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VOLUME 79 ISSUE 10

Arizona CATTLELOG

Official Publication of the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association



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CATTLE GROWERS' REPORT



Letter from the Editor



Grit isn't just a buzzword—it's the quiet determination to show up when the odds are stacked against you. It's the will to keep building even when the ground beneath you feels uncertain. That feeling seems like a daily occurrence in our livelihoods. Our grit, as ranchers, is tested constantly—by markets we can't control, weather that doesn't cooperate, regulations that don't always make sense, and the simple fact that there are never enough hours in the day.

Our family's roots in ranching run deep. Both of my parents, Gary and Sharla, grew up in agriculture. When they met and got married, they knew they wanted to raise their children in the same way—on land, alongside livestock, with their hands in the dirt and their hearts committed to a purpose bigger than themselves. They credit their own upbringings for the values they hold dear: heart, perseverance, hard work, stewardship, and a deep love for animals and open country. Those were the gifts they hoped to pass on to us.

Our ranch sharpened our commitment to caring for the land, improving habitat, and raising quality beef. Fifteen years ago, we began managing a historic ag landmark in the community. The

plan was simple: steward the land, keep it productive, and keep it in agriculture for as long as we could, while connecting our guests to the story of their food.

For 10 years, we ran cattle and crops under the weight of uncertainty. The developers who owned the land regularly reminded us that their plans were moving forward and our time there could end at any moment. Still, we poured ourselves into the work—building fence, rotating pastures, planting crops, and doing our best to leave things better than we found them.

Then, in late 2020, everything changed.

On December 30, we showed up at the courthouse auction (a foreclosure on themselves to restructure ownership) just to witness the outcome. No one else came. My dad, Gary, asked what would happen if he placed a bid \$1 over the opening price. The answer: we'd need a non-refundable deposit on the spot and the full amount delivered within 24 hours. Somehow, he found a check tucked into the center console of his ranch truck—something he never carries. We didn't think we could get financing in time. It was New Year's Eve. But something told us to try anyway.

Miracle after miracle, everything fell into place. By the next day, we had a loan secured and a check hand-delivered. Just like that, the land was ours. It still doesn't feel real. A miracle!

That moment didn't just change the future of our family—it deepened our purpose.

As CEO of Mortimer Farms, my role today stretches far beyond daily operations. I juggle production, food safety, marketing, planning, execution, leadership, finances, staffing—you name it. And to do that well, I've had to lean hard on a few key traits: grit, decisiveness, a high tolerance for chaos, and the ability to move quickly without losing focus. I've learned that being successful isn't about knowing everything—it's about being willing to figure things out faster than most people are willing to try.

Today, alongside our cattle operation, we raise over 50 crops, welcome the public to experience a glimpse of the ranching/farming life and share life moments with our guests like weddings and other private events. We've built a platform to tell the story of agriculture—to show the long days, the hard calls, the deep care we have for the land and animals, and the unshakable pride that comes with feeding people.

Ranching today is more complex than ever. From rising costs to predator pressure, from policy shifts to public perception—there's no shortage of headwinds. But what hasn't changed is the resolve of this community. The cow-calf operators, the stockers, the finishers, the multigenerational families, and the young couples just getting started—you show up, rain or shine, because that's who you are.

Thank you for what you do. Thank you for raising beef, managing land, and holding the line for rural Arizona. And thank you for letting me share a little piece of our story with you.

Here's to grit, to good cattle, and to keeping this life alive for generations to come.

With respect,
Ashlee Mortimer, CEO, Mortimer Farms

Letter from the ACGA President

Dear Friends and Fellow Cattlemen and Women,

As we reach the halfway point of 2025, the pressure on American ranchers continues to build. From shifting federal priorities in Washington to regulatory creep right here in Arizona, the challenges we face are coming fast and from every direction.

This spring, we've seen renewed efforts out of D.C. to expand the federal definition of "waters of the U.S." (WOTUS), despite last year's Supreme Court ruling that sided with private landowners. Agencies are regrouping, and new language is being introduced that could once again expose working lands to unnecessary and burdensome regulation. A virtual listening session hosted by the SBA Office of Advocacy and EPA just this month confirmed these efforts are moving forward, and we must remain vigilant.

At the same time, enforcement around the Endangered Species Act has intensified—especially in predator-heavy areas like ours—without any meaningful protections for the ranching families impacted most. We're continuing to work with our federal partners and support legislation regarding the gray wolf.

Meanwhile, climate-focused land-use bills tied to conservation easements and 30x30 goals are picking up momentum. What's being sold as "preservation" is, in reality, another threat to private property rights, water access, and productive working lands.

Rest assured—ACGA is not sitting on the sidelines. We're working with national coalitions, legal advisors, and our state legislature to push back. We're fighting to keep Arizona ranching in the hands of the families who built it.

And that's why this July matters more than ever.

Our Annual Convention & Trade Show will take place July 23–25 in Thatcher/Safford, and I urge every one of you to be there. It's an election year for ACGA leadership. These seats are more than symbolic—they're responsible for steering our advocacy, carrying out our policy direction, and showing up where it counts. If you're a proponent of boots on the ground organizations, now is your time to lead or support those who will.

Serving as your ACGA President has been the honor of a lifetime. I've never been more convinced that the strength of this organization comes from its people—your grit, your wisdom, your refusal to back down.

We are proud to welcome Suzanne Menges as the new Executive Director of the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association. Suzanne brings with her a strong background in agriculture, a sharp policy mind, and a deep understanding of the issues facing rural Arizona. She's policy-driven, organized, collaborative, solutions-focused, grounded in the values that matter most to our members, and believes in grassroots advocacy. Her leadership will be a tremendous asset as we continue to advocate, educate, inspire, and protect Arizona ranchers. Please join me in giving her a warm welcome to the ACGA team.

Before I close, I want to acknowledge the devastating wildfires currently threatening parts of our state. Our thoughts are with the families, ranchers, and firefighters battling these dangerous conditions. It's a sobering reminder of the urgent need for proactive land management tools and the immense benefit of cattle on the range. ACGA continues to advocate for the use of cattle as a tool to prevent wildfires, maintain our landscapes, and promote healthy rangeland ecosystems. If you or someone you know has been impacted, please reach out to the state office for help—we're here to support our Arizona ranchers.

I hope to shake your hand in Safford,

Mike Gannuscio, President, Arizona Cattle Growers' Association

Board of Directors are elected by Arizona Ranchers and represent you and your family.

Executive Committee

Mike Gannuscio	President
Brian DeGanahl	1st VP
Bopper Cannon	2nd VP
Jared Lyman	Treasurer
Stephanie Teskey	Secretary
Tim Petersen	Member-at-Large
Ben Menges	Member-at-Large
Andy Groseta	Imm. Past President

County Presidents/Representatives

Vacant	Apache	Ron Flake	Navajo
Steve Layton	AZ Strip	Vacant	Pima
Tim Klump	Cochise	Vacant	Pinal
Mike Macauley	Coconino	Vacant	Santa Cruz
Peter Oddonetto	Gila	Reuben Verner	Yavapai
Bill Sollers	Graham	Scott Pilchard	Business Rep.
Ginger Cheney	Greenlee	Vacant	Native American
Marty Byrne	La Paz	Trina Sue Riggs	AZ Cowbelles
Lisa Khan	Maricopa	Trever Hall	Foundation
John Harris	Mohave	Nate Brawley	Ranchers for Tomorrow



Letter from the Executive Director

ACGA Updates: Staffing, Events, and Legislative Efforts

Ken Ligon, Interim Executive Director

As you read this, Arizona Cattle Growers Association (ACGA) will have selected and installed the new, full time Executive Director. It is my pleasure to welcome Suzanne Menges to this important position in serving ACGA. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position as her family operates a major ranch in eastern Arizona and she has extensive administrative experience in a variety of fields which will serve ACGA quite well going forward.

It has been my pleasure to have served the ACGA as Interim Executive Director for the past four months, which was the target for serving in this position. During this time there have been a number of accomplishments that the ACGA Board has achieved as a result of their realizing that a full time Executive Director is crucial for ACGA going forward.

The steps taken during the past four months include the following:

1. A new 6 month budget was developed for July 1 through December 31 to align with the ACGA Board's fiscal year change to the calendar year.
2. The ACGA Board collaborated with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) to coordinate a national search and handle the details in seeking a new Executive Director. This has been successful.
3. The ACGA Board developed a sponsorship packet to use when meeting with donors and sponsors in soliciting financial support for ACGA.
4. The ACGA Board worked to develop relationships with ranchers, associates and businesses to promote ACGA and what it strives to accomplish on behalf of ranchers and the beef industry.
5. Fund raising has been a major focus and Andy Groseta has led the way by developing an Executive Director Fund.

I am most impressed by the ranchers who I have had the privilege to meet and converse with during my short term as the ACGA Interim Executive Director and thank all for your support of ACGA.

The best days of ACGA are yet to come as the Board, Executive Director and members pursue the goals and objectives needed in order to grow and sustain this wonderful 122 year old association.

I wish the ACGA all the best going forward as I sign off as Interim Executive Director.

Legislative Update

Legislative Update: Spring 2025—What Arizona Ranchers Need to Know

As spring turns to summer, Arizona ranchers are navigating a fast-changing legal and policy environment. From water rights to land ownership and predator management, new legislative efforts—both state and federal—are shaping the future of our livelihoods. Here's a roundup of the most pressing developments as of May 2025.

Ranching Without Red Tape Act (H.R. 2238)

Backed by the Trump administration and introduced in March, this bill would fast-track range improvement approvals on federal lands. If the Forest Service fails to respond within 30 days, the project moves forward automatically. It's a major win for reducing delays in critical land and water projects.

Maude Case Dismissal: A Precedent-Setting Victory

After facing felony charges over a century-old fenceline dispute, South Dakota ranchers Charles and Heather Maude have finally seen their case dismissed. Thanks to advocacy from the Public Lands Council (PLC) and support from Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, this decision sends a strong message against government overreach and affirms the rights of all federal grazing permittees. A new USDA Lawfare Portal has also been launched to help landowners report unjust legal actions. At this time, the lawfare portal is for USFS issues, not all USDA or BLM/USFWS as they are interior.

Endangered Species Reforms & Mexican Gray Wolf Conflicts

Arizona ranchers are pressing Congress to reform the Endangered Species Act. Proposed legislation such as H.R. 845 (the "Pet the Livestock Protection Act") aims to federally delist the gray wolf. This would set a precedent for the Mexican Grey Wolf which is included at this time.

New World Screwworm Response

In May, USDA suspended all live animal imports from Mexico due to the spread of New World Screwworm, which poses a serious risk to U.S. herds. This decisive move highlights the need for ongoing border biosecurity measures.

State-Level Updates: Water, Land Use & Property Rights

Water Rights Under Threat?

Attorney General Kris Mayes' recent lawsuit against Saudi-owned Fondomonte has broader implications. Though framed as a foreign land ownership issue, the legal theory used—declaring groundwater use a "public nuisance"—could set a precedent that endangers private water rights for all Arizona landowners. Ranchers across the state are closely monitoring the case and advocating to protect property rights regardless of who owns the land.

Active Management Areas (AMAs)

Several bills aimed at increasing flexibility in AMA designations and water use policies were vetoed by Governor Hobbs.

- HB 2088 & HB 2089: Would have allowed for AMA status to be removed based on updated water assessments or voter petitions.
- HB 2202 & HB 2203: Addressed irrigation rights and grandfathered uses.

Tax Relief for Landowners

SB 1122 ensures property tax exemption thresholds are adjusted annually to match inflation. This provides long-term protection for ranchers' bottom lines.

What Comes Next: Engagement is Essential

A growing coalition of farmers and ranchers is working proactively to protect landowners' rights. As policymakers debate water use, property rights, wolves, and environmental laws, it's more important than ever for ranchers to stay engaged. Reach out to your representatives, attend local hearings, and support organizations fighting for ag values in Phoenix and D.C.

Arizona agriculture was built on grit, water, and land. We must protect them all.

Mark your calendars!

Event: ACGA's 122nd Annual Summer Convention

Date: July 23rd through July 25th

Details: www.azcattlegrowers.org

At Work for You!

Your Vote Matters!

Officers are elected every two years at our Annual Summer Convention. Save the date for July 24th, in Safford during the general membership session.

While our officers traditionally “move up the chain”, (for example its customary that our current first vice president will be our next president), any and all members in good standing may run for office!

The Nominating Committee is comprised of one representative from each county organization, the immediate Past President, and the current President sit on the committee. The committee contacted current officers regarding their desire to continue serving in their current position or moving into a new one. They also surfaced names of new candidates.

Unfortunately, Mr. Ligon has had to decline the nomination for president. As always, additional nominations may be made from the floor.

The Committee is recommending the following nominations:

President – David Cook (Gila county)
1st Vice President – Ben Menges (Graham county)
2nd Vice President – Bopper Cannon (Cochise county)
Member at Large – Brian Deganahl (La Paz county)
Member at Large – Tim Peterson (Yavapai county)
Secretary – Stephanie Teskey (Yavapai county)
Treasurer – Richard Searle (Cochise county)

Members are free to submit additional nominations for any of the officer positions from the floor at Summer Convention. For those positions that have only one nomination, a voice vote will be taken. For those positions that have more than one nomination, a paper ballot will be provided. Each position will be voted on separately. Visit the following link for a complete explanation of how the Committee nominations work and how the election will be run. (<https://youtu.be/Op7e3ex-qhE?si=pQPvNepM7Gxkj-zr>)



If you are unable to attend convention, you may send a proxy. Please be sure to request a current proxy form from the office, sign it, and ask your proxy to turn in the forms when they register at convention.

Here is a link to access the proxy form online:

https://mortimerfarmsaz-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/sharla_mortimerfarmsaz_onmicrosoft_com/Efzkt2hxdtBEqF9uhnJU4cB2CUt1Y4xaP9k5fwboOogaQ?e=BDbXzr

Remember, if you give a proxy and then attend the meeting, your proxy will still vote for you. Note – if you are carrying proxies, you must turn them in at convention registration, the member must be in good standing, and forms must have an original signature.

Don't miss the general session at convention! Your Vote Matters!

ACGA Nominating Committee:

Cochise – Sonia Gasho, Chair

Past President – Andy Groseta, Yavapai

Coconino – Benny Aja

Outgoing President – Mike Gannuscio, La Paz

Graham – Bill Sollers

1st Vice President – Jared Lyman, Gila

Greenlee – Ginger Cheney

Gila – Pete Oddonetto

La Paz – Marty Byrne

Maricopa – Leatta McLaughlin

Mohave – Dan Rodriguez

Yavapai – Tim Peterson



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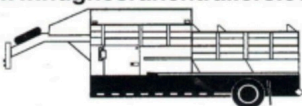
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Get Ready! Auction Alert!



Donate an Auction Item to the Foundation at the ACGA Summer Convention!

The Arizona Cattle Growers' Association Summer Convention is just around the corner—July 23–25—and we're calling on our community to help make a difference! We're seeking donated items for the live and silent auctions benefiting the Arizona Cattle Industry Research and Education Foundation.

Your donation supports scholarships, leadership programs, and educational efforts that protect and promote Arizona's cattle industry. Whether it's a unique experience, handmade item, artwork, ranch gear, or a great gift basket—every item helps us raise funds for a stronger future



July 23rd - 25th 2025



Safford AZ

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SAVE THE DATE!

2025 ACGA ANNUAL CONVENTION

**JULY 23-25, 2025
THATCHER/SAFFORD, AZ**

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WORKSHOPS RELEVANT INFORMATION
AND LOTS OF FUN!**

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**2025
ARIZONA CATTLE
GROWERS'
ASSOCIATION
122ND ANNUAL CONVENTION**



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EMAIL!**

At Work for You!

Why Policy?

Many of us hear the words policy or by-laws and head for the nearest exit. It can be tedious. It can be boring. Over the years, I've heard many comments about having better things to do, better presentation, or just plain more fun things to do (happy hour). Why bother?

Policy is what drives our association. If the by-laws are the engine of the truck, policy is the GPS. It determines the direction our organization heads in, what our lobbyist say or don't say at the legislature, what positions the President speaks on. It's how the association effectively represents its membership. It's how your voice is heard!

YOU, the membership, program that GPS by participating in policy development - on a committee, in committee meetings, at the county association level, and on the floor of the meeting. **It is NOT the President or Executive Committee's job to develop policy - it's Yours!**

You have two opportunities to shape policy during our association year - at the Winter Meeting and at Summer Convention. If there is a pressing issue you think the association should address/take a position on, please attend committee meetings and the policy meeting on Friday, July 25. Take the time to discuss, debate, and vote.

Current policy link - https://irp.cdn-website.com/47f27eb6/files/uploaded/ACGA_Policy_24_PDF.pdf

Proposed policy link - https://irp.cdn-website.com/47f27eb6/files/uploaded/Proposed_policy_committee_2025.docx

How policy happens flow chart link -

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/47f27eb6/files/uploaded/Policy%20Development%20flow%20chart%20Feb%202022.pdf>

Sonia Gasho, Ag Issues Chair

Proposed 2025 Amendments

We received proposed amendments to three sections of our bylaws, which will be voted on during our upcoming Annual Summer Convention in Safford on July 25.

The first set of amendments pertain to Section 5.4 Ranchers for Tomorrow. A member has suggested adding the word "young" to better describe the members of this group. Additionally, the phrase "a living" would be replaced with "income." (See the language in red font below.)

The second set of proposed amendments relate to Section 9.1 Nomination of Candidates. Since the first sentence already mentions "geographic areas of the state," a member has recommended deleting the fourth sentence as it is redundant. In addition, the following sentence would be added: "A majority of the members of this Committee shall elect a chair." Furthermore, "a slate" will be replaced with "nominations" to clarify that the individuals selected by the Nominating Committee are not running on the same ticket. (See the language in red font below.) This link explains how a Nominating Committee works: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op7e3ex-ghE>.

The third and final set of proposed amendments are for Section 9.1 Elections. This section covers the Executive Committee election, which will take place during the general session of our Annual Summer Convention. A member has suggested adding "by majority vote" as to how a member will be elected to an Executive Committee position. A member also suggested that elections for offices with more than one candidate shall be done by paper ballot or electronic counter. (See the language in red font below.)

If you have questions, please reach out to Leatta McLaughlin at leattamc@yahoo.com or (623) 330-1779.

5.4 RANCHERS FOR TOMORROW. Any **young** person who aspires to make **income** ~~a living~~ in the cattle industry, and may or may not own cattle, may become a member upon written application. Ranchers for Tomorrow shall be afforded the privileges of Cattle Producer, except the right to vote, upon written application and payment of the specified dues for Ranchers for Tomorrow Members so provided.

9.1 NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES. Nominations for Executive Committee shall be made by the Nominating Committee, with consideration given for equal representation of all geographic areas of the state. A Nominating Committee shall be formed at least six (6) months prior to the Annual Summer Convention of the Association for the purpose of nominating officers of the Association. The Nominating Committee shall consist of one (1) person appointed by each county organization, the immediate Past President, and the current (outgoing) President. ~~Consideration shall be given to all geographic areas of the state and for continuity in the succession of officers.~~ **A majority of members of this Committee shall elect a chair.** This Committee shall notify the Membership of its nominations at least sixty (60) days before the biennial election. Such notice may be given in the Cattlelog, by mail, or by email. The Nominating Committee shall submit ~~a slate including~~ **nominations** for all officers ~~positions~~ **at the general session of the Annual Summer Convention.** Following the report of the Nominating Committee, nominations may be made from the floor.

9.2 ELECTIONS. The election of the Executive Committee shall be **by majority vote** at the general session of the Annual Summer Convention with a quorum present. The election shall be by voice vote unless the Nominating Committee provides more than one (1) candidate for each position, or there are nominations from the floor. **Elections for offices with more than one (1) candidate** ~~for each position will require a~~ **shall be by paper ballot or electronic counter.**

ACGA 122ND Annual Summer Convention

July 23, 2025 – July 25, 2025

Partners in Progress

	# of Tickets	Amount \$
All-Inclusive Registration Includes: Cattlemens College, Welcome reception, All sessions, Trade show, Trade show reception, Lunches and Dinners \$175		
THURSDAY ONLY: Thursday sessions, Trade show, Lunch, Joint cattle industry auction and dinner \$75		
FRIDAY ONLY: Friday sessions, Trade show, Lunch, Steak fry dinner and dance \$100		
Arizona Junior Livestock Registration (Must be 18 years or younger) Includes all meals and all AJLA activities \$50		
Early bird registration closes on June 13th. Registrations must be postmarked by this date. After June 13th, the cost increases by \$25, with an additional \$25 fee for Non-Members.		

TOTALS

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COUNTY _____

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Wednesday, July 23 – Agenda

7:00 am	Bonita Room #109	Coalition of Counties Meeting	Howard Hutchinson, Executive Director
9:00 am	Gila Room #107-108	Cowbelles Meeting & Workshop	Trina Sue Riggs, ASC President
1:00 pm	Bonita Room #109	AZ Cattle Industry Foundation Meeting	Mike Macauley, ACIF President
1:00 pm	All Areas	Trade show set up opens	
1:00 pm	Multiple Rooms	Committee Meetings as needed	
5:30 pm	Branding Iron	Welcome Reception	Scott Pilchard, Western Skies Advisory

Thursday, July 24 – Agenda

7:00 am	Foyer	Registration & Trade Show Opens	
7:00 am	Bonita Room #109	Cowbelles Past President's Breakfast	
8:00 am	Main Hall #111	Welcome & Opening General Session 1	Todd Haynie, EAC President Mike Gannuscio, ACGA President
8:15 am		Cattlemen's College #1	Dr. Sarah Klopatek, JBS
8:55 am		NCBA Update	Colin Woodall, CEO
9:20 am		Break/Door Prize	
9:30 am		Selling Meat Directly to Consumers Expert Panel	Sierra Jepsen, Dr. David Anderson, Audra Smith, Courtney McGuire
10:30 am		Arizona Department of Agriculture	Rob Smook, Associate Director, AZDA Katelin Clifford and Daniela Rodriguez
11:00 am		Cattlemen's College #2	Dr. Pedro Carvalho, AgNext
11:45 am		Break	
12:00 pm		Legislative Lunch	Pivotal Policy Consulting Nikki Weston, ANCW

Breakout Sessions I

1:30 pm	Main Hall #111	Butcher Solutions Demonstration	Sierra Jepsen
	Bonita Room #109	Partnering with Programs: Farm Service Agency	Jeanette Kirkland
	Rooms #107-108	Partnering with Law Enforcement	Sheriffs Mark Dannels, PJ Allred, Eric Ellison and Bret Axlund
2:30 pm		Break – Door Prize	

Schedule subject to change without notice

Thursday, July 24 – Agenda (Continued)

2:45 pm	All Rooms	Committee Meetings as needed	Committee Chairs
3:45 pm	Main Hall #111	Policy Meeting	Sonia Gasho, Ag Issues Chair
4:30 pm	Trade Show	Trade Show Reception and Door Prizes	
6:30 pm	Manor 415	ACGA / ACIF / ASC Cattle Industry Dinner and Auction	

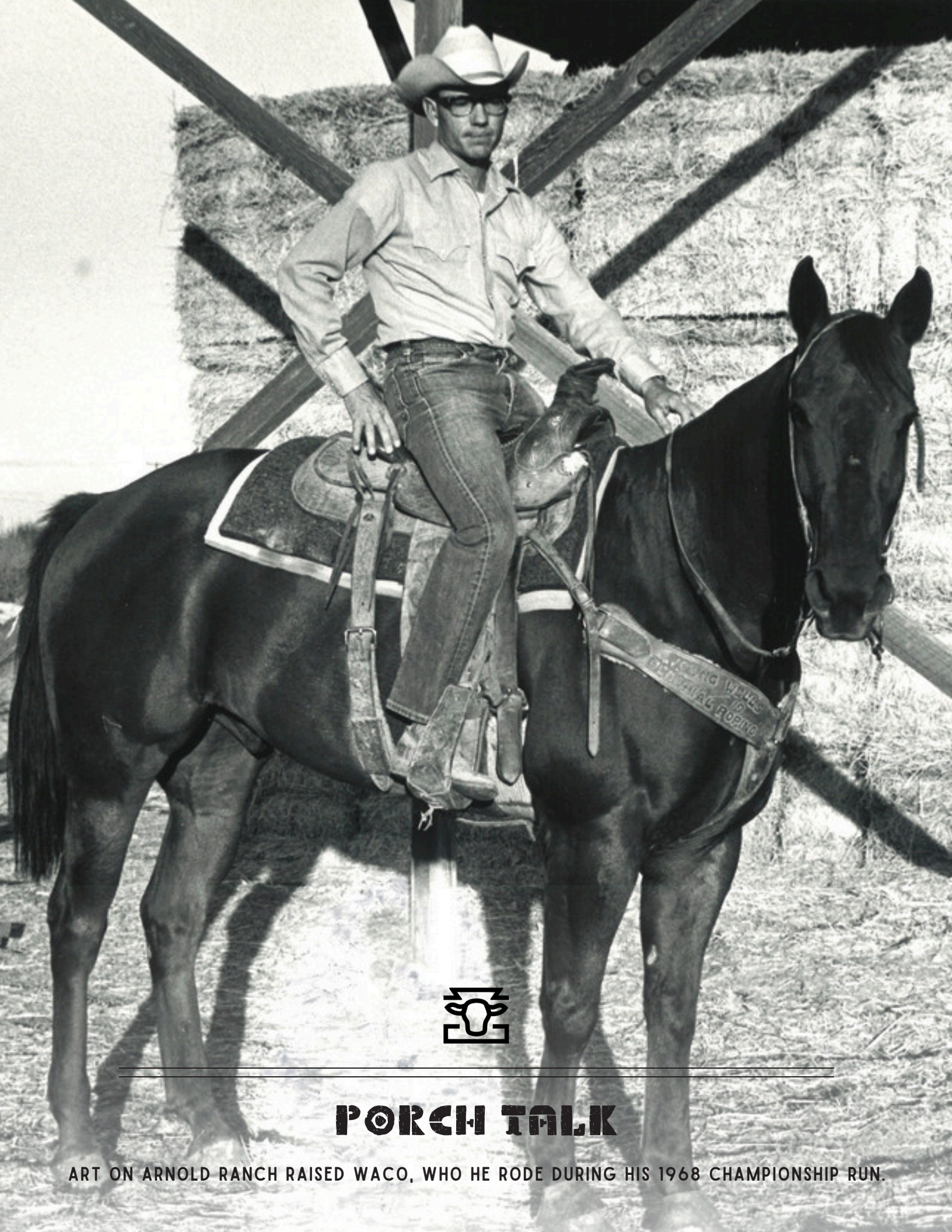
Friday, July 25 – Agenda

7:00 am	Foyer	Registration & Trade Show Opens	
7:30 am	Gila Room #107-108	Business Affiliate Breakfast	Scott Pilchard, Chair
8:00 am	Main Hall #111	Opening General Session II	Mike Gannuscio, ACGA President
8:15 am		University of Arizona Update	Dr. D Scott Merrell and Dr. Ed Martin
8:45 am		Cattlemen's College #3	Corbitt Wall, Feeder Flash
9:45 am		Break	

Breakout Sessions II

10:00 am	Gila Room # 107-108	USFS / BLM Updates	Robert Trujillo & Philip Cooley
	Main Hall #111	Game & Fish, US Fish & Wildlife Updates	Deputy Director Josh Hurst, Jennifer Kaplan and Heather Whitlaw
	Aravaipa #110	AZ Beef Council "Beef 101"	Lauren Maehling and Tiffany Selchow
11:15 am	Main Hall #111	"Emerging Technology in Agriculture and the Benefits to Ranchers"	Dr. Ethan Orr
11:45 am		Break	
12:00 pm		Awards Lunch	Mike Gannuscio
1:30 pm		ALIRT Presentation	
2:00 pm		General Membership Meeting	
4:00 pm	Trade Show	Trade Show Closes	
4:00 pm		Closing Session and Door Prizes	
6:30 pm	Manor 415	Steak Fry & Dance (featuring Mark Earp and The Last Territory Band)	

Schedule subject to change without notice



PORCH TALK

ART ON ARNOLD RANCH RAISED WACO, WHO HE RODE DURING HIS 1968 CHAMPIONSHIP RUN.

The Many Faces of Cattle Growers



Photo on the left - Art and Joe Glenn in OK City. Picture from the DeVere Helfrich collection Natl Cowboy Museum

Longtime Western AZ Rancher Acknowledged as One of Rodeo's Best

Those of you who know Art Arnold will verify that you probably won't meet a more humble or down-to-earth guy. It would be hard to tell that he is considered one of the best team ropers of his era.

Born in 1940, about the time his dad acquired a farm and two grazing allotments in the Buckeye area, Art has been punching cows in the desert all his life. Like many Arizona cowboys of the time, Art became a very skilled roper at a young age doctoring cattle for screwworms.

His dad, Carl, was also a renowned professional steer tripper, always participating in Cheyenne and Pendleton, winning both once. Carl was probably best known for match roping, though. He matched the famous Bob Crosby six times, winning five of those times. He also matched notables such as Everett Bowman, Toots Mansfield, King Merritt, Ike Rude, and Clark McIntyre, to name a few. After one match, Carl came home with \$12,000 in prize money and money won betting on himself. That was a lot of cash in 1946. As Art said, "That probably paid off the family farm."

Besides raising hay on the Buckeye farm, used to feed cattle in drought conditions, they also raised horses. Many went back to the stud Mark, in the bloodline of Lucky Blanton. They crossed these mares with neighbor Jack Clem's stud Peppy Apache. In dry times, they would bring the cattle to the farm, but the horses stayed on the desert. "They didn't know what hay was," said Arnold.

Art began rodeoing in 1958 and attended the first-ever NFR in 1959. He would compete in 11 total NFR rodeos. Art won the World Championship in 1968, roping with the previous year's champion and Arizona legend Joe Glenn. In 1969, Art was Reserve Champion behind Jerold Camarillo, as he had been in 1967 behind Glenn. Art only competed in 29 rodeos in 1968, but he and Glenn won every Arizona rodeo. Asked what his favorite rodeo was, he replied, "Salinas, but I didn't do very good there. I only won it once." Known for tying the thief's knot in team tying, he was faster than all other headers. This caused the RCA to outlaw the knot. It didn't matter, though—even tying an overhand knot, Art still had the fastest hands.

Last year, Art was inducted into the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame. If you watched the ceremony, you saw the humble man receive his award, thank the Hall, and walk off stage. Enough had already been said, according to Arnold.

Art was also a longtime board member of the Western Arizona BLM Advisory Board, along with industry leaders Bob Crowder and Jim Caughlin. He and his wife, Jody, still live in Buckeye.

You can see the interview at azcattlegrowers.org.

There's My **Cowboy**

Applejack by Bryce Angell

Applejack surprised us when he showed one summer morn'. We weren't aware of any appaloosa to be born. We raised him from a colt. He was tough as a rhino's hide. He could pack a half an elk all day and never break his stride. He had the best of qualities; I'd say except for one. 'Cuz when you put a shoe on him that horse would come undone. To think you would control him was a notion without hope. He'd unravel faster than a brand new cheap five dollar rope. Given choice of shoeing Applejack and pounding in my brain, I'd choose nailing apple jelly to a runaway train. The last cowboy who'd shod the horse still wore his right arm sling and looked like he'd gone fifteen with Mike Tyson in the ring.

So, when Applejack was needing shoes I hoped that he'd give in. But when I looked into his eyes, I saw the devil's kin. I picked up Applejack's right foot. He didn't move an inch. I wondered if this was the time. Would this shoeing be a cinch? But then he jerked his hoof and gave the halter rope a fling. Applejack was madder than a rooster on caffeine. He was blowing snot. His eyes were wide and being just plain rude. Applejack was proving his tornado attitude. He reared up too far backward then fell down and hit his head. I swear I heard my brother say, "Let's hope that horse is dead!"

He wasn't dead, just plumb knocked out. I thought, "Good time to shoe." I tried to grab his leg again, then Applejack came to.

He struggled, then he stood right up and looked like he was lost. His expression so bewildered, 'cuz both his eyes were crossed.

I picked up Applejack's hind leg and nailed a brand-new shoe. The other three went on so fast, he didn't have a clue.

For three whole hours old Applejack just stood and stared ahead. I'm sure he must have felt like his poor head was made of lead.

Now I'm not recommending how to shoe an ornery cuss. But when a horse tips over, then it might just be a plus.

And if you're wondering, did the headache cure old Applejack? It didn't help a doggone bit. That old devil came right back.

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THE LATEST PROBLEM FOR RANCHERS: FIRE INSURANCE

Written by Fred and Lewis Ruskin

Ranching has never been easy, but it has become increasingly challenging as more and more of the headaches are outside of a rancher's control.

Last spring, we were shocked when our longtime insurance carrier canceled fire coverage on every building on our ranch. We later learned we weren't alone—fire policies were being dropped for rural properties across Arizona. The reason given? Increased wildfire risk.

Our ranch dates back to the 1860s, and not once in that time have we lost a building to a wildfire. We've had fires, sure—from electrical issues or other internal causes, just like fires do in town. They didn't come roaring in from the forest.

The trees around our buildings are mostly juniper, which are famously hard to burn. Up in the pines on our high country, where we've seen lightning-triggered fires, the flames fizzle out when they hit the junipers. And many of our buildings are built entirely of metal, and with no flammable vegetation nearby. In short, the actual fire risk here is minimal.

This isn't just about risk—it's about how that risk is measured. The truth is, insurance companies simply have not bothered to develop the tools or local knowledge to assess rural risk. To them, anything outside city limits looks like a matchbox. But anyone who's spent time managing land in the West knows the picture is far more complex.

For instance, chaparral is much more of a fire risk than large forests are. Think about starting a fire—what's easier to light, a juniper log or a handful of twigs? The tragic “forest” fires we hear about—Griffith Park, Mann Gulch, South Canyon, and Yarnell—mostly burned through brush and grass, not dense forest. Yet somehow, all rural land gets painted with the same high-risk brush. I know, it is a waste of time trying to explain this to a secretary in Hartford, Connecticut, who doesn't know a juniper from a junebird.

And now, not just ranches, but even well-developed subdivisions near places like Flagstaff are losing their coverage. It's becoming harder and harder for anyone outside a municipality to secure basic fire coverage.

This adds to the already growing list of challenges modern ranchers face. Between market volatility, water regulation, labor shortages, and wildfire preparedness, we're now asked to be insurance specialists. Losing access to essential coverage like fire insurance makes it that much harder to keep a ranch running for the next generation.

The Forest Service is doing what it can. My son James has worked as a Hotshot in the Gila, Kaibab, and Coconino National Forests. He and his fellow firefighters are trying to manage a complex situation made worse by decades of fire suppression. But the reality is, most working ranches aren't sitting in the middle of overgrown, explosive forests. They're active, managed spaces—often with less burn potential than a suburban backyard.

We appreciate the support we've seen from lawmakers like Mark Finchem, Quang H. Nguyen, and Selina Bliss, who've shown they understand the unique pressures facing rural Arizonans. What we need now is a legislative fix—something that gives rural residents a pathway to access fair, realistic insurance.

For those in Yavapai County still searching for coverage, I recommend reaching out to John Popp with the Farm Bureau. If there's a way to get you insured, John will find it.



Woodrow Banuelos Wins the Best Verde Valley Bred and Fed Steer Award at the 2025 Verde Valley Fair

Written by Yavapai Cattle Growers' Association

Congratulations to Woodrow Banuelos from Cottonwood, who won the Best Bred and Fed Steer Champion Award from the Yavapai Cattle Growers Association (YCGA) at the Verde Valley Fair on May 3, 2025. The Yavapai Cattle Growers Association presented him with a \$1,000 check for his award.

Woodrow is eight years old. In what was his first year being eligible to compete with a market animal, Woodrow made a memorable debut. The young showman is the son of Eric and McKenzie Banuelos, both Cottonwood natives who also grew up showing livestock at the Verde Valley Fair. Now, they're proudly watching the next generation carry on the tradition.

Woodrow's passion for cattle started early. When his older sister Kennedy began showing on the jackpot circuit at age seven, Woodrow was right by her side. At just five years old, he began participating in peewee competitions, developing a deep-rooted love for the livestock industry.

As the youngest member of Banuelos Livestock & Feed, Woodrow was hands-on throughout the process of breeding, calving, and raising his steer, affectionately named "Who's There." The name, inspired by the steer's sire "Knock Knock," was a shared joke between siblings that turned into a fitting moniker.

A key mentor along the way has been family friend Trenton Castro, whom Woodrow looks up to like an older brother. Trenton not only helped guide and support Woodrow throughout the year but also had a standout fair himself, winning Grand Champion Market Goat.

After a year of showing side by side, Woodrow and Kennedy wrapped up the season at the Verde Valley Fair in spectacular fashion. Not only did Woodrow take home the Bred & Fed honors, but Kennedy also earned Reserve Champion Market Beef—on her 10th birthday, no less—making the day even more special for the Banuelos family.

Capping off the celebration, Woodrow's Grand Champion Bred & Fed steer was purchased by longtime community supporters Big O Tires, owned by Chris and Nicole Ogden—an act of generosity that underscores the strong support for youth in agriculture in the Verde Valley.

Woodrow plans to continue raising and showing steers in the years to come, building on the foundation of hard work, family support, and a love for the cattle industry.

Each year, for the past several years, YCGA presents a \$1,000 check to the market steer exhibitor at the Verde Valley Fair who has the Best Bred and Fed Beef in the Verde Valley. YCGA encourages the development of more young people to become engaged and/or pursue a career in the beef cattle industry. The Yavapai Cattle Growers Association membership includes cattle ranchers from throughout Yavapai County. YCGA proudly represents the cattle ranchers in Yavapai County and represents their interests in policy issues and in working with the Federal Land Management agencies (USFS/BLM) and state and federal agencies. YCGA wishes Woodrow the best in his future endeavors.



L to R: Past YCGA Presidents: Ken Ligon, Andy Groseta, Paul Groseta, 2025 YCGA President Tim Petersen, Trenton Castro, Woodrow Banuelos

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Stewardship Comments

New Study, Funded by Arizona Cattle Industry Research and Education Foundation, Examines Economic Impacts of Mexican Gray Wolf Depredation on Arizona Ranching

On May 1, 2025 The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension is proud to announce the completion of a groundbreaking study, Effects of Depredation and Mexican Gray Wolf Presence on Ranch Returns: A Case Study of a Representative Arizona Ranch, funded by the Arizona Cattle Industry Research and Education Foundation (ACIREF).

The study is now available at <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/effects-depredation-mexican-gray-wolf-presence-ranch-returns-case-study-representative>.

This comprehensive case study explores the financial and operational challenges faced by Arizona ranchers due to Mexican gray wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) depredation and presence, offering critical insights into balancing wildlife conservation with sustainable ranching.

Conducted by a team of researchers from the University of Arizona, with support from ACIREF, the study focuses on a representative cattle ranch in eastern Arizona, within the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area. It quantifies the direct costs of livestock losses from wolf depredation and indirect costs, such as reduced cattle weight gain, lower pregnancy rates, and increased operational expenses due to wolf presence. The research also evaluates the effectiveness of current compensation programs and non-lethal deterrence strategies, like range riders and fladry barriers, in mitigating economic impacts.

Key findings include:

- Direct depredation losses, while significant for individual ranchers, represent less than 1% of annual gross income for the regional livestock industry, but indirect costs can amplify financial strain.
- Compensation programs often fall short, covering only confirmed depredations and excluding indirect losses, which may be two to three times higher than direct losses.
- Non-lethal strategies, such as the Range Riders Program, have shown promise, with a reported 39% reduction in depredations in 2020, highlighting the potential for broader implementation.

The study underscores the need for enhanced compensation models and broader adoption of non-lethal deterrence to reduce conflicts. It also highlights the emotional and economic toll on ranchers, calling for collaborative solutions involving ranchers, conservationists, and government agencies.

The full report is accessible to the public through the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension website. Stakeholders, including ranchers, policymakers, and conservation groups, are encouraged to use these findings to foster dialogue and develop sustainable strategies for human-wolf coexistence.

Sharing Your Story – It Matters

How to Talk to Consumers About Agriculture: Start by Listening

Written by: Ashlee Mortimer, CEO, Mortimer Farms

There's one tool in advocacy that's often more powerful than facts or photos: listening.

When we talk about agriculture with the public—whether in the comment section, at the grocery store, at the State Capitol, or during a tour—it's easy to feel the need to immediately jump in and correct misinformation. But sometimes, the best way to open the door to understanding is by first hearing where someone is coming from.

Many consumers are asking honest questions. Others may be repeating things they've seen online or heard. Either way, starting with a posture of curiosity—not defensiveness—makes all the difference. When someone says, "I've heard cows are bad for the environment," instead of jumping into stats and science, start with:

"That's a great question. I can understand why you'd wonder about that. I too care about the environment and there's a lot of information out there."

That simple sentence does two things: it validates the person's concern, and it creates space for a respectful exchange. From there, you can explain how ranchers manage land with sustainability in mind, rotate pastures, and use regenerative practices that benefit the environment.

The truth is, most people don't want to argue. They just want to feel heard. When we approach conversations with calm, patience, and a willingness to listen first, we open the door to trust.

Here are three tips to help guide those conversations:

Ask Questions Before You Answer - "What made you curious about that?" or "Where did you hear that?" helps you understand their perspective and respond more clearly.

Find Common Ground - Whether it's care for animals, clean water, or healthy food—start where you agree before diving into differences.

Stay Human - You're not a press release—you're a person who cares deeply about your work. Share your story, your challenges, your values. That's what people connect with.

In a world full of noise, our quiet confidence, lived experience, and willingness to engage respectfully is more powerful than any headline. So next time someone challenges you, try this: pause, listen, and then **speak with heart**. Because that's how we build bridges—and that's how we protect the future of agriculture.

On the Ranch Q & A

Written by Josh and Kennedi Ross, 51 Ranch

How has the new U.S. administration impacted your livelihood as a rancher?

The new U.S. administration has impacted our livelihood as ranchers by implementing tariffs on imported goods. This has caused a positive effect on the beef market for U.S. ranchers by increasing beef prices.

What policy changes do you hope to see in the near future regarding our industry and why?

We hope to see a policy change regarding the regulations on selling beef. Many consumers are looking to buy food products straight from producers. This is difficult for ranchers to execute, as cut beef has many regulations when sold directly to the consumer.

What is the single largest factor contributing to the profitability of your ranch or operation, and how does this relate to the health of your herd and your calving rate?

Rain is the largest factor in our herd health, calving rate, and therefore, profit. Without rain, the cows do not have water or feed and do not reproduce.

What role does your operation play in sustainability, and how do you balance conservation with profitability?

We do many improvement projects on the 51 Ranch to use the country to its fullest ability while also benefiting the wildlife and land. These projects include spring development, installing water lines, wells, cleaning dirt tanks, rolling up old fences, and clearing trails. The 51 Ranch works closely with Arizona Game and Fish and the Arizona Mule Deer Organization to assist with funding and labor on these projects.

What advice would you go back and give yourself when you were just starting off?

I would tell myself to shut up and listen to the old-timers; they know way more than I thought I did.



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Cattlemen's College

Protecting Water Rights: Why the Fondomonte Lawsuit Sets a Dangerous Precedent for All Arizona Agriculture

Much of the public discourse surrounding Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes' lawsuit against Fondomonte Arizona, LLC has focused on the fact that the company is a Saudi owned company. And while foreign ownership/leasing of American farmland absolutely deserves its own legislative scrutiny, we must not lose sight of what's really at stake in this case — water rights, private land use, and leased land use.

Let's set aside the foreign usage debate for a moment and imagine a different scenario: What if this land were owned by an American farmer or rancher? What if, instead of an international company, it was a fifth-generation Arizona cattle producer who had sunk wells, invested in infrastructure, and grown hay or raised livestock — only to be sued because their neighbor or a nearby town claimed the farming/ranching activity was inconvenient, or that it was potentially affecting water levels?

That's the precedent this lawsuit risks setting.

This legal action isn't just about Fondomonte. It's about whether agricultural producers on private and leased land in Arizona — regardless of who they are — can retain their groundwater rights or be stripped of them through public nuisance claims. If this lawsuit succeeds, it opens the door for any neighbor or interest group to challenge a farm's/ranch's water usage, even if that business is operating lawfully, efficiently, and within its water rights.

Water in Arizona has always been a high-stakes issue. We farm and ranch in one of the most arid regions of the country, yet we've built a powerful agricultural economy by being resourceful, efficient, and productive. Arizona's alfalfa yields are among the highest in the world, thanks to our climate and growing season. But it only works because of water access. This lawsuit has the ability to increase all of our alfalfa prices and make alfalfa harder to come by — something that will directly affect ranchers.

Yes, we need reforms around who can buy and lease agricultural land in our state. Yes, we need additional legislation to protect our property/water rights. But undermining lawful groundwater use through nuisance lawsuits is a slippery slope that threatens every agricultural operation in Arizona.

We must look beyond the current lawsuit and recognize how it could affect our ability to ranch and farm — how it could lead to tomorrow's regulatory overreach. If we weaken the rights to access the water beneath their own property, we're not just going after one foreign company — we're setting a precedent that could erode the very foundation of Arizona agriculture.

Protecting water rights isn't just about preserving a resource — it's about preserving the future of farming and ranching in our state.

There is a growing group of Arizona farmers and ranchers uniting. These land stewards are working together to protect every landowner's right to access the water beneath their property. They believe that today's fight isn't just about one company or one lawsuit; it's about safeguarding the future of agriculture in Arizona.



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Cattlemen's College

Ranchers Deserve Fair Treatment, Not Felony Charges.



Photo Courtesy of Elsie Fortune Photography

After more than a year of legal uncertainty, fear, and public outcry, Charles and Heather Maude, fifth-generation ranchers from South Dakota, are finally free of the federal criminal charges that threatened to upend their lives and livelihood. On Monday, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins formally announced that the charges—filed under the Biden Administration and tied to a disputed fence line between the Maudes' private land and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) allotments—have been dropped.

The case garnered national attention and sparked outrage across the ranching community. At the heart of the dispute was a piece of ground that had been managed consistently by the Maude family for generations. Despite good-faith efforts by the Maudes to resolve the boundary issue through standard USFS channels, federal officials served both Charles and Heather with separate felony charges of "theft of federal property," each carrying potential sentences of up to 10 years in prison and \$250,000 in fines.

Public Lands Council (PLC) and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) worked tirelessly across two presidential administrations to secure justice—not just for the Maudes, but for all public lands ranchers who feared similar overreach. "This was a clear example of government overreach," said NCBA President Buck Wehrbein. "No ranching family should ever have to endure what the Maudes went through."

PLC President Tim Canterbury echoed those sentiments, saying, "The public outcry showed that ranchers across the West are fed up with being treated like criminals for managing land they've responsibly cared for for decades. Trust in federal agencies cannot exist under the threat of prosecution."

As a safeguard to prevent future incidents, Secretary Rollins also announced the creation of the USDA Lawfare Portal, a new tool for landowners and ranchers to report cases of legal harassment or misuse of authority by federal agencies.

"This case underscores the imbalance of power between ranchers and a sprawling federal bureaucracy," said Kaitlynn Glover, Executive Director of PLC. "It had a chilling effect on every permittee across the West."

With this case resolved, the Maudes—and ranchers like them—can focus once again on what they do best: stewarding the land, raising livestock, and feeding the country. And thanks to industry leaders who stood firm, a strong message has been sent: ranchers deserve fair treatment, not felony charges.



INDUSTRY NEWS

FROM PARTNERS & FRIENDS

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PLC Update

Garrett Edmonds, Director, Public Lands Council

As summer approaches, the fruits of the labor sown by the Public Lands Council (PLC) and our partners are already bearing fruit. After more than a year of work with the Biden and Trump administrations, PLC secured a significant victory for ranchers who rely on fair and predictable land management and legal processes. After more than a year of facing federal felony charges—each carrying a potential \$250,000 fine and up to 10 years in prison—over fence lines between their private land and Forest Service land that had not changed in three generations, the Trump Administration has officially ended the criminal prosecution of Charles and Heather Maude, permittees from South Dakota. PLC worked diligently across two administrations to bring this case to a close not only for the Maudes, but for ranchers across the West who face similar uncertainty if the Forest Service chooses to pursue criminal charges over fence lines, and we thank Secretary Brooke Rollins for recognizing the injustice and taking action. **As PLC President Tim Canterbury stated, “The public outcry we saw on behalf of the Maudes shows that public lands ranchers everywhere are breathing a sigh of relief knowing that the USDA, under Secretary Rollins, is no longer trying to put handcuffs on hardworking farmers and ranchers.”**

To prevent future cases like this, Secretary Rollins announced the launch of a new USDA Lawfare Portal, which will allow ranchers and landowners to report instances where the law was wrongfully used to target or impede their operations. PLC encourages producers to utilize this tool.

Not to be outdone, the Department of the Interior is also correcting policy missteps from the last administration. After calls from PLC and efforts in partnership with PLC staff, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) officially rescinded Permanent Instructional Memorandum (PIM) 2025-004. This memo would have delayed grazing permit renewals, introduced unnecessary restrictions in bighorn sheep habitat, and caused confusion regarding sage-grouse management areas. If left in place, the IM would have impeded BLM's ability to enact meaningful grazing regulations reform, so PLC worked quickly with Interior solicitors and acting BLM leadership to protect permittees' ability to renew permits and take advantage of upcoming rulemakings.

On Capitol Hill, the Senate has been busy advancing key USDA and DOI nominees supported by PLC: Stephen Vaden, nominee for Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; Leslie Beyer, nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Lands and Minerals Management; and Dr. Andrea Travnicek, nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science are all on the cusp of consideration by the full Senate. Deputy Secretary Kate MacGregor was confirmed in mid-May, which is a crucial step in moving PLC's priorities forward through the Department. Many of the issues we want this administration to address—from grazing regulations to improved permitting processes and streamlined environmental reviews—require a seasoned, experienced leader at the helm. PLC strongly supported Deputy Secretary MacGregor and is glad she's finally in place at the Department.

In international news, President Trump announced a landmark trade agreement with the United Kingdom that will open new doors for U.S. beef exports. During the press conference, Secretary Rollins described the deal as “a game-changer,” highlighting American beef as “the safest, the best quality, and the crown jewel of American agriculture.” This agreement will significantly expand market access for U.S. producers and serves as a timely reminder of the global strength of our ranching community. While the terms of the agreement are still unclear regarding lamb and wool products, PLC remains committed to working with our state and national affiliates to promote policy for a strong public lands ranching market and export conditions.

PLC advocates for a science-based implementation of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and seeks practical solutions for managing livestock depredations, particularly from predatory species. We are collaborating with Congress to ensure that ESA listings are based on data and do not unnecessarily impede grazing operations. We support H.R. 845, the Protect the Livestock Protection Act, which aims to federally delist the gray wolf. PLC has submitted letters of support and is meeting with members of Congress to increase backing for this important legislation.

We thank Congressman Gosar for holding a hearing back in March that highlighted the unintended consequences of nonessential experimental populations under Section 10(j) of the ESA. PLC Secretary Robbie LeValley provided testimony on the challenges faced by producers and rural communities. This effort has sparked broader discussions on the issues surrounding these predator species that coexist with ranchers and rural communities.

PLC is making progress in finding meaningful legislative solutions to alleviate the burdens caused by the Mexican gray wolf, and Congressional staff are eager to discuss this issue, seeking insights from those directly affected. Please continue to reach out, as your firsthand knowledge is invaluable in educating members of Congress about the challenges you face. During the ranchers' visits to Washington, we emphasized the importance of Congressman Bruce Westerman's ESA Amendments Act of 2025, which aims to provide necessary flexibility and address unscientific listing timelines. The time to act on these species-specific issues is now, as we work to restore common sense to what was once a well-intentioned piece of legislation.

A subject that is top of mind for any rancher this time of year is wildfire. We are urging Congress and federal agencies to incorporate proactive wildfire risk reduction strategies across the West. PLC partnered with the Congressional Western Caucus to send a letter to Secretary Rollins urging the administration to prioritize targeted grazing as a key wildfire mitigation strategy as the agency implements Secretarial Memorandum 1078-006 to increase timber production from the National Forest System and carry out emergency actions to reduce wildfire risk. Targeted grazing is a proven method for reducing fine fuels, protecting critical habitat, and enhancing landscape resilience. With rising temperatures and early-season ignitions already occurring, PLC is calling on federal agencies to embrace grazing as an essential land management tool.

We will provide more updates ahead of Flagstaff, but for now—stay safe, and thank you for standing strong with PLC.

NCBA Update

NCBA Priorities Advance in House Reconciliation Bill

Several key priorities supported by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) advanced May 22nd as the U.S. House passed its reconciliation bill, delivering wins for cattle health, disaster relief, and tax policy.

"Cattle producers need strong protections—from foreign animal diseases to natural disasters and depredation," said NCBA President Buck Wehrbein. "This bill moves us closer to delivering those resources, and NCBA will keep fighting until it becomes law."

Key provisions include:

- Reimbursement for losses from federally protected predator depredation
- Expanded access to livestock forage disaster aid during drought
- Continued funding for feral swine eradication
- Strengthened animal disease response infrastructure (NADPRP, NAHLN, NAVVCB)

The bill also includes major NCBA-backed tax reforms:

- Permanently raises estate tax exemptions to \$15M/person, \$30M/couple
- Preserves stepped-up basis
- Increases the Section 199A deduction from 20% to 23%
- Expands Section 179 expensing to \$2.5M
- Reinstates 100% bonus depreciation for five years
- Extends the Federal Disaster Tax Relief Act of 2023

"This package provides vital tools for family farms and ranches," said NCBA VP Ethan Lane. "We urge the Senate to pass it quickly and support America's cattle producers."

Cowbelles Report

The 2025 Arizona Farm and Ranch Museum & Hall of Fame photos are in! Look at those 2025 Hall of Famers!

Photos from this year's event are available on our website. It is a work in progress. You are welcome to look them over but know we are working on a better way to show them. <https://bit.ly/HOFPage>



Cattlelog Ad Prices



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➤ 1/4 Page 3 5/8 X 4 7/8	\$375.00
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Any state and national companies or entities engaged in serving the needs of the cattle industry with customers across the state.

SEEKING NON-VOTING MEMBERSHIP

BUSINESS ASSOCIATE \$125

Any local businesses or entities that engage in serving the needs of the cattle industry with regional customers and companies.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER \$125

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The membership form can be emailed to operations@azcattlegrowers.org or mailed to the office. To make a credit card payment over the phone, please call 602 267 1129 or a check can be mailed to **PO BOX 1267 Buckeye, AZ 85326**. Please make checks payable to ACGA, noting (Membership) in the memo line.

U of A Report

CALES Showcases Research Excellence at 2025 Discovery & Innovation Awards

Research excellence remains a cornerstone of the College of Agriculture, Life and Environmental Sciences (CALES). At the 2025 Discovery & Innovation Awards, CALES recognized exceptional contributions across the college, highlighting work that advances sustainability, public health, and community well-being across the Southwest.

Outstanding Team in Research Award

The Southwest Environmental Pathogen Produce Safety Study team conducted the largest longitudinal environmental microbiology study in North America, collecting over 8,000 samples and performing 15,000 pathogen analyses. Their findings provided vital insights into the causes of major foodborne outbreaks and offered solutions to prevent future contamination, especially in relation to dust and wind patterns.

Outstanding Staff in Research Awards

Anna Bounds (ALVSCE Research Administration) managed nearly 200 proposals last year, streamlining pre-award processes and supporting research growth.

Gregory Goodman (SNAP-Ed Program) leads Arizona's SNAP-Ed data team, developing innovative methodologies that have set new standards for national reporting. He is celebrated not only for his technical skills but also for his mentorship and team spirit.

Early Career Research Award

Flurin Babst (School of Natural Resources and the Environment) has secured over \$3 million in research funding and published 30 papers since 2020. His work in carbon cycling and dryland ecology is shaping climate change mitigation strategies.

Outstanding Research Mentor Award

Rachel Mitchell (School of Nutritional Sciences and Wellness) has mentored 15 students who have gone on to publish papers and present research nationwide, making her an invaluable asset to student success.

Research Impact Award

Norma Perez-Brena (Norton School of Human Ecology) leads community-driven research centered on Latinx youth and families. Her projects have secured \$10.7 million in funding, supported hundreds of students, and positively impacted over 2,000 families.

Eminent Researcher Award

Donald Falk (SNRE) is a global leader in ecology, whose 17-year CALES career has produced 14,000 citations and over \$9 million in funding. His work bridges theory and application, shaping how land managers respond to climate and ecological change.

From food safety to forest resilience, CALES researchers continue to deliver bold solutions for the Southwest and beyond.



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Arizona Dept. of Ag Update

IMPORTANT MESSAGE:

In the near future, the Arizona Department of Agriculture will begin charging a service fee on all transactions paid with a credit or debit card.

Up until now, the Department has absorbed the fees that are assessed by credit card companies, which have been averaging over \$80,000 a year. Due to state budget cutbacks, we must now pass these fees on to our customers. Upon implementation, the Department will charge a transaction service fee of 2.2% or \$2.00, whichever is higher.

This fee can be avoided by paying electronically via ACH electronic funds transfer or e-check.

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Proposed BRANDS

The official location for notice of proposed brands is the Arizona Department of Agriculture's website at <http://searchagriculture.az.gov/mastercontent/brandsnotice.aspx>. To view the complete list of proposed brands, be sure to check the AZDA website. Below are a few of the brands submitted in accordance with A.R.S § 3-1261(C).

These brands are not available for sale by the Arizona Department of Agriculture. The "End Date" shown is the deadline for receiving protests for the proposed brand. All protests or objections must be submitted in writing and postmarked before the "End Date" in the chart below. Protests that are postmarked after the End Date will not be considered.

Brand	Brand No. End Date	Location	Brand	Brand No. End Date	Location	Brand	Brand No. End Date	Location
	Brand No.: 20117 End Date: 6/14/2025	Cattle: RH Horse: RH Sheep: RH Goat: RH		Brand No.: 20108 End Date: 6/13/2025	Cattle: LT Horse: LT Sheep: LH Goat: LH		Brand No.: 20113 End Date: 6/13/2025	Cattle: RH Horse: RT Sheep: NO Goat: NO
	Brand No.: 20115 End Date: 6/13/2025	Cattle: LR Horse: LS Sheep: LS Goat: LS		Brand No.: 20116 End Date: 6/13/2025	Cattle: RR Horse: RH Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20114 End Date: 6/13/2025	Cattle: LT Horse: LT Sheep: LR Goat: LR
	Brand No.: 20111 End Date: 6/12/2025	Cattle: LH Horse: LH Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20112 End Date: 6/12/2025	Cattle: LH Horse: LH Sheep: LH Goat: LH		Brand No.: 6194 End Date: 6/12/2025 AMEND	Cattle: LR Horse: LT Sheep: NO Goat: NO
	Brand No.: 20109 End Date: 6/8/2025	Cattle: NO Horse: RS Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20110 End Date: 6/8/2025	Cattle: NO Horse: LH Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20107 End Date: 6/8/2025	Cattle: LH Horse: LT Sheep: NO Goat: NO
	Brand No.: 20106 End Date: 6/8/2025	Cattle: LS Horse: LS Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20105 End Date: 6/7/2025	Cattle: LS Horse: LS Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20104 End Date: 6/6/2025	Cattle: LH Horse: LH Sheep: LH Goat: LH
	Brand No.: 20103 End Date: 6/1/2025	Cattle: LH Horse: NO Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20101 End Date: 5/31/2025	Cattle: RH Horse: RT Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20102 End Date: 5/31/2025	Cattle: LH Horse: LS Sheep: NO Goat: NO
	Brand No.: 20099 End Date: 5/30/2025	Cattle: LH Horse: LS Sheep: LH Goat: LH		Brand No.: 20100 End Date: 5/30/2025	Cattle: RH Horse: RH Sheep: NO Goat: NO		Brand No.: 20097 End Date: 5/29/2025	Cattle: LH Horse: LH Sheep: NO Goat: NO

Arizona Farm Bureau Update

Arizona Farm Bureau: Advocating for Ranchers and Agriculture

Daniel Harris, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Manager, www.azfb.org/join

Written on May 16, 2025

As the Arizona Legislature reconvenes, budget talks remain deadlocked—largely due to disagreements over Proposition 123, a critical education funding measure tied to state trust lands. Governor Hobbs has vetoed multiple water-related bills important to rural Arizona, including SB1518 and HB2570, which addressed groundwater management and non-expansion areas—issues directly impacting ranching families in water-scarce regions.

Meanwhile, at the federal level, USDA has suspended live cattle imports from Mexico due to the spread of New World Screwworm. This aggressive pest poses a serious threat to U.S. livestock and border-area ranching operations. The USDA is increasing surveillance and biosecurity in coordination with APHIS and CBP.

On the trade front, President Trump's new agreement with the United Kingdom boosts U.S. beef exports, establishing a tariff-free quota of 13,000 metric tons and expanding market access for American ranchers.

Additionally, a May 19 virtual WOTUS listening session hosted by the Small Business Administration will provide stakeholders an opportunity to weigh in on how new EPA definitions may affect private land use, ditch classification, and federal jurisdiction—key issues for property-owning ranchers.

With budget deadlines looming and policy shifts under way, Arizona ranchers are encouraged to stay engaged and informed.

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A special thanks to our Pioneer, Homestead, Trailblazer and Foreman award recipients. Your continued support is greatly appreciated!

We are humbled and honored to have served the cattle and range industry for more than 100 years and appreciate the support and attendance of more than 200 people at our "Honoring the Past and Looking to the Future" Field Day.

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