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JULY 4 2005

Cox Farms

To APHIS

I am Gary Cox, cattleman here in southeastern Ohio. The Coxes have been stockman in this valley for over 170 years. We're a cow-calf outfit and in the past, all purebred Charolais herd. Have been exposed to all the facts of stock raising; sickness, death, theft weather and unsure markets. But your proposed ID plans have infuriated us, at the USDA. That, and the ease some producers are intimidated by an agency supposed to be working for us.

No producer of the many live

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spoken to on this issue, says they want to participate, but fear they will be forced to.

I've talked to dozens of people on this issue, bussiness men, accountants truckers, doctors, even a couple vegetarians! People whose only contact with cattle are fast food joints or steak at the country club. None see it as a safety issue but say regulation seems the goal, as I believe. Not making our food supply safer, but controling one of the last free parts of our society. The non-farm-ranch folks are concerned about hormones and anti-biotics, but feel American meat is safer than imported stocks from

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countries where standards aren't as high.

As the ID system is being force fed us here in Ohio, only the producer and some unknown in charge of animal health for the state can have this information. No one believes this in these times of human ID theft, computer virus hacker etc. Your man here also claims a stock brand is invalid because the hide comes off when animal is slaughtered. Now which package or which cut get the one ear duct taped to it? That's easy, the packer sells us both back for our dogs.

We are ~~already~~ already the front line of animal health.

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Here standing behind our stock, we already care the most and have to to continue. America's meat health troubles have so far been caused by improper handling after leaving our care.

Cattlemen also are already required to pay $1.00 per. head and record private or public sales for the BEEF CHECK OFF.

Let, USDA hold up it's end, by inspecting plants and imports Example, that illegal boneless chicken legs deal that got clear scattered around Ohio, produced in whole world area of avian flue outbreaks!

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We want USDA to quit hindering COOL, or wanting Canadian border open before its really safe. Prevention is easier and less expensive than damage control Don't saddle us with regulation in the name of safety, making us pay for you to control us. What's next? How many cows per premise? Where or When we can market? What breeds?

I see this as only regulation in the name of false security and public fear.

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I will not tag our horses or cattle for this system and will remove any such tag from stock I may purchase.

yours truly

Gary Cox
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