



State of Oklahoma
Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry

J. Kevin Stitt
Governor

Blayne Arthur
Secretary of Agriculture

May 21, 2021

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Attorney General Garland,

On behalf of Oklahoma's farmers and ranchers, we would like to express support for the continued investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice into the nation's meatpacking industry and the beef supply chain. The substantial margins between the live cattle prices our ranchers receive and the retail prices consumers pay at the grocery store are a continuing source of concern and frustration for Oklahoma's beef industry. This investigation is necessary to determine if any manipulation, collusion, or other illegal activity may be occurring and ensure market transparency.

Cattle producers work tirelessly to provide nutritious, safe, affordable protein for the world and steward their land, and their ability to stay in business is crucial to the success of Oklahoma and the United States. Oklahoma is home to over 52,000 cattle operations and ranks second nationally for beef cow inventory. The cattle industry is a mainstay of our state and local economies, and the same is true of many states across our nation.

The significant concerns of our cattle industry stem from the historical consolidation of meat processing companies in the U.S. and the minimal competition that exists in this sector of the beef supply chain today. After years of substantial profit margins for packers, cattle producers are concerned about the level of control these few companies have over the live cattle market. If any market manipulation does exist, it is vital for the continuation of the American beef industry that it be identified and fairness in the market be restored.

We appreciate your recognition of this issue and support further investigation by the DOJ.

Sincerely,

Kevin Stitt
Governor of Oklahoma

Blayne Arthur
Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture