



PO Box 2136  
1415 12th Ave SE  
Jamestown, ND 58401  
800-366-8331 / 701-252-2341  
<http://ndfu.org>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Sept. 1, 2010

## **NDFU Voices Concern at USDA/DOJ Workshop**

**Livestock Concentration key issue at workshop**

JAMESTOWN, N.D. — The USDA/DOJ held a workshop in Fort Collins, Colo. on Friday Aug. 27 that focused on competition in the livestock industry. Attorney General Eric Holder and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsak listened to testimony regarding lack of competition in the livestock market.

“The new Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyard Administration (GIPSA) rules or the farmer/rancher bill of rights needs clarification, but also needs to move forward and become permanent to create fair competition among all sectors of the livestock industry,” said North Dakota Farmers Union Vice President Woody Barth, who attended the event. “Market concentration limits buyers allowing an unfair farm to retail spread. The concentration is also leading to food safety issues, which directly affects the consumer.”

National Farmers Union had two members on the speaker panel, Chris Peterson, Iowa Farmers Union President and Armando Valdez, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union member, both are livestock producers who highlighted the need for reform in the livestock industry, citing increased concentration, which pushes out competition and creates incredible difficulties for family producers.

Family farmers and ranchers made up the great majority of the attendees, with packer- producer organizations represented on a much smaller scale. The workshop had 1300 individuals registered for the event.

(Continued)

*North Dakota Farmers Union is the state's largest general farm organization with more than 42,000 member families. NDFU works through the political process to develop economic and social policies, provides services to start and sustain cooperatives and related initiatives, and offers educational programs to benefit farmers, ranchers and rural communities.*



PO Box 2136  
1415 12th Ave SE  
Jamestown, ND 58401  
800-366-8331 / 701-252-2341  
<http://ndfu.org>

The realignment of the livestock industry has been damaging to farmers, ranchers and growers. In 1980, there were more than 666,000 hog farms and 1.6 million cattle farms or ranches. Today, there are only about 71,000 hog farms and 950,000 cattle farms or ranches. In 1980, hog producers received half of the retail value of a hog but in 2009, they got less than one-quarter of the value. Similarly, in 1980, cattle producers received 62 percent of the retail value but in 2009 received only 42.5 percent.

Contact:

Jessica Haak, Communications Specialist  
[jhaak@ndfu.org](mailto:jhaak@ndfu.org)  
(701) 952-1110

*North Dakota Farmers Union is the state's largest general farm organization with more than 42,000 member families. NDFU works through the political process to develop economic and social policies, provides services to start and sustain cooperatives and related initiatives, and offers educational programs to benefit farmers, ranchers and rural communities.*