



Down to Business

by **Brooke Byrd**

***Cattle Industry
Annual Convention
off to a great start.***

DENVER, CO (Feb. 2, 2006) — On Thursday, Feb. 2, the cattlemen got down to business with the opening session of the 2006 Cattle Industry Convention, which carried the theme, “Cowboy Up!”

National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) President Jim McAdams and Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion and Research Board (CBB) Chairman Alan Svajgr both welcomed cattlemen to Denver, Colo.

Marlene Strickland, American National CattleWomen Inc. (ANCW) president, discussed some of her organization’s programs. “Our plan is to better educate and meet the needs of our national members,” she said.

New long-range plan

Patti Brumback, Washington State Beef Commission, and Richard McDonald, Texas Cattle Feeders Association, reviewed the most recent Beef Industry Long-Range Plan and how the industry has changed in recent years. “We were basically a dying industry,” Brumback said. But now, “we’ve increased demand about 20% since 1998.”

The previous long-range plan addressed six key areas. Brumback

and McDonald described how the beef industry has met its goals in each area: safety, preparedness and issues, exports and trade, nutrition, product innovation and development, and protecting and enhancing the business climate. “NCBA and the entire industry working together got it done,” McDonald said.

Donnell Brown of R.A. Brown Ranch, Throckmorton, Texas, was introduced to explain the new Beef Long-Range Plan. The main challenge the long-range planning committee faced, he noted, was to maintain the industry’s momentum. The new long-range plan (see “Facing the Future” under the Issues Forums section of the Newsroom at www.4cattlemen.com) focuses on four priority areas: creating value, growth, sustainability and opportunity.

“This to me is a plan we can be a united part of,” Brown said. “We can achieve success for the future with this long-range plan, and you are the reason we can succeed.”

Strong business outlook

Renowned economist and speaker Barry Asmus delivered an optimistic statement about the future of the beef industry: “The

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good news is that the bad news is wrong,” he said.

In a time of unprecedented growth, Asmus predicted 2006 would be a time of strong business expansion. The main reasons for this growth, he noted, are the demographics of U.S. consumers, his predictions of low interest rates, and the incredible productivity of the U.S. workforce.

He then noted the importance of lowering taxes and of government deregulation. “Freedom is the mainspring of economic prosperity,” Asmus emphasized. For the cattle industry, that means “the golden age of the American

beef industry is in front of us, not behind us,” he stated.

“Good things do not come without hard work,” Asmus concluded, adding, “Not one of us is doing this by ourselves. Team beats the world.”

Surprise visit

The opening session concluded with a surprise visit by actor and beef checkoff spokesman Sam Elliott. Referencing his life growing up around agriculture and the natural world, Elliott finished with the words that will forever be heard in his voice: “Beef: It’s what’s for dinner.”



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