

ASSEMBLY AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 10, 1977
4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Hickey
Assemblyman Price
Mr. Serpa
Mr. Jacobsen
Mr. Rhoads

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Jeffrey
Mr. Polish

GUESTS: Dallas Byington, Nevada Cattlemen's Association

Chairman Hickey called the meeting to order for the purpose of hearing from Mr. Byington. Mr. Byington stated that he was Chairman of the Beef Development Task Force in Nevada and that he had a slide presentation for the committee's information.

Mr. Byington stated that the cattle people had gotten together to form a Task Force to get something done to help stabilize the beef industry. They had obtained national legislation by way of a national referendum, which if passed would assess themselves 3/10 of 1% of their gross sales for research and information. This came out of Congress called the Beef Research and Information Act.

At this time Mr. Byington began the slide presentation which presented the following information.

The cattle business has problems. These include: boycotts, price controls, loss of DES, unrestricted beef import, environmental controls and concern, cholesterol scare, talk about cancer, meat substitutes, eat less beef campaigns and volatile market. Two years ago a Beef Development Task Force was developed. This was developed by the cattle producers. This is a self help program. It is enabling legislation only for beef research and information. There were hard fought battles with labor unions and consumer activists but in 1976 it was passed.

It is important to stress that this is enabling legislation which enables the industry to create a self help program not a government program. This is for cattle producers by cattle producers. It will include area of beef market development, beef promotion, consumer education, research and foreign market development.

Task Force has estimated that between \$30-\$40 million per year will be needed. Other agricultural groups already assess themselves. Some of these are: Eggs, Cotton

Ducks, Milk, Prunes and Citrus Fruits. Citrus fruits are the highest at 2½% with Beef being the lowest.

If this referendum is passed there would be uniform collection on each sale and voluntary refunds to those who do not wish to participate. There would be 68 members on the Beef Board with State representation based on the cattle population within the state. This would include dairy cattle. National program would not interfere with any State Beef Councils or Beef Boards. Most of the money collected would be spent at the national level where the most good would be done for the fewest dollars.

In developing an effective beef market development program there would be the following: Consumer education, Public relations, Advertising, Merchandising, Research and New product research, as well as Production research.

As far as marketing there would be an attempt to keep supply in line with demand, better pricing methods, and better handling and financing of cattle. Also, there would research into the distribution, storage and handling of cattle. This has been a problem as cattle are still being handled the same as they were generations ago.

In the area of better information they would attempt to improve marketing as far as efficient processing and distributions are concerned. There would also be foreign market development. This would be accomplished by expanding present markets and creating new markets for high quality grain fed beef. There is an enormous need for new markets for this product.

After the slide presentation, Mr. Byington stated that they had presented this in hopes that there was some way to get this committee's support in urging the cattle industry in this state to endorse this. It will be the last time the cattle industry or any agricultural industry will be able to get legislation like this through Congress.

Mr. Hickey asked why consumers were so involved. Mr. Byington stated that this was similar to coffee in that consumer groups were afraid that prices would rise. Mr. Byington went to say that the industry felt that this would help stabilize and thus the housewife would not be faced with this constant fluctuation of prices.

Mr. Byington stated that this had gone through extensive hearings all over the country. 164 people testified on it with only 6 speaking against it. He added that he was not really sure when they would actually be voting on this.

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Mr. Hickey thanked Mr. Byington for his presentation and stated that the Committee would discuss this further at another meeting.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Gagnier
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Assembly Attache