Washington State's beef cow herd is at a 50 year low, Eastern Washington is now down to only two auction yards, and independent feeders have been forced to go along with the packers or go out of business.

If it is the intent of DOJ and USDA to restore competition in the marketplace, strengthen rural America, thus allowing the U.S. cattle producer to feed our nation, then you need to look back at 2004 and 2005. The U.S. cattle producers, independent cattle feeders, farmers and consumers were all better off without imported Canadian cattle!

Sincerely,

Wade King, President

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"CPoW is a non-profit grassroots organization whose purpose is to sustain, improve and protect Washington State's live cattle industry and to address the market interests of Washington live cattle producers and promote the heritage of ranching to present and future generations. CPoW is Washington State's fastest growing cattle producer's organization, with members in nearly every county. CPoW's members represent approximately 35% of Washington's beef cowherd, which contribute over \$100 million to the states economy.

U.S.A. Beef, ask for it!

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