



# NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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## DOLE BILL WOULD AUTHORIZE LIVESTOCK MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, D.C.--Senator Bob Dole, top Republican on the Senate Agriculture Committee, has announced that he will introduce legislation tomorrow to authorize a national check-off fund for livestock market development, the Beef Research and Consumer Information Act. These funds would come from the sales of cattle by producers and not from taxpayers' funds or federal subsidy.

Calling this type of program the "best example of a bootstrap operation," Dole said the bill would enable cattle producers to establish, finance and carry out a coordinated program of research, producer and consumer education, and promotion to improve, maintain, and develop markets for cattle, beef and beef products and to provide an adequate, steady supply of high quality beef and beef products readily available to consumers at reasonable prices.

Dole, who has been working with various livestock and trade groups on the legislation, said it would provide a means for livestock producers to unite and help themselves. "In the past, this kind of program has met with a great deal of success in the wheat and grain industries," Dole added.

Senator Dole pointed out that while some consumer representatives may applaud low cattle prices as the best means of keeping retail meat prices low, these retail prices have not lowered nearly to the degree that live cattle prices have declined. "The disastrous price levels in the cattle industry have not benefited consumers and I am concerned that continued low prices in the industry will be disastrous for consumers as well as producers. It will be far more expensive for consumers," Dole said, "to get production back to an adequate level later if a substantial part of the livestock industry is forced out of business now."

Enactment of this legislation would require the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct extensive hearings and research to determine how producers desire to proceed in the program. The Secretary would then write and publish research and promotion orders which would have to be approved by producers in a nationwide referendum. Following two-thirds approval, orders would be issued enabling the formation and operation of the Beef Board. The Board would be composed of 68 cattle producers representing eligible cattle producer organizations. Members would be representative of the number of cattle produced in geographic areas of the Nation, and serve six-year, staggered terms.