



Nourishing Today  
Sustaining Tomorrow

# Lean Trimmings

The official newsletter  
of the Meat Institute

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## TOP STORY

### **Tariffs on USMCA-Compliant Imports Suspended Through April 2; China's Retaliatory Tariffs on Agricultural Products Take Effect Today.**

Last week, President Donald Trump signed executive orders imposing a 25 percent tariff on imports from Canada and Mexico and an additional 10 percent tariff on imports from China. On Thursday, President Trump announced he was suspending tariffs on USMCA-compliant imports from Canada and Mexico – including meat, poultry, and live animal imports – until April 2, 2025, which the Meat Institute applauded. The Canadian government, however, has presently decided to maintain retaliatory tariffs on U.S. imports.

Beijing began imposing tariffs today on many farm products from the United States. According to China's Ministry of Finance State Council Tariff Commission (SCTC) announcement, the duties would apply to anything not shipped out of the U.S. by March 10 and that had not arrived in China by April 12. A 10-percent tariff will be applied to commodities such as sorghum, soybeans, pork, beef, aquatic products, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, while a 15- percent tariff will be imposed on items including chicken, wheat, corn, and cotton. HS codes for products subject to the increased tariffs are listed in links in the [Global Agricultural Information Network \(GAIN\) report](#).

A summary of the meat industry's trade flows with Canada, China, and Mexico is available [here](#), and an FAQ document with links to previous Meat Institute memos on this topic can be found [here](#). The Meat Institute will continue to share updates about the tariffs, as well as changes to the policy and retaliatory actions, as they become available. The Meat Institute is still accepting input through its [Impact Survey](#) to collect and aggregate impact data from member companies affected by the tariffs.

## REGULATORY AFFAIRS

### **West Virginia Becomes First State to Pass Sweeping Ban on Artificial Food Dyes.**

West Virginia lawmakers passed a first-of-its-kind bill that bans a slate of artificial food dyes and preservatives. [House Bill 2354](#), approved by the state Senate on March 5, with a 31-2 vote, prohibits the sale of food products containing seven synthetic dyes and two preservatives, citing health concerns for children and families. The dyes targeted include Red No. 3, Red No. 40, Yellow No. 5, Yellow No. 6, Blue No. 1, Blue No. 2, and Green No. 3 — along with preservatives butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) and propylparaben. The measure, which cleared the House of Delegates on Feb. 28 with a 93-5 vote, now awaits reconciliation over its effective date before heading to Gov. Patrick Morrisey's desk for final approval.

## SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

### **Summary Available for March HWAC Call.**

The Meat Institute's Health and Wellness Advisory Committee (HWAC) held its monthly conference call on March 5 to discuss issues of common interest. The [summary](#) of what was discussed includes the meeting topics, such as the Make America Healthy Again commission, Administration updates, and an NIH-FDA nutrition regulatory science workshop, among other topics. The next monthly HWAC call will be held on Wednesday, April 16, at 2 p.m. ET. Contact Vice President of Regulatory and Scientific Affairs [Susan Backus](#), (202) 587-4220, with any questions.

### **Meat Foundation Advances Scientific Understanding of Meat and Poultry's Role in Healthy Diets.**

The Meat Foundation is committed to advancing scientific understanding, cultivating future leaders, and supporting continuous improvement in the meat industry. With recent cuts to USDA food safety committees, it's more important than ever to support the Foundation's research and scholarship programs. [Donations to the Meat Foundation](#) can be directed toward specific scholarship or research funds, or toward the general program funds. This online giving feature complements traditional giving via solicitation and meeting registration donations. Contact [Susan Backus](#) with any questions.

[Learn More About Supporting the Meat Foundation](#)

## LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

### **Federal Funding Expires March 14, House Republicans Unveil Stopgap Measure.**

Congress has until Friday to reach an agreement to fund the government beyond March 14. House Republicans on Saturday unveiled a stopgap measure to keep the government funded through September. The 99-page [continuing resolution \(CR\)](#), would increase defense spending, along with additional funding for veterans' health care, while decreasing non-defense spending below 2024 levels. The bill also includes more funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The House Rules Committee is expected to consider the measure today, with a floor vote expected Tuesday.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### **Meat Institute Signs Letter Supporting Luke Lindberg for Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs at USDA.**

The Meat Institute [signed a letter](#) along side dozens of organizations supporting Luke Lindeberg's nomination to be the next Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs at USDA. "We look forward to Mr. Lindberg's leadership and strong advocacy on behalf of the farmers, ranchers, growers, hunters, forest owners, conservationists, cooperatives, state departments of agriculture, renewable fuel producers and agribusinesses that we represent nationwide," the letter said. "Mr. Lindberg has a wealth of experience in this area, having served in multiple key capacities vital to trade and agriculture." [READ MORE>>](#)

**Trade Data for January 2025 Now Available.**

The latest Trade and Market Statistics Report released by USDA and compiled by the Meat Institute presenting [export data](#) through January 2025 is now available. Beef export volume is up three percent and value increased five percent from data in January 2024. Pork volume and value decreased by three percent and two percent, respectively, over the same period. [Import data](#) for the same month is also available, which shows a spike of imported beef products into the U.S., especially from countries like Paraguay, Japan and Argentina, by percentage rise.

## PROTEIN PACT UPDATE

### **Protein PACT Highlighted at SXSW.**

The Protein PACT was included in the official food track at SXSW in Austin, Texas, on Sunday. Meat Institute Chief Strategy Officer Eric Mittenthal was joined by representatives from Sea Pact, a seafood sustainability consortium and the Plant Based Food Association to discuss the role of protein in healthy, sustainable diets and how different sectors could collaborate on goals. A recording of the session will be made available on the [SXSW website](#).

### **Meat Institute, Protein PACT Connect with Industry Audiences at International Livestock Congress.**

Industry trust building and communications efforts took center stage at the International Livestock Congress in Houston. Sessions featured an overview of the Protein PACT strategy and effective ways to engage and earn consumer trust, particularly for student leaders attending the event. In addition, the Protein PACT academic advisory committee met to discuss ways to advance science to earn greater trust in animal protein.

## MEMBERSHIP ALERT

### **13 Meat Institute Members Participating in 2025 Climate Education Course.**

The Meat Institute is excited to recognize the following 13 member companies that are participating in the [Spring 2025 Supplier LOCT](#) climate education course to continue their journey of continuous improvement:

1. Agri Beef
2. Branding Iron Holdings
3. Carls Buddig & Company
4. Caviness Beef
5. Clemens Food Group
6. CLW Foods
7. Coast Packing
8. FPL Food
9. Golden State Foods
10. Johnsonville
11. Land O'Frost
12. SCS Engineers
13. Smithfield

- 14. Upper Iowa
- 15. Wholestone Farms

Now is a good time to consider participating in the Fall 2025 semester – more details are on [the Meat Institute's website](#). If you're unsure whether your company is participating or expected to see your company in this program, reach out to Strategy Director [Kristi Block](#).

## INDUSTRY EVENTS AND EDUCATION

*Do you have suggestions for educational content for upcoming Meat Institute Events? [Click here to submit your idea!](#)*

### **In-Person**

#### **[Annual Meat Conference](#) | March 24 – 26, 2025**

##### **Orlando, Florida**

This year marks a significant milestone as the [Annual Meat Conference](#) proudly celebrates 20 years of Power of Meat research! The Power of Meat report has guided the industry with key insights on consumer trends and the evolving meat market. Join us for sessions exploring the industry's past, present, and future with data-driven discussions and expert discussions. Be part of the Power of Meat's 20-year legacy and join over 2,400 attendees in shaping the next chapter! [See whose attending](#). [And Learn More>>](#)

#### **[Environment, Labor & Safety+ Conference](#) | April 21 – 23, 2025**

##### **Charlotte, North Carolina**

The Environment, Labor & Safety+ Conference (ELS+) is a platform designed for safety, environmental compliance, and HR professionals in the meat industry to stay ahead of emerging trends and challenges. Our experts focus on practical and applicable insights, sharing essential information to help keep your workforce and facilities safe, engaged, and up to date. This community provides a secure environment where you can discuss challenges and learn from peers about what strategies are effective and which ones aren't. Most importantly, you will leave equipped with tools and talking points to effectively communicate your valuable ideas back at your plant. [Learn More>>](#)

**The [Environmental Committee](#) and [Worker Safety Committee](#) will hold meetings at the ELS+ Conference open to all attendees. Register for these committee meetings with the links above.**

#### **[Animal Care & Handling Conference](#) | May 13 – 14, 2025**

##### **Denver, Colorado**

The Animal Care & Handling Conference is the only event dedicated to advancing animal welfare and handling practices, particularly within the meat industry's slaughter sector. This unique gathering brings together industry leaders, academics, and practitioners, bridging academic research and real-world application. The event encourages open dialogue and shares practical, actionable solutions designed for those working in slaughter operations. Attendees will gain valuable insights, network with peers, and leave equipped with strategies to enhance animal care and handling in their daily practices. [Register>>](#)

## Webinars

### **THIS WEEK: [Regulatory Services Update | March 13 at 1 p.m. ET](#)**

#### **Sponsored by [Neogen](#)**

From appealing non-compliance reports to product labeling to recent inspection issues and policy updates, the Meat Institute's bi-monthly Regulatory Services Update provides members access to experts who understand how to navigate the regulatory environment. This month's update will cover:

- FSIS Directive 12800.1 (which replaced 12600.2 and 12700.1) Inspection Coverage and Overtime
- Updated FSIS Guideline for Retained Water, January 2025
- Trade Update
- NR Workshop

### **[The Evolution of Foreign Material Inspection: From Reactive to Proactive](#) | April 10 at 2 p.m. ET**

#### **Sponsored by [FlexXray](#)**

Foreign material contamination has emerged as a critical concern for food safety professionals, prompting the development of enhanced technologies, tools and strategies for FSQA teams to mitigate recall risks. Join us for this webinar as we explore:

- A breakdown of the state of foreign material detection technology
- The stages of foreign material maturity and how to tell where your company sits
- What proactive foreign material management entails - from preventive maintenance to supplier monitoring and routine surveillance.

## **EMERGING LEADER SPOTLIGHT**



**Christina Hemmingway, Fair Oaks Food, LLC**

## **COMMITTEE NEWS**

**A list of upcoming Meat Institute committee activities is provided below:**

- The Meat Institute's **Animal Welfare Committee** will hold its next virtual meeting on Wednesday, March 28, at 12 p.m. ET. Contact [Casey Gallimore](#) to participate.
- The Meat Institute's **Communication and Marketing Committee** will hold its next virtual meeting on Tuesday, April 1, at 2 p.m. ET. Contact [Casey Kammerle](#) to participate.

- The Meat Institute's **Health and Wellness Advisory Committee** will hold its next virtual meeting on Wednesday, April 16, at 2 p.m. ET. Contact [Susan Backus](#) to participate.

The [Environmental Committee](#) and [Worker Safety Committee](#) will hold meetings at the [ELS+ Conference](#) open to all attendees. Register for these committee meetings with the links above.

## WEEKLY SUPPLEMENTS

**Meat Institute Weekly Market Report Released.** Last week's market report, prepared by Urner Barry by Expana, [is now available](#). According to the report, the weekly Federally Inspected Slaughter figure stood at 578,000 head of cattle, down 12,000 from the previous week. Total pork production was estimated to be 524.1 million pounds, 5.0% lower than the previous week.

**Total Red Meat Production Figures Released.** USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) released figures for total red meat production for the week ending March 8, 2025. An overview of the data is presented below and is available [here](#).