



RETURN LIVESTOCK MARKET FAIRNESS

Call the White House Feb. 14

Urge President Obama: Get the USDA GIPSA Rules Issued Now!

Concentrated control by big corporate entities is striking everywhere around us, with our financial institutions, agricultural seed sources, fertilizer and, more than ever, with our food.

The meat packing industry is now controlled by a near monopoly of vertically integrated companies that can manipulate supply and demand for livestock which therefore affects the price paid to independent ranchers and feeders. The ripple effect also hurts our communities as the “Big Four” packers - Tyson, Excel, JBS-Brazil and National Beef now control more than 88% of all cattle slaughtered. Poultry and hog markets are almost totally concentrated in the hands of a few mega companies.

The Packers & Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) within the U.S. Department of Agriculture has taken on the difficult task given by Congress to offer rules which can lead to openness and more fair competition in livestock markets. These rules are a giant step towards reducing control by food cartels and big packing companies alike.

Some welcome highlights of the new proposed rules include:

- Individual farmers & ranchers don't need to prove industry-wide anticompetitive injury to sue under the law
- Packer-to-packer sales would be illegal as would buyers purchasing livestock for multiple packers
- Packers would be required to supply evidence used in contracts to support differential pricing, such as the use of premiums and discounts
- Arbitration in contracting disputes would be voluntary and would prohibit the packer in setting those terms
- Prohibiting packer bias against producer/sellers based upon different volumes of livestock offered for sale.

These proposals are a great step, but big corporate interests are pushing to have them killed!

Take a moment to **call the White House on February 14**. The calls are easy to make and will help make sure fair farming rules are put into place.

Here's how you make a call:

- 1) Call the White House on February 14 or 15 at **(202) 456-1111** between 9am- 5pm EST. You may need to call back a couple of times because it might be busy.
- 2) Wait for an operator to answer the phone to take your message.
- 3) Share the message below (or something similar) –

My name is _____. I'm a farmer/livestock producer/consumer/other from city, state. I urge President Obama to ensure USDA issues and enforces the new Packers and Stockyards livestock fairness rules now. These rules are very important for family farmers and ranchers. Fairness and competition in the livestock industry has been severely damaged by corporate meatpackers and their partners. Get a strong rule out now! Don't let the packers stall and weaken these important rules.