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Editor, Beef Magazine
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Dear Editor:

The long term impacts from the extended closure of cattle imports from Sonora (whose animal health & pest programs rival ours in the U.S.) are eroding critical foundations of the U.S. cattle industry infrastructure. Even after nearly two years of border closure and three years of screwworm entry into Mexico - extensive inspection, surveillance, quarantine and programmatic decrees - not a single incident of the screwworm has appeared in the state of Sonora.

Previous temporary openings of the border demonstrated that the USDA's "tri-level" Screwworm import protocols (preventative treatment and inspection at the ranch of origin; inspection and quarantine at pre-export facilities; and inspection and treatment at final export facilities) were effective by demonstrating that not a single imported animal exposed the U.S. to the Screwworm.

While some in the U.S. pound their chests "keep the border closed" - Mexican cattle producers invest and build the infrastructure to solely export boxed beef to the U.S. and we lose the added value of production in the U.S. - this adherence to a short game poses a question. Will southwest ranches find the market for their calves in Mexico...while Mexican boxed beef finds its way to U.S. plates?

There's a saying, "...eat it or smell it..." with what's transpiring with cattle/beef infrastructure investment in Mexico and loss of infrastructure in the U.S. — the aroma is not pleasant!

Bas Aja