



# Arkansas Cattlemen's Association

www.arbeef.org • 310 Executive Court • Little Rock, Arkansas 72205 • (501) 224-2114

April 7, 2020

Mr. Rob Robinson  
Chairman  
Arkansas Bankers Association  
1220 West Third St.  
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Mr. Robinson:

We write today on behalf of the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association (ACA), representing over 8,650 cattle producers and their families located across the state of Arkansas. We would first like to thank you for your comments during Governor Hutchinson's COVID-19 press conference on March 28, 2020. It is reassuring to know that money is safe, insured and assessable for cattle producers and their families during these difficult times.

Much like Arkansas banks, Arkansas cattle operations are open and operating. Every day, Arkansas cattle producers are rising to the challenge to meet the protein needs of Arkansas, the United States and the world. Unfortunately, like so many industries across the nation, the COVID-19 outbreak has not left the cattle industry and producers unscathed. A recent economic damage assessment from Kansas State University, estimated that the COVID-19 outbreak has damaged the cow-calf sector of the cattle industry to the tune of \$3.53 billion; while the stocker sector of the industry has been damaged by \$3.79 billion. Loss of equity and volatile markets will undoubtedly have serious repercussions for producers and will reverberate through the industry for a significant time.

We recently received an email from one of our members, a young producer in Greene County, which read in part; "When talking to lenders, the trending rebuttal is 'we are being told it is business as usual' from the cattle market." This email illustrates the uncertainty and level of concern in our industry. As stated above, while cattle markets continue to operate and cattle move through the supply chain, prices are artificially low, in response to COVID-19. We write this letter today to offer ourselves as a resource to the members of the ABA. The ACA is ready and willing to assist our local banks by answering questions about market events, governmental economic assistance for cattle producers, or common management practice. Please know we are available to assist you and your membership however we can so together we can assist the cattle producers of Arkansas.

The ability for cattle producers to access financial tools is critically important. We appreciate all of our local banks across the state that continues to serve our agriculture communities. There is a saying, "Behind ever successful farmer is a wife who works in town." It may be past time to add "and an understanding banker." We wish your and the ABA continued success. If we may be of service, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Bernie Freeman  
President  
Arkansas Cattlemen's Association

Cody Burkham  
Executive Vice President  
Arkansas Cattlemen's Association

CC: Mrs. Lorrie Trogden, President & CEO Arkansas Bankers Association

